

ANNUAL REPORT

2025



WE ARE 7 LAKES ALLIANCE:

Conserving the lands and waters of the Belgrade Lakes region for all.

Our Vision

7 Lakes Alliance envisions a future where the Belgrade Lakes region thrives with clean, healthy water, unspoiled lands and a vibrant community.

We achieve this through science-based conservation strategies in collaboration with Colby College and other important partners, including local lake associations.

We foster a culture of conservation that benefits everyone—strengthening both our community and local economy.

With passion and dedication, our staff works year-round to deepen the connection between people and the lakes and lands of this remarkable watershed, safeguarding its beauty and vitality for generations to come.



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Back cover photo by Alex Wall

A LETTER FROM CHRIS MONZ, CEO

Dear Friends,

I write these words in the heart of the Maine winter, a time of quiet beauty, contemplation, and especially humility—that nature is a force to be respected and revered. I am fortunate to love this time of year and all the challenges it brings. While the season provides some reprieve from spring and summer work, it is also a busy time for us at 7 Lakes Alliance as we continue to monitor the lands and lakes, plan for our season ahead, and chart a future course for the organization—important work.

In the pages that follow you will see many of the details of how our scientific team continues to make a difference in protecting our lakes and shorelines. How our lands protect wildlife habitat, how our stewardship provides opportunities for all to experience nature, and how our outreach efforts engage and enlighten our community. Our dedicated, professional staff work year-round to assure that all these benefits are here now and for future generations. None of this would be possible without you—our community of dedicated volunteers, partners and supporters who make all this work possible.

We remain truly grateful for your partnership in this vital work.

Chris
DR. CHRISTOPHER MONZ
President and CEO



Chris Monz and his wife, Wyatt



CONSERVED

a 172-acre parcel on the shore of Long Pond, protecting an additional 25 acres of wetlands and 1,250 feet of shoreline

EARNED

Renewal of Land Trust Accreditation

STEWARDED

20 miles of trails

INSTALLED

28 stone steps across three trail systems, improving sustainability and safety

CONDUCTED

53 LakeSmart evaluations

COMPLETED

69 YCC projects

AWARDED

\$1.1 million in 319 grants to support erosion control on all seven lakes since 2018



MAKING AN IMPACT IN 2025



LAKE SCIENCE

CONDUCTED
207 lake monitoring visits

INSTRUCTED
6 summer research students in a range of lake science disciplines



INVASIVE AQUATICS

COMPLETED
5,263 dive hours
April to November 1

HOSTED
8 community powered invasive plant paddles



EDUCATION & OUTREACH

ENGAGED
271 summer campers in conservation activities

PROVIDED
hands-on learning for 144 students

WELCOMED
278 attendees aboard the education boat

HOPE FOR BELGRADE STREAM

SHARON MANN

Invasive Aquatics Director

Since the early 1990s, variable-leaf milfoil (VLM) has spread unmanaged throughout Belgrade Stream, which flows from Lower Long Pond to Messalonskee Lake. Today, the entire 7-mile stream is heavily infested along with 15 locations within Messalonskee Lake. Over three decades, property owners, anglers, and paddlers have witnessed declining water quality and reduced native plant diversity as the infestation intensified.

A comprehensive restoration plan for Belgrade Stream is now possible due to advances in aquatic plant management and updates to state and federal permitting. Given the scale and density of the infestation, manual control methods such as hand-pulling and benthic barriers alone cannot achieve meaningful ecological improvement. While these techniques remain important tools, relying on them exclusively would require an unsustainable level of effort. To restore ecological balance and create long-term manageability, a carefully designed, targeted herbicide strategy is necessary.

Beginning in 2026, a multi-year management effort led by 7 Lakes Alliance and Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will implement low-risk aquatic herbicide treatments in Belgrade Stream and select areas of Messalonskee Lake. This initiative represents one of the most significant invasive aquatic plant treatment efforts ever undertaken in Maine. The goal is

not eradication, but to substantially reduce the footprint of the infestation—so that milfoil can be sustainably managed with ongoing monitoring and manual removal.

Restoring this system is critical to protecting lakes both within and beyond our watershed as Belgrade Stream is a major source of milfoil spread.

