



THE ALIC NEWS

Join or Renew Today

Summer 2019

President's Message

by *Bill Messer*

Aside from the carrying out my normal responsibilities, the year of 2018 presented some difficult, internal challenges for the ALIC Board of Directors. As we were operating without a president for a good part of the year, cohesion and agreement on certain key issues was often absent.

After our Annual Meeting last August, I agreed to move up from vice president (which I have held for most of the past 10 years) to president. My major goal was to help bring a level of unification to our board, while encouraging the expression of opposite viewpoints.

I am pleased to report that the following accomplishments helped us to make great progress toward our 2018 goals:

- The *LakeSmart* program has seen a significant increase in participation.
- The *Eyes on the Water* program continues to grow.
- In partnership with the *30 Mile River Watershed Association*, sustain weekend coverage for the *Courtesy Boat Inspection* program.
- Our annual Loon Count and Loon Response programs remain strong, as well as our seasonal loon population, with the birth of new chicks occurring more frequently.
- In spite of several consecutive seasons of low rainfall and higher temperatures, the quality of Androscoggin Lake has continued to improve. Our water testing program has seen major expansion over the past 11 years.
- The summertime level of our lake has been more consistent over the past three seasons, due to the hard work of Ian Barclay and his dam maintenance crew.
- Improved communication with town officials in Leeds.

We have set ambitious goals for the 2019 season:

- Sustain all of the above accomplishments.
- Increase membership.
- Increase membership of businesses benefiting from our special lake asset.
- Review the results of the last Watershed Survey conducted on our lake to identify recommendations which might still need action.

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Loon Counts

2018

adults	31
chicks	1

2017

adults	24
chicks	2

Annual Meeting

Saturday, August 10th

Yacht Club

8:30am refreshments
 9:00am business
 10:00am speaker

Everyone is encouraged to attend. Mark your calendars!

www.androscogginlake.org

President's Message ...

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- Reduce pollution of our lake from failed or outdated septic systems.
- Take advantage of our recent engagement for administrative assistance from the 30 Mile River Watershed Association to help with the above stated goals and projects.

We greatly appreciate the financial contribution that our members have made through the membership dues and beyond. However, ALIC cannot be successful without more "sweat" contribution from it's members. Please, please consider taking a more active role in the management of Androscoggin Lake. This is a unique, ever changing, dynamic, and challenging 'Body of Beautiful Water', which none of us can take for granted!

Contact us at alic@androscogginlake.org to learn more about volunteer opportunities.

Water Quality Legislation

by Jim Breazeale

Imagine looking out across our beautiful lake while eagerly awaiting the arrival of your family or close friends. Then, as the youngsters bound from the car, you have to explain there will be no swimming because e-coli has been found in the water. Or imagine that, as they begin unpacking their fishing gear, you all look across the lake only to notice a sea of green algae. These things have happened to numerous vacation destinations, some very close to Androscoggin, but they will not happen here if each of us does our part to preserve what we often take for granted.

Lakes are very vulnerable to upsets because, unlike flowing rivers and streams, they do not flush themselves quickly and any pollutants begin to accumulate. Androscoggin Lake is doubly vulnerable because in the spring we receive water flooding in from the Androscoggin River as far away as New Hampshire. Throughout the rest of the year, Lake Androscoggin serves as the last in a chain of lakes,

ponds, and streams, all which make deposits into our waters. Because ours is a shallow lake, the possibility of an algal bloom becomes a real threat in rapidly warming summer water.

Last year the Maine State Legislature began efforts to help lake communities address water quality by proposing two pieces of legislation. LD 235 is a bill that increases the cost of annual boat milfoil stickers to help contain and manage the spread of invasive aquatic species. This bill was scheduled for consideration at a committee work session on March 20th.

The second bill pending, LD 216, is intended to protect and improve lake water quality by requiring that shoreline septic systems be inspected by a certified inspector prior to sale of a property. This law has been in place for a number of years along

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Androscoggin Lake Improvement Corporation

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Wayne, ME 04284

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Board of Directors

George Bardaglio
Ian Barclay (*Town of Leeds*)
Tom Barden, *Treasurer*
Aaron Chrostowsky (*Town of Wayne*)
William Cousins
Buddy Cummings

Jeff Degroot (*AYC*)
Ronn Jubinville
Margaret Lane, *Secretary*
Bill Messer, *President*
Tom Wells

Dam Discussion

by Tom Wells

The summer of 2018 proved to be an interesting one, particularly when studying Androscoggin Lake's water levels. Because of the receding shoreline, many property owners blamed it on the dam on the Dead River, and some believed that a person was responsible for controlling the level of the water. However, there is only one "person" to blame: Mother Nature.

