



BELGRADE REGIONAL CONSERVATION ALLIANCE



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

Legacy

Doing conservation work makes one think of legacy. What we do matters. What *you* do matters.

Your support has allowed BRCA to accomplish several milestones in 2014:

- We published our new hiking trails map in September – this includes new trails in the Kennebec Highlands and on The Mountain, and our first bike trail. Special thanks to Brian Alexander and Dave MacLeay, two volunteers who helped make this update happen. Fall is a great time to be outdoors – please get or give a copy of the new map, available at BRCA and Day's Store, and enjoy the foliage.
- We purchased a 287-acre parcel of land to expand the Kennebec Highlands, have received \$90,000 in grant funding from the Land for Maine's Future program, and have applied for additional grants. This is a great parcel for 3 reasons:
 - * For the first time, it provides public access on a public road on the west side of the Highlands – this will facilitate cross-Highlands hiking and biking opportunities.
 - * The property has 100' of frontage on Kimball Pond, a remote trout pond, which will allow public access (carry-in only) to the pond.
 - * The wildlife habitat is extensive and includes two beaver ponds.



- We completed over 100 Youth Conservation Corps projects this summer, throughout the Belgrade Lakes watershed, passing 1,000 projects completed since the YCC was founded by East Pond Association 18 yrs ago.
- The Courtesy Boat Inspection (CBI) program completed over 10,000 inspections again this year, and remains the largest in the state. The program enjoys strong town, state, and lake association funding and support.

Given the cost of milfoil removal, and the risk to the lakes that are not infested, this program supports the truism that:

“Prevention is much cheaper than treatment.” Arguably, we should expand the program to have more boat launch coverage, and will do so with increased funding and volunteers. Volunteers make up a significant portion of this program – thank you all.

- The milfoil removal program for Great Pond, in partnership with Belgrade Lakes Association, continues its success in containing the infestation. We are literally not out of the water yet and expect to be working on Great Pond indefinitely, but the amount of milfoil harvested has steadily fallen from 50,000 gallons in 2012, to 30,000 gallons in 2013, to 10,000 gallons in 2014. The amount of milfoil is steadily falling but the need to stay vigilant and aggressive remains.
- BRCA and Friends of Messalonskee (FOM) removed more milfoil from Messalonskee Lake and Belgrade Stream in 2014 than in the previous decade, as a result of increased focus and funding from towns, DEP, and

President's Column: Another Great Year

It's been a great year for us and our busy summer is almost over. I'm proud of what we've accomplished this year and optimistic about the future.

The Friends of Messalonskee lake association increased its membership from about 50 members to over 350! We supported their efforts this summer to manage milfoil in their lake and the Belgrade Stream, and we will continue to support them.

We supported the Belgrade Lakes Association again this year in their fight against the milfoil infestation in Great Meadow Stream and Great Pond. We found fewer milfoil plants than expected this summer! We will not let our guard down, but we are very pleased that our hard work is paying dividends.

Rick Watson and his North Pond Association made the Smithfield Fairview Grange located on North Pond LakeSmart! The Maine Lakes Resource Center, our home office, also earned the LakeSmart award.

Dave Hallee volunteered to become the new president of the

McGrath Pond/Salmon Lake Association replacing Ron Purnell. Dave has been very active in the Lake Trust, and we look forward to working with him in his new position.

We intercepted fragments of milfoil coming out of boats on Messalonskee Lake on four different occasions; fragments that may have ended up in one of our other Belgrade Lakes.

East Pond Association conducted a shoreline survey in September to get a better understanding of where they should focus their work to improve water quality on East Pond.

We implemented 100 Best Management Practices this season trapping phosphorus before it could be transported into our lakes, decreasing the possibility of nasty algal blooms.

The Town of Rome won a court decision against a communications company that proposed to build a cell tower near The Mountain. We are not against improved technology, but The Mountain is our most popular hiking trail so we lobbied for an alternative location. The company has appealed the decision but we are hopeful that the decision will be upheld.

We purchased an additional 278 acres of land on the western side of the Kennebec Highlands adjacent to

Kimball Pond, giving us access from the western side of the Highlands for the first time.

On the personal side, I lost some great friends this year, within our watershed and from away. My daughter married a wonderful young man that would make any father proud. The fishing was fabulous again this year, and for the first time ever my wife purchased a fishing license and joined me out on the lake. Awesome!

