



Canton Lake Association Newsletter

Volume 5: April 1999

President's Corner

April is here and with it comes spring. It is a sad time for those of us who really like winter and the sports it brings; but great for others who enjoy the warmer weather. The lake has had its beauty this winter with snowmobiles, ice fishing, people skating when there was no snow and, of course, the beautiful sunsets.

A group of commercial smelters working the lake alarmed a group of lakefront owners. Having met with the Water District Superintendent and Warden Clukey their concerns about the large unmarked smelting holes and the amount of smelts being taken (and anything else they caught in the nets) were heard. In addition, the commercial smelters were leaving rubbish, bottles, and batteries on the lake. One of their trucks went through the ice this winter and it was three days before it was removed.

The land owner at the mouth of Sparrow Brook will not allow people the use his land next year because he and his family have been harassed for several years and he is concerned for their safety.

It was the decision of the group that met with the warden to support the closing of Canton Lake (Anasagunticook) to commercial smelting and limit other smelting to hook and line only. Warden Clukey suggested that we send a letter supporting this request to the following people: the Selectmen of Canton and Hartford, Commissioner Perry, John Boland (Fisheries Division), Peter Bourque (Dept. of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife), Senator Ferguson, and Representative Randy Berry. This has been done.

If you are interested in learning more about this situation, please feel free to contact me at 18 Lake Shore Drive, Canton, ME 04221 or by calling me at 207-597-2762. Further information can be expected in upcoming CLA Newsletters.

Jack Atwater and his committee are to be commended for their extensive time and effort on the watershed survey. Please read the articles in this issue for a clear picture of our progress.
Polly Bussiere, CLA President

Remember Lake Days: July 31st

REMINDER: Lake Days '99 is Saturday, July 31st 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. followed by the Annual Meeting on Sunday, August 1 at 11:00 a.m.



Great fun, games and prizes had by all at Lake Days '98!
CLA Lake Days Com.

thanks to



Photos courtesy of Biff Atwater, Lake Days '98

PROTECTING OUR LAKE

After starting several years ago, our watershed survey is finally complete. A summary of the final report by Scott Williams the aquatic biologist and technical consultant for the survey can be found on page 3. For readers for whom this is a new subject, a review of the watershed survey may be helpful.

In the fall of 1996, like many other lake associations, the CLA voted to apply for a grant to help us do a watershed survey. This included our commitment of \$1000 to help pay for it. And what is a watershed survey? It is a very close look at the entire area from which water runs into the lake, trying to find any areas where erosion has, or is taking, place. The problem with erosion is that water washing across soil and gravel picks up phosphorus and sediment, eventually transporting it into the lake. A build-up of sediment is harmful to plant and animal life in the lake near the shoreline. Phosphorus is harmful in several ways. It combines with oxygen at the bottom of the lake, making life impossible for deep-water fish. But worse, it nourishes algae, leading to growth of a green,

smelly scum on the lake especially late in the summer.

Canton Lake Association volunteers finished their work last summer and we owe thanks to them all.



Without this small group, some of whom put in several hot days, pestered by bugs, walking through mud, we could not have made plans to correct some of these problems.

Scott Williams and Karen Hahnel, from DEP, followed up on our survey and fashioned it into a full report, documenting the significant problems that were found (see "Watershed Survey is Complete", page 3). Problem areas were found along town roads, a state highway, and on private property.



Although we have not yet had a chance to discuss this as a lake association, I feel confident that the membership will vote for a project to correct as many of the erosion problems as possible. This will mean spreading the word, doing more education, and asking for the cooperation of property owners, the townships, and even the DOT. However, some of the problems are too great to expect groups of volunteers to correct. In some cases, more labor and funds will be required than our association can muster.

Therefore, we are extremely fortunate that the same federal program that gave us the grant for the survey has funds available to correct some of the problems. These funds could be significant; some could be used for expensive roadwork to reduce erosion. However, there are a few strings attached and there needs to be support at the local level. Specifically, we need statements of support from the two townships, our lake association, and other local groups. Exactly how much support and what kind are not specified. Also, it should be realized that even if the grant is awarded, not all the problems will be corrected. The grant would focus on "demonstration" projects, intended to show how problems can be corrected and encourage further action at the local level. The "demonstration" projects would help us correct some of the worst problems.

