



BELGRADE REGIONAL CONSERVATION ALLIANCE



BRCA conserves the lands, water quality, and natural heritage of the Belgrade Lakes watershed.

Stewardship Report: Forest Fire on French Mountain

On Thursday, May 19th a forest fire occurred on French Mountain, a BRCA property and beloved hiking area in Rome. Fortunately the fire was contained to the cliff side of the property and the majority of the forested area was spared. The total area burned is somewhere between 2-4 acres. Without the quick action and dedicated support of local fire fighters and volunteers, as well as the Maine Forest Service, this fire could have been much worse than it was. BRCA is very grateful for the good work of the Rome, Belgrade, Mount Vernon, Fayette, Oakland, Readfield, Manchester, Smithfield, Wayne and Vienna Fire Departments, as well as the Maine Forest Service, which deployed water via



helicopter to some of the more difficult to reach areas of the mountain. Given the dry weather we have had this spring, there has been a higher threat of fire danger throughout the State. Camp fires, cigarette butts, and other devices that create a spark can easily start a wildfire. The fire is still under investigation.



Important Reminder: Fires are not permitted on any BRCA properties and we encourage anyone who sees evidence of fire to call 911 and then to contact the BRCA office at (207) 495-6039. Thank you!



President's Column:

I'm writing this article from a beautiful desert resort located in Tucson, Arizona. Tucson is a beautiful place, sporting a captivating desert environment and stunning vistas. There isn't a lot of green vegetation, every day this week brought triple digit temperatures-it's a dry heat they say, and I don't recall seeing a lake anywhere. But the people who live here seem to love it.

I've had the opportunity to live in Florida, Louisiana, California, and Texas during my childhood and career. I can honestly say that I loved every place that I lived; each has its positive and negative attributes. Louisiana and Texas have great food, but the long summers are incredibly hot and humid. Florida offers gorgeous beaches, but like Louisiana and Texas the summertime heat is almost unbearable, and they are all susceptible to dangerous hurricanes and flooding. Also, all of the places I lived in Florida, Louisiana and Texas are topographically challenged. They are flat as a pancake.

California-we lived just southeast of San Francisco-offers beautiful rolling hills and mountains, and for the most part the summer temperatures where we

lived were pleasant; we cranked the air-conditioning up perhaps one week a year. Strangely the hills in the winters were green and the summers brown-backwards to what I was accustomed to but still a very pleasant place to live. After experiencing my first earthquake I decided that it was time to find a safer state to call home.

When we decided to retire we considered a variety of locations, but after the dust settled we agreed that we wanted to live on a lake in Maine. Following a long search, we found property on East Pond and eventually built our home there. The Belgrades offer a plethora of opportunities to enjoy life to the fullest, especially if you enjoy the outdoors. Summers are heaven, fall brings a kaleidoscope of colors when the leaves turn, and winter brings lots of skiing, snow-shoeing, and ice skating. Spring, well it brings mud season; fortunately, short lived but we Mainers love to complain about it.

East Pond fulfilled a childhood dream for us. Our boat is delivered by the end of May every year and whenever we get the itch we can be out on the water in a matter of minutes. If we wish to have lunch on the lake, then it takes a whopping half hour to pack all the fixings and accessories before we are on East Pond basking in the sun, perhaps observing a bald ea-

gle in a nearby tree.

Amazingly, the Belgrades offer more than lakes. I have always enjoyed hiking in pristine forests where I can get some much needed exercise while observing all Mother Nature has to offer. Thanks to the BRCA over 9000 acres of stunning undeveloped land are available within a 30-minute drive from our home. French Mountain, The Mountain, Mount Phillip and many other locations offer well marked trails with easy to challenging hikes among conifers and hardwood trees. In July and August you may find sweet delicious blueberries to snack on. Trail maps are available at the BRCA office.

Unfortunately, all is not well in the Belgrades. Our lakes are threatened by disgusting algal blooms and invasive plants. Fortunately, we have many dedicated people working hard to preserve and protect our lakes. Many of these concerns and the efforts to manage them are described in this newsletter, so I encourage you to read it carefully. Living in the Belgrades comes with an obligation to be a steward of our lakes, so please do your part to help preserve our treasures for future generations.

As I pack in preparation for the flight home I marvel at the beauty that Tucson offers, but I'm anxious to get back to paradise in the Belgrades. It's where I choose to live! - Mel Croft, President

Camp Road Workshop – July 12, 10-2:30, Maine Lakes Resource Center, Belgrade Lakes

BRCA, Maine Alliance for Road Associations (MARA), Friends of the Cobbossee Watershed, and 30 Mile River Watershed Association are hosting a Camp Road Maintenance Workshop. This workshop will discuss road design, installation, and how maintenance of your camp road will save you money and protect water quality. The workshop will also cover legal issues related to forming and operating a road association, including new changes in Maine law.

