

Fathoms

The Newsletter of The Sebasticook Lake Association

Volume 31
Number 2

*Our association was formed in 1972 to improve and maintain
water quality and the general conditions of Sebasticook Lake*

November
2024

President's Message

"Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Willing is not enough; we must do."

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Autumn Greetings,

The summer went by WAY too fast, as usual, and the superb water quality made it SO hard to believe that the annual draw down was needed; but it WAS, and it CONTINUES TO BE!

The data from the bi-weekly water monitoring team indicated that there should have been an algae bloom and green water in the third week of August, based on the scientific formulas and 40 years of data. So, why was Sebasticook Lake's water NOT green in August, or at least in September, when the Draw Down commenced? Maybe it was the Luck of the Irish. Maybe it was a fluke. Or a miracle. Or magic.

Whatever the reason, the data gathered during the recent Watershed Study indicates that our present Watershed Management Plan is BARELY keeping Sebasticook Lake as clear as it was in the summer of 2024, and the study identified the areas where MORE needs to be done to maintain and more importantly, IMPROVE our situation. The entire report from *EcoInstincts* is available on the Sebasticook Lake Association and Town of Newport websites. I encourage you to look at the content.

On page 7 of this newsletter, there is a brief synopsis along with Sebasticook Lake Association members' concerns generated at Public Forum held on August 15, 2024.

In the meantime, there is an Education Outreach Team preparing short articles informing residents of surrounding communities about the study data, improvement projects, wildlife, recreational opportunities and threats to Sebasticook Lake, and inviting residents of the surrounding towns to participate in programs supporting the lake.

On that note, I bid you 'Farewell 'Til Spring' in this newsletter, and remind YOU to take one more action step to protect the jewel we have in Sebasticook Lake.

Have a Safe and Healthy Winter!!

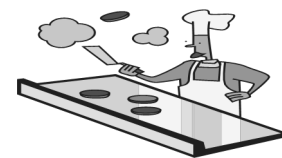
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ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday July 5th at 10 a.m. at the American Legion Hall



Coffee and Donuts Before the Meeting
Barbecue After the Meeting



We are asking for Lake Association members to please help with the annual barbecue by bringing a dessert. Thanks.

Contact New BBQ Chairperson: Heidi Hutchins heidihutchins@yahoo.com



Lake Association Officers


President – Muffy Pare 207-368-5424
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Vice President - Deb Ferrell 368-4769
Secretary- Darcy Parlee 461-2452
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daferrell11@gmail.com
Membership Committee – Allan Fernald 368-5492
Nominating Committee - Dick Stone 368-2272
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“Fathoms” Newsletter Staff

Debbie Ferrell 368-4769
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Rick Perlmutter 249-5533



**Sebasticook
2024 Annual Loon
Count**

**26 Adult Loons
2 Chicks**

**TRANSFER
STATION
HOURS**

**Tuesday thru Friday 8 am to 6 pm
Saturday 8 am to 4 pm
Closed Sunday and Monday**



ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIPS

For those of You
Who Wish To Be Part of
The Sebasticook Lake Association
Yet Do Not Live on the Lake
\$8 Per Year
Includes
“The Fathoms” Newsletter



**Sebasticook Lake
WATERPROOF / FOLDABLE
MARINE CHARTS**

Now available for purchase
At Newport Town Hall

Lake Association E-Mail Data Base

We are continually building an e-mail database of Sebasticook Lake Association members. There will be an e-mail sign-up sheet at this year’s meeting. If you are unable to attend, please send your e-mail address to
PERLMUTTERS@MSN.COM

Of course, e-mail addressed will be used only for Lake Association business and will *never* be given out.

SEBASTICOOK LAKE ASSOCIATION MINUTES

July 6, 2024

The meeting was held at the American Legion Hall in Newport, Maine on Saturday at 10:00 a.m. There were 88 people in attendance.

President's Report - Muffy Pare - Muffy called the meeting to order and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Committee Reports

New members - Charlie Morris of 32 Noah's Landing and Julie Ferrell of 22 Loon Drive. Julie is Debbie Ferrell's daughter.

