



OSS�PEE LAKE REPORT

Volume 7, Issue 3 • October – December 2008

KEY DATES:

- Monday, October 13: Winter lake drawdown begins and continues through December.
- Saturday, November 15: New Hampshire Watershed Conference. Grapone Conference Center, Concord. Info @ 603-271-8811.
- Thursday, November 20: Ossipee Watershed Water Quality & Source Water Protection Presentation. Runnels Hall, Chocorua, 6:30 PM. Info @ 603-539-1859.

NATURAL AREA GETS MANAGEMENT PLAN

OSS�PEE — For the first time since it was purchased by the state in 1969, Ossipee Lake Natural Area will have a management plan.

Under the terms of the plan, which is expected to be enacted by the state agency DRED this fall, a portion of the shoreline will be designated for low impact public recreation and education. The remainder of the property will be closed for an indeterminate period of time to allow it to recover from years of damage to its natural and historic resources.

In addition to detailing how the property will be managed, the new plan will establish DRED's oversight of the Natural Area's near-

shore waters, including monitoring water quality, boating safety and nuisance behavior, all of which have been identified by the state as issues needing to be addressed.

Balancing recreation and preservation at the site was one of three options established by a coalition of state agencies in June after holding a number of meetings on the Natural Area's issues during the winter.

In recommending what it called the "preferred plan," DRED officials said it was up to the public whether such a balance can work, noting that success will "require changes in public behavior and compliance."

Continued on page 3



A private moment at the end of a dock, at the end of summer. The lake's winter drawdown will start on October 13, gradually taking the level down more than three feet. *Contributed Photo*

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OSS�PEE LAKE, THE BAYS, THE RIVERS
AND CHANNELS, DANFORTH POND, LOON
LAKE AND ROUND POND

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Susan Marks, Development Director
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LINGERING LEE CASE PASSES 20-YEAR MARK

OSS�PEE — It was 1988 and Ronald Reagan was near the end of his second term as president when Donald Lee began altering the flow of the Lovell River with walls and breakwaters, hoping to create a huge sand bar in front of his house on the big lake.

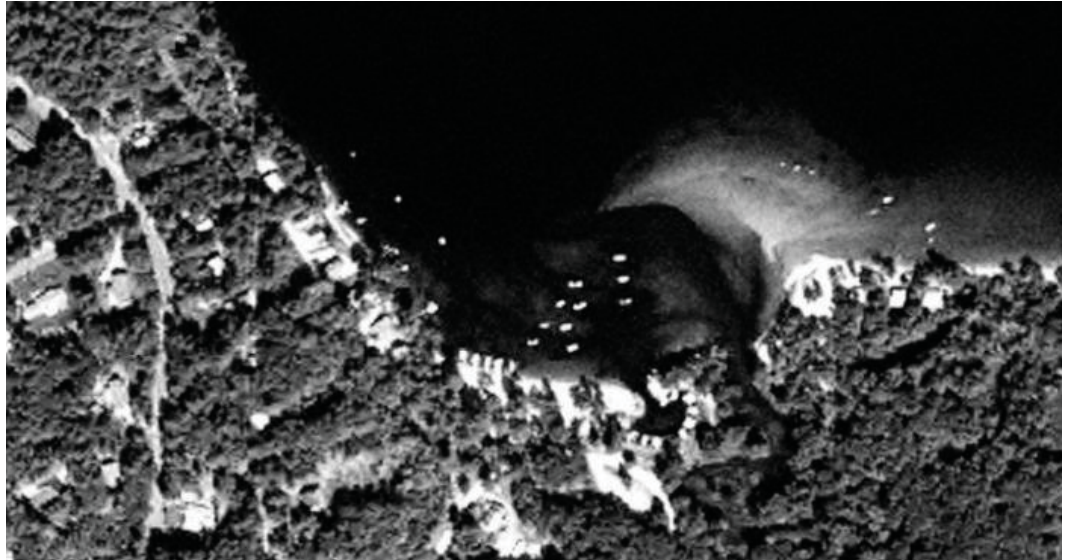
With the 2008 presidential election just weeks away, the results of Lee's environmental meddling - tons of sand and debris clogging the mouth of the Lovell River and extending far into Ossipee Lake - stand as a stark reminder that 20 years have passed and the Lee case remains unresolved, the damage unremediated.

Not that the case is inactive. A legal team was busy this summer pursuing the serial environmental violator - but it wasn't a team from the State Attorney General's office. The legal battle has been waged, and continues to be waged by, the Ossipee Bluffs Association, a property owners group that almost single-handedly has kept Lee's environmental damage from falling off the state's radar screen.

