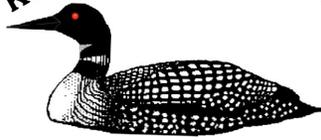


Keoka Lake Association



Waterford, Maine

Volume 2, No. 1

Spring, 2010 Newsletter

Ice-out was the earliest on record (March 23rd); the loons are back and it's once again time to think about another season at Keoka Lake. With the winter snows and the spring rains behind us, there is much to report on in this newsletter.

There's more to "INVASIVES" than Milfoil

..... and they are moving east! The 11th Annual Maine Milfoil Summit was held in February, 2010 and instead of 'preaching to the choir' and reiterating the information about milfoil, boat inspection statistics, current milfoil locations, etc., the agenda widened the picture with presentations by Meg Modley, Aquatic Nuisance Species Coordinator, Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) and George Smith, executive director of the Sportsman Alliance of Maine, who provided a sportsman's perspective on invasive plants. The LCBP is currently dealing with not just invasive plants but animal species as well. Boat movement from that area raises the risk of the introduction of those plant and animal species into Maine lakes and streams. The success of the LCBP is based on the cooperation of federal, state, provincial and local initiatives all working to restore and protect Lake Champlain and its surrounding watershed.

In addition to milfoil and aquatic plants, LCBP is dealing with zebra muscles as well as didymo (aka 'rock snot') in streams within the Lake Champlain watershed. Zebra muscles now infect 579 lakes nationwide including all five of the Great Lakes. As larvae, these nearly invisible hitchhikers travel in bilge, live wells or any vessel that gets wet – leading to the caveat: **Don't transport water** in your boat.

Didymo, on the other hand, is an alga that has historically been confined to cooler, low-nutrient waters. Although it is believed to be native to North America, it has recently been found to occur at nuisance levels in nutrient-rich streams and rivers. Forming a dense mat up to 6 inches thick, it smothers streambeds, aquatic plants, insects and reduces fish habitat and food. As only one cell is needed to start an infestation,

humans typically transport didymo. The microscopic algae can cling to fishing gear, waders, boots and boats and survive in cool, dark, damp environments for at least 40 days. The Maine DIFW has distributed signs warning of the threat of didymo and advising anglers on how to prevent its spread. In 2009, DEP and DIFW supported three pilot self-service anglers equipment wash stations established through the efforts of Fly Fishing in Maine. A chapter of Trout Unlimited produced and distributed "personal-sized" didymo wash stations for anglers in Maine. (http://www.northcountryangler.com/PDFfiles/vally_angler/personal_washing_station.pdf)

Citing the concerns for zebra muscle and didymo infestations in Lake Champlain as an example of invasives being more than just milfoil, George Smith, in his presentation, called on Maine's state agencies focused on the prevention of milfoil infestations in Maine's lakes to work together with the sportsman organizations to guard against all invasive species – not just invasive aquatic plants. The cooperation between the agencies in the LCBP evidences the need to work together to keep Maine's 6,000 lakes clean and safe to provide continuing opportunities for tourism dollars to flow into the state.

SUCCESS! Our federal tax dollars at work in Maine.....

The first-ever Maine Milfoil Initiative is launched! The MMI was established in response to the growing threat of invasive aquatic plants in Maine. Focusing on variable leaf watermilfoil (VWM), Maine's most abundant aquatic plant invader, the mission is to address the existing infestations through a target program of 1) prevention, 2) research and development, and 3) management, mitigation and eradication through the application of "best practices." Supported by all four Maine delegates to congress in their requests to the Appropriations Committee and funded by the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, the Maine Milfoil Consortium received a \$500,000 federal grant to study and

possibly eradicate VWM. The Maine Milfoil Consortium, made up of representatives of the Little Sebago Lake Association, St. Joseph's College, Maine VLMP and Maine COLA, will administer the program.

Phase 1 of the \$1,250,000 request will involve seven test lakes and two "apprentice" lakes (Sebago and Little Sebago, Messalonskee Lake, Pleasant Pond, Shagg Pond, Lake Christopher, Thompson Lake and Lake Arrowhead). The federal grant will be used 1) to supply technical assistance to citizen lake groups engaged in controlling, containing and trying to eradicate VWM infestations, 2) to fund research to determine the most effective ecologically sound techniques and 3) to create a best practices guide for use in Maine and elsewhere. St. Joseph's College will receive a contribution for its marine and freshwater laboratory and to fund the applied research. Maine COLA and Maine VLMP will receive compensation for project management and the creation and dissemination of the guide. Each of the seven test lakes must match double the federal monies allocated to their lake with private fundraising and other in-kind contributions such as equipment use and volunteer time. The Messalonskee Lake project, for example, is a \$39,000 project that includes \$13,000 in aid from the U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife and the remaining \$26,000 from the Messalonskee Lake Association as either a cash or in-kind match. (For more information on the Messalonskee Lake project, see http://www.onlinesentinel.com/news/local-lake-part-of-state-effort-to-control-milfoil_2010-04-10.html)