Camp Road Residents, Lake Association members, Contractors, Road Commissioners, Select Boards, Public Works Supervisors, CEOs and others involved in road maintenance are invited to attend. For more information, see BRCA's website, <http://www.belgradelakes.org/Road%20Workshop%20Flyer%20July%202016%20FINAL%20v6.pdf>.

To register, call 207-495-6039.

Lectures, Workshops & Guided Recreation

Thursday, July 7th at 10 a.m. MLRC, 137 Main St., Belgrade	Adopt-A-Shoreline Workshop. FMI: Toni Pied, brcamf@belgradelakes.org or call (207) 215-2685.
Thursday, July 7th, 7:00 p.m. MLRC, 137 Main St., Belgrade	Climate Resilience lecture with Dr. Ivan Fernandez, University of Maine's Climate Change Institute.
Tuesday, July 12th, 10 a.m.—2:30 p.m. MLRC, 137 Main St., Belgrade	Road Workshop: \$15 Pre-registration; \$25 day of event. \$5 discount for members of the same road or lake association, business or town.
Wednesday, July 13th, 11 a.m.— 3:00 p.m. Fun, Education, and BATS MLRC, 137 Main St., Belgrade	A great family hike on French Mountain, our Lakes Geology story and back to the MLRC for “Bats of the World”, a Chewonki presentation sponsored by the Belgrade Lakes Association (Lecture begins at 2 p.m.)
Thursday, July 14th, 7:00 p.m. MLRC, 137 Main St., Belgrade	Fisheries in the Belgrades lecture with Inland Fisheries & Wildlife Biologist Jason Seiders along with an officer from the Maine Warden Service
Friday, July 15th, 8:00 a.m. to Noon Location TBA. To register call 215-2685.	Stewardship Trail Work Day. If people are interested in helping out, they should call or e-mail Toni Pied. Please call 215-2685 to register.
Saturday, July 16th, 10:00 a.m. MLRC, 137 Main St., Belgrade	Adopt-A-Shoreline Workshop. FMI: Toni Pied, brcamf@belgradelakes.org or call (207) 215-2685.
Sunday, July 17th, 5:00 a.m.—4 p.m. All Belgrade Lakes Fishing Derby	Brought to you by Friends of Messalonskee and Oakfest. For rules, registration, and more information, visit their website or call 207-465-8333
Saturday, July 23rd, 10:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m. 55 Pleasant Street, Oakland	OAKFEST Town of Oakland celebration, check out our BRCA table.
Wednesday, July 27th, 2:00 p.m. MLRC, 137 Main St., Belgrade	Predators the Balance of Nature. This Chewonki presentation is sponsored by the Belgrade Lakes Association.
Wednesday, July 27th, 7:00 p.m. MLRC, 137 Main St., Belgrade	Geology of the Highlands and Belgrade Lakes Watershed lecture with Mel Croft and Pete Kallin. Go back in time through ice ages & beyond!
Thursday, August 4th, 7:00 p.m. MLRC, 137 Main St., Belgrade	Lyme Disease in Maine lecture with Dr. Beatrice Szantyr, medical director for Maine Lyme, focus on awareness, risk factors, and prevention.
Saturday, August 6th, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. MLRC, 137 Main St., Belgrade	AQUAFEST FAMILY FESTIVAL: Activities include: T-shirt painting; Fishing for Tots; Stream and Lake Critters; Stream Table and more!
Wednesday, August 10th, 2:00 p.m. MLRC, 137 Main St., Belgrade	Owls of Maine: Habits and Adaptations of Maine’s Native Owls. This Chewonki presentation sponsored by Belgrade Lakes Association.
Thursday, August 11th, 7:00 p.m. MLRC, 137 Main St., Belgrade	The Art and Science of Beekeeping in Maine lecture with veteran beekeeper, Matthew Scott.
Wednesday, August 18th, 7:30 p.m. MLRC, 137 Main St., Belgrade	Maine’s Wabanaki Native Americans , a lecture on their history presented by Ken Hamilton. Sponsored by the Belgrade Historical Society.
Wednesday, August 22nd, 7:30 a.m.— 4:30 p.m. Belgrade Lakes Disc Golf Course 311 Mercer Road, Rome	1st Annual BRCA Open Belgrade Lakes Disc Golf Course in partnership with the Belgrade Lakes Disc Golf Course and the Maine Golf Tour, BRCA will co-host a disc golf tournament for participants of all ages (children under 13 require adult supervision); cash prizes for winners.
Saturday, September 3rd at 8:00 a.m. Camp Runoia, Point Road, Belgrade	9 th Annual 5K Race for the Lakes Event
Wednesday, September 7th at 5:15 p.m. BRCA Annual Meeting –Alden Camps	Annual Meeting at Alden Camps