We are also fortunate that the Oxford Country Soil and Water Conservation District (OCSWCD) is qualified and willing to coordinate this project, including preparing the grant application. Please read Wendy Garland's article "Lake Protection Grant Submitted for Canton Lake Watershed" on page 5 explaining the grant proposal in detail. A presentation has been made to the Boards of Selectmen from Canton and Hartford. Your selectmen need to hear from you. As property owners, read this issue of the Newsletter carefully and express your feelings about this ongoing project.

The deadline for the grant application is the end of April. Even if approved, the grant money would not be available until the year 2000. Meanwhile, we, the Canton Lake Association, need to organize to contact our neighbors who have erosion situations on their property and try to gain their cooperation in remedying erosion patterns. Neighborliness, caring and education must be the keys since all participation will be voluntary.

We need to educate ourselves and our neighbors in the watershed to causes of erosion and how to change these patterns. It is time for us to decide what we can do as an association, as individuals and concerned citizens to insure that our lake can again become sediment-and-phosphorus free.

Jack Atwater, Chair of Watershed Survey

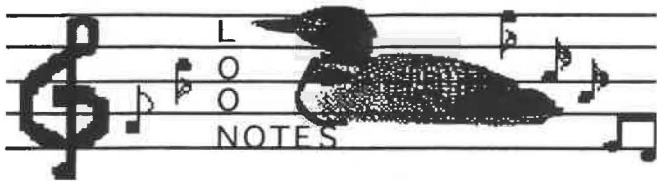
CLA Calendar 2000

A "millennium" calendar is proposed. Tim Kirwan and his committee want to generate our second calendar for the year 2000. Check your photography of the lake, watershed, and area. Send your entries along with your '99 dues to Judy Hamilton, 39 Salem St., Andover, MA 01810 or send photos only to: Tim Kirwan, 48 Hanscom Ave., Reading, MA 01867. Be sure to include a brief caption including names of people in your photos, location, time of year and the year the picture was taken. We need the pictures NOW if we are to have the finished product by Lake Days '99.

Tim Kirwan, CLA Graphic Advisor

Thank You from Canton High-Riders

Canton's snow mobile club wants to thank property owners for allowing the use of established trails which cross personal property in Hartford and Canton as well as many other towns. This is a very popular winter sport and depends on the good will of landowners and well as the considerate use by sportsman. Thank you!



"THE ONLY THING LONELIER THAN THE CALL OF THE LOON...IS NO CALL AT ALL!" FROM LOON BY KIP TAYLOR, 1988.

The Loons are Back!

Shortly after ice out, loons return to Canton Lake as harbingers of spring. The male arrives first followed by his lifetime mate a few days later. During the spring it is not uncommon to see more than two loons but as breeding season approaches, the "visitors" will be forced to leave Canton Lake and fly to other locations.

Canton Lake has just one pair of breeding loons while larger or more secluded lakes may have multiple pairs; the major reason for this is limited nesting habitat. Two marshy places offer perfect nesting sites, but, due to human encroachment, one of these marshes is no longer suitable. Residential development now lines both sides of the entrance to the marsh making it difficult for the loons to enter and exit. Fortunately, one suitable nesting area remains and the loons were successful in hatching two chicks in August 1998.

Breeding season begins with "courting" when the male engages in showy displays which the female appears to ignore. These displays often happen in the middle of the lake and are easily visible. The male rises out of the water showing off with spread wings. At night courting continues with vocal concerts featuring a variety of loud and distinctive sounds. Neighbors often ask each other at this time, "Did you hear the loons last night?" An eerie nighttime silence falls on the lake after the female lays her eggs between late May and early July depending on conditions. The loud vocal cries of courting are replaced by muted calls.

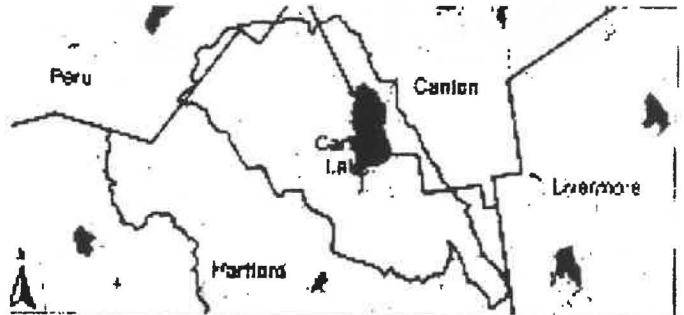
Unless disturbed, the nesting loon pair does not draw attention to themselves in an effort to keep the location of the nest secret. If the nest is approached too closely, a loud unmistakable call of distress will warn of the intrusion. People may inadvertently come too close to the nest. If this happens, they will minimize the impact by leaving immediately and NOT RETURNING! Observing the loon nest without causing undue disturbance can be accomplished through use of binoculars. Under no circumstance should people visit the nest on a daily basis, take close up photographs or otherwise disturb a nesting

loon. To ensure hatching of the chicks, the eggs must be kept warm twenty-four hours a day. If the loon is forced to abandon the nest even a few minutes, the chicks may not hatch. Advertising where the loon nest is located is not a good idea.

