

Alamoosook Lake Association

Summer 2022 Newsletter

pictured: Dead River

MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND PICNIC: Tuesday, August 23, Alamoosook Lakeside Inn (details page 2)

DUES: \$20 www.alamoosooklakeassociation.org or send to PO Box 464, Orland 04472

EXCITING NEWS FOR ALAMOOSOOK'S FUTURE!

On July 13, Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust officials gathered in the Wildlands in Orland to launch Growing the Dream, a major capital campaign to support the purchase, conservation, and stewardship of additional lands to protect wildlife, preserve more than one mile of the Dead River shoreline, and promote climate resilience in Hancock County. Campaign co-chairs Carl Derian and Emily Fuller Hawkins made the announcement at the Wildlands Dead River Trailhead.

The \$2.36 million campaign parcels will increase the size of the Trust's holdings to 5,000 acres. To date, more than 110 donors to Growing the Dream have contributed \$1.8 million in cash and pledges, representing 77% of the goal.

"This campaign is significant to conservation in Hancock County. As a 29-year-old land trust, we are grateful to have the support of so many friends who deeply believe in our mission," Carl Derian said.

The Trust has one of the largest contiguous land holdings on Maine's coastal plain, and it's growing, thanks to the campaign. This campaign will help the Trust to conserve unspoiled shorelands and mature forests, allow low-impact recreation, protect an additional 7,000 feet of undisturbed Dead River shoreline, fund the critical maintenance of trails, bridges, and roads, stabilize the Wildlands' infrastructure in the face of climate change, and open the Joost Family Preserve on Verona Island for the community to enjoy.

The major initiatives that contributors are supporting include:

The purchase of a 355-acre addition to the Wildlands on the Dead River, newly named "Dead River West."

This acquisition assures that 355 acres of forest and wetlands will be protected from development.

It adds more than one mile of shoreline on the Dead River in Orland and Bucksport to the Wildlands.

This acquisition ensures that both sides of the Dead River will be protected forever.

Investment in Wildlands infrastructure, including equipment, trails, roads, and bridges.

The Wildlands Road network is similar to that of a small municipality. The Trust must plan to better prepare for the challenges of our changing climate. These plans are vital to preserving wildlife habitat and accommodating our visitors to the Wildlands.

The last campaign initiative provides funds for land acquisitions currently in negotiation. When opportunities arise to acquire new land parcels, Trust officials want to be prepared.

The Trust also announced they have received a grant from Land for Maine's Future, totaling \$264,972. Land for Maine's Future funds conservation projects across Maine that conserve lands and preserve public access to lakes, rivers, scenic views, and mountain vistas for Maine people.

In addition, two anonymous donors will double new gifts to the campaign from individuals. The next \$150,000 in new contributions will be matched, dollar-for-dollar. This will provide \$300,000 in new funds for the campaign. This match does not apply to new pledges or existing pledge payments.

To learn more about the Trust, support Growing the Dream, watch the campaign video and read the brochure, visit www.GreatPondTrust.org/Dream.



the Wildlands

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Alamoosook Lake Association Courtesy Boat Inspection (CBI) Program

ALA's CBI Program is off to a great start this 2022 summer season! Our inspectors are doing a great job of monitoring the boat launch, looking for invasive species on incoming and outgoing boats, and providing information to boaters regarding our important program. We have received additional funding this year from the Dept. of Environmental Protection (DEP) which allows us to add more inspection shifts to monitor for the invasive Variable Water Milfoil found in Alamoosook Lake last fall. We continue to do everything we can to address the threat of invasives.

We still need help, if you are willing to serve as a volunteer this summer, please let me know, we will continue our inspections through Labor Day. If you know of others that might be interested, please ask them to contact me as well. Charlie Dodge at cdodg0629@gmail.com or call at 210-863-1105.

Our main goal has always been to defend against invasive aquatic species from entering our wonderful lake, and we will continue to diligently defend against the spread of invasive plants. Thanks to the past efforts our CBI Inspectors the program continues to mature and become more effective. We continue to strive to improve the CBIs by offering more training for inspectors with the help of our supporting agencies and partners.