The dam on the Dead River was built as a pollution control facility (PCF) in 1936, attempting to prevent the polluted Androscoggin River from backwashing into the lake, particularly in the spring when the river runs high. It proved to be effective until 1999, when an algal bloom created a movement to address the water quality in Androscoggin Lake. It was believed that the phosphorus from the river was contaminating the lake because the pollution control facility was in a state of disrepair.

ALIC played a vital role in negotiating with the paper companies and the Department of Environmental Protection, to contribute funds to help maintain the "dam" to prevent deadly toxins from entering the lake's ecosystem.

Prior to this event, the ALIC confronted the Department of Conservation and paper mills regarding the high dioxin levels. Contrary to public belief, it was discovered that the toxic levels in the

lake fish were as high as those in the river. This fact brought about both discussion and change.

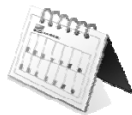
Through negotiation with the Department of Conservation, the ALIC, and the paper companies, it was agreed that all would take part in maintaining the dam to prevent backwash into the lake. This was an attempt to make certain that the polluted waters of the river would have little opportunity to enter our lake.

At times, the "dam" is used to hold water in the Androscoggin watershed during droughts and water shortages. The lake level of 269 was registered when it was built and it appears that this is a healthy height. During droughts, this is impossible to maintain, and this past summer is a perfect example. Beginning in April, rainfall amounts were considerably lower than average, and this accounted for the lower water levels. Global warming doesn't help either.

A dedicated team of volunteers attempts to keep the level as close to 269 feet as possible, in hopes that the lake can sustain its vibrant population. They clear debris from the "dam" and make certain that it is capable of addressing various issues with fluctuating water levels. It is no easy feat, but it is

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Calendar of Events



- June 22rd** **Maine Lakes Conference, University of Maine at Farmington**
Visit www.mainelakessociety.org
- July 20th** **Annual State Loon Count**
Contact Tom Wells for details or to volunteer: alic@androscogginlake.org
- July 27th** **Lake Stewards of Maine Annual Conference**
Visit www.mainevlmp.org
- August 10th** **ALIC Annual Meeting, the Androscoggin Yacht Club, Wayne**
Refreshments and check-in at 8:30am, business meeting at 9:00am, speaker at 10:00am

Visit www.androscogginlake.org for more information regarding summer events

Write a Different Story for Androscoggin Lake

by Lidie Robbins, Executive Director of the 30 Mile River Watershed Association

A Maine summer. Is there anything sweeter? Summers for many Mainers and visitors to our beautiful state are spent taking in the natural beauty and abundance of our beloved local lakes, ponds and rivers. In Maine, we're fortunate to have close to 6,000 lakes and ponds that offer seasonal pleasures such as swimming, boating, fishing, wildlife watching and more. That's where we, the people of Maine and visitors to Maine, need to act and take simple measures to ensure that the health of our lakes and ponds is secured well into the future.



Soil erosion is one of the biggest enemies to our waters. Soil that is picked up by runoff and transported to our waterbodies contains phosphorus, a nutrient that feeds algae. When phosphorus levels are high enough, this leads to algal blooms, which not only spoil recreation but also deplete available oxygen in the water, resulting in decreased populations of aquatic organisms.

East Pond in Smithfield, Maine had suffered from algal blooms for decades. In 2018, East Pond received an in-lake alum treatment to prevent these blooms. At a cost of \$1.1 million raised by the East Pond Association and the 7 Lakes Alliance, this treatment involved spreading 360,000 gallons of an alum mixture into the deepest parts of the lake. The alum falls to the lake bottom where it binds with phosphorus and prevents it from rising up into the water and feeding algae. These efforts bought an estimated 20 years of clear water. Around 2038, residents of East Pond and supporters will likely have to raise another \$1.1 million+ for a second treatment.

The story of East Pond does not have to be the story of Androscoggin Lake. Waterfront residents can address soil erosion issues that occur on their properties, often with simple do-it-yourself solutions. A first step is to request a LakeSmart visit. ALIC and the 30 Mile River Watershed Association have been working together to run the LakeSmart program on Androscoggin for the past two years. This free, voluntary program is designed to evaluate waterfront properties, assess the amount of erosion occurring on the property, and provide clear, low-cost solutions that reduce polluted runoff and protect the lake. A free site visit from trained LakeSmart volunteers will help you understand what is working well and what could be improved. Qualifying properties receive the LakeSmart Award.