Readers of this column are encouraged to pass it along to others so that knowledge and common sense will ensure the return of loons to Canton Lake for years to come.

Margaret Taylor, Dir. Loon Protection

Lake Anasagunticook Watershed



A watershed is the land area, wherein water drains to a specific waterbody. Lake Anasagunticook, also known as Canton Lake, is a 593 acre waterbody situated in southwestern Maine. The scenic 13.4 square mile watershed encompasses portions of the Towns of Canton, Hartford, and Peru. Approximately 11% of the lake watershed lies in Canton, 5% is in Peru, and the remainder is in Hartford.

The Canton Lake Watershed Survey Report states that "One of the strongest indications that the lake is stressed is the depletion of dissolved oxygen that has been documented in a significant percentage of the lake during the late summer period. (This condition) combined with the fact that Canton Lake is a public water supply, has caused the Maine DEP to rate the lake "Most at Risk" under the Maine Stormwater Management law. Canton Lake is also listed on the DEP's "Nonpoint Source Priority Watershed" list.

From Canton Lake Watershed Survey Report

WATERSHED SURVEY IS COMPLETE!

Two years after the Canton Lake Association started the Lake Anasagunticook Watershed Survey it is complete, including a final report with colored photographs. Scott Williams' final report includes: a history of some of the past testing of the lake water, an explanation of how the survey was done, a summary and discussion of the erosion sources found, with examples, and

recommendations for correcting the problems.

It is emphasized that the intent of the survey is not to find fault. Rather, the purpose is to determine what kinds of problems exist, hoping this will lead to voluntary actions to correct as many of



This photo clearly shows the large sediment delta that has accumulated in the lake over time at the north end of the lake along Rt. 140. Smaller sediment particles and dissolved phosphorus spread throughout the lake.

the problems as possible. (See "Lake Protections Grant Submitted for Canton Lake Watershed" on page 5 for information on the grant proposal to correct some of the problems and demonstrate how others can be corrected.)

The report points out that the lake has had algae "blooms" in the past, although not recently. Phosphorus levels are moderately high. Water clarity is less than average for Maine lakes. Depletion of oxygen has been measured in late summer periods. It is stated that the most effective way to prevent future algae blooms is to find and reduce sources of stormwater runoff that pick up phosphorus and sediment.

The locations of erosion are listed, giving the type of land use in each case, and a map reference. Each "site", or erosion area, is given a priority of importance, based on the following equation: Priority = Technical level to install + Impact + Cost.

- ◆ TECH LEVEL: the degree of technical expertise required to address the problem.
- ◆ IMPACT: the potential impact of the site on the lake, or a stream that drains to the lake.
- ◆ COST: An estimate of the costs involved in stabilizing the site or otherwise resolving the problem.

A total of 77 sites were found. Nineteen were considered high priority, 28 medium, and 26 low. However, even the "low" priority sites, when considered as a group, can be serious. Fifty-two of the

sites were along some sort of road - state, town, or private. Eighteen were on residential property. The others were in miscellaneous categories. For each site the report describes the problem, locates the area on a map (giving its size), sets a level of priority and recommendations for improvement are made. In many cases, the report suggests that buffer strips of vegetation between lakefront residences and the lake (also around some residences away from the lake) would improve many sites by allowing runoff to be absorbed into the soil.

There is evidence that Sparrow Brook has been heavily damaged by sediment from various sources over the years. There are also some similar problems in Thompson Brook.



This severely eroded logging road was constructed on a moderately steep terrain. No provision was made to divert runoff from the road surface. As a result, runoff remained on the road, which over time have eroded to a depth of over two feet in some places. Material from the road washed into streams and carved additional erosion below the site.

In conclusion, the report addresses "What is the Next Step?" It suggests that individuals:

- ◆ Prevent stormwater from running directly into streams and the lake. Detain in depressions or divert flow to flat, wooded areas.
- ◆ Reduce the amount of cleared land and road surfaces on your property.
- ◆ Avoid removal of natural vegetation (trees, shrubs and ground cover).
- ◆ Let lawns and raked areas revert to natural plants (if you stop mowing and raking and leave the area alone, it will revert back).
- ◆ Avoid the exposure of bare soil.
- ◆ Support watershed efforts at town meetings.
- ◆ Do not alter the shoreline. Leave existing rocks and vegetation in place.

