

China's Pride
Keep it Alive



CHINA LAKE ASSOCIATION

Newsletter

Volume 23, Issue 1

Summer '10

President's Report

China Lake Association Board of Directors

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Summer officially starts when my wife starts swimming in the lake, and that date is now several weeks past. You can never judge the start of summer when kids first get in the lake, because kids have no sense of water temperature. How many of us have seen our children shivering, blue and still swimming? This year it seems the water did warm up early. When I put my docks in around the middle of May, we men did it without the usual wet suits and all commented on how warm the water was. This year's "ice-out" on China Lake as recorded in the *Town Line* was March 19th. Only once since 1874 was there an earlier "ice-out" date. That was March 18th 1981. Ice out dates around the state generally were early this year. Scott Williams, executive director of Maine's Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program (VLMP), believes early ice-out may be implicated in poorer water quality during the ensuing summer. Ice cover protects the lake from oxygen loss through a number of mechanisms. Early ice loss means the stress on lakes begins sooner and algae growth and oxygen consumption have a longer time to progress.

Have you heard the loons around the lake this year? Doesn't it seem more peaceful at night than in past years? If you love the evening quiet, you have State Representative Dave Cotta to thank. Dave has worked tirelessly with our Congressional representatives to get the large trucks off of Route 202. I am really enjoying sitting on my deck in the evening not hearing the air braking and accelerations from dozens of large trucks. Thanks Dave! See Representative Cotta's article about this topic on page 3.

The China Lake Association works arm in arm with the China Region Lakes Alliance (CRLA) on erosion control projects around the lake. This past year, the CRLA was named "Conservation Organization of the Year" by the Maine Association of Conservation Districts. This was quite an honor and appropriate recognition for the incredible amount of work the CRLA has been done over the last decade in mitigating erosion to our lake. This summer, the Youth Conservation Corps is hard at work on erosion control projects on area lakes in an effort to protect water quality. Free consultations are available as well as cost sharing for buffer strip improvement projects and erosion control work on paths, camp roads, and shorefronts.

The all important Courtesy Boat Inspections (CBI) have begun at the two main boat launches on China Lake. The inspections were originally slated for weekends only, but the China Lake Association Directors have approved additional funding to extend the inspections to Friday afternoons as well. The inspections on China Lake boat launches aimed at keeping invasive plants out of the lake will cost over \$6,000 this year. Look for our local youth in their lime green shirts working on our behalf at the boat launches and shorefront. Stop and say thanks!

(continued on p. 3)

Annual Meeting

Thursday, August 12

7:00 p.m.

China Primary School

- Water quality update
- Alewives
- CRLA accomplishments

*Refreshments served

CRLA Conservation Organization of the Year

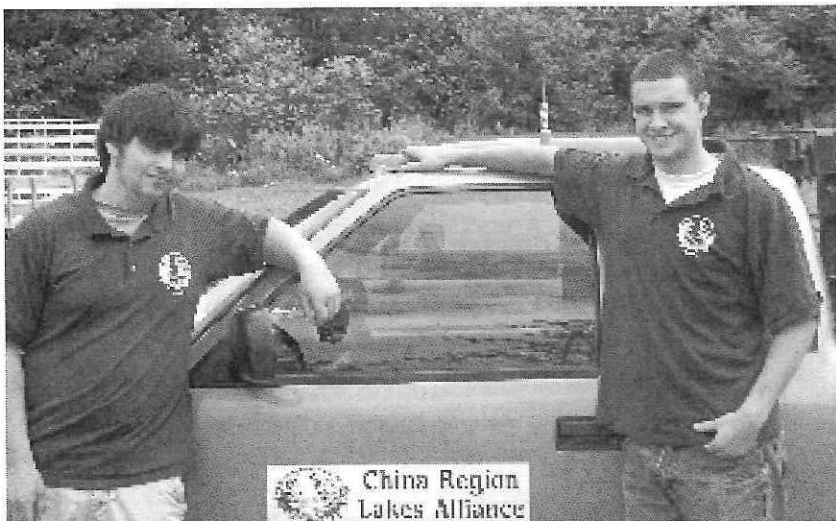
At the annual meeting of the Maine Association of Conservation Districts (MACD), the China Region Lakes Alliance (CRLA) was named *Conservation Organization of the Year* for 2009. Tom Gordon of the MACD commended the CRLA's long track record of significant accomplishments and recent large scale erosion control work in the China Lake watershed. Gordon noted that few volunteer-run conservation organizations have tackled such a wide range of projects. On accepting the MACD award on behalf of the CRLA, President Jim Hart thanked the many partners that have helped the CRLA attain its success. The China Lake Association was in the original group of organizations that formed the CRLA, along with the Three Mile Pond Association and Kennebec Water District. At the urging of then Senator George Mitchell, Three Mile Pond President Dan Dubord spearheaded the first meeting of the CRLA in the fall of 1994, the first of its kind lake alliance in the State. Dan worked tirelessly to get the fledgling organization off the ground and served as its President for 11 years. Thank you, Dan!