If you do have erosion on your property and would like assistance addressing the issues, the 30 Mile River Watershed Association's (30MRWA) Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) is here to help. Since 2010, 30MRWA's YCC has been providing low-cost, lake-friendly landscaping for watershed landowners, thanks in part to the support of ALIC, the towns of Wayne and Leeds, and many other contributors. When erosion is threatening water quality, YCC will install conservation practices to mitigate the problem. These practices include vegetated buffers, rain gardens, infiltration steps (shown here), mulched pathways, dripline trenches, driveway diverters, and more. All work is strictly cooperative with the landowners and provided at a much-reduced cost.



To request a free visit from trained LakeSmart volunteers, contact LakeSmart coordinator Buddy Cummings at lakesmart@androscogginlake.org. To learn more about 30MRWA's YCC program and to request a YCC project, visit www.30mileriver.org.

The New Loon Enemy

by Tom Wells

Recently reported by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, the most common cause of loon deaths has changed. Up until 2010, lead poisoning (from fishing sinkers) was the most prevalent perpetrator.

Based on statistics from the past eight years, that cause of death has changed to blunt trauma. This can be caused by boat strikes or even attacks from fellow loons. It does appear that boat traffic might be the culprit. It is imperative that operators must maintain a safe speed and be particularly aware of loons in the area.

On a sad note, there was a dead loon discovered on Camp Androscoggin's beach and an autopsy was performed by Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. The results were inconclusive, but they did discover a shotgun pellet embedded in its right shoulder, and also a soft tissue mass which is normally caused by infection, perhaps by a hook or a loon fight.

If residents ever discover an injured or deceased loon, they should contact Terry Brooks at loons@androscogginlake.org or the state police. Both will follow up with Maine IF&W.

Water Quality Report

by Bill Messer



The water quality of Androscoggin Lake continues to show gradual improvement in terms of increased water clarity and reduction in phosphorus.

Approximately 30 individual samples were collected and analyzed by the state laboratories for total phosphorus, which showed ppb ratings ranging from the mid-teens to the single digits. For comparison, a number of samples were taken 6 inches below the surface as well as core (composite from top to near bottom). Overall the results were close between the two methods.

Over 400 tests were performed on site, comprised of dissolved oxygen, temperature and secchi (clarity).

I want to thank all of the you, ALIC members and others, for your diligence and support in maintaining the quality of our very precious resource, Androscoggin Lake.

2019 Bass Tournaments on Androscoggin Lake



05/04	club	<i>Androscoggin Bassmasters</i>
05/25	release	<i>Maine Yak Anglers</i>
06/16	open	<i>Maine BASS Nation</i>
09/15	club	<i>Rocky Hill Bass Anglers</i>
09/18	club	<i>Saco Valley Cast Masters</i>
09/21	open	<i>MVB Trail Spring</i>
10/13	club	<i>York County Bassin</i>
10/27	open	<i>Maine BASS Nation</i>

2018 Annual Loon Count: Androscoggin Lake

by Tom Wells

Under cloudy skies and occasional heavy fog, eight brave souls along with their crews boated to their quadrant on Androscoggin Lake to count loons. Despite the fact that there had been limited sightings throughout the summer up to that point, the count was higher than last year. Thirty-one adults and one chick were sighted, compared to twenty-six adults and two chicks in 2017.

According to the Maine Audubon website, across the state numbers soared. The 2018 estimate for chicks is the fifth-highest ever recorded, and the estimate for adults is the second highest. It is believed that much of this is due to counters being more diligent and "scouting" their areas weeks before the actual

loon count. Evidence of this is found on the Audubon website. There has been a steady increase in sightings since 1984.

The loon count volunteers were all pleased with the count this year. The quadrant that produced the most sightings was the cove behind Androscoggin Island crossing over to Stinchfield point (8 adults). The solo chick was sighted in the bay just west of Norris Island.

Thanks to all of the 2018 volunteers. Anyone interested in joining the 2019 loon-counting team should contact Tom Wells at alic@androscogginlake.org.

A New Role for Lawns

by David Van Cott

Our notion of a grass lawn was originally a radical assertion of the British aristocracy in the 17th century to show they no longer needed to cultivate the land. Meanwhile, tenants living on that land endured famines, no vote, emigration, and more. Today, however, NASA reports that here in the US we have converted 63,000 square miles of habitat into grass lawns. The EPA finds that one hour of lawn mowing is the equivalent of driving 12 (or 40 new) cars for one hour and that motorized yard

maintenance equipment accounts for 17% of harmful VOC emissions. Since the Industrial Revolution began, humans have burned enough fossil fuel to add 365 billion metric tons of carbon to the air while deforestation has contributed another 180 billion metric tons or 50%. Next time you are out, recall that forest would normally cover land East of the Mississippi River but 70% of the Eastern

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Legislation ...

