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TACOMA LAKES IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2012

Welcome to the autumn 2012 Tacoma Lakes Improvement Society Newsletter! We hope you enjoyed the summer and are now ready for the winter ahead.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Tacoma Lakes Improvement Society held our annual meeting and breakfast on Saturday, July 14th 2012 at the Sportsman's Club in Litchfield. The breakfast started at 8:30 AM and ended at 9:30 AM. We had a record turnout of nearly 80 people. The breakfast was followed by a brief business meeting then excellent speaker presentations. Full minutes from the meeting are posted on the Society's website.

2012 MEMBERSHIP DUES NOW OVERDUE

Your 2012 membership dues are \$15.00. A membership application is included in the newsletter. Your board of directors would appreciate you mailing your application and dues payment in as soon as possible. **If you have already paid your dues for 2012 please do not pay them again.** We also prefer not to receive dues for future years as our accounting system is designed for one year at a time. Thank you!

FIREWISE PROGRAM

The assessment of the Tacoma Lakes was presented at the annual meeting. The result of the assessment is posted on our website. Town officials in Litchfield and Monmouth also received copies. It will now be up to each community to determine what, if any, action they wish to take regarding the report.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Your Society is enjoying a very successful financial year in 2012. Membership is now the highest it has been in many years. We were successful in obtaining grants from the State of Maine, as well as the Towns of Litchfield and Monmouth. We're grateful for the incredible support from member donations, which are nearly double those in 2011. We thank our business advertisers, donors and friends leaving returnable bottles and cans at the Litchfield Transfer Station. We continue to carefully manage expenses, the largest of which is the inspectors at the boat launch. We will dedicate any surplus for future invasive species mitigation.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Members:

Due to unprecedented support from you and other members, 2012 was a record setting year for TLIS. With your help we were able to increase our membership level to a new high of 216 as of September 20. Financial donations were beyond our wildest expectations. Our July annual meeting and breakfast was a resounding success with a packed house, a display of the DASH boat, speakers from the Friends of Cobbossee Watershed and the Maine Forest Service, and our first ever silent auction. Needless to say, the pies and other desserts were such a success we plan on having even more next year!

The year 2012 saw new leadership at the Friends of Cobbossee Watershed. Its new Executive Director John Blouin has shown the energy and enthusiasm to continue to grow its membership base, invasive plant eradication activities and educational programs. He and his staff's efforts to eradicate the milfoil in Purgatory stream have amazed me and we cannot thank them enough for their efforts. I would encourage all members to lend their support to the FOCW and visit their website to stay current with their many activities.

As you all are aware, 2012 also saw the State allow the purchase and use of fireworks by citizens. Unfortunately, as with many well intended laws, misuse of these fireworks have resulted in many complaints to local municipal officials resulting in many towns and cities passing very restrictive ordinances or totally banning fireworks. A survey TLIS did at our annual meeting showed the majority of members agreeing with the opinion that fireworks over our lakes are damaging both to the water quality and wildlife. In addition, members complained that fireworks are frequently used after the 10:00 pm deadline. TLIS officers fully intend to participate in a committee being set up by the Town of Litchfield to explore whether regulation is required and we are committed to presenting your views to the local officials, both in Monmouth and Litchfield.

Terry Averill, Dam Keeper, has continued to do an outstanding job on maintaining the water level in our lakes and both the town and TLIS would be hard pressed to ever replace him. The dam continues to be in good condition, although some remedial works is still pending in regards to the placement of additional rip rap and other minor work. Hopefully this work can be accomplished in 2013 since it has the full support of municipal officials.

As usual, the workload for your directors of TLIS never seems to decrease and we appreciate your patience with us as we continue to strive to improve our services to you and maintain our lake system as one of the best in central Maine!

Bruce G. Doyle
President
Tacoma Lakes Improvement Society

THANK YOU DONORS!

Please note that membership dues only provide about 1/3 of our annual expenses. Our dues do not even cover our largest expense, the inspectors at the boat launch. Your board of directors would like to thank the members who have made donations in addition to your dues. These donations are an essential part of our ability to help protect our lakes. All donors are acknowledged on our website, which is updated regularly.



Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program
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<http://www.mainevolunteerlakemonitors.org>

Milfoil Control Continues in 2012 on Purgatory Stream

The surprising discovery of variable-leaf milfoil in Purgatory Stream in 2010 has resulted in the combined efforts of the Friends of the Cobbossee Watershed (Friends) and Tacoma Lakes Improvement Society (TLIS) in removing the plants from the stream. First noticed by Cobbossee Watershed District scientist Ryan Burton, the milfoil infestation is located in the part of the stream sometimes referred to as “Mill Pond” by local residents, which is the area just upstream of the dam at the intersection of Whippoorwill and the Hallowell/Litchfield roads. Thankfully downstream of the Tacoma Lakes, the infestation is still uncomfortably close to those non-infested water bodies, and the reason for the concentrated efforts of the two organizations to work towards eradication of the plant in Purgatory Stream. Variable-leaf milfoil, also present in Horseshoe & Pleasant Ponds and Cobbossee Stream, can quickly plague native ecosystems, disrupt recreational activities like swimming and boating, and drastically reduce property values.

Since the stream is shallow and not very wide, only small boats or non-motorized kayaks and canoes can access the water. Removal efforts therefore have been focused on the physical hand removal of plants, as well as the use of “milfoil mats” placed on the bottom of the stream over patches of growing plants. The mats, also referred to as benthic barriers, are made up of weighted tarp-like fabric that prevents sunlight from reaching the plants, inhibiting growth. The mats are left in place for one to two months, and then removed, with the hopes that native plants will reestablish the area first.

In a serious effort to have an impact on the Purgatory Stream infestation the Friends increased the number of 10’ X 12’ milfoil mats placed from (35) in 2011 to 80 this summer. Fifty mats were originally placed in late May; in late July 30 of the mats were picked-up and moved to another location in the stream, to cover more area. By mid-September, when the final mats were removed from the water, 9,600 square feet of milfoil-infested stream bottom had been covered this summer alone. Combined with hand pulling efforts by Friends staff and TLIS volunteers, the 2012 season has been extremely successful in fighting back the growth of milfoil in Purgatory Stream. The Friends plan on continuing this partnership with TLIS in the years to come, with hopes that in three to five years of sustained effort, we will be able to eradicate this invasive from Purgatory Stream!

For more information about the Friends invasive plants efforts, or other programs, please contact the Friends Education Program Director, Tamara Whitmore: 207-621-4100 or tamara@watershedfreinds.com.



July 30, 2012 Professional Scuba Diver Denise Blanchette hands a “milfoil mat” she just picked up from the bottom of Purgatory Stream to TLIS volunteer Kelly Weissenfels and FOCW Education and Programs Director, Tamara Whitmore.



TLIS Volunteers Rainey Doyle and Buffy DeMatteis carefully remove variable-leaf milfoil by hand in Purgatory Stream on July 30, 2012.

LAKE LOWERING

This year's lake drawn down will start on October 15, 2012 according to dam keeper Terry Averill. Please make sure you have removed any boats, docks, etc. prior to then if this lowering will cause you additional difficulties. As a cautionary note, the beaver dam on Jimmy stream is currently passable but may not be once the water level is lowered.

THANK YOU FRIENDS OF COBBOSSEE WATERSHED

The Friends are an amazing partner to TLIS. Their work benefits our entire watershed, not just the Tacoma Lakes. The Friends provided the following services to TLIS in 2012:

Managed the paid inspectors, ensuring our boat launch was covered on holidays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

The Friends provided payroll service, insurance and payroll taxes for the paid inspectors working the Woodbury Pond boat ramp. TLIS only had to reimburse them for these costs.

Arranged for Friends staff and paid divers for the milfoil remediation on Cobbossee Stream. They also provided the benthic barriers. TLIS volunteers assisted. This was the second year of this project, which will continue next year.

Filed reports on our behalf for the state grant.

