



BELGRADE REGIONAL CONSERVATION ALLIANCE



BRCA conserves the lands, water quality, and natural heritage of the Belgrade Lakes watershed.

French Mountain Upgrade

BRCA has been awarded funding from the State of Maine Recreational Trails Program. This funding has allowed BRCA to build a new parking area at French Mountain. Parking for six cars is now available and roadside parking is still available for overflow. The new parking area not only provides ample space for one of our most popular trails, but also provides a safer place for hikers with small children, as French Mountain is one of our most kid-friendly hikes. (continued on page 5)



French Mountain Hike

Friday, 9/25 – 10:00-11:30 a.m.

Hike along the French Mountain Interpretive Trail and learn about its history and the diverse mountain ecosystem! The French Mountain Trail is an easy 0.8 mile loop with beautiful views of the Kennebec Highlands from the summit.

<http://greatmaineoutdoorweekend.org/event/french-mountain-hike-rome-sept2015/>

Round Top Geocache

Saturday, 9/26 - 1:00-3:30 p.m.

Try your hand at geocaching at the summit of Round Top Mountain. Hike through picturesque hardwood and conifer forests along the Kennebec Highlands Trail. Bring your smartphone or GPS unit, muggles welcome! The Round Top mountain trail is a 3.9 mile loop through varied terrain and rated for intermediate hikers. <http://greatmaineoutdoorweekend.org/event/round-top-geocache-rome-sept2015/>

The Great Maine Outdoor Weekend is a series of events led by outdoor oriented organizations and companies to celebrate the how, where, and what of being active outside in Maine. Our goal is to connect our friends and neighbors with the natural world, to promote fun, physical activity, & good health.

President's Column: "Do Good Work"

Most of my close friends know that I am fascinated with the exploration of outer space, including its history. My message for this newsletter is borrowed from the late astronaut Virgil "Gus" Grissom. Grissom was one of the original Mercury Seven astronauts and was the second American launched into space. Part of his duties prior to that launch included visiting many of the contractor facilities around the country to deliver motivational speeches to the workers. It was believed that hearing and meeting an astronaut in person would instill a sense of pride in their work. Grissom was a man of few words and not comfortable speaking in front of crowds.

During a visit to the Convair plant that was building the Atlas rocket, Grissom stepped up to the microphone in front of thousands of Convair employees where he uttered three words; "Do good work," and then sat down. Ad-

mittedly this was not the longest or most articulate speech ever given, but Grissom received an overwhelming response from the employees and those three simple words became their motto.

So what does Gus Grissom have to do with lake conservation? His simple message applies to our efforts to conserve our lakes, so I implore you to do good conservation work.

My close friends also know that unlike Grissom, I am not a man of few words. If you don't have a lakefront buffer, then add one. If you do have a buffer, look for ways to improve it; add a rain garden or mulched plantings. Check your camp road regularly to ensure it is not eroding, allowing phosphorous laden sediment to be transported into our lakes. Inspect your parking area to make sure it is well defined and overlain with gravel or mulch. Minimize the amount of grass in your yard.

Cover areas of bare soil with mulch or gravel.

Call for a LakeSmart evaluation. LakeSmart is the flagship program of the Maine Lakes Society's lake conservation efforts. Focusing on lakefront property owners, LakeSmart educates, assists, and recognizes property owners who maintain their shorefront land to adopt or improve measures that manage stormwater on site and prevent groundwater flows of septic effluent to lakes. For more information contact Maggie Shannon at the Maine Lakes Society (207)-495-2301 or email msshannon@mainelakesociety.org.

There are many best management practices that home and camp owners can implement to make their property more lake friendly. Our Youth Conservation Corps can also help you with installation. You may contact the BRCA at 495-6039 for more information.

Mel Croft, BRCA President

Executive Director's Column

Land Trust Update

BRCA is still fundraising for the Kennebec Highlands Kimball Pond project! Our original goal was to raise \$289,000 in funds for the Kimball Pond project: \$229,000 in state funds and \$60,000 in private and foundation contributions. To date, we have raised over \$80,000 from private and foundation sources. However, our ability to raise state funds through the Land for Maine's Future (LMF) program and other state programs has proved difficult. Although BRCA has officially been awarded \$120,000 from the state, these funds have not been disbursed because of the ongoing impasse between the executive and

legislative branches of state government.

BRCA bought the Kimball Pond property after the award of LMF funds last summer. As you may remember, we borrowed money to do so. We have paid down our loan by the \$80,000 we have raised, and have rescheduled the loan for one year. As you can imagine, we are very motivated to pay off this loan as soon as possible. Please give as generously as possible to this great expansion of the Kennebec Highlands! To those who have already donated, thank you!

