

# Shoreline Soundings

McGRATH POND & SALMON LAKE ASSOCIATION

SPRING 2008

## Dear Neighbors,

Spring is finally in the air – **When will ice out occur?** While the winter brought challenges to home owners and road crews, it also provided opportunities to enjoy the outside activities for which Maine Winters are famous. McGrath Pond and Salmon Lake again provided a focus for recreational activities in the Oakland and Belgrade areas. With plenty of ice, and a reputation for good fishing, the lakes supported weekly outings by both residents and non-residents. As part of the Maine trail system, snowmobiles traversed our lakes to connect with trails to our neighbor's lakes, towns and throughout the state and Canada. For those preferring more exercise in their travel, the lakes afforded us a chance to put on skates, skis, snowshoes and hiking sticks. It was great to be able to get out and enjoy our lake and share this with our neighbors.

As we all enjoyed the recreational opportunities that winter brings, the association board was working diligently to represent the membership in maintaining our lake quality. In early April a budget was approved which again directs most of our funds toward milfoil inspections, conservation measures and education. Because we rely mostly on members' dues, I encourage each of you to support the association, both financially and in person. This year, the board members will each volunteer to provide a day of boat inspecting. This will help us balance our budget, while giving us a great chance to meet our boaters. The board is asking interested members to volunteer for a day or half-day of inspecting, (Contact Don Borman at [tborman@roadrunner.com](mailto:tborman@roadrunner.com)).

Working with the BRCA, our Board has unanimously approved our participation in the Belgrade Lakes Aquafest, scheduled for Labor Day Weekend. This will be fun-filled family program that will be a great celebration of our lakes. While having lots of fun, we hope to raise funds to help support the BRCA and our individual associations. As with all great events, many volunteers make for success. If you can lend a hand, contact Rick Swanson at 465-8345.

In closing, I hope that each of you will stay or become involved in our common cause. As a member, a volunteer, and a good lake steward, you can be part of the effort to keep our lakes pristine for ourselves and future generations.

*Respectfully submitted,*

Don Borman  
President - MPSLA



*James Geidel caught this brook trout on March 16th while ice fishing on McGrath Pond*



*Nona Purnell passes Camp Tracy on a Sunday "Spring" afternoon walk*

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Save the Date  
August 7 • 6:30 pm  
**ANNUAL MEETING**  
Center for All Seasons  
Belgrade

## Navigating the Narrows

The only public boating access to McGrath Pond is by way of the public boat launch located on Salmon Lake. Back in 1998 the McGrath Pond/Salmon Lake Association submitted a request to the Maine Department of Conservation for Navigational Aid placement in the narrows between the lakes. The Department denied our request, stating what the Boating Facilities Division did not have the resources to support adding more lakes to their work load. At that point MPSLA entered into an agreement and received a permit to assume the responsibility of the placement, inspection and maintenance of the navigational aids within the lakes. A bi-weekly inspection and maintenance record is maintained and submitted to the State at the end of each year. The association asks that if anyone should find a navigational aid off its anchored station or damaged; contact the association's appointed buoy tender, Doug McCafferty at 465-3983 .

### **Not all hazards are marked, boater should always use caution**

State waterway markers shall not normally be placed within the Water Safety Zone (200 feet or less from any shoreline), except when marking channels or hazards to navigation in critical high traffic areas. Markers normally mark hazards covered by less than four (4) feet of water during the boating season.

*Navigational Aids are to be placed in the narrows of McGrath Pond/Salmon Lake on or before May 15<sup>th</sup> and removed from the lake on or after October 15<sup>th</sup> of each year. Please note that, the lake levels are normally dropped during September, so when navigating the narrows during that time of year. It is a good idea, to tilt the motor on your watercraft when traversing the channel.*

### **Navigational Aids**

There are 3 distinct colored navigational aids used within McGrath Pond and Salmon Lake.