The first line of defense are the boaters themselves. We always encourage them to perform self-inspections, clean their boats, and keep them dry. Guidance from our inspectors helps to remind boaters of this important task. Please CLEAN, DRAIN & DRY your Watercraft!

Get to Know Our Paid Inspectors:

Brooke Bennett summers in the SW Cove of Alamoosook. She boats to work her shifts 3 days a week. A Brewer High School Junior, Brooke has been enjoying her outdoor CBI work and hopes to return next summer!



Kyle Barry is finishing up his 2nd season as a boat inspector. Soon he'll be leaving to begin a program in Cyber Security at the College of Southern Maryland. He enjoys the flexibility of the job and appreciates his father, also certified, being able to cover a shift when needed. He'll be back on Alamoosook next summer.



Arnold Splan has lived in Maine his entire life. In early adulthood he and his wife moved to Penobscot from Sherman Mills, Aroostook County. After retirement he was trained by Lucy Leaf for the Toddy Pond CBI Program, now at Alamoosook. He likes getting to meet people and keeping busy. When not at the launch, he enjoys fishing and hunting.



On the morning of July 16, from 7 to 7:30, Alamoosook loon counters took their stations around the lake as part of the annual Maine Audubon loon count, which takes place simultaneously around the state. This year's count totaled 10 loons, half of last year's count. The count was followed by an after-count gathering hosted by Ed and Judy Hartman.



2022 Loon Count Gathering: Front Row Peg Sturmfels, Gina Bushong, Michelle Dodge. Back Row: Ralph Sturmfels, Fred Blodgett (coordinator), Ken Miller, Judy & Ed Hartman, Charlie Dodge, John Greenman, Michele Inglis. Not pictured: Katie Greenman (photographer), Dick & Charleyne DiBiase, Christine Kesnig, Mary Girard & Gary Bates, Pete & Barbara Walton, Chip Stubbs, Greg Doucette, Sally Short, Mary Murray.

Membership Meeting Tuesday August 23, 5pm Alamoosook Lakeside Inn

Bring your own Family Picnic, soft drinks if you like. The Association will provide water and the Inn will offer a cash bar. Dessert lovers, bring some to share.

This will be a laid-back time to meet and greet your neighbors on the lake. Your board members will be on hand to answer questions, and you'll be voting on a new officer slate. You must be paid-up to vote. Easy to pay on the website, or send a check to ALA, Box 464, Orland 04472

Orland River Days by Lisa Deweese

Last year's Orland River Days took place on a beautiful sunny Saturday in September. Alamoosook Lake Association was represented by Lisa and Joey Deweese, Lynn Ames, Chip Stubbs and Fred Blodgett. Many visitors stopped by to read about our search for invasive plants in the lake, courtesy boat inspections and our wonderful loons. We were able to educate some Orland folks on our association and our beautiful lake that we call home.

This year, Alamoosook Lake Association plans to step it up with a loon calling contest. Stop by to see if you have the best call. Maybe you will win a prize, or maybe you find your loon mate for life! We'll also have information about our Alamoosook All Clear Team's survey in search of invasive and native milfoils. Please contact Lisa Deweese if you are able to help with setting up, staffing, or packing up the canopy tent and booth: rehablisa1@gmail.com or (207) 951-3925. See you on September 10th!



To buy the Lake Book (\$8)
<https://www.lakes.maine.gov/lakebook/buy>

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You may already be familiar with The Lake Book. A publication that first circulated in the lakes community in the 1980s, The Lake Book was packed with information about lakes and the impacts people have on lake ecology and health. Forty years later, The Lake Book is now in its fourth edition, with a smaller wire-bound format, stunning graphics, colorful photos, and up to date information about lake science, lake wildlife, native plants, best management practices for erosion control, and a list of achievable actions you can take to improve your lake. New pages on climate impacts, invasive species, and algal threats have been added, making this a useful book for all who use, visit, and live on or near Maine's lakes and ponds. The Lake Book would be a great gift for new camp owners, an excellent birthday gift, or new addition to anyone's lakeside library.