Water Quality Update

BRCA received a major donation from the Elmina B. Sewall Foundation to help fund the Water Quality Initiative. Other major project sponsors are Maine Lakes Resource Center, and Colby College, which is donating

major in-kind resources including faculty time, boats, and lab testing. The project has also received major support from the lake associations whose volunteers take staff out on the lakes to collect data, saving the project time and money and providing the volunteers with hands-on water quality testing experience. The goal is to complete the water quality (WQ) analysis this fall, to develop a restoration plan by March 2016, and to begin fundraising to implement the restoration plan in 2016.

Public WQ information meetings were held July 29 and August 26 at the Maine Lakes Resource Center, and Sunday morning project updates were held at the Farmers Market all summer.

(Continued on Page 5)

Lake Trust Corner: Announcing the Alfond Challenge 2015

On August 9th, the Harold Alfond Memorial Pro Am Golf Tournament was held on a glorious Sunday afternoon at the Belgrade Lakes Golf Club. The tournament marked the start of a fundraising campaign to raise \$50,000 for lake water quality. BRCA thanks the Harold Alfond Foundation, Kyle Evans and the Belgrade Lakes Golf Club, for their support of this tournament and for their contributions to restoring the water quality of the Belgrade Lakes watershed.

BRCA has conducted this fundraiser in conjunction with the biannual Harold Alfond Memorial Golf Tournament that we have held at the Belgrade Lakes Golf Club for the last several years. BRCA and the lake associations that participated in the tournament are splitting the money raised the day of the event.

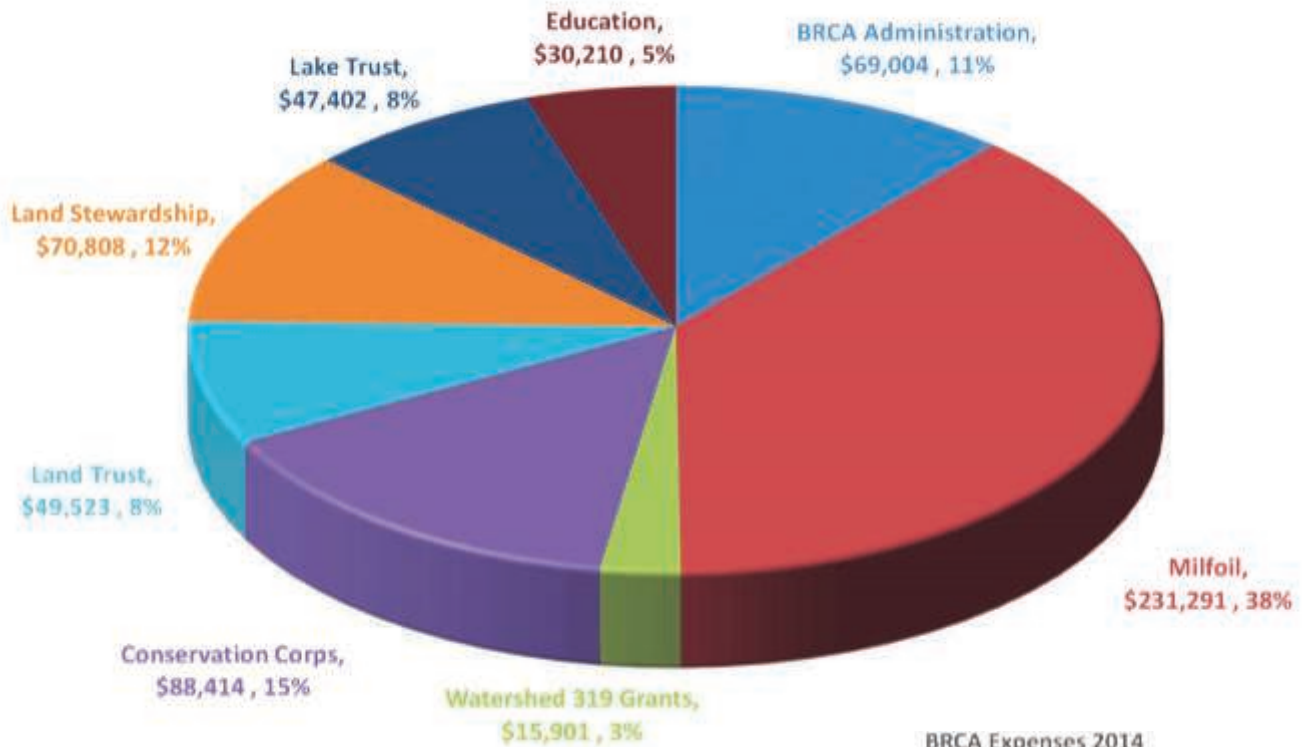
As noted, all of the money raised in this challenge will be used for BRCA's water quality and lake trust conservation programs. Our membership dues and our program fundraising does not cover all our lake trust expenses and this challenge has become a critical part of BRCA's funding over the last decade. We stretch the money we raise at the golf tournament and through this challenge grant to help fund these programs over a two year period, or until the next golf tournament.