Secretary's Report - Darcy Parlee - Darcy was not able to attend the meeting this year so Heidi Hutchins took the minutes. Muffy Pare made a motion to accept the 2023 minutes. It was accepted and approved.

Treasurer's Report - Andre Cushing - A copy of the report was handed out to everyone along with a list of four motions. He briefly explained them and mentioned that they would be brought up again during the new business. A motion was made to accept the 2023 treasurer's report and it was approved. Andre mentioned that two Sebasticook Lake trays were given as gifts to donors who gave more than \$2,000 for the fireworks show. He brought one in to show everyone. He also thanked Rick Berry for all of his help.

Membership Committee - Allan Fernald - Allan made the point that many people don't understand what the dues are for. There were 326 paying members in years past and it's down to 289. Members with multiple properties are only paying for one. Dues are only \$10 and we have received dues from 179 members so far this year totaling \$1790. The areas with the least amount of paying members are Maplewood, Durham Bridge Rd., and Camp Benson Rd. The areas with the most paying members are Kitchen Hill Rd. and Grove St.

Water Quality Testing - Allen Whitaker & Donnie Gross - Allen and Donnie spoke about the recent secchi disk readings. Recent readings were at 4.6 meters and current at 3.4 meters. They have to get re-certified every year to participate and are planning a trip to Millinocket to do that. Muffy made a motion for funds to cover the gas expense, lunch, and postage to send in samples. The motion was accepted and approved. A member asked about green stuff floating in their area and another member asked if it's safe to swim in the lake. Donnie showed a sample of green stuff from the east end and Jen Jespersen identified it as filamentous algae which is not harmful. Jen said that there is no cyanobacteria algae bloom going on. She said if you can't see your feet it's not safe to swim. She also said that the lakestewardsofmaine.org website is a good place to go for information. Another member asked about an area off Camp Benson that looks like an oil slick. Jen explained the difference between oil and organic material. It was also reported that there is no milfoil at this time. Donnie made a motion for the SLA to allocate up to \$500 for the analysis and report of the samples brought forth. The motion was accepted and approved.

Newsletter Committee - Rick Perlmutter & Debbie Ferrell - Rick and Debbie talked about the importance of having the correct addresses (summer & winter) for members as well as their correct emails. The Association website has the newsletters on it. Debbie mentioned that the cost to send the newsletters via snail mail is \$1000 annually. They will have the water quality results on the Fall newsletter. Rick mentioned that people liked to read the "how we got here" article and people haven't been contributing to it.

Cookout Committee - Heidi Hutchins - Heidi thanked everyone for attending and asked for a round of applause for all of the volunteers who make the BBQ possible. She invited everyone to the BBQ after the meeting. At the BBQ she drew the two names for the giveaways. Joyce Shippee won the lake basket and Rocky Freeman won the Hamlin's Marine tote that was donated.

Old Business - None to report

New Business

Muffy introduced Dan Higgins from Hamlin's Marine and Scott Huntley from Maine Shore Solutions. Muffy said she has total faith in these businesses and wants to put worries to rest. They are very supportive of SLA. Scott welcomed the community to check out their place and mentioned that their current hours are 8-5 Wednesday - Sunday. The gate is left open and there are security cameras on the property. He spoke about educating on water safety, the importance of marking rocks, partnering with SLA and the Sea Plane Association, and gave a brief history of the company. Dan spoke about the history of the building, what had to be done for updates, and future plans. He talked about boat storage and a plan for a brew pub restaurant.

Members made comments about having no wake signs on the lake in certain areas and the need for markers near Loon Island. The new law for boaters born after 1999 was discussed and a few members thought it should apply to everyone. One member voiced her concerns about too much growth on the lake and finding a balance.

