

OSSIPEE LAKE REPORT

BBA REORGANIZES, FORMS OSSIPEE LAKE ALLIANCE

Broad Bay Alliance celebrated its first anniversary by reorganizing and expanding to become Ossipee Lake Alliance, the first permanent organization dedicated to the preservation and protection of Ossipee Lake, its bays, rivers and surrounding land.

In making the announcement the group also outlined an ambitious set of projects to be implemented this summer in partnership with Green Mountain Conservation Group (GMCG) and several state agencies.

BBA founder and executive director David Smith will head the new organi-



Eric Williams of NHDES joins Blair Folts and David Smith at the announcement of the Ossipee Lake Protection Program, a partnership between Green Mountain Conservation Group and Ossipee Lake Alliance.

zation whose aim is to link property owner associations, children's camps and environmental groups in education, vol-

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Key Dates:

- Saturday, April 26: Training for GMCG watershed water quality monitoring program. Info @ 603-539-1859.
- Sunday, May 25: Annual spring meeting of Berry Bay Association. David Schaarsmith, NHLA, guest speaker. Info @ 914-725-3342.
- Saturday, June 21: NHLA 2003 Lakes Congress. Info @ 603-226-0299.

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DANFORTH POND RESIDENTS SPEAK THEIR MIND IN SURVEY

Danforth Pond property owners want to prevent the spread of milfoil, protect the natural environment and improve the safety of boaters and swimmers. They also think forming a property owners association to address such issues is an idea worth considering.

Those were the findings in a survey conducted by Ossipee Lake Alliance between November and February to determine what the Danforth Pond community is concerned about and how it can work with other parts of the lake system to address those concerns.

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NEW OSSIPEE LAKE ALLIANCE IS FORMED BY BBA GROUP

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unteer activities and advocacy to address quality of recreation, environmental and land use issues on the lake. BBA development director Susan Marks will also transition to the new organization and continue in the same role.

Chief among the Alliance's initial activities will be the launch of a water quality monitoring program in which water will be sampled regularly from the entire lake system of 14 tributaries, the main lake, the three bays and Danforth Pond.

Sampling will be conducted by counselors and campers from Camps Calumet, Robin Hood, Cody, Huckins, Marist and Tohkomeupog, marking the first time that the camps have worked jointly on a major lake environmental project.

The water monitoring program is one of several initiatives the Alliance is launching as part of the "Ossipee Lake Protection Program," a partnership between the Alliance, GMCG and the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES).

In June the partners will also launch LEAP 2003, a lake environment assessment program that will use observational research techniques to quantify and inventory quality of recreation and environmental issues on the lake, including boating conditions, shoreline erosion and rafting. As part



Alliance development director Susan Marks is shown with Andrea Lamoreaux and Jody Connor of the Volunteer Lake Assessment Program at the N.H. Department of Environmental Services.

of LEAP 2003 the Alliance has arranged for NHDES to determine the current physical, chemical and biological condition of the lake system, the first such scientific assessment of Ossipee Lake since 1987.

The Alliance and GMCG will also join forces with the state's Department of Resources and Economic Development in a public education initiative to protect the lake's unique ecological assets, including its globally rare pondshore communities and the pine barrens. The partners will host a public seminar on the pondshore communities at GMCG's Watershed Weekend on July 12th. Other presentations and events are being planned for the summer and fall.

Ossipee Lake Alliance is a New Hampshire corporation based in Freedom and has applied for 501(c)(3) non-profit status. It maintains a website at www.ossipeelake.org that details its activities and posts volunteer opportunities for area residents.



RESULTS OF DANFORTH POND SURVEY ARE PRESENTED

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Since Danforth Pond is one of two locations in the lake system where milfoil has been documented, it was not surprising that the survey respondents were unanimous in calling the weed a critical issue for the lake. According to state officials, the spread of milfoil can be controlled but there is no certain and environmentally safe method of eradicating it entirely. In past years volunteers on the pond have covered the invasive weed with mats and have harvested it by hand as control measures. The respondents were hopeful that something similar would be done this year.

The survey questions on the quality of recreation on Danforth Pond prompted some of the strongest responses and the largest number of written comments. Residents red-flagged safety on the water as a significant issue by citing overcrowded conditions, especially on weekends, making it difficult to water ski, kayak and canoe. Many factors were offered by the respondents for the increase in boat traffic, including the creation of 35 boat slips at Danforth Bay Campground in 1999.

Personal watercraft, generically known as jet skis, and their operators were singled out for particular criticism, with respondents saying that such craft were often operated recklessly and were responsible for damaging the beaver dams on the river to Huckins Pond.

Some residents stated their opinion that the personal watercraft situation is the result of a lack of marine patrol enforcement on the pond, noting frequent violations of the no-wake law in the Narrows by power boats of all types, endangering swimmers and eroding the shoreline. Danforth Pond is connected to Broad Bay by a long, narrow and shallow brook which sets it apart from the larger bodies

of water in the lake system where marine patrol officers are usually in evidence during the summer.

Commenting on the survey, the Alliance's director of development Susan Marks said "the results show that the concerns for the lake by Danforth Pond residents are the same as those expressed from Berry Bay to Spindle Point to Deer Cove. The issues are perceived as being local because that's where the impact is felt, but they are common to all parts of the lake."

The Alliance has encouraged Danforth Pond residents to form a property owners association that would open a line of communication between neighbors and allow them to work with other parts of the lake system to address lake management issues, such as ensuring quality of recreation and protecting the environment. The Alliance plans to form an advisory committee of representatives of property owner associations, camps and environmental groups and it would like Danforth Pond to be represented.

"The survey shows there is interest in forming a group to address issues on the pond," says Marks. "The next step is the hardest one, finding a core group of people willing to commit to getting started. We continue to be willing to help in any way we can."

COURT IS SET TO HEAR MARINA ISSUES

The process of determining the legality of decisions made in 2002 by Freedom's zoning board of adjustment regarding Ossipee Lake Marina will start on Friday, July 18th.

That is the day on which state Superior Court will begin considering five different challenges to the town, two by lake property owners and three by the marina's principal owner. An article on the case will appear in the next newsletter.

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A COMMUNITY OF INTEREST FOR OSSIPEE LAKE

Ossipee Lake is a magnet for vacationers, boaters and wildlife enthusiasts. Home to a growing number of permanent residents and a significant contributor to the economic well-being of three towns.

Those of us who love it worry about its future. Its popularity has placed it under developmental pressure and environmental stress. With more houses and less open space. Over-crowded boating conditions. Legal challenges to land use laws by commercial interests. A lack of protection for its unique ecological assets.

The lake community has many concerned individuals, camps and property owner associations but previous efforts to preserve and protect the lake have been hindered by a lack of communication between these entities.

Our goal is to bring these diverse

groups together to form a lake-wide community of interest that can raise volunteerism to a new level, tap the benefits of state programs and speak with a single public voice on important issues.

The challenges we face are plain. Maintaining water quality and quality of recreation. Preserving the lake's character and environment. Ensuring respect for boating regulations and land use laws.

These are the issues on the minds of the lake community from Berry Bay to Long Sands to The Bluffs, and they are the issues on our agenda. Issues that deserve to be understood, debated publicly and resolved for the benefit of all. As we launch the new Ossipee Lake Alliance, we cordially invite you to step on board with us.

David Smith, Executive Director

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