COURTESY BOAT INSPECTIONS

Once again this year, KLA will be sponsoring voluntary Courtesy Boat Inspections (CBI) of boats entering and leaving Keoka Lake at the town boat launch. At the 2010 Waterford Town Meeting in March, the Town of Waterford again approved the funding for the CBIs. Typically, the town monies in combination with a grant from LEA will provide CBIs on weekends in the spring and fall as well as additional weekday hours in the summer. The 2010 LEA grant is less than in past years, so the balance of the funding will have to be raised by KLA to continue the CBI program at the town boat launch. The hours when Courtesy Boat Inspectors (CBIs) will be on duty will be posted on the KLA website as soon

as the inspection schedule is established. KLA's thanks go to Peter Morse for managing the CBI program again this year.

DID YOU KNOW?

In the state of Maine, it is now **illegal** to *sell, propagate or introduce* to Maine waters 11 aquatic plant species. The plants are aggressive growers and can be used in water gardens and/or aquariums and known by different names. Currently, Maine has four of these plants – Variable leaf watermilfoil, Hydrilla, Curly-leaved Pondweed and Eurasian Milfoil. For a complete list of the 11 Banned Invasive Aquatic Plants, go to <http://www.maine.gov/dep/blwq/topic/invasives/invlst.htm>

KLA ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD – 2010 OHHS RECIPIENT

At the 2009 fall board meeting, the Board voted to establish a KLA Environmental Award to be given to an Oxford Hills High School senior who resides in Waterford and who has a commitment to, and record of, environmental stewardship, particularly with regard to the health of the lakes of Maine. The first recipient of this scholarship will be invited to attend the 2010 Annual Meeting to be recognized.

2010 is the year.....

..... for the botanist. KLA engages the services of a botanist every other year to provide an inspection of the plant life in Keoka Lake. Anyone interested in joining the botanist for all or part of that inspection in order to learn more about the aquatic life in Keoka is welcome. The date will be announced at the Annual Meeting and will be posted to the website when it is available.

PLANT PATROLS NEEDED

Keoka Lake Volunteer Plant Patrols are needed!!!! Training will be provided for anyone willing to be part of a volunteer effort to focus on identifying, monitoring and educating KLA members about the state of plant life in Keoka Lake. If you have an interest in knowing more about the Plant Patrol program, please contact Charlie Tarbell (207-671-6962) soon so training can be scheduled in time for the 2010 summer season.

Are you 'LAKESMART'?

LAKESMART is a Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) program that is designed to promote appropriate property maintenance practices for homeowners. Appropriate practices are meant to create a watershed environment that discourages phosphorus-laden storm runoff. The program has been in place for several years on other lakes in the state, but is new to Keoka and to the Keoka Lake Association..

Keoka Lake has two principle enemies: Invasive Aquatic Plants (e.g. Milfoil) and phosphorus-laden storm runoff. You hear and see a lot about Milfoil – Town Warrant articles, courtesy boat inspectors at the Town Beach, newspaper articles on infested lakes, etc. There is not quite as much visibility given to runoff, despite the significant threat it poses to our lakes. In fact, before Milfoil happened on the scene in the late 1990's, runoff was the primary threat to Keoka. Indeed, runoff was responsible for the relatively poor water quality in Keoka that occurred during the 1970's and 1980s.

During the 1990's, KLA cooperated with Oxford County Soil and Water District and the Town of Waterford in a project that addressed runoff issues on public lands. These projects included: Hawk Mountain Road, the Rt. 35/37 picnic area, Plummer Hill Road, the Boat Launch, Kedar Brook, and others. These projects have helped to contribute to Keoka's water quality improvement – from HIGH concern in the 1990's to MODERATE/HIGH concern more recently, according to ratings from Lakes Environmental Association.

The next step in improving water quality is to turn our attention to improving private properties. This is where the Lakesmart program comes in. Lakesmart involves DEP-provided inspections of lakefront property with the goal of reviewing runoff control practices in place, and pointing out areas that could be better controlled. Properties that exhibit appropriate controls receive an award, together with signs that can be posted on your property to indicate receipt of the award. Properties that do not "pass" at first have the opportunity to take the remedial actions

recommended and, in turn, receive the award.