Members of the China Lake Association can take pride in the CRLA's impressive list of accomplishments over the past decade. Major accomplishments include supplementing town-contributed funds with over \$1.2 million in outside funds for erosion control work on China Lake, Webber, and Threemile Ponds, completing over 300 erosion control projects in the lakes' watersheds, running a Youth Conservation Corps that has employed over 125 high school students, and inspecting boats at the lakes' boat launches. As a result of the erosion control projects, more than 100 tons of sediment have been prevented from reaching area lakes over the past ten years. Soil runoff is our lakes' primary pollutant, and improving water quality by reducing soil erosion is a chief priority of the CRLA.

Few towns and lake associations have the capacity to offer erosion control consults and complex engineering help on major erosion control projects at little or no cost. Residents on China Lake can receive these and other services such as buffer strip assessment and plantings by contacting the CRLA or China Lake Association. The people of China identify China Lake as a major asset of the town and have consistently acted to protect and improve water quality through annual funding of the CRLA.

This year is again a busy year with camp road, shorefront, and buffer strip projects planned and underway. Boat inspectors are watching China's boat launches for invasive plants. Who would have thought aquatic plants brought in on boat trailers from out of state would threaten Maine lakes? This was not even a concern when the CRLA was founded in 1995. With the vital support from the people of China, the CRLA has been able to respond to both old and recently recognized threats to our lakes. China Lake Association members can take pride in their role in founding the CRLA.

CRLA: lakesalliance@yahoo.com; China Lake: david.landry@yahoo.com



Travis Pitre, left, Director of China's Courtesy Boat Inspection Program and Charlie Boyle, right, Director of the Youth Conservation Corps, 2010

(President's Report cont. from p.1)

The CLA has two shorefront initiatives in progress. First is the *LakeSmart* Awards Program which recognizes outstanding buffer strips around the lake. Look for shorefront signs announcing local winners of this prestigious State award. Next is the ongoing Buffer Strip Improvement Program. This program offers shorefront property owners help in improving the effectiveness of the shorefront buffer strip without interfering with lake views.

I would like to thank all our members who so generously responded to our spring membership mailing. Your contributions keep the important work of this organization moving forward. If you haven't renewed your membership, please do. Consider giving at the \$100 level if you are now a basic member. This is a small price to pay for the work that is done on your behalf. Ask a shorefront neighbor to join. Only one in four shorefront property owners contributes to the Lake Association, yet everyone benefits from our work. Thank you. I'll see you at the annual meeting.

Respectfully,

David Landry
President, CLA

Buffer Strip Improvements

As in past years, the China Lake Association is offering help in improving the buffer strip on shorefront properties. Buffer strip evaluations are available free of charge. Members of the survey team can offer suggestions regarding planting and landscaping to reduce soil runoff into the lake. A matching \$250 credit on trees and shrubs, discounted prices and free labor are all available for buffer strip work. Contact YCC Director Charlie Boyle at lakesalliance@yahoo.com for more information.

