



# CHINA LAKE ASSOCIATION

Newsletter

Summer 1996

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The China Lake Association has proclaimed 1996 the **YEAR OF THE CAMROAD**. The restoration project has addressed both lakefront and off-lake pollution problems in the last six years. One major area that has not been addressed is run-off related to fire roads. With forty plus access roads around the lake there is significant silt-laden water travelling along the fire roads into the lake.

In 1993, a survey of all of the fire roads was conducted and a scoring system constructed that rated problems on the fire roads. This data was analysed by Brian Dueley of the Kennebec Water District and the worst roads were identified regarding lake pollution related to runoff. Based on the scoring, the worst roads were thought to be Fire Roads numbered 12, 36, 1, 2, 24, 41, and 48. With money and expertise provided by the Water District, solutions to the road problems will be addressed. The funds are limited and based on local road user interest and willingness to contribute matching funds to complete the road repairs.

The Lake Association has available a civil engineer through the Americorps Volunteer Program to do design work free of charge for road associations. The camp road program is a great chance for road associations to get needed work done with free expert advice and possibly matching funds from the Lake Association. For more information including papers on how to organize your road association call David Preston of the China Lake Association at 968-2526.

The Lake Association has been an active organizer of a larger lake group, the China Region Lakes Alliance made up of members of the China Lake, Webber Pond and Three Mile Pond boards of directors. The goal of this group is to provide self-sustaining staff with expertise to guide the component lake associations in a time when state funds have disappeared.

Members of The Association were recently called upon to round up floating islands, help with school based environmental education programs and provide temporary funding to Project Learning Tree. The Lake Association has represented the concerns of members about the spreading of manure close to the lake and has discussed this matter with field owners. We have arranged for a portable toilet at the landing area with the generous assistance of Christy's and The Landing. Additionally, the Lake Association will be paying for the ongoing water quality in both basins of China Lake. We have represented the membership on many important issues the best that our busy schedules will allow. Most of the active board members have demanding careers and young families yet still make time for lake related work.

The final item is a hearty thank you for all of the concerned members who support The China Lake Association with their membership dues, especially those friends that send along more than is required. Your donations are utilized well. We still need a few people willing to work for The Association in a leadership capacity. Please contact me if you can help out.

David E. Landry, President  
China Lake Association

### China Lake Association

President	David Landry
Treasurer	Andre Boutin
Secretary	David Preston

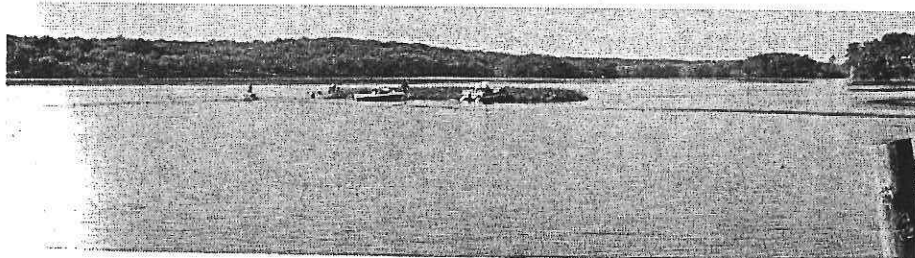
## Floating Islands

China Lake has been host to four floating Islands this past spring and early summer. The Islands are really sections of marsh that have broken off of some of the wetlands around the lake. The reason for this is uncertain but boat wave action and high water may be a factor. These floating islands have been noted in other lakes including Snow Pond in Oakland. While somewhat amusing to watch float past, the islands can create havoc with shore frontage, capsize moored boats and be nearly impossible to move.

In response to multiple complaints members of the lake association went on an island round-up on the first weekend of June. The target was the largest island which measured over 150 feet across. Starting at 6 am, five powerful boats were used to push the supertanker island slowly from the area of the landing to the marsh in Wentworth Cove (near the Church Camp). The push took three hours to go 1.5 miles and used many gallons of gas. The rotation and movement of the island as it moved up the lake was carefully controlled by applying variable power with each of the boats.

The landing zone for the errant island was the marsh pond from which it had strayed. As the target approached, final adjustments were made in angle and speed in an attempt to force the island up the channel it had floated down. At the channel entrance the island hung up on the bottom despite the boats pushing until mud threatened to shut down the engines. The island drew quite a bit of water since it has stumps and tree trunks embedded in the underside. Having moved as far as it would go, the marsh island was further secured with stakes and 2 by 4's up to 12 feet long. However, high water and a strong south wind could dislodge this mobile marsh again next spring.

Two smaller islands were also anchored in place leaving one moderate sized island still to be captured at press time. This is shore frontage that can be purchased at a very reasonable price!