- ◆ Do not rebuild beaches without permits and technical assistance.
- ◆ Consult with the town Code Enforcement Officer before cutting trees. Shoreland Zoning laws and harvesting limitations may apply.
- ◆ Check sludge levels in septic tanks every year. When tank is half-full, pump it out (average is every 2 to 3 years for year round residences; 4-5 years if seasonal) and upgrade marginal systems.
- ◆ Get involved with Canton Lake Association and become a steward of Canton Lake!

- ◆ Develop a funding plan for long-term road repair and maintenance.
- ◆ Get a copy of "Camp Road Maintenance Manual - A Guide for Landowners," this reference is a must for any one managing a dirt road. (Copies can be obtained at a cost of \$4.50 from The Maine Department of Environmental Protection - 17 Hospital Dr., Augusta, ME 04330).
- For more extensive problems, seek a professional engineer's help. Contact the Oxford County SWCD to request technical assistance.

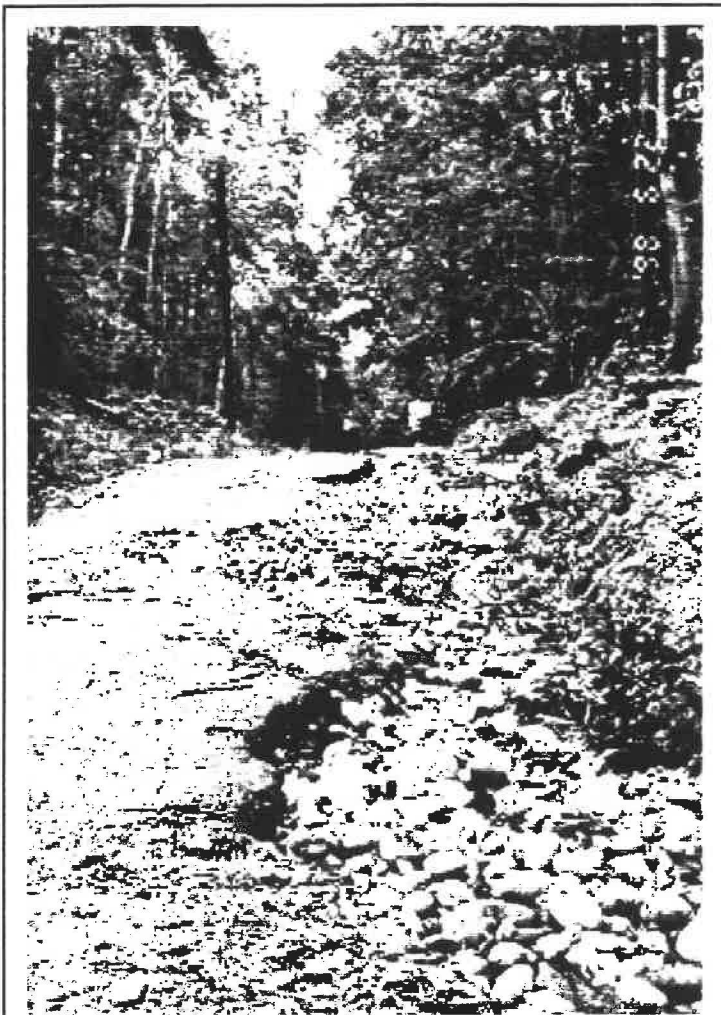
Summarized by Jack Atwater from the Canton Lake Watershed Survey Report by Scott Williams

Lake Protection Grant Submitted for Canton Lake Watershed

Last spring and summer a cadre of local volunteers and project staff conducted a survey to identify potential sources of polluted runoff --primarily in the form of soil erosion-- to Canton Lake. In total, surveyors documented 74 problem sites that were associated with town roads, private roads, residential areas, boat launches and other various land uses. Over the past few months, several organizations and individuals have since developed a grant proposal to tackle some of these insidious problems.