Maine's Interstate Weight Limits

In an effort to inform the citizens of Albion, China, Benton and Unity TWP regarding truck weight limits on Maine's Interstate highway system, I wanted to provide an update on this transportation issue which impacts the safety and economic viability of our community.

The Federal Department of Transportation and the Maine Department of Transportation recently heard Maine citizens' concerns dealing with 80,000 pound gross vehicle weight restrictions on the Maine Interstate system. Last December, Senator Susan Collins included a provision in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2010 which created a one-year pilot.

Many residents have noticed a significant reduction of heavy truck traffic, vehicles with a gross weight of over 80 thousand pounds, on the roads throughout our community. This is the direct result of a one year pilot program signed into law on December 16, 2009. The pilot program will allow heavy trucks to use the Interstate system for one year. Then an assessment will be conducted to determine the impact to safety, commerce, wear and tear on the roads and bridges.

I am honored to represent the citizens of Albion, China, Benton and Unity TWP. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact State Representative David Cotta at 207-445-4067 or at cotta@fairpoint.net.

Sincerely,

David Cotta
Maine House Representative

Editors note - If you are pleased with the reduction in tractor trailer traffic on local roads, thank Representative David Cotta and Senator Susan Collins for their efforts and urge that the changes be made permanent.

Boat Inspections Fight Invasives

Twenty-five Erskine Academy students and adults representing the Kennebec Water District, Three Mile Pond, Webber Pond, and China Lake Associations spent time on Saturday June 12th learning about this season's Courtesy Boat Inspection (CBI) Program. The statewide Courtesy Boat Inspection Program is a coordinated effort designed to halt the spread of invasive aquatic plants in the state of Maine. Keeping invasive plants out of the lakes of the China Region Lakes Alliance is an important priority for the organization with boat inspections set to begin July 2 at boat launches on China Lake, Webber and Three Mile Ponds. At this time China Lake and Webber Pond will have weekend inspections. Additional funding from the Three Mile Pond Association will allow an expansion of the program to seven days a week on that lake. At its June board meeting, the China Lake Association Board of Directors approved funding to expand boat inspections to include Friday afternoons.

While no invasive plants have been found in area lakes, there are currently 32 lakes in the state of Maine with confirmed invasive plants, including nearby Damariscotta, Salmon and Messalonskee Lakes. During the 2009 season, boats from all three of these effected lakes were inspected prior to launching at one of the CRLA member lakes' boat ramps. During the 2009 season, nearly 1000 boats were inspected by CRLA boat inspectors. Statewide, 53,864 boats were inspected with invasive plants being found and removed on 29 boats prior to launch. Invasive plants can grow so thick that shorefront property can become unusable for swimming and boating. A number of invasive plants can grow in water up to 25 feet deep, ruining large areas of shallow lakes like China Lake, Webber and Three Mile Ponds for recreational use. While most boaters are courteous and appreciate the effort being put forth to protect China Lake, student surveyors have already encountered boaters refusing to have their boats inspected prior to launch.

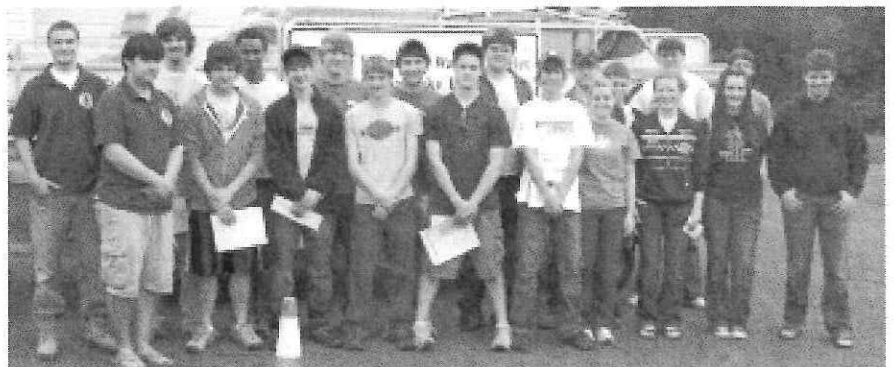
Invasive plants can negatively affect shorefront property values. Arrowhead Lake in Waterboro has sustained a 20% drop in shorefront property value following a serious infestation with milfoil. CRLA member lakes are shallow and would be similarly impacted if invasive plants make their way to this part of Central Maine. The total shorefront property valuation in Vassalboro and China combined is \$160 million with \$1,760,000 in yearly tax revenue to the towns. If a 20% decline in shorefront property values were to occur here, it would result in a loss of \$352,000 in yearly tax revenue to the towns. On China Lake, the assessed shorefront property value is \$110,000,000, certainly an asset worth protecting.