## Water Level Survey Results

With the summer 1995 Newsletter, a water level survey was distributed to all members. Of the 260 surveys mailed, 31 were returned. The results were as follows:

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Question #1 | Do you think the water level is too high in China Lake?                                  |
| Response    | Too high, 39%;      Level OK, 45%;      Too low, 16%                                     |
| Question #2 | Should the Lake Association initiate changes in the current water level management plan? |
| Response    | Yes, 19%;      No, 39%;      Uncertain, 42%  |

At the current time a group led by Al Althen of South China is petitioning the state to review the order setting water levels with the aim of lowering the water level in China Lake. As a result of our survey and because of the lack of hard data to support a move from the current water level plan, the Lake Association will monitor the situation but not actively advocate a change from the current plan. Please, if you have strong views on this, contact David Landry, P.O. Box 194 China, ME or 968-2856.

## Annual Meeting

- \* **Thursday, August 15, 1996 at 7 p.m.**
- \* **China Middle School Library**
- \* **Topics: Progress on lake related projects  
Water Quality**
- \* **Light Refreshments**

## Bass Are Better

While China Lake has a reputation for great brown trout fishing, it is the bass fishing that has attracted large numbers of anglers to the lake in recent years. There will be five bass tournaments on the lake during 1996. The largest tournament will be held on Sunday, July 21st and is sponsored by the Maine Ambassadors and Mid-Maine Marine to benefit The Pine Tree Camp for Children. This tournament attracted 40 teams last year and raised \$200 for charity. Fish in the 5-6 lb. range are common and the public can see the weigh-in at 4 pm at the China Lake Conference Center at the end of Fire Road 5. Entry information can be obtained from Jeff Rafuse at Mid-Maine Marine at 465-2146.

Bass tournaments are regulated by the Inland Fishery Department with a maximum of 5 events taking place on a lake during the year. For lakes with great bass fishing like China Lake, the demand exceeds the slots available. A lottery system is held each spring to award event slots. The Fishery Department also handles complaints that may arise. All of the tournaments are catch and release. The bass boats are equipped with fish holding tanks complete with water circulating pumps. Anglers are penalized for fish that do not survive to be released. Tagging studies indicate that the bass quickly find their way back to the area from which they were caught.

Dave Barnes, a local fishing guide and bass angler of national note recently shared some advice for China Lake residents. In mid-summer the bass are in somewhat deeper water and good fish can be caught around ledges, shoals, and points in the lake. A diving lure like crankbait is worth a try. Dave's favorite color for this lure is chartruse. The weed beds will also be productive and a soft plastic worm rigged with a weedless hook and sliding sinker is good. Dave uses a 6 inch worm in a color called June Bug. Remember to conserve the resource - all serious bass anglers are strictly catch and release.

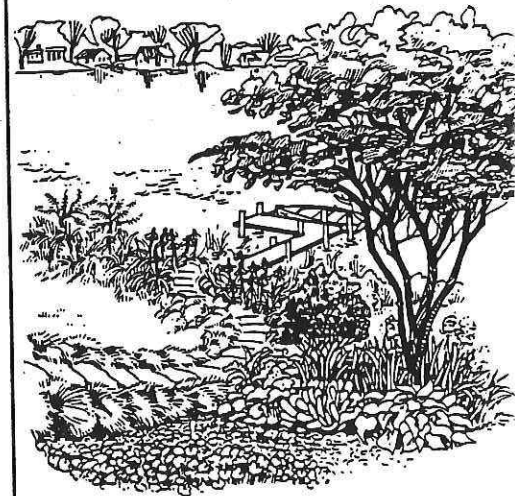
If you are looking for some real advice and an unforgettable day of fishing, Dave is a professional guide and takes out anglers from the first time novice to the expert. He provides all equipment except for lunch. David Barnes can be contacted at his home in Weeks Mills at 445-4627.

## Vegetated Buffer Strips

Many people know of the connection between soil erosion and a "green lake" and want to know what they can do to help. One way is to plant a vegetated buffer strip, which will help control erosion and improve the looks of the property at the same time. A buffer strip is an area, usually shoreline, where plants are allowed to grow naturally or have been planted. These areas can be a wild or as manicured as the landowner wants, and still improve water quality.

Lately, a lot of people have been asking how to get started. The China Region Lakes Alliance now has an informative pamphlet available. It gives guidelines about where buffers are needed, what to plant, and what plants will thrive in different areas.

You can pick up a copy of this helpful pamphlet at the China, Vassalboro or Windsor Town Office, or at the China Region Lakes Alliance office.