In a six-page motion to Hillsborough District Superior Court in July, the group's attorney asked that Lee be slapped with civil penalties of \$5,000 per month and that a lien be

Continued on page 2

LEE CASE PASSES THE TWO DECADE MARK



Lee's Hook: A space shot shows the huge, distinctly hooked sand bar Donald Lee created by altering the flow of the Lovell River. The boats at the left are moored at the Bluffs boat basin. *Photo: Google Earth*

Continued from page 1

placed on his property to ensure that he complies with a 2006 state-mandated remediation plan that is expected to cost \$850,000.

Responding to the contempt motion, Lee's attorney said he can't comply with the court order because doing so will cause irreparable damage to the property of a neighboring lake-front property owner heretofore unconnected to the long-running case.

Given that the New Hampshire court system is as clogged as the mouth of the Lovell River, the latest claims and counter-claims make it certain that the case will enter its third decade shortly after we elect a new president in November.

Years of Deception

To those who have followed the case, Lee's latest actions come as no surprise. Evidence presented at his 2006 Superior Court trial documented how he flummoxed DES officials for years, ignoring directives to remove the walls, tearing them down before state inspectors arrived and rebuilding them after they left.

Finally hauled into court by the Bluffs Association, Lee admitted his actions and was found guilty of violating state environmental laws. The judge ordered him to "forthwith" produce a plan to remediate the damage and pay for it.

Eight months later, he sent DES a two-page document disputing the facts of the case and proposing a clean-up plan with so few details that the office of the State Attorney General was asked to rule on whether it qualified as an application. The Attorney General said it did not.

In September 2007, the first anniversary of the trial, Bluffs attorney Jed Callen went back to court with a motion for contempt, and this April the judge finally ruled, staying the motion and giving Lee another 60 days to comply.

Instead of allowing him to pick his own remediation plan, however, the judge picked one for him: the "preferred alternative" plan that environmental experts at the trial agreed was the most logical option.

Exhibit 33C

This time Lee responded quickly, producing an application that was detailed and filed on time. According to Bluffs attorney Callen, however, the application had nothing to do with the plan mandated by the judge. Whereas the preferred alternative plan required dredging a 700 ft. by 150 ft. channel and removing 25,000 to 30,000 cubic yards of sediment, Lee's plan proposed dredging 7% of the channel area and removing 1% of the sediment.

By way of explanation, Lee's attorney, Finis Williams, pointed to Exhibit 33C, one of hundreds of remediation maps and documents submitted into evidence at the trial, and a key part of the preferred alternative plan. By following Exhibit 33C, Williams said, his client would have to tear down the home of abutting property owner James Lamm.

Williams charged the Bluffs group with "submitting an improper exhibit," adding that Attorney Callen had taken "totally inconsistent" positions in explaining the meaning of the document. At press time a new motion for contempt filed by the Bluffs was pending in court.

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NATURAL AREA WILL HAVE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Continued from page 1

To help implement and manage the plan, DRED this month will convene a 17-member Working Group of Natural Area stakeholders, including members of the lake’s boating community, state agencies, conservation and lake organizations (including Ossipee Lake Alliance) and local businesses.

While the working group does not have statutory decision-making authority, it will advise the state on public communication and education and will help officials monitor natural resources and water safety.

Public Response

DRED official Don Kent, who is the administrator of the state’s Natural Heritage Bureau, said the agency received a large number of public comments on the plan during the summer.

“One thing you can say is that there was a lot of misinformation out there,” he told the Alliance by phone.

“We think the Working Group will be able to help close that information gap.”

On the lake, many property owners and boaters seemed optimistic about the plan’s prospects.

Persistent DRED critic George Eisner, who is president of the Long Sands Association, called on the public to support the plan in a long letter to the Carroll County Independent that the paper published as a guest editorial instead of in its letters column.

With a different point of view, Bob McDonald, whose property abuts the Natural Area, called DRED “irresponsible” for proposing a management plan that the agency concedes it can’t fund, saying an unfunded plan is no plan at all.

Mixed Compliance

Adding to property owners’ concerns were conflicting reports about whether boaters

complied with the signs the agency posted this summer directing people to stay off the closed portion of the shoreline. The rules for this season were identical to the rules posted by the state last August, closing most of the shore and leaving part of it open.

On the western side of the preserve, a Hodgson Shore family contacted DRED to say boaters had ripped down the state’s signs and thrown them into the woods, adding that boats were pulled up on the shore and people were using

barbeque grills, drinking and smoking pot. DRED forest rangers re-posted the signs and located them closer to the water.