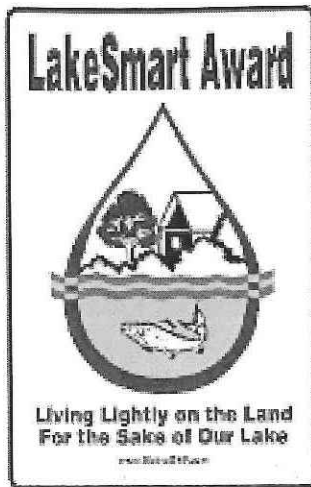
The CBI Program is expensive to run with this year's program estimated to cost the CRLA \$18,000. The cost is paid for out of CRLA funds, money from area lake associations, including the China Lake Association, and with a \$2000 grant from the Maine D.E.P. administered by Lakes Environmental Association out of Bridgeton.

If you would like to learn about the CBI Program on your lake, you can contact one the China Lake Association members, or email the CRLA at lakesalliance@yahoo.com.

Importantly, if you have boating guests coming from out of state where invasive plants are prevalent, please have them inspect and wash their boats before arriving at one of our boat launches. Thanks.

Erskine Students participate in China's Youth Conservation Corps and Courtesy Boat Inspection Program. Left to right, are: Charlie Boyle, Director of the YCC, Travis Pitre, Director of the CBI Program, Kelcy Thompson, Robert Robilliard, Greg O'Connor, Darrin Wood, Justin Marcellino, Nick Kothman, Evert Fowle, Brenden Wood, Dan Boynton, Sean Cabaniss, Ben Johnson, Jenna Marcellino, Paul Reed, Andrea Lees, Dan Mather, Catherine Pelton, Alex Collins, and Shane Bernier.





LakeSmart Award Program

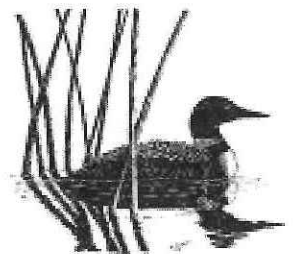
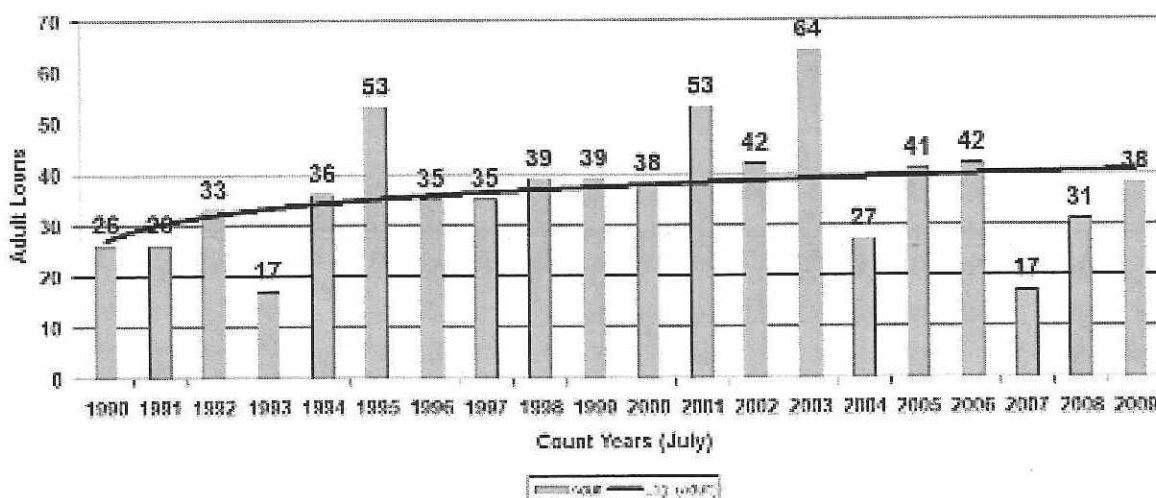
LakeSmart is a program developed by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to reward and recognize lakefront property owners who manage their properties in lake-friendly ways. LakeSmart's goal is to preserve water quality and protect property values by keeping polluted storm water from getting into Maine lakes.