I made a new friend in our watershed that earlier in the year was a bit critical of me. He tells me that he never reads our newsletter, but just in case he changes his mind this is a promise to buy him breakfast one morning; give me a call my friend.

Yes, East Pond turned green mid-August and Messalonskee Lake and the Belgrade Stream have challenging milfoil problems, but I remain optimistic about our future. Why? Because I believe that people CAN make a difference in our watershed. I believe that people WILL make a difference. I know, because I work with them every day!

I hope your summer was as fulfilling as mine and I wish you a great winter.

- Mel Croft: President BRCA

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A special thank you to one of BRCA's dedicated volunteers, Linda Kallin, who has provided BRCA with her invaluable service of completing our monthly membership mailing 84 times for a total average of 10, 500 pieces of mail. Linda has scheduled with the office manager for the past seven years to come in every month to organize, fold, stuff, mark, stamp, seal, label, and mail the membership renewals. Her monthly service is greatly appreciated.



Card to BRCA:

Dear all of you hard-working trail people—

My husband and I have a small camp on Watson Pond— what a glorious spot! Anyway, we have hiked the Sanders/Saunders Hill trail many times in the past years. I had to tell you we love the new 2nd half where you walk in the woods instead of on the snowmobile trail. And that awesome picnic table—genius! Thank you, too, for the new wood creek crossings—I have MS & having stable footing is so helpful. I know that keeping the trails in good shape is a never ending job & please know how much we appreciate it!

Thanks again, BRCA Member

Milfoil Program: Season Update

Prevention: Memorial Day weekend is generally seen as the kick-off to summer. It's also the weekend when the BRCA Milfoil Program starts sending out Courtesy Boat Inspectors to all seven public boat launches in the Belgrade Lakes watershed. This year, we hired 26 boat inspectors, mostly from within the watershed, to staff the boat launches through Labor Day weekend. BRCA has one of the largest regional courtesy boat inspection programs in the state. Last year, BRCA conducted about 16% of all inspections in the state. This year, our inspectors logged 12,310 inspections! There were four "saves" in our watershed this summer. Three variable milfoil fragments were found on boats coming out of the Sidney boat launch on Messalonskee Lake, and one fragment of variable milfoil was found on a boat coming out of Messalonskee Lake at the Oakland boat launch. Thank you to our Courtesy Boat Inspectors, as well as Lake Associations and Towns in the watershed for your continued support of this program. Prevention continues to be the most effective way to win the battle against invasive aquatic plants!

Early Detection: Our second summer of Adopt-A-Shoreline on Great Pond and Long Pond continued to engage shorefront property owners and other volunteers in surveying the shoreline for invasive aquatic plants, specifically variable milfoil. So far, twenty-three miles of shoreline has been "adopted" on these two lakes. Next summer, we hope to expand this program, and get other lakes involved. This summer our invasive plant patrol volunteers had some help from

Colby College interns, Andrew Newcomb and Kiana Kawamura. Andrew and Kiana surveyed all of North Pond and East Pond to develop a baseline of native plants and look for invasive aquatic plants. Thankfully, no invasive plants were found and we now have a record of all the native plants on each of these waterbodies. We hope to survey Salmon Lake/McGrath Pond during the summer of 2015.

Mitigation: Thanks to the implementation of our new DASH (diver assisted suction harvester), the summer of 2014 brought another considerable effort by our summer milfoil crew and New England Milfoil. 12,900 gallons of milfoil were removed from the Great Meadow Stream and Great Pond, and 16,438 gallons were removed from the Belgrade Stream.



Although there is still variable milfoil present in the Great Meadow Stream and North Bay, the volume has significantly decreased and we are making steady progress. The most important piece of this effort is to keep it going and prevent spread to other parts of the lake. BRCA is working on some new survey equipment to make surveying the lakes more efficient and effective. Stay tuned!

At this time, our efforts in the Belgrade Stream are focused on access points and pushing the plants away from uninfested waterways. Our crews worked near the Wings Mill Dam and unofficial boat launch off Bartlett Road, the unofficial boat launch off Knowles Road, and the carry-in boat launch off Route 27.

Partnerships & Volunteers: BRCA is lucky for the opportunity to partner with local universities through their summer intern programs. This past summer we were fortunate enough to get three interns from the University of Maine at Farmington's (UMF) Partnership for Civic Advancement, and two interns from Colby College. In addition, we hired two students from the University of Maine at Orono, one other student from UMF, and

one student from Kennebec Valley Community College. BRCA is very grateful for the opportunity to work with students and hopes that they come away from the experience with a better appreciation and understanding of lake ecology and the important work of BRCA and all the lake associations.