(Minutes continued on next page)

(Minutes from Page 4)

Another member asked about the boat rentals and safety. Scott answered that they ask if the renter needs instruction. They are not checking coolers for alcohol at this time. He mentioned that they forecast for 6 boat rentals. There are currently 26 slips and 4 are used for demo boats. There are 20 slips being rented out to the public. Another member asked about selling fuel at the marina. They are talking with the town and the state about it. It's for convenience to boaters and not a big money maker. They want it to be affordable and properly managed.

Andre Cushing asked everyone to look at the four motions on the handout. They are as follows:

1) *Motion to apply for grants* - A motion was made to apply for grants to study and improve public access as well as develop a plan to address point source pollution. The motion was accepted and approved. There was further discussion about the public meeting scheduled for 8/15/24.

2) *Motion on expending funds to promote SLA's annual meeting and fireworks* - A motion was made for SLA to authorize the board to approve a plan for promoting the annual meeting and community fireworks show. Amount not to exceed \$500. A few members made a motion to give up the fireworks show because it's harmful to the lake and animals on the lake. They would rather have a light show. That motion was tabled for further discussion another time. The motion for the funds to promote the annual meeting and fireworks was accepted and approved.

3) *Motion to approve developing and printing information about the SLA and its work to protect and preserve Sebasticook Lake* - A motion was made to authorize the SLA board of directors for development of flyers and educational materials for the public. They would give a history of the lake and importance of protecting the watershed. Cost not to exceed \$2500 during the coming year. The motion was accepted and approved.

4) *Motion to approve moving SLA funds to a lending institution to get a better interest rate on funds in our accounts and segregate the fireworks account from general funds* - The motion was accepted and approved.

Miscellaneous

After the motions were approved a member asked about the need for the drawdown. Muffy responded that the scientists are recommending to still do it and there is a drawdown meeting scheduled in August.

Another member asked about doing an ice out raffle which opened up discussion about when is the actual ice out. Some areas on the lake don't have ice out as early as the larger part of the lake.

A member asked about increasing the dues amount from \$10 to \$20. Debbie Ferrell mentioned that it should be \$25 and that other lake associations charge more. Andre Cushing brought up the possibility of a lifetime membership. It was decided to table a motion made for an increase so that the board can do research on it.

Guest Speakers - Jen Jespersen of *EcoInstincts* & Matt Scott, a retired state biologist

Jen Jespersen presented an excellent slide show presentation. Data has been collected over the past 2 years and there is a 10 year management plan for the lake. The lake quality has improved over the last 40 years from 1972 to present. The slide show detailed the types of pollution as being legacy pollutants, soil erosion, bad septic systems, runoff from agriculture sites, and runoff from roadways. There are currently 172 road locations on the lake and there is soil erosion at 50% of the sites. There are 371 developed lots with septic systems on the lake and 61 of those do not have permits on file. Only 24% of property owners responded to the septic survey that went out.

Jen recommended pumping septic tanks regularly and possibly replacing systems installed prior to 1995. She is hoping for some funds to help with that. An agricultural survey was done and there are 181 farms in the watershed.

Jen went over the current water quality readings. She said there is less oxygen in the summer and the numbers are double for what they want to see. Looking at 1980 vs. 2023, the phosphorous levels have been reduced. Phytoplankton was down in 2023 which is good. Most of the phosphorous in the lake is located way down in the deep hole. Temperature change and warmer water will likely cause more issues with it. Eighty-two percent of the phosphorous is coming from the watershed and 13% is coming from internal loading. Much of the watershed is undeveloped land with low phosphorous. The developed and agricultural areas are where the levels are higher. Jen spoke about the drawdown and why it's important to continue it. Right now we are in a maintenance mode. There is a summer flush and another one in the fall during the mixing. There is a technical advisor committee overseeing the drawdowns. She also mentioned that an alum treatment would cost millions of dollars and last approximately 3-5 years.

Jen concluded that we still have a lot of work to do on this lake and hopes to see everyone at the meeting on 8/15/24. There will be discussion about the next 10 years and what our goals are for the lake.

Matt Scott gave a great presentation about the history of Sebasticook Lake and the watershed. He mentioned the cleanup of the Eastland Woolen Mill and that it was the most expensive recovery (\$5.5 million) ever. He said that Maine lakes are the crown jewels, and we need to take care of them.