Please help BRCA continue the land and water conservation in the Belgrade Lakes watershed by participating in this challenge and helping us reach this important goal. Thank you.



The Harold Alfond Foundation has generously agreed to match donations that BRCA receives between August and December 31, 2015. These donations are for water quality and for lake conservation in the Belgrade Lakes watershed. The first \$25,000 of donations that BRCA receives during this period will be matched 1:1 by the Foundation. To date, BRCA has received \$5,745 towards this goal. Please donate now to help BRCA raise the additional \$19,255 needed by the end of this year to leverage the full \$25,000 offered by the Harold Alfond Foundation's challenge grant.

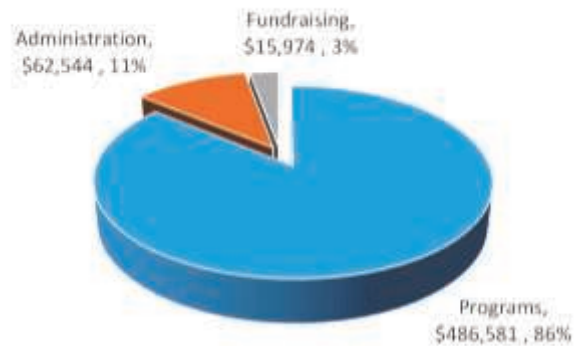
BRCA REVENUES 2014 - \$602,552



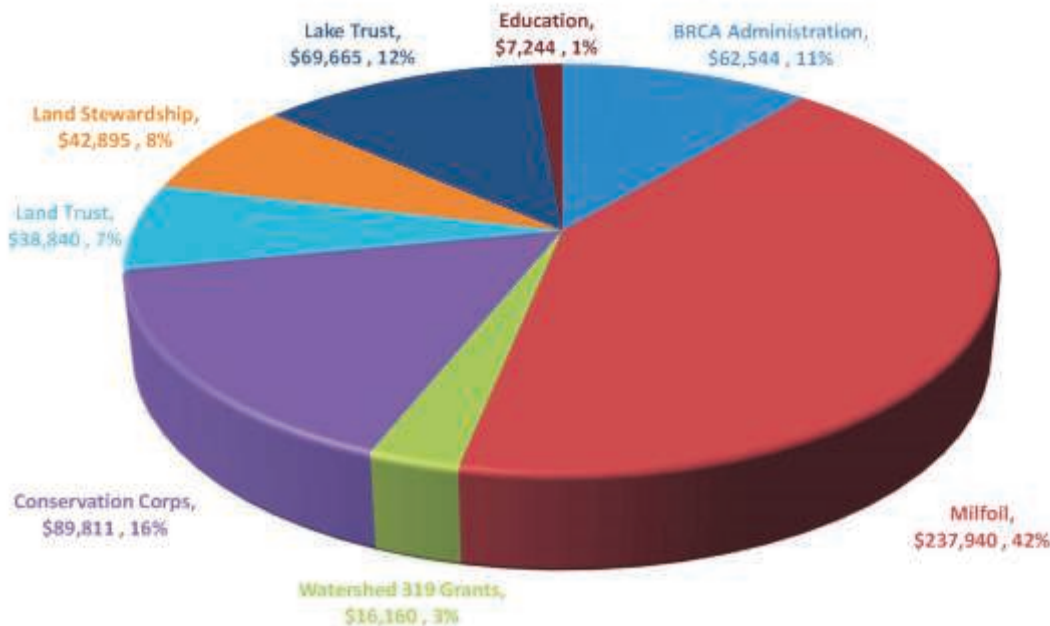
BRCA revenues were \$602,552. Contributions were from multiple sources including individuals, businesses, lake associations, foundations, towns, and state and federal agencies. Additional revenues were from program services, investment income, and special events.