The proposal will be submitted to the Maine Department of Environmental Protection's NPS grants program, which funds water quality improvement projects throughout the state. The purpose of this grant is to raise public awareness about the watershed's polluted runoff problems and demonstrate specific ways that individuals can help protect Canton Lake. If approved, the project would include the following elements:

- *Demonstrations of conservation practices* - Conservation practices will be installed on town roads, private roads and residential sites around the watershed to demonstrate cost-effective solutions to the common erosion and runoff problems identified in the watershed survey.
- *Technical assistance* - Free technical assistance will be offered to watershed landowners and their contractors that request advice for erosion problems on their property.
- *Workshops* - Workshops will be held to highlight the work being done around the watershed. There will be a workshop to demonstrate shoreline buffer planting techniques and how



In this photo, the runoff that scoured the channel in the road had no opportunity to get off the road. Sediment from this washout was followed through a wooded area for over 300'. Material from this washout eventually reached a small stream that travels to the lake.

And that Road Associations (and private roads without associations and driveways):

- ◆ Attend a camp road workshop.
- ◆ Minimize road runoff by planning a regular, comprehensive maintenance schedule - and then adhere to it.
- ◆ Use appropriate Best management Practices on the road.

shrubs and trees can be used to protect Canton Lake. In addition, the grant may include a hands-on workshop for town road crews and contractors to demonstrate roadside erosion control practices.

- **Education and Outreach** - The grant will implement several other projects to raise local awareness of watershed problems and solutions. For example, the grant will help the Canton Lake Association with their newsletter and web site development. Specialized technical services and educational materials will also be offered to help residents minimize soil erosion during construction and soil disturbance activities.

The Oxford County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is taking the lead on the grant and, if funded, would be the project sponsor. The Canton Lake Association and aquatic biologist, Scott Williams, would also help guide the project. "We're looking forward to working with watershed residents, municipal officials, homeowners associations and others on this project. Everyone has a role to play in lake protection," said Laura Suomi Lecker, Project Manager at the Oxford County SWCD. "Hopefully, at this time next year we'll be starting to implement some on-the-ground solutions in the watershed." For more information about the project or how to get involved, contact Laura Lecker at 207-743-5789, ext. 109.

Wendy Garland, Lakes Program Manager,
Southern Maine Soil and Water Conservation
Districts

News from Maine COLA

Beginning with this issue, we will bring you excerpts from the Maine Congress of Lake Association's Newsletter, *For the Sake of Maine Lakes* and/or notification of current legislation affecting our lakes. Here is the first which is appropriate and related to erosion:

Legislative Alert

The following two bills deserve your lake association's support. As you know, phosphorous runoff from "dirt" or "camp roads" is a major factor in the eutrophication of Maine's lakes. These two bills help to provide funding to correct these road-related problems. They represent an excellent small matching grants program for private camproads and public town and state-aid roads to improve drainage conditions for controlling

stormwater damages and pollution into lakes.

LD 1537, An Act to Protect Maine Lakes and Ponds (municipal & state aid roads)

LD 1691, An Act to Protect Maine's Lakes and Ponds from Camproad Runoff

Contact your legislators to indicate support for these two bills by calling (within the state of Maine):

Senators at 1-800-423-6900

Representatives at 1-800-423-2900

Or by contacting:

Senator Norman Ferguson

PO Box 36, Hanover, ME 04237 (207-364-7641)

Canton's Representative:

Rep. Randall Berry

184 Robinson Rd., Livermore, ME 04253

(207) 897-3664 Email <berry@megalink.net>

Hartford's Representative:

Rep. Rosita Gagne

70 North Hill Road, Buckfield, ME 04220

(207) 336-2836

Maine Boating Regulations

As another season of lake recreation begins, it might be helpful to review the Maine laws governing safe boating. The following are some of the rules from "A Guide to Safe Boating in Maine". Copies of the guide may be obtained in the Hartford and Canton Town Offices.

1. All jet skis must follow the same laws as boats.

2. If pulling waterskiers or tubers, boats and jet skis must have a driver and a spotter.

3. The wake zone is 200 feet offshore. All boats and jet skis should be at headway speed (the minimum speed necessary to maintain control of the watercraft) while the watercraft is moving within 200 feet of shore.

4. Drivers of boats or jet skis cannot be drinking alcohol; .08% blood alcohol level is against the law.

5. Drivers of boats or jet skis can be issued a summons if caught harrassing wildlife (loons, etc.) on the lake.

6. All boaters must have life jackets available for every person in the boat. Boats over 16 feet must also have a throwable life preserver. Children 10 and under must wear a life jacket even in a canoe or paddleboat. Jet skiers must wear a life preserver jacket.

7. Speedboats must keep a safe distance from one another and from canoes and sailboats.

Reprinted from the Bear Pond Improvement Association Newsletter, August 1998.