ADVANCES IN AQUATIC HERBICIDE TREATMENTS

The phrase “chemical treatment” understandably raises concerns, especially in lakes used for swimming, fishing, and in some cases, drinking water. However, modern aquatic herbicides are far more targeted and lower risk than products used decades ago. Today’s in-lake treatments rely on selective compounds that are rapidly absorbed by invasive plants and break down quickly in water.

One such product is ProcellaCOR® (active ingredient florpyrauxifen-benzyl), a synthetic plant hormone that selectively targets milfoils and other fast-growing invasive species. ProcellaCOR only recently was approved for lake use in 2018, and was added to DEP’s permit list in 2019.

ProcellaCOR was first used in Maine to treat Eurasian milfoil in Cobbosseecontee Lake in 2019. Soon after, 7 Lakes Alliance partnered with DEP to treat variable-leaf milfoil in Great Meadow Stream (Great Pond), where manual removal had been ongoing since 2010. One year after treatment, surveys found only a single milfoil plant in an area previously dominated by thousands. Some regrowth



Green masses pictured above in Belgrade Stream are patches of Variable-leaf Milfoil, photo by Alex Wall

has occurred since then, which is expected. Low-risk herbicides are not a silver bullet, but an effective tool to reduce infestations to manageable levels.

A WATERSHED-SCALE VISION

The decision to move forward now reflects a broader shift toward watershed-scale conservation. Historically, invasive plant management focused on individual lakes. While that approach can work locally, greater progress is achieved when connected systems are managed collaboratively. Bringing Messalonskee Lake and its tributaries under coordinated management made a comprehensive Belgrade Stream strategy possible. We are excited to be partnering with Friends of Messalonskee on fundraising and outreach for this effort.

Specific treatment locations and timing for 2026 are still being finalized by DEP. We remain optimistic that this coordinated, science-based approach will begin restoring Belgrade Stream and protecting lake health for generations to come. Community understanding and support are essential. We encourage residents to stay informed, attend public meetings, and share questions as planning continues. 💧



Above: Emergent flower spikes of invasive Variable-leaf Milfoil / Below: A blanket of Milfoil rooted in heavy clay; both in Belgrade Stream



LAND AND LEGACY: MOUNT PHILLIP

LAURIE RALEIGH

Advancement Director

For generations, Mount Phillip has stood watch over the Belgrade Lakes region, its ridgelines etched into local hearts and memories. With sweeping views of Great Pond and well-worn trails, the mountain has long been a quiet constant.

Its protection is the result of extraordinary community commitment that began more than two decades ago and has now come full circle.

In the early 2000's, as Mead Paper Company divested its holdings, large tracts of Maine land faced an uncertain future. The Belgrade Lakes community stepped forward with leadership from the Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance (BRCA), predecessor of the 7 Lakes Alliance. In partnership with Pine Island Camp, BRCA purchased nearly 200 acres of the south side of Mount Phillip.

Pine Island Camp, founded in 1902 on Great Pond, has long fostered a deep connection to Mount Phillip. With support from the extended Pine Island Camp community, and key local champions, including Jack Schultz and Bob and Katherine Hogan, a significant portion of the mountain was permanently protected for recreation, wildlife habitat and quiet reflection.

During the same time, a local landowner sold the 10-acre summit, along with a right of first refusal on the north side to Jack Schultz, who generously donated the summit to Pine Island Camp in memory of his two beloved sons. Pine Island Camp, in turn, entrusted the land to BRCA through a conservation easement.

In 2016, Denny and Sandy Phillips helped conserve an additional eight acres off Route 225 that were added to the conserved land, further strengthening both protection and access to the mountain.

Today, the story continues. The same landowner has agreed to sell the adjacent 197 acres on the north side of the mountain to 7 Lakes Alliance. Once again, the community rallied. With leadership backing from steadfast donors, including Jack and Diana Schultz and Bob Hogan, who made one last very generous gift just before passing at age 99,