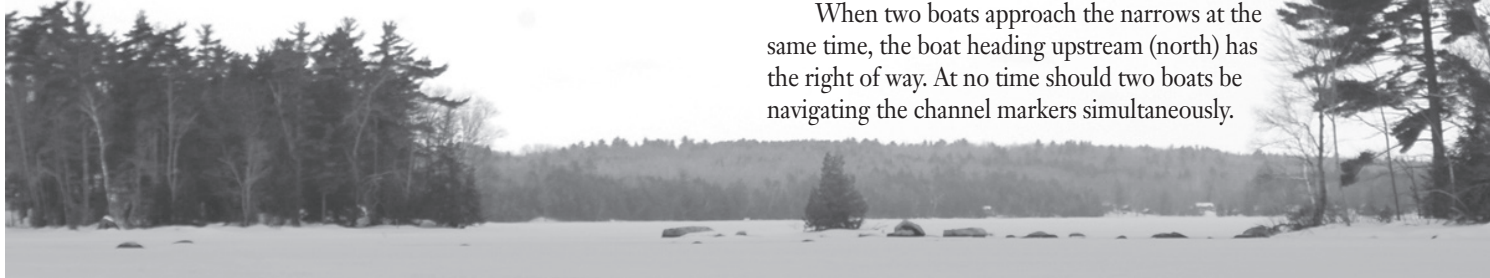
1. **White Colored Marker** with orange marking and black lettering. This is a **Water Safety Zone Marker**. You will find one of these markers 200 feet off shore of the public boat landing on Salmon Lake. This Marker is in place to let boaters know that they need to slow down coming into and exiting the boat landing area. Waves can cause unsafe boat loading and launching activities. You will also find **Water Safety Zone Markers** at entrance and exit to the channel markers in the narrows between the lakes.
2. **Solid Green Colored Marker**. This is a **Channel Marker** indicating the side of the channel to be kept to the left (port side) of the watercraft when proceeding upstream.
3. **Solid Red Colored Marker**. This is a **Channel Marker** indicating the side of the channel to be kept to the right (starboard side) of the watercraft when proceeding upstream.

### **Navigating the Channel at the Narrows**

When entering the area of the narrows, always look for and navigate your watercraft towards the **White Colored- Water Safety Zone Marker** at the entrance to the channel. Reduce watercraft to headway speed. Tilt the motor on the watercraft and proceed to and pass closely by either side of the white marker, then go directly between the first set of **Red and Green Colored Markers**. While traversing the remainder of the channel, all-red and green markers shall be kept on the same side of the watercraft as indicated by placement of markers at the entrance of the channel. After passing the final red and green markers, proceed to and pass closely by the White Colored-Water safety Zone marker before exiting to the open lake.

Please note that, it is very important to maintain a headway speed when traversing the channel. The waves from excessive speeds could move the navigational aids off their stations, causing serious safety issues for all boaters on the lake.

When two boats approach the narrows at the same time, the boat heading upstream (north) has the right of way. At no time should two boats be navigating the channel markers simultaneously.



**ANNUAL MEETING • AUGUST 7 • 6:30 PM**  
**CENTER FOR ALL SEASONS • BELGRADE**

## Boating Safety

*Good boating safety starts with knowledge of Maine's boating laws and regulations.*

Your Lake Association reminds you that, prudent watercraft operation creates a safe environment for all of the people on the lakes. The operator of a watercraft must consider the effects of the wash or wave created by their craft. Imprudent boat operation effects shoreline erosion, waterfront piers, floats and other property; as well as the birds and animals nesting along the shoreline. Be a good neighbor; obey the boating laws & regulations.

### Maine Boating Laws Make Good Sense

#### Speed Regulations

**'Water Safety Zone'** watercrafts may not be operated at a speed greater than **"Headway Speed"** (the minimum speed necessary to maintain steerage and control of the watercraft while the craft is moving – **"No Wake"** if possible) while within 200 feet of the mainland or an island.

**Exception:** A watercraft may enter or leave a water safety zone, as directly as possible, to pick up or drop off water skiers, surfboarders or persons on similar devices. In doing so, it is the watercraft operator's responsibility not to endanger any person or property.

#### Boating and Alcohol

Any person who operates or attempts to operate any watercraft while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs or a combination of both could be found guilty of a criminal violation. A Law Enforcement Officer, who has probable cause to believe that a person may be operating or attempting to operate a watercraft while intoxicated, will ask that person to submit to a blood-alcohol test. A level of 0.08% or more by weight of alcohol in that person's blood is considered a criminal violation.