(Continued from page 2)

the coast but is now proposed to also apply to inland properties. This is particularly important on Androscoggin because many its camps have older designs. Additionally, because of the high volume of visitors, the systems are not designed to address this.

Some believe that inspections should follow a schedule, and not be solely based on the sale of the property. This is the only way we can ensure that we are not allowing e-coli and high levels of phosphorus to enter the lake. The Committee on Environmental and Natural Resources has directed the departments of Health & Human Resources and Environmental Protection to study the provisions of this bill and report back early next year. The committee will then decide whether to support this at the next legislative session.

The health of our lake is important, and the ALIC is diligently working towards the goal of keeping it clean. It is up to each of us to do our part, before being forced to do so by law, to ensure that our septic systems are properly designed and regularly pumped and otherwise maintained. Interested parties can learn more and monitor the legislative status by searching www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills.

Time to Renew Your Membership



The primary purpose of our lake association is to maintain and improve the quality of the water in Androscoggin Lake. ALIC works hard to safeguard the lake from threats posed by both pollutants and invasive plants. But, the ability of ALIC to continue its good work relies on support from all of its members.

If you have not already done so, please renew your membership in ALIC today!

To renew, use the form enclosed in this newsletter, or click the Join option at www.androscogginlake.org. Send your completed membership form, along with your check, to the following address:

ALIC
PO Box 307
Wayne, ME 04284

Lawns ...

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shore has been logged (versus 15% of the Amazon). Grass is subverting much of the biodiversity of natural forestland. Wildlife, including pollinating bees, cannot find food or shelter in these wide-open spaces of lost habitat that “fragment” or in effect divide and conquer large forests.

This increase in carbon emissions and deforestation threatens the food chain not only on land but also all the way out to sea. One third of the carbon dissolves in water forming carbonic acid that “eats away” at the calcium carbonate exteriors of shellfish (i.e., scallops, oysters, clams, mussels, corals, and most marine calcifiers). While the right whale’s tiny prey of krill and zooplankton recently became too “limited” off the shores of New England, native fish species and lobster cannot live in such rapidly rising water temperatures. Grass lawns increase the amount of unfiltered surface water runoff that also alters water chemistry. Since the magnitude of these changes is worsening each day, we should start making a difference where we can now at our homes.

Consider a new relationship to reconnect with your land. Yards are no longer all about aesthetics. Replacing grassy lawn space with more native trees and plants are some of the best things we can do. Only native flora that evolved together with the local wildlife for millennia can provide the nutrition needed. First, it is important to seek out local conservation groups for available resources, publications, and websites to learn about the best practices that are recommended. Blend in by widening dense layered borders that hide the ground and absorb leaves. An edging tool creates a planned look. Trees can add 15% to your homes value and mitigate weather extremes all year. Times have changed; the exemplary books by Charles, Prince of Wales (i.e., *Elements of Organic Gardening 2007*) explain all this in a down to earth manner... that has grown more urgent over the years.

Dam ...

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imperative that the PCF remains in a healthy state, or the lake will indeed be threatened. Despite the fact that the structure is not a dam, it is important to realize that all parties are concerned about the health of Androscoggin and this is their primary focus. Nothing is more important than that.



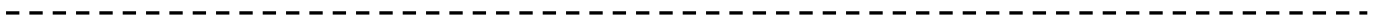
ALIC
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ALIC MEMBERSHIP FORM
Androscoggin Lake Improvement Corporation (ALIC)
www.androscogginlake.org

Membership in the lake association is open to anyone with an interest in preserving and protecting *Androscoggin Lake*.

To renew or to join as a new member, fill out a printed copy of this form and mail it, with your check, to the following address:

ALIC
PO Box 307
Wayne, ME 04284



Name: _____
Phone: _____
E-Mail: _____

(Member e-mail addresses are never shared by ALIC)

- Renew Membership New Member
- I would like to save some trees. By checking this box you will not receive paper copies of ALIC Newsletters. ALIC newsletters can always be found on the web site, www.androscogginlake.org.

Membership Contribution

- \$25 Individual \$45 Family \$75 Loon \$100 Contributor \$150 Benefactor
- \$250 Eagle Other: _____

Healthy Lake Fund Donation

Additional Contribution to the *Healthy Lake Fund*: _____

The <i>Healthy Lake Fund</i> is a reserve fund for special projects outside of the annual operating budget. Consider donating.
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Mailing Address

Street or PO Box: _____
City, State, Zip: _____

Summer Address (if different)

Street or PO Box: _____
City, State, Zip: _____