Meanwhile, several Long Sands Road residents reported that people were being dropped off by cars and hiking to the shoreline through private property and the state-owned buffer zone between the Natural Area and the residential community. The zone is officially closed to the public. Within days of the reports, state forest rangers posted large new signs.

Officials of several lake organizations viewed the area by boat just prior to Labor Day and saw no violations, with boaters swimming and sunbathing well offshore along the closed section.

DRED spokesperson Kent said rangers had issued warnings to a number of boaters this summer but did not have a precise number.

He said that “no trespassing” signs have been printed and will be posted after the Working Group holds its first meeting and the management plan becomes official. Boaters who ignore the “no trespassing” signs will be subject to arrest by Marine Patrol officers.

Information about the Working Group meeting will be posted on the Alliance website and via email news at <http://ossipeelake.org/email/>.

Natural Area Working Group Representatives

- Member, Boating Community
- Member, Boating Community
- Member, Boating Community
- DES Lakes Management and Protection Program & Advisory Committee
- New Hampshire Department of Safety, Marine Patrol Division
- DRED Division of Parks and Recreation
- DRED Forest and Lands Forest Protection
- DRED Forest and Lands Natural Heritage
- Green Mountain Conservation Group
- Lakefront Landing Marina & Campground
- Long Sands Association
- New Hampshire Lakes Association
- Ossipee Lake Alliance
- New Hampshire Public Waters Access Advisory Board
- Town of Effingham
- Town of Freedom
- Town of Ossipee

All members of the Working Group have been identified and selected. Meetings will be announced in advance and will be open to the public.

“The Working Group will help monitor the plan and will advise the state on public communication, education, and water safety issues.”

A HISTORY OF CAMP WAKUTA, FREEDOM NH

By George T. Davidson, Jr.

This article, continued from the previous issue, was written in 1987 and is courtesy of the Freedom Historical Society and Rick Davidson.

At the same time that I was locating my camp in Freedom, the First Christian Church in Freedom invited me to come to their church as a lay-minister, and the summer of 1953 was my first at the Freedom church.

That first summer of 1953 at Shawtown Pond, some boys stayed overnight in the little white cabin, but most of the boys came in each day by truck from the Conway area. We were not yet an overnight camp in the fullest sense of the word.

Twenty-two boys were members of the camp in 1953. By the time that we became located on Shawtown Pond, it was decided that we needed a new name, and with a list of Indian names being submitted by Bob Evans, the boys voted to adopt the name of "Camp Wakuta" by an overwhelming margin.

It was during the summer of 1954 that Camp Wakuta became a full-fledged overnight camp, and the day camp members were dropped. William Otis, who was principal of the Center Conway Elementary School was our assistant this year, and Morton Leavitt, John Luke, John Stevens, and Whitney Shackford were the counselors, with Ken Breon and Glenn Saunders as counselors-in-training. Mrs. Margaret Hall of Bartlett, N.H. was the camp cook.

Thirty-four boys were enrolled in Camp Wakuta that first official year of 1954. Many of the boys were holdovers from the Conway Day Camp era, but we also had boys from New York City, Winchester, Mass., Foxboro, Mass., Arlington, Mass., Leominster, Mass., Warrington, Florida, Newton, Mass., So. Portland, Maine, and Keene, N.H.

The summer of 1955 brought additional growth to Camp Wakuta. Many local boys helped with the additional land clearing that was required, as well as constructing more cabin space. Head counselor in 1955 was Mr. Gordon Mann, a Dartmouth graduate and a teacher-coach at Kennett High School. Robyn Dawes, a student at Harvard College at the time, was in charge of the waterfront program, and he developed a very successful and most active Red Cross Swimming Program.

Seventy-three percent of the boys enrolled in the camp in 1955 passed the camp swimming test, and Robyn coached an outstanding swimming team that was undefeated in area camp competition. The names of Bob Abbott, John and Jim Frazier, Ralph Shaw, John McGilvrey,

Paul Richardson, Sut Marshall, Damon O'Neal, Scott Saunders, Dick Russell, and Dave Ride-out stood out as outstanding Wakuta swimmers that year.

Throughout all the summers, the swim program at Wakuta remained strong, and many outstanding swimmers competed successfully over the years.

Baseball was an integral part of the Wakuta program, and it was in the summer of 1955 that the ballfield at Wakuta became a reality, thanks to Mr. Frank Whipple and Morton Leavitt who supplied the bulldozer to do the necessary clearing. Previous to this, Wakuta was a road team, but now in 1955, we had a ballfield of our own.

It was in the summer of 1955 also, under the leadership of Glenn Saunders and John Luke, two boys who eventually matriculated at Bowdoin College, that the Pequakets and Chipewas as camp Indian tribes came into being, and the construction of the tribal areas was begun.

The highly secretive Wakuta Council fire gatherings of the camp became one of the featured parts of the summer camp program. Indian tribal ceremonies were developed, and the boys made their own tribal costumes, highlighted with the awarding of colored feathers as award symbols. A special leadership award, given to Glenn Saunders for the first time in 1955, became a coveted annual award.

Under the leadership of Whit Shackford, many boys enjoyed a camp horseback riding program which was carried on in later years under the supervision of Glenn Saunders and Sut Marshall.

Camp Wakuta was organized as a small camp, and each year the enrollment was limited to about 40 boys and a staff of approximately ten counselors and junior counselors. I wanted to get to know and work with the boys in a close, personal way and this I was able to do because of the camp size.

Interestingly enough, by 1967, the last summer in which the camp operated, the five counselors had all spent a minimum of ten summers each in camp. In the summer of 1959, Nels and Kay Corey joined the camp staff, as Assistant Director and Camp Mother respectively, and they remained an integral part of the camp until it closed as a boys camp in 1967.

Nels was a close college friend of mine at Bowdoin, an outstanding athlete at the college and later as its head coach of football.

Continued on page 6

GEORGE DAVIDSON'S REFLECTIONS ON CAMP WAKUTA, FREEDOM NH

Continued from page 5

Camp Wakuta continued to operate each summer until the summer of 1967. Many of the boys who attended Camp Wakuta in the years between 1951 and 1967 returned each summer and actually grew up with the camp.

Rising costs and the need to expand in order to operate successfully, plus the desire on my part to use my summers for other things, especially travel, prompted me to close the camp in 1967. I was reluctant to do so, and I made this decision with mixed emotions.

It marked the end of nearly 30 summers of work with youth in camp settings, at the Toltecs and at Wakuta. During that span of years, I was privileged to be associated with a large number of boys and men, and many of the friendships which began in camp have lasted a lifetime.

One of the interesting facts about Wakuta over the years was its close connection with Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine. Each year the entire camp visited Bowdoin, and we camped out on the property of Burt and Bibbo Whitman, and each trip was highlighted by a tour of the Bowdoin campus and a swim in the pool. The annual lobster cook-out was also a great feature of the trip.

In addition to the spirited intra-camp competition, there was also an extensive inter-camp athletic program with neighboring camps like Camp Calumet, Camp Robin Hood, Camp Marist, Camp Wonalancet, Camp Pine Knoll, and Camp Tokomeopog, to name a few of the camps.

We climbed many of the mountains in New Hampshire, including annual treks up Mt. Washington and Mt. Chocorua. A big trip to Quebec was most enjoyed. An effort was made to include visits to college campuses so as to inspire boys to want to go on to college, and visits to Dartmouth and West Point were featured, in addition to Bowdoin.

Our trips to the Atlantic Ocean at Higgins Beach were especially enjoyable, with a cook-out at the Cartlands. Every summer, boys and counselors of Protestant faith would climb into the truck each Sunday and attend church services at the First Christian Church in Freedom, while boys of the Catholic faith would attend mass in Center Ossipee.

With the end of the boys camp in 1967, the facilities of the camp were leased out to special groups. For years, the Truth 'N Teens Youth Group would hold retreats here during the weekends of Memorial Day, 4th of July and Labor Day.

The Wilmington, Mass., High School football team began to come to Wakuta in 1969 for the last week in August for the purpose of intensive training for the football season. This Wilmington has continued to do every year with the exception of one summer, and they have been joined in recent years by teams from Kennett HS in Conway, Memorial High in Manchester, Chevrus High of Portland, and Bishop Bradley of Manchester.

In the summer of 1986, Bob Burns, baseball coach at Kennett, and Mike Gile, baseball coach at Winnacunnet High School in Hampton, started a boys baseball camp. It was very successful, and this year, 1987, they plan to expand to two weeks.

A few years ago, my daughter, Raylene Newbury, and my daughter-in-law, Jane Davidson, took over the full camp operation, and they have expanded the groups that are now using the camp; including company picnics, wedding receptions, church outings, family reunions and the like. It has been a source of great pleasure and satisfaction to see so many people, young and old, enjoying the beauty of Wakuta, and we as a family hope it will continue to be used in this manner for generations yet to come.

It is especially appropriate that I close this informal history of Wakuta with a word of sincere thanks to the many individuals who down through the years have contributed their time and efforts to the development of the camp. Without their help, Wakuta might never have become a reality!

CAMP WAKUTA FIRST YEAR - SUMMER, 1951

George T. Davidson, Jr., Director
 Richard French, Jr. Counselor
 John Stevens, Conway
 Glenn Saunders, North Conway
 Scott Saunders, North Conway
 Barry Hill, North Conway
 Kenneth Breon, Conway
 Fred Revaz, Glen
 Sutton Marshall, Conway
 George Nitschelm, North Conway
 Robert Sweeney, North Conway
 Michael Sweeney, North Conway
 Bruce Willey, North Conway
 Richard Hansen, Conway
 Paul Richardson, Conway
 Ed Sisk, Conway
 Allen Sisk, Conway
 John Chandler, North Conway
 Buddy Bunker, North Conway
 Curtis Kennett, Conway
 John Bumstead, North Conway

George Davidson was a teacher, coach, sports broadcaster and pastor. He lived in Freedom and died in 2001.

STATE MAY FUND DANFORTH MILFOIL REMOVAL

FREEDOM — Freedom Selectmen have applied for state funding to implement a program to treat Danforth Pond's milfoil with the aquatic herbicide 2,4-D. If the application is accepted, the state and town will split the estimated \$14,000 cost.

The herbicide treatment is part of a management plan for the pond that was written by DES using data compiled by Ossipee Lake Alliance and the Friends of Danforth Pond property owners association. The plan also includes selective hand-pulling and suction harvesting by professional divers, and the installation of a small number of benthic barriers, which are fiberglass mats that smother the pest by blocking sunlight.

2,4-D is the only approved aquatic chemical that attacks milfoil's root system. DES spokesperson Amy Smagula said it is safe "when used appropriately," and the state has set application and post-application standards that exceed the product's directions for use. State tests show it does not migrate into ground water and is safe for fish and native plants.

Smagula said 2,4-D is recommended because it will knock back the invasive weeds for three to five years, allowing non-chemical methods to be used for ongoing control. She said the hand-pulling of thousands of pounds of weeds by professional divers during the past three years has been successful but has had limited impact.

"There's no way divers can pull 24 acres of weeds all at once," she said, "and the milfoil is spreading faster than it can be eliminated by hand."

Chemicals have been used in the lake before. Diquat was used in Danforth Pond in 2002 and in Leavitt Bay around the same time. Since diquat does not kill milfoil's roots, the weeds returned the following year.

There will be public notice if the plan is funded and moves ahead, and swimming in treated areas will be prohibited for approximately one week. Details will be posted on the Alliance website and through the free email news service at <http://ossipeelake.org/email/>.

PEQUAWKET RAMP'S MANAGING LAKE HOST

OSSIPEE – We caught up with Nick Paquette on the Pequawket Trail boat ramp just before Labor Day as a middle-aged boater eased a slick blue and white runabout with a Connecticut bow number out of the water.

After receiving the boater's permission, Paquette circled the craft from stem to stern armed with a clipboard and the seasoned eye of a detective, looking for invasive weeds that might otherwise head south to infest another lake in another state.

"Good to go," Paquette called out, meaning his courtesy inspection had come up empty this time, which is the preferred outcome.

Paquette is one of a number of Lake Hosts who worked in the Ossipee Lake area this summer. Now in his second year, he's the Managing Lake Host for the ramp, meaning he helps organize and manage the program.

"The best job I've ever had," says the UNH student who is a sophomore this year. "You can't beat being outdoors and lakeside all day."



Paquette and others who work at the lake's ramps know the Lake Host program works.

"This year we had two saves," he says as we sit in the sun waiting for the next boater to enter or leave the lake.

"One boat had milfoil going out and another had water chestnut coming in," he said, referring to the decidedly nasty invasive plant found elsewhere in the state but not in Ossipee Lake.

The unpaved dirt ramp is owned by the Town of Ossipee, and the program is run by the Ossipee Conservation Commission, which gives Paquette top marks for his work.

As does Wayne Killam, who monitors for milfoil at the adjacent paved ramp, part of his Lakefront Landing Marina and Campground business on the channel between Broad Bay and the big lake.

"He's a great kid," Killam says. "Friendly and effective. It's good to have him here."



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INSIDE:

- Natural Area Gets Management Plan
- Lee Case Enters 21st Year
- State May Fund Danforth Milfoil Plan
- More Memories of Wakuta

Preserve. Protect. Educate.