#### Imprudent or Reckless Operation of a Watercraft

A person is guilty of **"Imprudent Operation"** of a watercraft if the person, while operating a watercraft engages in prolong circling, informal racing, wake jumping or other types of continued and repeated activities that harass another person. **"Reckless Operation"** means that it is illegal to operate a watercraft in such a way as to recklessly create a substantial risk of serious bodily injury.

#### Molesting of Birds and Animals

It is illegal to operate a watercraft in such away as to molest wild birds or animals so as to pursue, molest, drive or head any wild birds or wild animals.

#### Personal Flotation Device (PFD)

Before getting underway it is the responsibility of the operator of the watercraft to verify that there are approved PFD's (**Life Jackets**) for each occupant of the watercraft. It is mandatory that children 10 years of age and under must wear an approved PFD while on board the watercraft.

**Please note:** Boat cushions are not an approved PFD.

## Belgrade Watershed Aquafest

#### What is Aquafest?

A community-wide family event to raise funds for protecting water quality and improving public enjoyment of the seven Belgrade lakes for the benefit of all who live, work, visit, and play in the thirteen towns of the Belgrade Watershed. Aquafest is sponsored by the lake associations for East, Great, Long, McGrath, Messalonskee, North and Salmon lakes, working together as the Lake Trust of the Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance (BRCA).

#### SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday August 29th, 5-7 pm		8:45-9:00 am	5K Award ceremony at Camp Runoia	12:00 pm	Family chicken barbecue and swim at CFAS picnic area
Cocktail Party for the lakes at the Village Inn, Belgrade Lakes Village*			Overall men and women, 1, 2, 3 men's and women's in six age categories		First come, first served.* Live music!
		8:30-10:45 am	Fun Run Registration	2:00-3:00 pm	Watershed activities
			CFAS Route 27, Belgrade		Kayak clinic at CFAS swim area, Kayak Race; TBA*, Slalom Race; TBA, GPS clinic at CFAS picnic area
Saturday August 30th, All Day		9:00-11:00 am	Kids Corner Challenge at CFAS	<b>Village activities for families and friends</b>	
Center for All Seasons (CFAS) and Belgrade Lakes Village			Free, fun activities: 7-lake event course, T-shirt painting, games, GPS clinic, and prizes too!	8:00 - 2:00 pm	In the Village
6:30-7:45 am	5K Registration at Camp Runoia	11:00-11:45 am	Fun Run/Walk/Crawl/Creep (dogs too!)		Boat and float plane rides*, farmer's market, vendors and art mart.
8:00-8:40 am	5K Race for the Lakes		From CFAS, around the Village flower triangle and back*		
	Timed road race on a safe, rolling course. Out and back from Camp Runoia with food, great prizes, free raffle!*	11:45 am	Award ceremony for Kids Corner, Fun Run and Fishing Derby at CFAS	7:00 pm	Union Church coffee house*
			Great Prizes		Music with open mike

\*A fee will be charged for this activity



# Water Quality Part 2: Phosphorous

By Ron Purnell

Ron was trained in the proper phosphorous measurement techniques earlier this year by our friends at the Brackett Environmental Center, as part of the Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program. If you are interested in lake ecology of water quality, contact them at [vlmp@mainevlmp.org](mailto:vlmp@mainevlmp.org), or (207)-783-7733. The Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Volunteer Lake Monitoring program website is [www.mainevolunteerlakemonitors.org](http://www.mainevolunteerlakemonitors.org) where you can find a wealth of information on the site. The Brackett Center includes a library, a conference room and classrooms, offices for staff overlooking Lake Auburn.

Phosphorous is a major nutrient needed for plant growth. Aqueous phosphates are a major contributor to this measurement. They are not toxic to people or animals unless they are present in very high levels in which case digestive problems could occur. Phosphorous creates the same problem as nitrogen; too much can cause excessive growth and decomposition of plant material. Phosphorous is present in most lakes as people contribute to it with runoff, lawn fertilizers, and septic tanks.