Lake Association Annual Meetings:

East Pond Association: Saturday, July 16th, 10 a.m.
 North Pond Association: Saturday, July 30th, 4 p.m.
 Belgrade Lakes Association: Sunday, July 31st, 2:30 p.m.
 Salmon Lake/McGrath Pond: Thursday, August 11th, 6 p.m.

Invasive Plant Patrols:

East Pond: Friday, July 19th, 9 a.m.
 North Pond: Thursday, August 2nd, 9 a.m.
 Salmon Lake/McGrath Pond: TBA

Youth Conservation Corps Program: Update

The Youth Conservation Corps' (YCC) mission is to install Best Management Practices (BMPs) that mitigate erosion and to spread awareness of erosion issues around the Belgrade Lakes watershed (Great Pond, Long Pond, East Pond, North Pond, Salmon/McGrath, and Messalonskee). BMPs are designed by the Department of Environmental Protection and they reduce sedimentation and eutrophication in our lakes. The Conservation Corps installs a wide variety of BMPs and uses many techniques that prevent erosion.

**A BIG THANK YOU TO
CENTRAL MAINE MOTORS**

The program just celebrated its 20th anniversary and I want to share a brief history of YCC in the Belgrade Lakes watershed and my appreciation. The YCC started working in the Belgrade Lakes watershed in 1996. It began in the back of Bob Joly's pick-up with only a handful of crew members. The program began by installing 22 BMPs the first summer and the following year that number improved to 30 BMPs. Now YCC has an office in the Maine Lakes Resource Center located in Belgrade Lakes village. Last year we installed 125 BMPs across the 180 square mile watershed with 12 crew members, 2 supervisors, and 1 director. The success the YCC has today is due to the

fortuitous foundation that was laid before my time. I must express my appreciation for the opportunity to be a part of such an amazing program. I am standing on the shoulders of giants.

The YCC is also looking for project sites. Contact the Conservation Corps director, Nathan D. Durant to schedule a site visit and get a free estimate for suggested BMPs. The YCCs season runs for eight weeks from Late June to Early August. Our policy is first come, first serve. So don't hesitate. Send Nathan an e-mail brcacc@belgradelakes.org or call (207-931-8791).

INVASIVE PLANT ALERT:

Salmon Lake Saved from Another Invasion!

On June 15th, several fragments of Curly-leaf pondweed (*Potamogeton crispus*) were removed from a boat about to enter Salmon Lake. The plants were intercepted by Doug McCafferty, owner of Whisperwood Camps on Salmon Lake in Belgrade. Doug inspects all boats going into and coming out of his launch, and it is a good thing he does! Curly-leaf pondweed (CLP) is native to Europe & Asia, but is highly invasive throughout the United States and much of Canada. CLP is currently known to be in two lakes in Maine (Legion Pond in Kittery and West Pond in Parsonsfield), but is known from several water bodies throughout New England and further south. CLP is adapted to grow in cool conditions, sprouts from rhizomes and turions in the fall, grows through the winter, and reaches maturity late spring through early summer. Once the plants reach maturity, they re-



Photo courtesy of Dennis Spinney (West Pond)

lease seeds and turions which sink to the bottom of the lake where they stay dormant until the water begins to cool in the fall. CLP can form dense mats of plants and is very difficult to remove once established. CLP can be distinguished from our native pondweeds by the ruffled, finely serrated leaves (see picture above).

Thank you to Doug McCafferty for your important save and thank you for inspecting boats at Whisperwood Camps! Prevention is key to winning the battle against invasive aquatic plants. If you see a Courtesy Boat Inspector at the boat launch, thank them and let them know how important their work is for protecting our lakes.

Milfoil Program: Update

Variable milfoil is not the only invasive aquatic plant known from Maine lakes. There are other species of invasive aquatic plants known from Maine lakes, and many other species found nearby in New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, and farther south. The Belgrade Lakes watershed certainly has challenges when it comes to fighting variable milfoil in the Great Meadow Stream, Great Pond, Belgrade Stream, and Messalonskee Lake, as well as preventing and detecting any new infestations. It is important that we stay vigilant, looking for suspicious plants, and support the programs in the watershed that help protect our lakes and streams.