BRCA expenses were \$565,099. Program spending accounted for over 86% of expenses, administration was 11%, and fundraising was 3%.

BRCA Expenses 2014



BRCA EXPENSES 2014 - \$565,099



As in 2012 and 2013, milfoil programs represented the largest share of BRCA expenses at 42% including Courtesy Boat Inspections (1/3) and milfoil removal (2/3). The next largest programs were Youth Conservation Corps (16%), Land Trust and Stewardship (15%), and Lake Trust (12%).

BRCA 2014 Financial Report (continued)

BRCA assets increased by \$37,453 to a total of \$2,311,046. The majority of BRCA's assets are land holdings at \$1,699,075.

BRCA Balance Sheet 2014

Assets	
Current Assets	
Cash	154,003
Accounts Receivable	42,610
Investments	395,473
Total Current Assets	592,086
Property Assets	
Land	1,699,075
Vehicles	24,742
Accum Depr - Vehicles	(5,647)
Total Property Assets	1,718,170
Other Assets	
Prepaid Expenses	790
Total Other Assets	790
Total Assets	\$ 2,311,046
Liabilities and Net Assets	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	263,329
Accrued Payroll	5,196
Payroll Taxes Payable	5,340
Total Current Liabilities	273,864
Net Assets	
Unrestricted Assets	41,487
Restricted Assets	1,958,241
Current Year Earnings	37,453
Total Net Assets	2,037,181
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$ 2,311,046

French Mountain Upgrade

(continued from front page)



In addition to a new parking area, the French Mountain Trail is now interactive! As you walk the 0.8-mile trail, you will notice **QR codes** posted throughout, attached to BRCA's blue trail markers. Scan these codes with your smartphone to learn more about French

Mountain. Each code is purposefully placed at specific locations to better highlight the diverse mountain ecosystem. For questions about the new interactive French Mountain Trail, please contact BRCA Education & Outreach Coordinator, Matthew Leahey, brcaeducator@belgradelakes.org.



Executive Director's Column (continued from page 2)

This fall, we are forming a steering committee to oversee the water quality project. If you have an interest in participating, please let us know. We hope to have representatives from lake associations, towns, businesses, state agencies, academia, outside consultants, and the public. Public support and input are critical to the success of the project and implementation of the restoration plan.

To find out more about the project and to stay updated this fall and winter, please check out these resources online, KJ article: <http://www.centralmaine.com/2015/07/26/belgrade-lakes-water-quality-could-dive-in-a-decade/>

MLRC: <http://mainelakesresourcecenter.org/2015/08/23/water-quality-community-meeting-august-26/>

Colby: <http://web.colby.edu/lakes/>

or email: **BRCA, Subject: Water Quality Initiative.**



New Staff – Education & Outreach Coordinator

Hello! My name is Matthew Leahey and I am the new Education and Outreach Coordinator at the Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance. I moved from Long Beach Island, New Jersey to Maine 9 years ago to study at the University of Maine, Orono. While pursuing a degree in Parks, Recreation and Tourism, I helped to map snowshoe trails in the University Forest, create educational activities for the Orono Bog Boardwalk and help to bring environmental education to local middle schools. I was lucky to spend my junior year on exchange at the University of Montana in Missoula where my passion for education and the great outdoors continued to grow.



After I completed my degree, I worked for the Bryant Pond 4-H camp for two years as an after-school program teacher, summer camp counselor, backpacking & canoeing trip leader for students' grades 6-12 and AmeriCorps VISTA Intern. As a VISTA, I developed and delivered Green STEM curriculum to schools in Western Maine. When my VISTA contract ended, I became a Registered Maine Guide for Recreation with the Maine Outdoor Education Program, working as a snowshoeing and cross-country ski instructor for student's grades 4-12. When winter ended, I returned to the University of Maine, Orono to earn a Masters of Arts in Teaching, leading me to teach 8th grade science and math at Bucksport Middle School.

In my spare time, I explore Maine's vast waterways as an avid whitewater kayaker. My combined passion for kayaking and education brought me to the Education and Outreach Coordinator position for the Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance. I am excited to work in this beautiful region. My goal is to use my education experiences to help BRCA achieve its conservation mission.

Coming up at the end of September, I have scheduled two events during for the Great Maine Outdoor Weekend. The first event is on Friday, September 25th, a family-friendly guided walk along the French Mountain interpretive trail. The second is on Saturday, September 26th, a geocaching hike up Round Top Mountain.