View of Mount Phillip from Great Pond



Bob and Katherine Hogan, photo courtesy of the Hogan Family

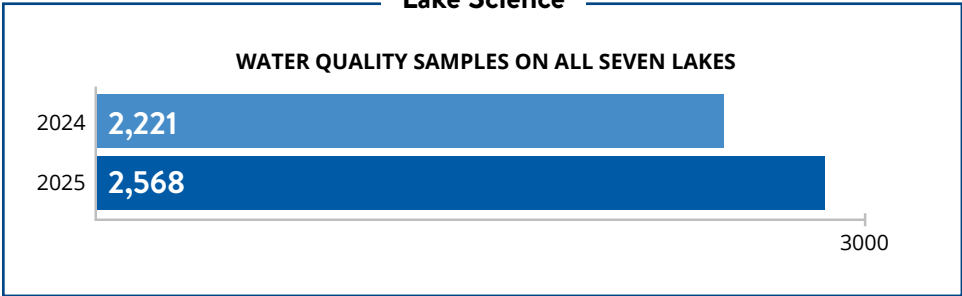
7 Lakes Alliance is now poised to permanently conserve this land. The north side parcel adds significant ecological and recreational value. It includes wetlands, critical winter wildlife habitat, striking rock ledges, and elevated viewpoints that offer expansive vistas.

Thoughtful stewardship will expand trail opportunities and deepen public connection to this iconic landscape.

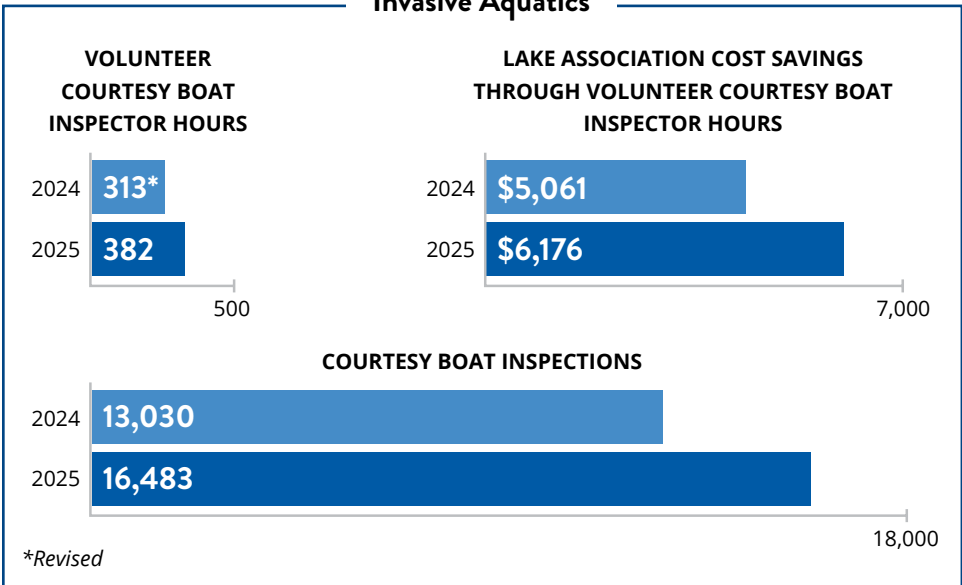
At its heart, Mount Phillip's story is about neighbors stepping up when it matters most to protect the place they love. Conservation is rarely a single moment; it is sustained across decades and generations - a legacy carried forward. Thanks to the enduring vision and commitment of this community, Mount Phillip will remain a place of discovery, peace and reflection for many years to come. 💧

IMPACT REPORT DATA

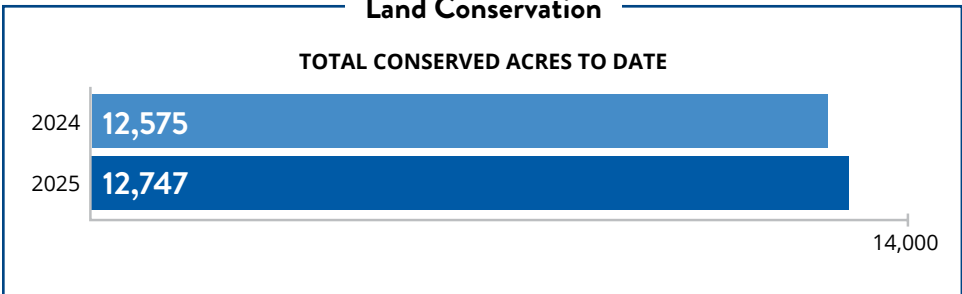
Lake Science



Invasive Aquatics



Land Conservation



THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Every gift matters. Thank you for protecting these beloved lakes and lands.