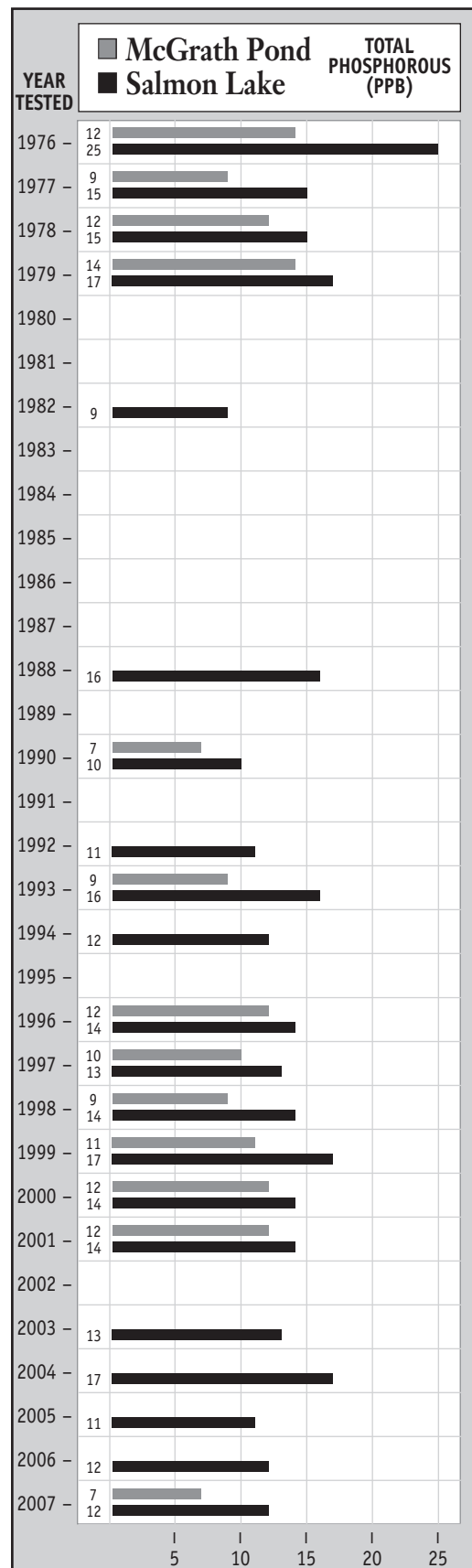
Phosphorus measurements were taken from McGrath Pond in 1976-79, 1990, 1993, and 1996-2003. Phosphorus measurements were taken from Salmon Lake in 1976-79, 1982, 1988, 1990, 1992-1994 1996-2001 and 2003-2005. Measurements on both Salmon and McGrath were taken at the end of 2007.

Phosphorous is best described as junk food for lake plant life. Phosphorous typically sinks to the bottom of the lake and is trapped in the sediments. In years with heavy runoff, this phosphorous levels tend to be higher as phosphorous is released from the stirred up sediment. The method for testing is to collect a sample from a few inches below the water surface at the designated monitoring station on both lakes. Samples are analyzed for total phosphorus (TP) measured in Parts Per Billion (ppb), which includes all of the organic and inorganic forms of the phosphorous present in the water.

Tracking changes in phosphorous over time can provide insight into the dynamics of a lake's water quality. As you can see from the graphs for both lakes, we have large gaps in measurements. For obvious reasons, the more years measured, and the more readings within a year, the more reliable and informative the data will be. The maximum number of readings includes a sample from every other week, throughout the summer. More typically they are monthly readings. Salmon and McGrath have never had more than one reading in a year. The biggest barrier to more frequent measurements involves the cost. Phosphorous needs to be measured in a lab. The fee for 2007 was \$24. A single measurement (for both lakes) is \$48. A series of 4 measurements (monthly) for both lakes would be \$192. The government does not fund the measurements. Volunteers use their own boats, gas, time and effort. The fees associated with last year's measurements were generously donated by local residents who were interested in seeing the results.

## Here are some ideas as to what you can do to help.

- 1 Only use biodegradable cleaning products check for phosphorus in the products you use.
- 2 Do not use chemical products (fertilizers, insecticides, herbicides) on your property.
- 3 Make sure your septic system is working properly.
- 4 Regenerate your shoreline.
- 5 Educate yourself.
- 6 Get involved and join **your** lake association.