## Americorps Member Coordinates Camp Road Program

Andy Reid comes to Kennebec County as a civil engineering graduate from the University of Maine at Orono. He is a member of the AmeriCorps program. The AmeriCorps program is President Clinton's national service program, passed with bipartisan support from Congress, that engages 20,000 Americans of diverse backgrounds in return for an educational award, which may be used to pay for college, job training, or graduate school. The majority of AmeriCorps members are working in partnerships with state, local governments, and non-profit organizations. Andy is employed by the Kennebec County Soil and Water Conservation District through the program. The Conservation District is a non-profit organization established to encourage the proper use and management of natural resources. Andy is the coordinator of the District's Camp Road Program, the goal of which is to protect lake water quality by providing camp owners and associations with technical assistance during the construction, maintenance and improvement of camp roads. According to Andy, poorly designed or maintained camp roads reduce water quality and contribute to excessive growth of algae by channeling soil into lakes.

"Phosphorous laden runoff is one of the most important factors leading to water quality problems in Maine lakes. The District's Camp Road Program is designed to help camp owners protect water quality by reducing the amount of soil entering a lake from roads."

The Camp Road Program provides road assessment services and road management plans outlining road improvements that consider safety, water quality and budget. The Conservation District and Andy Reid are providing assistance to the China Lake Association's *Year of the Camp Road* project. If you have a camp road problem, particularly if it is causing runoff into the lake, there are expertise and funds available to help.

A camp road manual called *Walk for a Rainy Day* can now be obtained at local town offices, through the Lake Association, or by contacting Andy Reid at 622-8250. David Preston is coordinating the camp road project for The China Lake Association. He can be reached at 968-2565.

## China Conservation Corps to Work on Camp Roads

Once again, the people who care most about China Lake are setting an example for other lake dwellers and lake lovers to follow. With the leadership and commitment of the China Lake Association, the "Year of the Camp Road" has progressed in just a few months from a good idea to a well-coordinated watershed improvement program. This summer, with the assistance and cooperation of camp road residents, the Kennebec Water District, the Kennebec Soil and Water Conservation District, our AmeriCorps members and local contractors, we will be performing major and minor repairs on eroding camp roads throughout the watershed. Brian Duelly, at the KWD filtration plant, has been organizing the projects and assisting with designs. He and Dave Landry will be working together to orchestrate this cooperative approach to reduce erosion and sedimentation from this major pollution source. The China Conservation Corps will be available to perform hand labor as needed throughout the summer. They will also begin their summer work by checking and cleaning out culverts on camp roads around the lake. If you see the Conservation Corps at work on your camp road, please stop and talk with these motivated young people. Josh Ferran is their crew leader this year and he will be happy to hand you a copy of Joel Stetson's new brochure and talk with you about camp road maintenance.

## Rebecca Manthey New Staff Member

Rebecca "Reb" Manthey has recently become a full-time staff member of the China Region Lakes Alliance. No stranger to the China Lake Restoration Project, she has been assisting us part-time for the past two years while working for the Kennebec Soil and Water Conservation District. This summer, Reb will be finishing her work on the highway runoff projects which were funded by a \$250,000 Federal Highway Administration and Maine Department of Transportation grant. She will also be putting the finishing touches on two other grant projects on China Lake: the Jones Brook Habitat Restoration Project, which was successfully performed last spring by our friends at Erskine Academy, as well as the Vegetative Demonstration Project, in which several vegetative erosion control techniques are being employed around the lake. Both of these projects were funded through the Maine Department of Environmental Protection under Section 319 of the Federal Clean Lakes Program. Welcome, Reb, and keep up the good work!

## Logo Needed!

We need a logo! The China Region Lakes Alliance has become established as a bona fide non-profit organization and we need a logo to identify us on a letterhead, business cards and newsletters. If you have any ideas or talent to offer, please contact George Lord at the town office. He will assemble all suggestions and designs and bring them to the next CRLA board meeting for discussion and selection. As you consider a logo design, bear in mind that our membership includes the China Lake Association, the Threemile Pond Association, the Kennebec Water District, and the Towns of China, Windsor, and Vassalboro. Also, our main purpose is to improve water quality through integrated watershed management. This is a great way to employ your artistic talents for a good cause and a good way to spend a rainy afternoon on the lake, after, of course, checking your camp road for erosion problems.

## Town Manager's Kids Get Involved

On a recent Saturday morning, China's Town Manager Dan L'Heureux and his children Abby and Jack joined George Lord for some "total immersion" training in lake water quality monitoring. Abby took extensive notes and spent the rest of the weekend writing a report for her eighth grade class. She was also very helpful in recording all of the water quality data which is used by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection for tracking water quality trends on China Lake. Jack was particularly impressed with China's own Bradley Island, which he intends to occupy for a weekend soon. If any of you would like to participate in lake water quality monitoring or a similar exercise, give George a call at 445-5021.