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all of the volunteers who have participated in the Adopt-A-

Shoreline program, invasive plant patrols, and to those volunteers that inspect boats at the boat launches. Volunteer support, as well as support from BRCA members, lake associations, and watershed Towns is the key to fighting invasive aquatic plants in the Belgrade Lakes watershed! If you would like to become a volunteer for BRCA, please contact Milfoil Director, Toni Pied brcamf@belgradelakes.org.

Youth Conservation Corps: Season Update

This is the 26th year BRCA has helped protect the natural resources of the Belgrade Lakes. The Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) has completed its 19th year of service. My name is Nathan Durant and this is my first year as the (YCC) director. Last year I spent with the Maine Conservation Corps (MCC) cutting new trail and maintaining existing ones. This experience has sparked a fiery passion for conservation that I wish to stoke throughout my life.

Best management practices (BMPs) are specifically designed structures that mitigate erosion. The YCC installed many of these practices such as: shoreline armoring (rip rap); infiltration trenches; rubber razors; and rain gardens. These structures mitigate erosion by diverting the water to vegetated areas, stabilizing slopes and shorelines, or infiltrating water into the earth. All these practices prevent phosphorus and other contaminants from entering our lakes.

2014 season had a full crew of 15. We had a great summer of installing many BMPs all across the watershed. We visited a total of 46 sites and installed 105 BMPs. We hit all the lakes in the region including the Serpentine in Smithfield. We only had four new members this year including myself. The rest of the crew members have had YCC experience. I must thank the crew members and leaders that are veterans of this program. They taught me many things about the program and we couldn't have reached 105 BMPs installed without their knowledge and expertise.

2015 is upon us and the list is already being filled. Here at the YCC we are always looking for projects to mitigate erosion. If you have experienced erosion on your property and you want us to take a look please give me a call at 207-931-8791 or e-mail brcacc@belgradelakes.org. Enjoy the rest of the warm weather. Winter is coming.

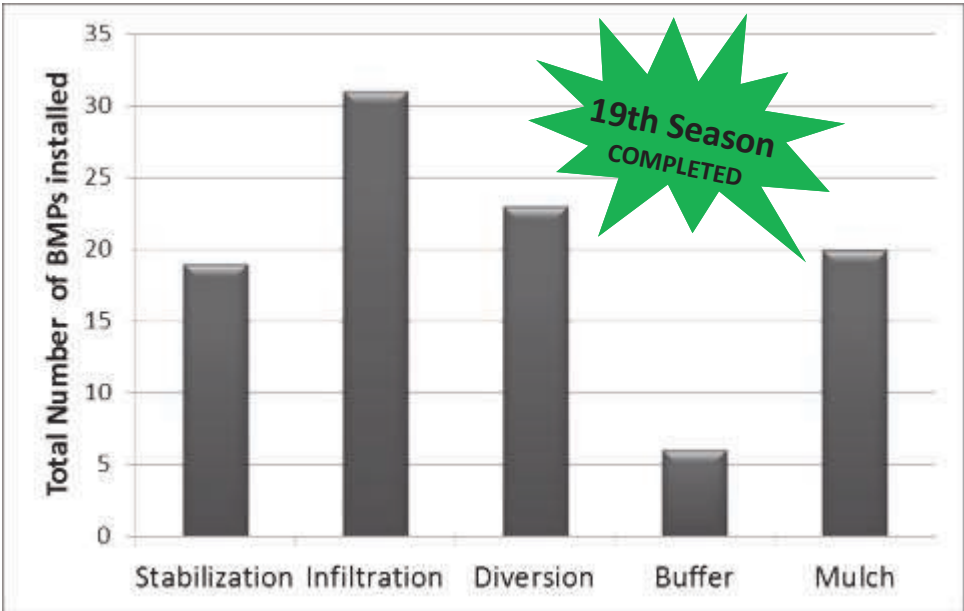


Figure 1.
2014 Total BMPs Installed

TERMS:

Stabilization = armoring shoreline, armoring ditched.

Infiltration = drywells, dripline trenches.

Diversion = rubber razor, open top culvert, swale.