## Support of Conservation Corps Protects Lakes

The MPSLA budget annually provides support to the Conservation Corps. Not only does the “corps” provide a valuable service to our lakes, but it employs high school and college kids who provide the physical power and the mental ability to make things happen. This program helps educate the next generation of lake stewards.



*Hauling rocks and placing rip rap are some of the “fun” jobs that await our youth each summer*



### Conservation Corps Preparing for 2008

The BRCA Conservation Corps is busy getting ready for its 13<sup>th</sup> season of operation, and is looking for work sites for this summer. Although it is best known for installing riprap, the rock armoring you often see on shorelines, the Conservation Corps can help with almost any runoff or erosion problem at your camp. The Corps can also help plant buffer gardens on your property. If you have a lawn that goes down to the lake, planting a buffer (or enhancing an existing buffer) is one of the simplest and most effective ways you can help protect the water quality of your lake. A good buffer helps to absorb and filter surface runoff entering the lake, and the roots of the plants will help stabilize the soil along the shore.

If you have a project you would like the Conservation Corps to help with, or if you would like advice on how to make your property more lake-friendly, contact Jason Bulay at the BRCA office: 495-6039 or via email at [brcacc@gwi.net](mailto:brcacc@gwi.net). For all Conservation Corps projects, the homeowner pays only the cost of the materials used in the project; the labor is provided free of charge.



*The map depicts the sites that have benefitted from the work of the Conservation Corp.*

## MPSLA Membership Drive: Protecting Our Lakes – Your Future

### Why should you get involved?

Clean, safe lakes with good water quality are not guaranteed. Maine is fortunate to have an abundance of natural bodies of water, yet milfoil, algae blooms, and pollution threaten the lakes and the wildlife that lakes support. Our economic investment and enjoyment of our natural treasure depends on our combined efforts to invest in our lakes, our future.

### What can you do?

- Be LAKESMART: Follow lake friendly practices
- Volunteer to inspect boats for invasive plants
- Be a good lake steward
- Join the McGrath Pond/Salmon Lake Association (MPSLA)
- Participate in Association activities
- Attend educational events



John Loomis '07, Treasurer  
3 Brigham St.  
Waterville, ME 04901

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## Membership Committee

That time of the year is finally upon us. As the ice thaws and our docks get put in, we hope you will take the time to consider the efforts of the MPSLA and how we help sustain the quality and pristine nature of these lakes. We again need your help and financial support to continue our efforts.

We thank those members who continue to join us with their support and membership dues.

To prospective new members, we hope that you will realize the importance of supporting the Lake Association in preventing milfoil, algae blooms from high phosphate levels, and educating homeowners on healthy lakefront/watershed ownership.

Without the financial backing of our membership, we will have to make hard choices on which programs we will be able to continue to fund. We are hoping you will see your Lake Association membership as your responsibility as a homeowner in the watershed.

There are several ways to join the effort:

- \$25 Association Membership (*Your membership helps fund our water quality inspection and improvement efforts, and to continue our education activities.*)
- \$50 Lake Steward (*This increased level of support is vital to our efforts.*)
- \$100 Watershed Futurist (*The future of the lakes is in your hands.*)
- **New this year we will allow members to volunteer to serve half- or full-days working as a boat inspector for the lake in lieu of paying dues. Please let us know if you are interested in doing this by checking off the Courtesy Boat Inspection Program box on the membership envelope, along with how to contact you to schedule for your day(s).**

As a friendly reminder to members who sent in dues at the end of 2007. You will need to renew your membership to be active for 2008. We hope that you have a wonderful spring and look forward to seeing you around the lake.

**YES! I want to help the MPSLA**

**Levels of Giving**

☐ Association Member (\$25)      ☐ Lake Steward (\$50)  
☐ Watershed Futurist (\$100)      ☐ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Francis Fox Sandmel Fund      ☐ Courtesy Boat Inspection Program

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Winter Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Summer Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you belong to a camp road association? ☐ yes ☐ no

If so, what is its name and contact information? \_\_\_\_\_

MPSLA is a nonprofit, 501 c(3) organization, registered in the State of Maine. All voluntary contributions to MPSLA are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.  
The McGrath Pond/Salmon Lake Association works to protect and improve the watershed of McGrath Pond and Salmon Lake through preservation, education and action.