The Lake Book is published by Maine Lakes and FB Environmental, with funding provided by the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund and the Margaret E. Burnham Charitable Trust. The Lake Book is a result of contributions from many collaborators across the state, including the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, Lake Stewards of Maine, Lakes Environmental Association, and the 30 Mile River Watershed Association. A map and list of regional and watershed organizations in Maine are included at the end of the book, and Maine Lakes thanks these groups as well as all the editors and contributors for making this edition of The Lake Book

President's letter

In August I'll be stepping off the Board knowing that the Association is in good hands with new leadership in Tad Van Leer as president and Chip Stubbs as vice-president with significant operational support from Mary Jane Cullinan, treasurer and Anne Buck Davis, secretary. Charlie Dodge will continue to coordinate our CBI program. Joe Giard, out-going VP, will continue to chair the Dam Committee and act as liaison with Bucksport Generation, LLC. Other Board members are stepping up to new roles. And hopefully a couple of new directors will be on the Aug. 23 ballot. I will continue to coordinate AACT's efforts with the support of a dedicated team and regularly monitor water quality with John Greenman.

Your Association BOD has accomplished a lot since the Verso Mill closure and the membership voted for 501c3 status and accepted new by-laws. We were awarded grants from Ram Island Conservation Fund to revive both an Invasive Plant Patrol and a CBI program. The ecosystem received further support through HCSWCD 319 grants for soil erosion mitigation projects and we learned from Maine Forest Service's Wildfire Prevention surveys. Every year we are present at the Orland River Day to educate the greater Orland community about the environmental work we are doing and invite folks to join us. We went through 2 years of virtual membership meetings during the height of the COVID pandemic. We keep in communication with the Craig Brook National Fish Hatchery and follow mitigation efforts to reduce levels of phosphorus in their discharge.

In recent years many of our long-time lake stewards and association leaders have passed, leaving their legacy of love for Alamoosook in our hands. We won't forget them and we can't let them down. With our stewardship we honor them and all those who came to these shores before us, including the Wabanaki centuries ago.

Together we can meet the challenges facing our beautiful lake. Together we keep the history, the people, and the stories alive.

Katie Greenman

Highlights from June 14th Membership meeting presentation: Roberta Hill, Director of LSM's Climate Change and Invasive Aquatic Species Program. Accompanying her was Drew Perlmutter, Invasive Species Education and Outreach Project Manager.

For Roberta, building a strong community can protect a lake. She has witnessed how our association is working together to educate members about threats to Alamoosook's ecosystem. By coming together to make decisions, we exhibit true democracy in action.

She asked us to stand up if we had at least one generation of attachment to Alamoosook. By the time she reached 5 generations, the majority had sat down, but a surprising number of members remained standing. What a rich heritage of connection! We need more of this deep sense of community in the world.

Roberta noted that we are facing a number of threats that climate change is exacerbating.

Just as the watersheds either protect or degrade our lakes, the work we do has impacts beyond our shores to surrounding communities.

Roberta shared background on Lake Stewards of Maine, its mission and training of citizen scientists to supplement LSM's and MaineDEP's work.

Of greatest importance to members, Roberta spoke about the alarming news of an invasive milfoil being identified by DNA testing and how the state-wide Response Team grew around this threat. This team has been meeting twice a month—a virtual community to plan outreach, press releases, posters at launches, trainings, revise sector maps*, survey management and a milfoil webinar. The Maine DEP dive team came in May to survey around Birdsacre Island where Charleyne Gilbert had identified the suspicious milfoil last September. Diver Denise Blanchette found only native milfoils; another “curious” one was found to be native as well. [* thanks to Ross and Bunny Westcott, “Uber IPPers”(those able to go to lakes other than their own to survey for invasive aquatic plants)]

Roberta told how earlier in the afternoon she and Drew led members of AACT in focused survey training in north sector A 21 at the Dodge's shore. We learned that plants can grow at depths we can't see with our eyes or scopes, even after a gap in plant growth, up to 13 feet and beyond. We practiced complete survey techniques and using weed weasels brought plants up from depths we've never surveyed before.