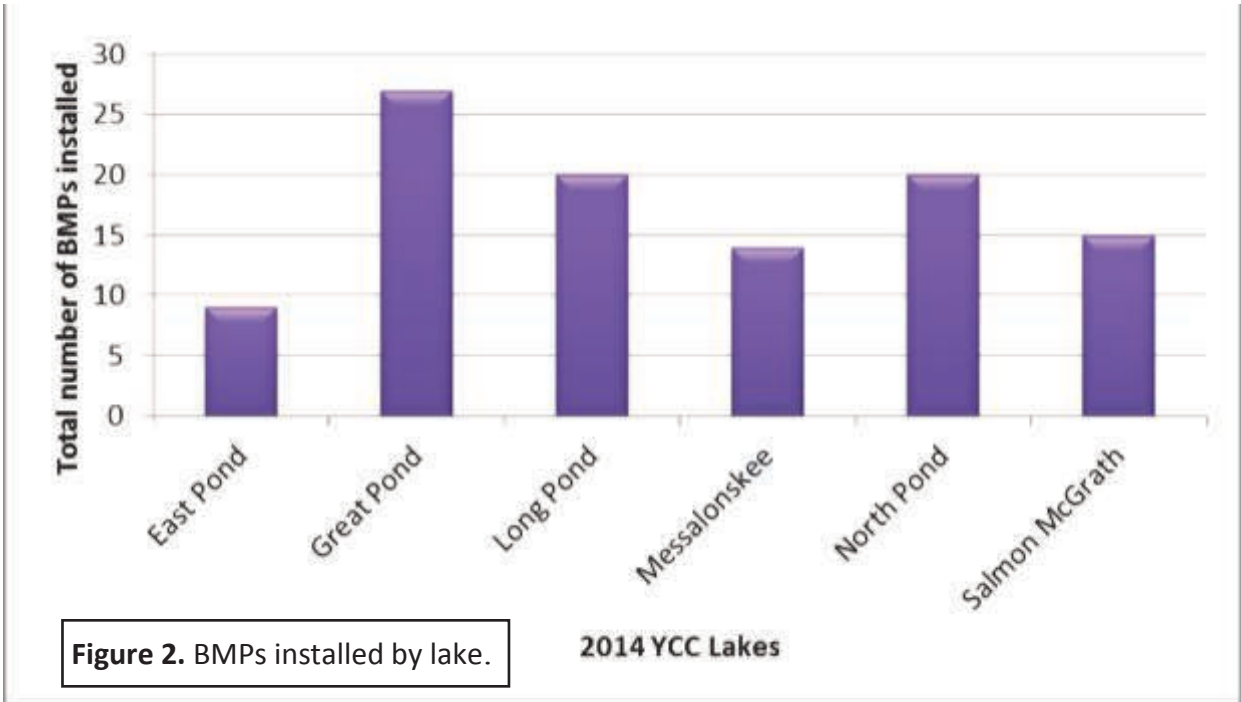


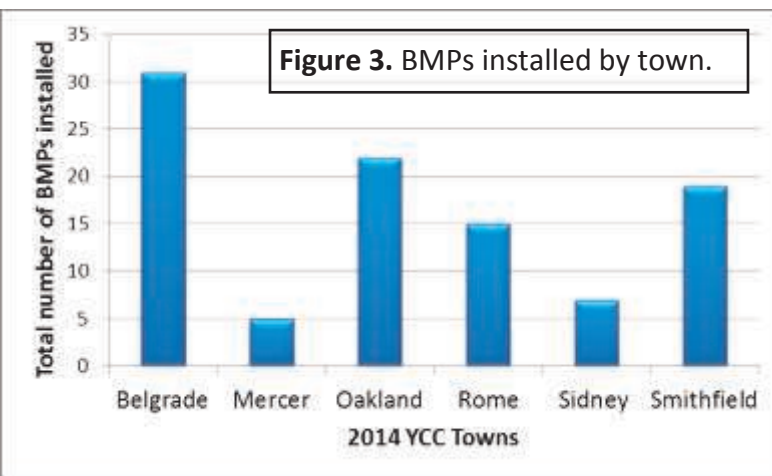
Figure 2. BMPs installed by lake.

2014 YCC Lakes



**Special thanks to:
Central Maine
Motors**

PHOTO: This truck provided by Central Maine Motors at no cost to BRCA worked as hard as we did! And we couldn't have installed 105 BMPs without it.