Matt has been extensively involved with the past lake studies and efforts to improve water quality. In 1988, it was decided to continue with the drawdown as it was making a difference. He emphasized that warmer temperatures, more rainfall which means higher water levels, and high winds will continue to impact our waterways. Matt also said that population growth and tourism are having a major effect on our environment. He would like to see a focus on fish management as well.

Next year's meeting will be on *Saturday, July 5th at 10:00 am at the American Legion.*

Motion to adjourn at 12:40 pm

The Lake Book

Everyone should look at the fourth edition of *The Lake Book* which was developed by Maine Lakes and FB Environmental Associates with funding provided by the Margaret Burnham Charitable Trust, Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund. and Curran & Woodard Foundation.

You can either purchase the book for \$8.50 or download the PDF version for free at www.lakes.me/lakebook.

I think you will really enjoy all the information, explanations, and pictures it provides

DID YOU KNOW?

The Newport Cultural Center offers the following at

Newportculturalcenter.com

Free downloadable eBooks and audiobooks through the cloud library. You can access the cloud library at yourcloudlibrary.com

Free downloadable comics and graphic novels through ComicsPlus. For first time users follow this link to set up your account:

maineinfonet.org/comicsplus/digitalmainecomics/

Cooks Corner



Rum Punch From *The Hermitage*,

Nevis, West Indies

From Rick Perlmutter

Some friends of ours celebrated their 50th Anniversary at *The Hermitage*, a quiet resort on the island of Nevis, which is one half of the two-island, West Indies nation of the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis. Besides enjoying how beautiful and not-touristy the island was, they returned home, raving about the fabulous rum punch that had become a part of their daily routine in this tropical paradise. We set about searching the internet for a recipe and discovered quickly just how popular this concoction must be. After weeding through half a dozen (or more) recipes and following that up with a few weeks of fine tuning the proportions, we developed what has become one of our all-time favorite cocktails. It is simple to make and really hits the spot on a pleasant summer day. You folks that will be wintering in Florida will find it the perfect libation for your southern Happy Hours. As for us, we're going to find out just how great this drink can be after a snowy day of skiing at Sunday River.

Makes 2

4-6 oz. Dark Rum

3 oz. Simple Syrup (*must be made with Turbinado sugar, equal parts water and sugar*)

2-1/4 oz. Lemon Juice (*fresh squeezed*)

Shake over ice.

2 dashes to each drink, Angostura Bitters

Grated Nutmeg (fresh) on each drink

The Barbour Cottage By Dick Barbour and The Barbour Family and Clan

In 1906, Charles Barbour bought a large parcel of land on upper Grove Street and built the existing cottage on Seabasticook Lake. I have always thought of the cottage and lake as the hub of an old wooden wagon wheel. The spokes being the five children of our grandfather and grandmother Charles and Olive Barbour. Since then, it has passed on to the Barbour, Titcombe, Taylor and Cary families. Now the “beat goes on” to the next generation.

We all have many cherished memories of the cottage and lake. All the swimming, boating, fishing and gatherings of family and friends over the years that we still continue to have to this day. Memories are plentiful and here are just a few:

- ◆ Waterskiing from our float when the lake was like pea soup and trying not to fall into the water and get slimed. Thank goodness the water is vastly different now.
- ◆ Seeing schools of white perch so plentiful that their fins were exposed crossing the water. We could catch them with a net.
- ◆ Walking or biking down to Tompkin’s store on lower Grove Street to buy a pinecone ice cream with the hope of getting the prized red tip stick which meant a free ice cream.
- ◆ Making our own ice cream at the family gatherings and all the youngsters taking turns cranking the ice cream maker.

Over the years the family has done several renovations to the original cottage. We have replaced the original stone foundation with a more stable one. We have also enlarged our screened porch to better see our panoramic view of the lake, especially the beautiful sunsets on the lake.