The standards used to evaluate properties were developed by experts in the field of watershed and lake management. Four areas are evaluated on each property:

- 1) driveways and parking areas
- 2) buildings and septic system
- 3) recreation areas and foot paths
- 4) shorefront and beach areas

In 2009, China Lake was accepted into the LakeSmart program for three years. during the first year, seven lakefront property owners received an award and five LakeSmart properties have been identified to date for 2010. **We need your help to identify additional LakeSmart properties.** If you think your property would qualify, please call Marie Michaud at 242-0240 or marieswp@me.acadia.net, Nancy Woodbrey at 872-2614, or Peter Caldwell at 968-2607. Additional information regarding Lakesmart can be found by calling one of the phone numbers above or at www.maine.gov/dep/blwq/doclake/lakesmart/index.htm. Marie, Nancy, and Peter look forward to hearing from you!

China Lake Loon Count



The annual Audubon Loon Count on China Lake on July 17th should be interesting. Many people have reported seeing and hearing more loons on the lake this summer. We expect to see a bigger count this year. This should follow the gradual improvement in the count since the low count in 2007. We will report on the count result at the Annual Meeting.

-Bob OConnor, China Lake Loon Count Coordinator

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We would like to thank you, our members, for your 2010 membership dues. We had an especially high response rate this year. Your contributions go a long way in helping us fulfill our mission of improving the water quality in our lakes and streams. The following members gave at the "Loon" level or greater. Thank you!

Mr. Raymond Ward, Bruce and Kathy Daniels, Raymond and Patricia Ward, James and Donna Boccuzzi, Brian Ayer, Ned and Loel Kline, Elizabeth Davidson, Avery Cottage Trust, Rayner and Joanne Kelsey, Gerald and Claudia Wagner, Donna Jacobsen, David and Janet Preston, Marie and Tom Michaud, Bradford Conant, Edward and Cynthia Rolfe, Richard and Mary Alice Giguere, Barbara and Laurence Dobson, H. L. Hopkinson, Richard H. Jenny, Wistar and Connie Comfort, Michael Klein and Louisa Barnhart, David and Cathy Wood, Harold and Sue Charles, Deborah and Joseph Karter, Daniel and Deborah Hobart, Jim and Jennie Clair, Randy Hix and Alan Vachereau, Johanna Lindsey, Douglas and Marcia Caron, WR Jones, James Pitney and Virginia Davis, Dave Landry and Diane Brandt, Mary and John Benziger

**Special Thanks to Lakeview Lumber and Ray Haskell Ford
for their generous contributions at the Eagle level!**

- Just in case you forgot to renew!

Membership Form - Summer 2010 China Lake Association

☐ Please renew my membership.

☐ I am a new member.

☐ I would like my donation to be anonymous.

Name

Address

City, ST, Zip

Phone email

☐ Annual Family Membership, \$25

☐ Bass, \$50

☐ Trout, \$75

☐ Loon, \$100

☐ Eagle, \$500

☐ other,

*Please make check payable to "China Lake Association" and mail to P.O. Box 6215, China Village, ME 04926.
Thank you for your tax-deductible contribution!*