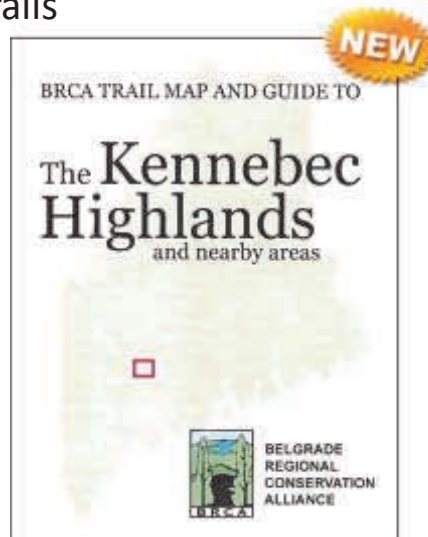


Thank you to Waste Management's Jeff McGown for allowing BRCA to utilize the Baker Farm. This partnership has been very advantageous to many BRCA interns and staff by providing free housing.

LAKE	Stabilization	Infiltration	Diversion	Buffer	Mulch	Totals
East Pond	3	3	0	1	1	8
Great Pond	2	11	8	0	6	27
Long Pond	1	2	10	0	8	21
Messalonskee	9	2	0	1	2	14
North Pond	3	8	4	1	4	20
Salmon/McGrath	1	4	5	1	4	15
Total	19	30	27	4	25	105

New 2014 Hiking Map and Trails

The **NEW** BRCA Trail Map and Guide to the Kennebec Highlands and nearby areas, is now available! The map is available in two different versions. One version is a high quality paper map and the other is made of a waterproof material. You can purchase a copy of the new map (paper map \$6/each, waterproof map \$10/each) at the BRCA office, within the Maine Lakes Resource Center (137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes, ME) or you can request a copy by calling (207) 495-6039 or e-mail brca@belgradelakes.org. You can also purchase a copy at Day's Store in Belgrade Lakes. Or, you can become a **BRCA member** and receive a **FREE** copy!



Included in the new version of the map are two new trails and a re-route of an existing trail. **Sander's Hill** in the Kennebec Highlands has been re-routed to follow the stream along the western section of the

loop. The new loop on **The Mountain** ("Outer Loop"), has already seen a lot of hiking traffic since it was opened in 2013. This is a 1.1 mile loop that starts and ends at the Great Pond Loop with two overlooks of Great Pond.

The 'A' Trail is a new multi-use bike/hike addition to the Kennebec Highlands trails. The trailhead is the parking lot located at the corner of Watson Pond Road and Wildflower Estates (same parking area for Round Top trail). The trail gains elevation until reaching an open lookout area with views of lower Long Pond at 3.3 miles. From the lookout, the trail meanders along the ridgeline, ending at the summit of McGaffey Mountain (1,288').



PHOTO:

View of Lower Long Pond from "lookout" on the new 'A' Trail.

Our new trails and map were publicized in the Portland Press Herald recently, October 5th. Go to <http://www.pressherald.com/2014/10/05/john-christie-kennebec-highlands-a-great-save-for-maine/> to see the article.

Lake Trust Corner The Friends of Messalonskee (FOM) had an extremely active summer working to control milfoil on the lake. Earlier in 2014 FOM built a DASH boat and operated the boat for 7 1/2 weeks which resulted in pulling more than 40,000 lbs. of milfoil from infested areas of Oakland, Sidney and Belgrade. Summer resources included three interns, two full time divers two part time support staff and approximately ten other volunteers. Two 50 x 8 foot burlap benthic barrier test plots were installed. Volunteers did some hand pulling in a heavily infested area of loon cove and overall there was approximately 600 hours of additional milfoil mapping, remapping and CBI volunteer work provided. FOM is now in the planning stages for work in the lake and Belgrade Stream in 2015.

Legacy (continued from page 1)

foundations. This is a challenging and expensive project – given our current budget, and the extent of the infestation, containment is our immediate strategy. We are exploring other methods that might be more effective or might reduce costs but, for the moment, keeping milfoil from infesting more of Messalonskee Lake and from infesting the other lakes in our watershed is our first priority.

- BRCA has received funding to launch an expanded education program – and to hire our first

educator! This program is being funded by two local foundations that value education and that understand that the next and future generations are critical to conservation. We are in the process of beginning to identify and meet prospective candidates. We have funding to hire a part-time year-round person and they will work in local schools to reach as many children living in the watershed as possible. We expect to have kids on the lakes, in the woods, and in the labs to learn first-hand. We

hope to expand the program to a full-time educator as experience and funding develop. If you know a great educator, who might want to lead a lake and watershed science program, and help build it from the ground up, please introduce them to BRCA!

As this short list suggests, your staff, board, and our many volunteers have been busy this year (and I am leaving out several land conservation easements, a major water quality initiative, and the Rome cell tower legal battle now in federal court).

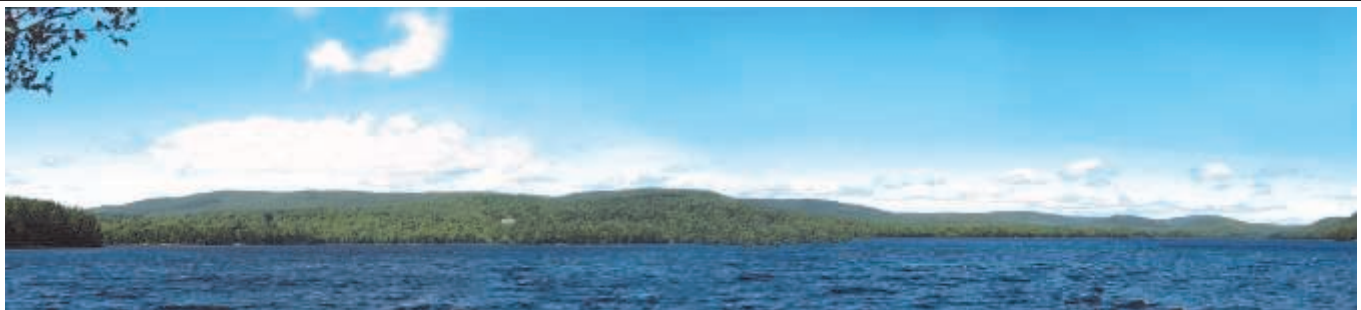
Fundraisers

Speaking of legacy, there are two major fundraisers this fall:

- ◆ **Kennebec Highlands:** BRCA needs to raise \$100,000 this fall and winter for the purchase of the new 287-acre Kimball Pond property. BRCA was able to take out a 0% interest loan to buy the land with the condition that it is repaid in one year (by July 31, 2015). Please join your fellow members and the community in conserving this gem which protects water quality, provides wildlife habitat, and nourishes the body and soul.
- ◆ **Great Pond BLA STOP Milfoil campaign:** BLA is working to raise \$100,000 in 2014 to remove milfoil from Great Pond. An added incentive is that there is a matching foundation grant for \$100,000 if BLA is successful in this effort by December 31, 2014.

Please give as generously as possible to either or both of these efforts!

Bequests Please consider BRCA in your will – several members have mentioned to us this last year that they added BRCA to their wills. This is a wonderful opportunity for you to give to a cause you value and to make your legacy our legacy. Donations can be directed to the program(s) you value most. If this is something you would like to consider, or just want more information about, please contact Mary Kerwood at 207-495-6039, or Charlie Baeder at 207-458-1334.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Natural Resources Council of Maine (NRCM) presented their 2014 Conservation Leadership Awards to Peter Lowell (Bridgton) and our very own BRCA Board member, Peter Kallin (Rome) for their tireless efforts to protect the water quality of Maine's Lakes.

The Maine Conservation Voters have announced that **Dean and Sheila Bennett of Mount Vernon** received the 2014 Harrison L. Richardson award. Dean and Sheila were honored at the [Evening for the Environment](#) on Thursday, October 2nd for two lifetimes of achievement, together and as individuals, dedicated to teaching, writing, speaking, advocating and inspiring all of us to care for the nature of Maine and its wild places.



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in full color with active
hyperlinks visit our website



Photo: Inspecting the map for the BMP Scavenger Hunt at the Family Festival.

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You are invited to follow this link to invite support BRCA by shopping at AmazonSmile. This will link you directly to smile.amazon.com in support of BRCA.



<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/04-3047156>

Photo (Front Cover): Antique Boat Party on Great Pond with Earl Morse's steamboat carrying board members, Maggie Shannon and Pete Kallin, and staff, Toni Pied.

Board of Directors

Mel Croft
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Don Mairs
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Dick Greenan
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Member at Large

Jodie Mosher-Towle
North Pond Association

Chris Cook
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Maggie Shannon
Belgrade Lakes Association

Mark Heuberger
Belgrade Lakes Association

Bill Swan
Member at Large

Pete Kallin
Member at Large

Mike Willey
Friends of Messalonskee

Bill Libby
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