This summer, in partnership with the Belgrade Lakes Association, BRCA will be working hard to remove variable milfoil from the Great Meadow Stream and North Bay of Great Pond, again this year. This project has seen great success since it began, shifting from a dense infestation (48,648 gallons of plants pulled in 2012) to one with scattered plants (4,675 gallons of plants pulled in 2015). This also brings many challenges, but our field operation is constantly adapting and we are constantly figuring out new ways to meet these challenges. This summer, you will see a team of interns on Great Pond, pulling plants, and on



Left to Right: Alex Dyer (Adopt-A-Shoreline), Adrian Heath (Survey Crew), Elija Tuell (Pulling Crew), Collin MacGibeny (Pulling Crew), Eben Lenfest (Survey Crew), Michael Stevens (Field Crew Leader).

both Great Pond and Long Pond surveying for new infestations. Our plan is to continue to reduce the size (density and area) of the infestation and to prevent any new infestations from becoming established.

In an effort to improve conditions and prevent spread to other waterbodies, BRCA will also be working with the Friends of Messalonskee to remove variable milfoil from the Belgrade Stream and Messalonskee Lake.

YOU CAN HELP! Volunteer to “adopt” your shoreline! Our goal this

summer is to expand the adopted shoreline on Great and Long Pond, as well as launch this program on other lakes in the watershed.

You can also volunteer as a Courtesy Boat Inspector! Whether you spend one hour or six hours at the boat launch, every inspection has the possibility of preventing a new infestation from becoming established. If you are interested in adopting your shoreline or volunteering as a courtesy boat inspector, please contact Toni Pied at brcamf@belgradelakes.org or call (207) 215-2685.

Adopt A Shoreline

Adopt A Shoreline (AAS) is a program available to those on Great Pond and Long Pond who would like to learn how to identify invasive and suspicious plants to better protect the lakes from infestations. We encourage those who are interested in adopting their shoreline to contact the BRCA for information or come to one of our training sessions.

AAS trainings:

Thursday, July 7th at 10 a.m.

Saturday, July 16th at 10 a.m.

For info contact:

Alex Dyer brcamf1@belgradelakes.org Toni Pied, brcamf@belgradelakes.org or call (207) 215-2685.

With your help we can maintain the beauty and functionality of our lakes for years to come.

Education Program: End of the Summer School Season

As the school year comes to a close and the summer begins, the Education & Outreach program at the Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance has successes to report and events to announce. From expanding into other classrooms to the development of a stream geomorphology table for k-12 and adult education!

When approaching watershed science education, it is important to remember that not all students have a passion for science; some love art, others have a knack for mathematics and more still enjoy English. In an effort to reach this broader range of students, I partnered with Colin Hickey's Topics in Non-Fiction Writing: Hunting and Fishing Seminar Course at Messalonskee High School. I instructed students on how to write a newspaper article using the inverted pyramid model and then investigated recently published newspaper articles on wild salmon populations.



On May 4th, after coordinating with staff from the Maine Lakes Resource Center, each student from both sections of Mr. Hickey's class ventured out to Bond Brook in Augusta where they all had the opportunity to release a few Atlantic Salmon into the stream.



I wrapped up my year at Messalonskee High School with Aaron Podey's Fish & Fishing Seminar Course. We gathered samples from the high school's drinking water, a fish tank, distilled water and the Maine Lakes Resource Center to test for water quality, collected macroinvertebrates in streams behind the school and learned to cast fly rods and tie flies with Trout Unlimited.



Of course, I can't write this update without mentioning my teacher partner at Messalonskee Middle School, Amanda Ripa. Over the year we covered topics like algae blooms, stream formation, bioaccumulation and more. We finished up with a lesson on biodiversity; where students played a game that placed them in the role of toxic frogs or snakes with a tolerance for toxicity. This taught students how genetic variations of traits in a population increase some individuals' probability of surviving and reproducing in a specific environment.

Lastly, I was able to start working with the "Turnip the Beet" Garden club this spring. I have a huge passion for clubs like these. They provide opportunities for students to learn lifelong skills that will improve their and their families' welfare in addition to getting them outside in the fresh air and putting dirt under their fingernails.



The most recent addition to this program's arsenal of educational materials is the stream table I built. This 6' x 3' table effectively demonstrates how streams, rivers, deltas and lakes form over tens of thousands of years. Using a material that does not retain water or dyes, we can leave it running for hours on end and show the transport of pollutants (or in this case food dyes) through both runoff and groundwater and how they can affect water quality and watershed health as a whole. This hands-on educational tool can and will be used for k-12, university and adult education. Make sure you attend Aquafest this summer to see it in action!



Outreach Programs: SUMMER EVENTS 2016

Summer 2016 is jam-packed with events! These are free and open to the public! Join me for the return of our **Summer Lecture Series** at the Maine Lakes Resource Center on July 7th, 14th, 27th, and August 4th and 11th from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. Topics include the natural history of the Belgrade Lakes region for the last 2 million years, climate change, Lyme disease in Maine, beekeeping in Maine and a fisheries update from IF&W and the Maine Warden Service!

AQUAFEST is also returning this summer on Saturday, August 6, from 10AM-2PM. Lake associations from across the watershed will be at the MLRC and host a variety of education activities for children and their families from a macroinvertebrates touch-tank to a stream table to t-shirt painting!



Lastly, the **1st Annual Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance Open** at the Belgrade Lakes Disc Golf Course will take place on August 20, 7:30 AM-4:30 PM – In partnership with the Belgrade Lakes Disc Golf Course and the Maine Golf Tour, BRCA will co-host a disc golf tournament for participants of all ages (children under 13 require adult supervision); cash prizes for winners. You can find pre-registration information on the Belgrade Lakes Disc Golf Course Facebook page.

Friday, July 15th,
8:00 a.m.—Noon
**Stewardship Trail
Work Day**



Executive Director's Column:

Water Quality Initiative Update

BRCA is working with Maine Lakes Resource Center (MLRC), Colby College, Belgrade Lakes Association (BLA), East Pond Association (EPA), Maine DEP, and outside consultants on a number of Water Quality projects in 2016.

MLRC and Colby have taken the lead in 2015 and 2016 in collecting and analyzing data on all seven major Belgrade lakes. BRCA and BLA hired a consultant last month to analyze the data from Great Pond and Long Pond and to consider recommendations, in concert with Maine DEP and Colby, for lake water quality treatment options that have never been tried in the Belgrade Lakes watershed but that are being used elsewhere in the U.S. (“internal” or “in-lake” treatments such as alum or oxygen, for example). BRCA plans to extend the in-lake treatment analysis to East Pond and Salmon Lake later this year.

BRCA is also working with East Pond, Colby, Maine DEP and outside consultants on updating the East Pond watershed management plan in 2016 and 2017, which will provide the basis for in-lake treatment options that are implemented in East Pond. BRCA has also begun discussions with North Pond Association and McGrath Pond Salmon Lake Association to conduct surveys to identify erosion sites that may be leading to “external” phosphorus loading to those lakes.

External and internal phosphorus loading contribute to lake water quality (algae) problems and both must be dealt with to sustain good water quality in the decades ahead.

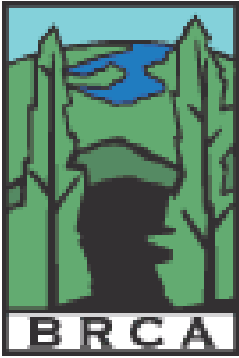
Colby will be presenting Water Quality updates to the public at the Maine Lakes Resource Center (MLRC) this summer. Please check the MLRC website <https://mainelakesresourcecenter.org/> and ours for more information.

Road Construction Funding Available to Protect Water Quality

BRCA has funding available in 2016 and 2017 for road construction projects which reduce erosion to protect water quality. The funding is available through a grant from Maine DEP which, in turn, is from the Clean Water Act program administered by US EPA. The funding is limited to the Great Pond and Long Pond watersheds and is available through a cost-share program whereby the road owner and BRCA share costs. The program pays for road *improvements* such as culverts and ditching, and does not pay for road maintenance such as annual grading.

For more information contact BRCA and ask about the **319 Grant Program**. This funding is a good example of the “external” or “watershed” remediation work that must accompany any “internal” remediation work that may be implemented as a result of the Water Quality Initiative.

- Charlie Baeder



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To view BRCA Newsletters
in full color with active
hyperlinks visit our website

**Kimball Pond –
Kennebec Highlands
2016 Fundraising Update**

*BRCA received our Land For
Maine's Future grant this
spring!*

*Together with donations re-
ceived from BRCA members, the
community, and foundations,
we are close to our fundraising
target of \$263,000. At this
time, we are still \$30,000 short
of our goal. If you have already
donated, thank you again for
your support! If not, please help
us reach our target. Join us on
the trails this summer!*

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