The more properties that are "Lakesmart", the higher the likelihood that Keoka's water quality will continue to improve. *KLA has set a goal that at least 15% of lakefront properties will be "Lakesmart" within three years.* We would love to exceed that goal. Kathy Souza, who, with her husband Alan, has just recently built a new home on Stone's Cove, is coordinating the Lakesmart program for KLA.

If you or somebody you know would like to receive a Lakesmart inspection, please feel free to contact Kathy (913-486-4700) or Charlie Tarbell (671-6962). We will begin the inspections in June and are only limited by the availability of the DEP inspectors.

MEMORIAL TREE FUND

The Memorial Tree Fund was established in 1970 with the purpose of paying for the removal of the stumps in Waterford Flat left by Dutch Elm Disease and to plant new disease resistant trees to take their places. Last summer, it was determined that two maple trees had died and needed to be taken down and their stumps removed. This additional expense has slowed the plan for planting more disease resistant elm trees. This month, the final 5 disease resistant elms will be planted and the dedication of the new plaque is scheduled for Memorial Day, May 31st. For time and location, please visit the KLA website at <http://www.keokalake.com>

ANNOUNCING THE 2010 RAFFLE!

The 2009 kayak raffle was so successful, KLA will raffle a kayak again in 2010. Tickets are \$5 each or 3 for \$10. Tickets are included with this newsletter for your use or to sell to your friends, family or co-workers. The winner will be drawn after the Fall Foliage 5k race on October 16th. You do not have to be present to win, however, transportation will be the responsibility of the winner of the kayak.

Please send checks for raffle tickets or requests for more raffle tickets to KLA, Box 97, Waterford, ME 04088 or bring them to the annual meeting.

ANNUAL MEETING

The 2010 Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, July 10th. Coffee and Lake Store doughnuts will be available beginning at 8:30 a.m. Come early, have a cup of coffee and a donut and reconnect with your Keoka Lake neighbors. The meeting will begin promptly at 9!

Please check the website closer to the date of the annual meeting for the agenda and identity of the speaker.

2010 DUES.....

..... are now due! Please return the enclosed Dues Notice with your check to KLA, Box 97, Waterford, ME 04088. We encourage those with "family places" to encourage each family unit to become members of KLA.

Dues remain at \$25 but additional contributions (specific or non-specific) are always welcome. KLA's mission is to provide on-going education to protect and to maintain the on-going health and beauty of Keoka Lake to all those who benefit from the lake.

NEW FOR 2010

Coming new this summer, KLA will be offering 'wearables'..... Hats, shirts, etc. Come to the Annual Meeting to be one of the first to see all the new gear!

KLA BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Charlie Tarbell, President
Joanne Eaton, Vice President
Dave Abbiati, Secretary
Chip Mason, Treasurer

John Caldwell
Dan Johnson
David Johnson
Jo Lynne Johnson
Arne Klepinger
Richard Orr
Don Rung
Tom Stockwell
Andy Tabor

ARE YOU A GOOD STEWARD OF KEOKA LAKE?

WHAT YOU CAN DO.....

- *Pay your dues.* If you are a multi-family household, as many of our summer camps are, please make sure that all of your families are members of KLA. A dues notice is included with this newsletter
- *Inspect your boats.* Please self-inspect your boats and remove any plant material you might find. If you suspect an Invasive Aquatic Plant, please send a sample to LEA in Bridgton.
- *Clean Up Your Property.* Stop runoff before it gets to Keoka. Get your camp roads and paths fixed. If you see evidence of erosion on your property, chances are it is hurting Keoka. Watch the website for suggestions on plantings that help to control runoff. If you want help or ideas, please contact KLA or LEA in Bridgton.
- *Be a Lakesmart award winner.* Contact Kathy Souza (913-486-4700) or Charlie Tarbell (671-6962) for more information or to schedule a DEP inspection of your property.
- *Document Boating Violations.* Call the Warden Service in Gray (1-800-228-0857) or the State Police (207-657-3030) if someone is operating a boat or personal watercraft illegally.
- *Volunteer.* KLA has many volunteer opportunities from Plant Patrol to staffing the KLA merchandise table at the Community Breakfasts, 4th of July or Fall Foliage Race, to Board member. Please note on your dues sheet or contact Charlie Tarbell directly if you would like to volunteer
- *Support KLA.* Through raffle purchases, fundraising activities and direct unrestricted contributions.