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Harold Alford Foundation
Borman Family Foundation
Buck Family Foundation
Delaware County Foundation
Egan Family Charitable Foundation
Elsie & William Viles Foundation
Henry Janssen Foundation
Horizon Foundation
David Davis & Janus Giving Fund
Klingenstein-Martel Foundation
L.L. Bean Foundation
Land for Maine's Future
Lloyd A. Fry Foundation
Maine Coast Heritage Trust
Momentum Conservation
Onion Foundation
William P. Wharton Trust

BUSINESS/CORPORATE

Belgrade Lakes Golf Club
Central Maine Motors
Golden Pond Wealth Management
Hammond Lumber Company
Lakefront, LLC

PROGRAM/FUNDING PARTNERS

Belgrade Lakes Association
Colby College
East Pond Association
Friends of Messalonskee
North Pond Association
Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands
McGrath Pond & Salmon Lake
Association
Town of Belgrade
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Town of Mount Vernon
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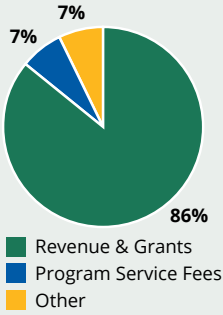
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We apologize for any errors in this report. If you have corrections or wish to remain anonymous, please contact Jennifer Warriner so we may correct our records. Contact: jennifer.warriner@7lakesalliance.org or 207-495-6039. We are deeply grateful for your generosity and for the trust you place in our work.

ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

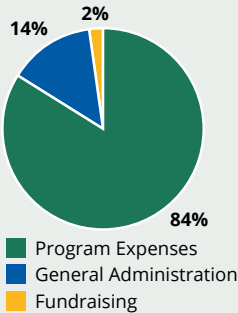
As reported in our annual 990* financial report from 2024



REVENUES¹

REVENUE & GRANTS	\$2,715,264
PROGRAM SERVICE FEES	\$224,628
OTHER	\$208,377
TOTAL REVENUE	\$3,148,269

¹Includes donations for planned land acquisitions and special projects



EXPENSES

PROGRAM EXPENSES	\$1,775,060
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION	\$299,741
FUNDRAISING	\$35,341
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,110,142

LIABILITIES

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	\$14,441
ACCRUALS & DEFERRALS	\$53,684
OTHER	\$9,500
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$77,625

ASSETS

CASH & EQUIVALENT	\$2,698,395
PROPERTY & EQUIPMENT	\$713,112
LAND HELD FOR CONSERVATION	\$2,670,488
RESTRICTED ASSETS	\$3,013,512
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$9,095,507
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$9,173,132

*Annual tax form that non-profits submit to the IRS



BECOME A MEMBER

Leadership Circle Members give \$1,000 and above annually (\$84 monthly). Members provide critical annual support for all of 7 Lakes Alliance programs and are recognized at an annual event.

WAYS TO GIVE

Donations

Make a tax-deductible contribution of cash, stock, mutual fund shares, donor-advised funds or IRA charitable distributions.

Endowment and Estate Planning

Consider making a legacy gift by including 7 Lakes Alliance in your estate plan.

Real Estate

Protect the lands you love by donating property or establishing a conservation easement to 7 Lakes Alliance.

Corporate or Employer Matching Gifts

Check if your employer matches and include the matching gift form with your donation.

Mail a Check

7 Lakes Alliance
P.O. Box 250
Belgrade Lakes, ME 04918

Donate Online

7LAKESALLIANCE.ORG/DONATE



For more information, please contact:

LAURIE RALEIGH

7 Lakes Alliance Advancement Director

(207) 931-8806

laurie.raleigh@7lakesalliance.org

ON THE HORIZON

Official launch of the
7 Lakes Alliance
Junior Ranger Program

New pavilion opening
at the Homestead Nature
Education Center

Annual Meeting with
dinner September 9th
at Alden Camps

*Stay up to date on all the latest 7 Lakes Alliance news!
Subscribe to our email at 7lakesalliance.org.*



2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JANE EBERLE
Chair

**RACHEL GADDES
JABLONOWSKI**
Vice Chair

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TOM MCCANDLISH
MEG MCCANN
LENNY REICH
CAROL ROSA SABIA
DICK SCHMALTZ
BILL SWAN
ALEX WALL**

NEW FOR 2026:

We welcome **HILARY BARNES HOOPES** and **HALLIE SMITH** to the Board and congratulate **CAROL ROSA SABIA** on her election as Vice Chair.

7 LAKES ALLIANCE

P.O. Box 250, Belgrade Lakes, ME 04918
(207) 495-6039
7LAKESALLIANCE.ORG