Roberta suggested drafting pontoon boat volunteers for “booze cruises” to look for milfoils in deeper water! She stressed that people can get involved at many levels.

We learned that Univ. of Maine researchers will be coming to Alamoosook to take water samples to build a database for e-DNA identification of what organisms are in the lake, including milfoils.

In closing Roberta emphasized that beyond caring, we need to act.

She then introduced Mark Whiting and Catherine Fox who offer support and training in Hancock County.

Mark Whiting, chair of the Board of Hancock County Soil and Water Conservation District (HCSWCD), has had over 20 years of experience surveying lakes with Catherine. Since there is a lack of well-funded lake associations in Hancock County, the District seeks grant money to hire people as roving invasive plant surveyors and courtesy boat inspectors. With HCSWCD's assistance, Silver Lake (Bucksport's water supply) has started up CBI and IPP programs.

Catherine Fox highlighted Mark's capacity and expertise (PhD in Botany) to identify aquatic plants here in Hancock County. He is our go-to person before reaching out to LSM.

Catherine also noted that Hancock County Lakes Association (a loose affiliation) is keeping track of info on over 100 lakes in the county: risk level, boat launches, local launch sites, etc. Of those 100 only 6 have lake associations and 2 “Friends of” groups are forming.

DNA tests confirm:
invasive variable milfoil



Roberta Hill of Lake
Stewards of Maine



AACT & Alamoosook Invasive Milfoil Response Team Update.....Katie Greenman

How fortunate we were to have strong IPP and CBI programs in place when DNA testing of a suspicious milfoil alerted us to the invasive variable water-milfoil. At the time of writing, however, the message is unclear. The physical characteristics of the suspicious milfoil to date are inconsistent with the DNA results. The question of possible hybridization is being explored. Alternative methods of DNA analysis are being pursued. 5 distinct patches of alternate flowered milfoil are marked with white buoys from Loon Island north to the Randall Bridge.

The fast development of the Alamoosook Invasive Milfoil Response Team in February demonstrated the power of collaboration. (See June 14th meeting highlights) Since this is the first time a Hancock County lake has faced possible infestation, the Team process will be invaluable to others. Climate change, shorter winters and the warming of our lake waters will inevitably increase the risk of invasive aquatic species.

On June 14th AACT members joined Roberta Hill and Drew Perlmutter in a literally in-depth survey exercise on the north shore and on July 28th ALA co-hosted with Toddy Pond Association an LSM-led plant paddle that focused on using the Quick key to rule out invasives. Seven AACT members participated among ????

AACTers will be out on the lake throughout August and into September surveying adopted sectors. Charleyne Gilbert has already put in many survey hours around the islands with a team of us including Lucy Leaf (Toddy expert working for HCSWCD) and Bunny Westcott (an expert from Panther Pond) in late June and again in early July with Lucy to identify areas of milfoil colonies—all appearing to be native. Other “Uber IPPers” will be coming to help us survey. We are indebted to Roberta Hill of LSM and Billy Helprin of Somes-Meynal Wildlife Sanctuary for their leadership and support and grateful to Maine DEP’s dive team led by John McPhedran and Denise Blanchette who have our backs if there are colonies of invasive milfoils to be removed.

Chip Stubbs, incoming VP on the Board, Volunteer CBI, and member of the Dam Committee, has been a phenomenal support of our initial plant surveying efforts, providing motor boat assists on numerous occasions, in addition to constructing and installing the Invasive Milfoil signage posts at area boat launches.

New equipment has been added to AACT’s surveying inventory: buoys for marking locations of suspicious plants, more kayak scopes, and weed weasels for deep water plant sampling. Thank you John G. for your help.

Do you want to learn more? Do you want to join the team? Do you want to host a milfoil search “booze cruise”? Please contact Katie 207-735-7552

IPPers surveying recently include Gina Bushong, Caroline Oldenburg, Miriam Tatum. Mark and Kelly Sawyer and Charleyne Gilbert.



ENJOY A FEW PHOTOS OF SUMMER 2022:

