

Combined Lake Association Meeting
Hosted by Otisfield Conservation Committee
Wednesday, Nov. 9, 2011 -7pm

Present – Pixie Williams, Lee Dassler, Scott Vlaun, Susan Feller: OCC
Jacinthe Sirois: Saturday Pond; Lew Wetzel: Pleasant Lake and Parker Pond;
Jean Hankins, Bob Tracy: Thompson Lake; Nadia Hermos: Casco Conservation Comm.
Dave Hyer: video setup; Rick Micklon: Otisfield Board of Selectman;
Jim Hamper: State Representative

Pixie opened the meeting at 7:10pm. She spoke about the dependency of lake health upon surrounding forest protection, and the impacts climate change might have on the lakes in the future. Pixie handed out lake health awareness “refrigerator” magnets provided by the Pleasant Lake-Parker Pond Assoc. (PL/PPA)

Lee handed out the “Losing Open Space in Southern Maine” foldout and reported on the Western Foothills Land Trust (WFLT) work with property owners interested in conserving their lands for the greater good of preserving ecosystems. Lee said anyone who is interested in land conservation can contact her at WFLT.

Pixie provided the brochures from Hancock Land Co. regarding the public use of Jugtown Plains and gave an overview of the Plains and what Hancock is doing to promote good land stewardship of Jugtown Forest.

Pixie also discussed the work of the OCC and Otisfield Selectmen to develop hiking trails on the town land between Saturday and Moose Ponds.

Lake Reports

Pleasant Lake and Parker Pond - Lew Wetzel presented the recent studies for both bodies of water. Invasive Milfoil has been found at the N.E. corner of Pleasant Lake at the Dolly Brook juncture with the lake at Seeds of Peace Camp. The PLPP Assoc. got approval from the Maine Dept. of Conservation to lay down benthic mats over the milfoil that will stay in place until next spring. Phosphorus levels in Pleasant Lake were 5 pp billion, a healthy reading. Phosphorus in Parker Pond was 9 pp billion, too high. Lily Brook serves as a sieve between Pleasant Lake and Parker Pond, helping to reduce contaminants. A new liner was placed inside the culvert between the Lily Brook and Pleasant Lake, reducing the flow of water. Beaver consequently have built a dam to raise the water level, and the dam will have to be removed.

Rick spoke about the work by Otisfield at the town beach on Pleasant Lake improving the entrance road and to mitigate erosion, and the improvement to the boat launch and the new relocated dock by the boat launch.

Thompson Lake – Jean Hankins reported that the Section 319 erosion control grant funds received by the Thompson Lake Environmental Association (TLEA) served to complete all major projects for erosion controls on town and secondary private roads. TLEA received \$7,000 in grant funds. The Youth Conservation Corp completed 25 projects over the summer. Courtesy boat inspections were conducted at 3 locations around the lake. Anti invasive Milfoil work continues, focusing on removing/controlling milfoil in the smaller coves, using a combination of suction boats and benthic mats. An underwater “scooter” has been used to aid divers in locating milfoil on the lake bottom.

Lee mentioned the land owner driven Pugleyville Conservation Corridor that WFLT is working on, and the 1,500 ft. of shoreline on Thompson Lake that is part of the proposed conservation land is the first of its kind on the lake.

Saturday Pond – Jacinthe Sirois reported that the Saturday Pond Assoc. has a website and provides a newsletter to keep the public informed of their work to protect the pond. They have written a safe boating guide and have information boxes at the access points at Sam’s Landing and Pond View. The dam is holding up, but the measuring gauge needs to be replaced. No invasive plants have been observed. However,

phosphorus levels have been increasing each year, reading having gone from 7pp billion to 10 pp billion to 12 pp billion. After Hurricane Irene struck in August, large mats of aquatic vegetation were observed floating on the surface of one of the northern shallow bays of the pond. Pixie explained that the wind and wave action disturbed the shallow areas of the pond bottom, turning over the vegetation, and releasing phosphorus from the sediment.

The three pond associations are planning a joint meeting in the near future, with Rick Micklon serving as moderator.

Moose Pond – Scott Vlaun reported that there is no official association at this time for the pond. Pixie said there is a new Moose Pond Assoc. which is just getting organized by property owners on the west shore, and Scott has had some contact with them. Scott presented his observations of increased development pressure, new docks and more shore access points. No invasive plants have been seen. Since the pond is shallow, and has a limit of 5-10 h.p. motors, there are rarely motorized watercraft in use, mostly canoes and kayaks. He has observed some float planes landing and taking off. The beaver dam that creates the pond remains in good shape, and so far the trees that are their food sources remain close enough to the pond for the beaver to remain there.

Pixie mentioned that the beaver pond at Coon Swamp remains undisturbed due to little intrusion by people, and continues to be an important habitat for wildlife.

Pixie reported on the findings from the State Lakes Summit held in August on the locations of invasive plants found around the state. Pixie plans to teach a free course in identifying native aquatic plants in Otisfield's ponds/lake next summer. Participants will need to provide their own kayak or canoe, and take the Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program's (VLMP) course on invasive aquatic plants prior to signing up for her course. The VLMP website lists their courses, and is located in Auburn.

The second hour of the meeting was spent watching the video presentation of "Maine's Climate Future", with Dr. George Jacobson, in conjunction with the University of Maine. The program provided an assessment of the changes in climate that will affect the people, geography, flora and fauna of the state in the coming years.

Susan Feller, OCC Secretary