Again, the analogy of the old wooden wheel hub and spokes still exists today. The cottage and lake unify the families who live all over the country and who annually return to it for our vacations and work parties to maintain “our little bit of Heaven” on lake Seabasticook. Over the years we have seen the lake itself change many times, from crystal clear to as green as pea soup to clear again, thanks to all the state and local groups for all their efforts to maintain this treasure we call Seabasticook Lake. Kudos especially to the Seabasticook Lake Association.

A Big “Thanks” To All 2024 Fireworks Sponsors!

Ted Cianchette
David Hartford/Diane Garnelis
David Greene
Hamlin's Marine
Darling’s
Christine & William Fowler
Janet & Robert Ellsworth
David Hetterich
Carol Hetterich
Goody Gilman
Deland & Linda Dixon
Coveside Wheel & Ski
Bear's One Stop
Seabasticook Valley FCU
John & Victoria Hammond
Jim & Debra Ricker

Adam Vashon
Rick & Maryanne Berry
Hydroseed
Ronald Irons
Hamlins Sports World
Allen & Teresa Fernald
James & Anne Bullitt
Dick Barbour
Joyce Shippee
Sonia Frey
Rick & Gayle Perlmutter
Alix & Jillian Clark
Margaret Gamboa
Maxine Pare
James Malcolm
Ken Fredette

2024 Water Quality

By Allen Whitaker

The water quality for 2024 was one of the best years that I have seen since I have started doing the testing. Donnie Gross and I tested eight times this year. Secchi disc readings in June were 4.65 meters and stayed in the 3 to 4 meter depth until late July and early August, where we saw 2.9 to 2.4 meters.

We also tested for dissolved oxygen levels and temperature. Dissolved oxygen went from 8.3mg/liters through the surface to 5 or 6 meters, then it drops off typically by 9 meters to .4mg/liters to no oxygen at greater depths.

Water temperature went from a low of 21.2 degrees Celsius to a high of 27 degrees Celsius in mid July.

We are looking to add more testing next year. We are buying a device to get phosphorus readings from different depths. These samples will be sent to the State Lab and will give us important information on how much phosphorus is washing into the lake.

If anyone is interested in helping with lake monitoring, please let us know.

Synopsis from August 15th Public Forum (After Reviewing the Results of the Watershed Study Plan)

VALUES AND THREATS EXERCISE

As a group exercise at the beginning of the meeting, attendees were asked to weigh in on the values they believe are important related to Sebasticook Lake. This was followed by asking them to list the threats that may affect the values listed. Below is a summary of both the values and threats. Numbers next to each topic area reflect the number of people who identified this as their highest ranked value or threat. Clean water and recreation scored highest for values, while agricultural pollution and non-compliance scored highest for threats.

VALUES

Clean Water (14)
Recreation (5)
Wildlife (4)
Sustainability (2)
Scenery (1)
Access (1)
Safety (boating) Education
Peaceful
History
Economic benefit
Upstream Water Bodies

THREATS

Agricultural pollution (11)
Non-compliance (10)
Overuse – increased boating
Milfoil and Invasive plants (3)
Lack of Education (3)
Development (2)
Enforcement (2)
Lawn fertilizer
Septic system

Breakout groups identified actions to take to increase/improve the values and to address and mitigate the threats. The entire report is available on the SLA website. Bottom line: we are holding our own. There are identified areas of deficiencies on state, town and private roads as well as on private properties that increase the risks to our lake. These issues will hopefully be addressed using grant monies and improvement programs that may be available to us.



Sebasticook Lake Association

www.sebasticooklakeassociation.org

Membership Form

Name _____

Address (Summer) _____

Address (Winter) _____

Telephone (Summer / Winter) _____

E-Mail Address _____

Please check if this is an address change

Dues for January 2024—December 2025:

Regular \$10.00 Associate \$8.00

Make Checks Payable To:
Sebasticook Lake Association
c/o Andre Cushing
123 Maplewood Road
Newport, Maine 04953

FALL 2024 ISSUE

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



22 Loon Drive
NEWPORT, ME 04953