Friends Executive Director John Blouin made a presentation at our 2012 Annual Meeting.

Coordinated and provided paid staff for the milfoil mediation in Purgatory Stream.

If you are not a member of the Friends please consider joining today. Their membership is free. For details please visit their website at: www.watershedfriends.com.

BOTTLE DONATIONS

TLIS is continuing to welcome your bottle donations that are being left in the blue barrels at the town recycling center. This remains one of our most important fund raisers. If you could bag the bottles in plastic bags prior to putting them in the barrels it would be greatly appreciated otherwise it can be somewhat of a messy job fishing them out and bagging them. Thank you!!

LOON COUNT

The Maine Audubon Society, through the use of volunteer observers, maintains a data base of loon populations on Maine lakes. These surveys are conducted once per year in a half hour period on the third Saturday in July. The latest information available is from 2011:

Lake	Adult Loons	Chicks
Buker Pond	2	2
Little Purgatory	0	0
Sand Pond	5	0
Woodbury Pond	18	4
Jimmy Pond	1	0

TLIS LEADERSHIP

July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013

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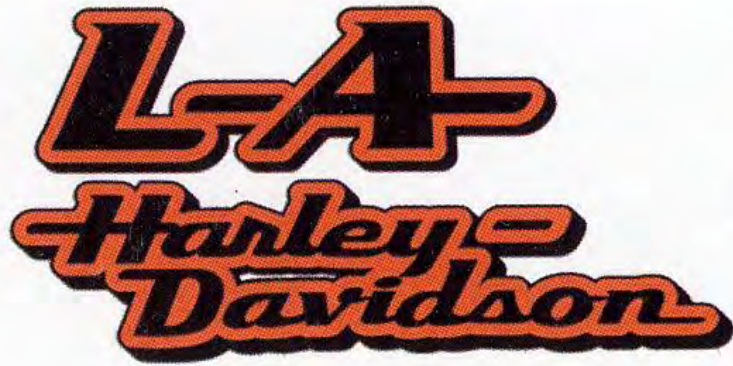
HISTORY OF TACOMA LAKES

TLIS Secretary Karen Smith-Ahern and TLIS Member Evelyn Waterman have agreed to work on an exciting project this winter, writing a history about our beautiful lakes. In addition to the written history we are seeking historical photos and documents. Can you help with memories, photos or documents? If so please contact Karen at kdsmith22@aol.com or Evelyn 207-375-4540. Thank you!

THANK YOU JOHN STORY AND NELLY GAMAGE

TLIS has presented plaques to John Story and Nelly Gamage. John Story was recognized for the generous financial support provided to TLIS by L-A Harley Davidson. Nelly Gamage was recognized for many years of service to TLIS as a board member and assistant dam keeper. Nelly has retired from the TLIS board. Thank you John and Nelly for your support of TLIS!

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS. THANK YOU!



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TACOMA LAKES IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY

2012 MEMBERSHIP DUES: \$15.00.

Thank you for your membership in the Society. Your membership dues are essential to support our many activities. Together all of us can help to keep Tacoma Lakes beautiful and healthy.

NAME: _____

STREET: _____ (Mailing Address)

TOWN: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____ OK TO E-MAIL? _____

We would appreciate your permission to send you e-mail. We will keep your e-mail private and will not share it with any other organization. If you have already provided your e-mail we do not need it again. Thank you!

POND PROPERTY IS LOCATED ON: _____

DUES: _____ DONATION: _____ TOTAL ENCLOSED: _____

Thank you for considering a donation to help us continue our important work.

Please mail this completed application along with your check payable to Tacoma Lakes Improvement Society to:

Tacoma Lakes Improvement Society
P O Box 293
Litchfield, ME 04350

Can you help? We are seeking volunteer boat inspectors. Free training is provided. If you are interested, please indicate your interest below and we will contact you:

Please contact me, I'm interested: _____

WE APPRECIATE YOUR MEMBERSHIP

IF YOU HAVE NOT PAID YOUR 2012 DUES PLEASE DO SO TODAY!