Currently, I am working with Aaron Po-dey of Messalonskee High School to teach a series of science seminars this year. The first is a 6-week Limnology Seminar starting in mid-October. This course will cover a variety of topics from water quality and pollution to aquatic plants and invertebrates. This group of students will spend time in the field gathering data, at the MLRC, and at the Colby College campus science labs. Students will be posting their progress and experiments to an online blog throughout the course available for all to see. Stay tuned for more information on this place-based educational experience!

Milfoil Program: Courtesy Boat Inspection Program

This summer, BRCA hired a Coordinator for the Courtesy Boat Inspection (CBI) Program. Alex Dyer has been a CBI since 2013. She has brought her experience and love of the Belgrade area to this new position. Dyer has lived on Belgrade Stream for 15 years, and has been aware of the danger milfoil poses to the lakes since before she could spell Messalonskee as a child. Growing up in the community and constantly swimming/kayaking/water skiing or just enjoying nature in and around the Belgrade lakes, she was particularly drawn to the CBI program. Now as the Coordinator, Dyer has enjoyed

bringing her passion for the community and the lakes to the CBI program.

Dyer is a graduate of Messalonskee High School in Oakland, and is currently enrolled in the Honors College at University of Maine in Orono for a degree in Biology. Upon graduation she plans on pursuing a graduate degree in Marine Veterinary Medicine. Dyer's ultimate goal is to be a veterinarian at a rescue and rehabilitation facility for marine animals.

With the addition of a CBI Coordinator and the diligent coverage of the lakes by our wonderful CBI's and volunteers, the 2015 CBI season has been a productive one. This year, 28 CBI's and

several volunteers, have managed to staff the public boat launches for over 6,000 hours since May; despite the rain and the cold early in the season! During this time, there have been over 11,600 inspections conducted and 110 plant fragments found and cleared from boats and trailers. Of those fragments found, 20 were identified as invasive species, which means a boat had the potential to transport that plant into a clean lake and destroy the ecosystem. Thanks to our inspectors, boats are leaving and entering the lakes fragment free. Please take time to thank a CBI when you launch on one of our lakes, and always remember to inspect your boat and gear!

Youth Conservation Corps Program, Update

Hello there, it's your friendly neighborhood Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) Director, Nathan Durant. The YCC works to mitigate erosion in the Belgrade lakes by installing Best Management Practices (BMP), such as infiltration steps and shoreline riprap. Erosion is the movement of dirt by wind and water. Dirt carries phosphorus. Phosphorus is the limiting reagent in algal growth.

YCC is working in concert with the Lake Smart program to combine efforts to improve water quality. Lake Smart screeners identify the erosion issues and YCC fixes them. Lake Smart and YCC recently conducted a site visit together. Dave Gay and Nathan Durant teamed up and provided a family operated camp information about erosion control and how to limit negative impacts on the lake. The YCC will be installing BMPs at this camp with Lake Smart as the goal.

This summer YCC employed 13 enthusiastic crew

members and leaders to install BMPs in the Belgrade Lakes region. We installed over 100 BMPs on more than 50 individual sites.

The YCC is constantly looking for new projects. There is still plenty of time to fit in a site visit this year and prepare all necessary documents so the YCC can get right to work in the spring. If you have an erosion issue or a question contact the Youth Conservation Corps Program Director, Nathan Durant. Call (207) 931- 8791 or e-mail brcacc@belgradelakes.org



Above: Major riprap erosion control project performed at the Village Inn, 2015.

YCC Crew 2015

Right photo (top left across and down): Jimmy Cumming, Nathan Durant, Chase Karter, Ryan Whitcomb, Zach Douin, and Chad Morisette

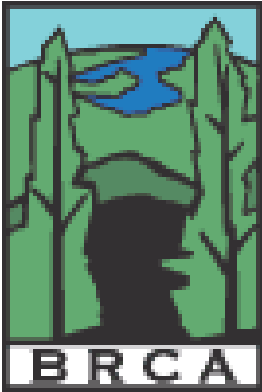
Bottom: Connor Parquette, Nathan Schnee, Torin Smith, Julia Schnee, Sophie Boardman, Allison Fischang, Nick Elias, and Jacob Violette



Special thanks goes out to our sponsors:

Central Maine Motors for a GMC Sierra. This truck is an essential tool for moving materials across the watershed.

Hammond Lumber donated generously to YCC.



BELGRADE REGIONAL CONSERVATION ALLIANCE

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To view BRCA Newsletters
in full color with active
hyperlinks visit our website



BRCA's New Milfoil Courtesy Boat Inspection Program Coordinator, Alex Dyer.

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