



Memphremagog Watershed Association

www.memphremagogwatershedassociation.com

Directors:

Don Hendrich,

President

Ginnie Bowman,

V-President

Gail Lynch,

Secretary

Karen Lippens,

Treasurer

Susan Watson

Chet Greenwood

Maria Young

King Boyd

Lynn Jenness

Pat Vana

Bill Round

Paul Dreher

Dayna Cole &

Ben Copans

(Honorary)

Heather Murphy

(Honorary Student)



Buffer on Jewett property ,Seymour Lake

NEK Healthy Waters Initiative a Watershed-Wide Success!

In summer 2012, Memphremagog Watershed Association joined ten other lake associations and conservation organizations to create the NEK Healthy Waters Initiative. From a water quality and community perspective, it made perfect sense to collaborate efforts within the watershed – it is clear that by the very pond, stream, or lake we call home, we are all connected.

Planning the Initiative took place during the fall and winter. The four-part series focused on increasing awareness of environmental concerns within the

watershed and preparing participants with the knowledge and resources to address these concerns. MWA board volunteers worked with Pauline Mazzotta's marketing class at Lyndon State College to produce a vibrant, informative poster and brochure, which partners helped to distribute throughout the watershed.

The kick-off workshop Stewardship at Water's Edge, was hosted at NorthWoods Stewardship Center, a non-profit organization in East Charleston that coordinated registration for the Initiative. Ben Copans, Memphremagog Watershed Coordinator for the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (VT DEC) introduced participants to the Memphremagog Watershed, and the primary concerns within the Watershed. Kellie Merrell, VT DEC Environmental Scientist, shared slides, stories and inspiration from her research on riparian habitat in Maine, and the implications this has on policy and practice in Vermont. Eric Hanson, VT Loon Recovery Project Coordinator, linked the loon's recovery in Vermont with increased awareness of water and shoreline habitat for wildlife.



Photo Courtesy Seymour Lake Association

In July, two workshops on Seymour Lake equipped participants with tools for applying stewardship at the water's edge. Restore Your Shore with Natural Buffers included a property tour of Ted and Mina Jewett's home, giving participants a first-hand glimpse of a variety of lake shore buffers. Dayna Cole of Newport's Natural Resource Conservation District (NRCD) and Amy Picotte of VT DEC provided tips and techniques for creating buffers that preserve water quality and riparian habitat while also satisfying the aesthetic and recreational pursuits that draw us all to our favorite watering holes. From the public beach on Seymour Lake, research academics Bill Kilpatrick of Seymour Lake and UVM, Art Brooks of Willoughby Lake, and Perry Thomas of Community College of VT, provided a microscopic view of species that live in our waters, as well as close observation of macroinvertebrates like the larva of caddisflies and mayflies. While these

Continued page two...

President's Message

Another summer season has passed and we are excited about a number of achievements. The Northeast Kingdom Healthy Waters workshop series was very successful and underscored the effectiveness of collaboration. Working together with our partners in the watershed provided both a larger target audience and greater outreach. All of the workshops were well attended.

We were also pleased to attend the dedication of the Eagle Point Wildlife Refuge to Michael Dunn and are proud of the part MWA played in realizing the late Michael Dunn's vision for the property and of our ongoing relationship with Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department in the development and maintenance of the refuge. Please see enclosed articles about both the workshops and Eagle Point.

The latest achievement to be noted is that our membership has now exceeded one hundred members. While we cannot yet match organizations or associations that have existed for decades, we are growing and with that our impact is strengthening.

Fall is planning time. MWA is currently working on a couple of initiatives. Our focus next year will be on wetlands in the watershed - their extent and their importance to water quality and habitat preservation. In order to continue a collaborative approach, we are working with partners in the watershed to develop activities that will support our focus on wetlands. The other initiative is a proposed WatershedFest to be held next summer. It would be a coming together of lake associations in the watershed for education, sharing information, and celebrating the Memphremagog watershed. We are currently polling associations to find out the level of support for the fest. There will be more on these initiatives in the spring newsletter.

Vermont is now living in a post-hurricane Irene era. While the northern part of the state was largely spared the storm's impact on river systems, infrastructure, and people's lives, we should be mindful of the potential for future similar natural disasters. And we should be increasingly aware of the fragility of the quality of our waters. Recently MWA participated in a consultation meeting in relation to Act 138 and the development of recommendations for a mandated Vermont Statewide Water Quality Report to be prepared by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. The report will, in part, identify priority needs for statewide water quality restoration and preservation. MWA is looking forward to the report and its implications for our Memphremagog Watershed and Northeast Kingdom.

Eagle Point Wildlife Management Area Dedication



On August 10th, the Eagle Point WMA, part of the Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge, was formally dedicated in memory of Michael Dunn. The ceremony was attended by a number of organizations whose efforts and dedication to Michael Dunn's vision for the property resulted in a unique agreement between state and federal Fish & Wildlife agencies. Represented at the dedication were the estate trustees Community Financial Services Group, Vermont Land Trust, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Missisquoi NWR manager Ken Sturm and VT Fish & Wildlife manager Paul Hamelin, as well as federal, state, and local representatives. Also attending were local residents, friends of Michael Dunn, MWA members, and students from the Student Conservation Association who had been working on establishing trails and other amenities. Emphasized at the ceremony were the opportunities for public access to the area including hiking, wildlife observation, hunting, fishing, primitive camping, and access to the lake in winter. It was pointed out that Eagle Point has already been a successful breeding area for osprey, bobolinks, and Savannah sparrows, species key to the grassland habitat. One of the most outstanding features of the property is the number of habitats that are found there, from hardwood forest to grassland to wetlands to undeveloped shoreline. Also found in the wildlife management area are a number of rare and/or endangered species. MWA was involved with the effort to conserve Eagle Point prior to the transfer of title from Mr. Dunn's estate to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and continues its involvement with VT. Fish & Wildlife manager Paul Hamelin. This summer MWA helped remove brush and debris and invasive plant species, and blaze trails. We look forward to continuing our relationship with the Eagle Point WMA. We also look forward to working with our colleagues in Quebec as they develop the Canadian side of the property as a Biodiversity Reserve. The properties on both sides of the border are an unparalleled asset to both the human and natural communities.

On August 10th, the Eagle Point WMA, part of the Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge, was formally dedicated in memory of Michael Dunn. The ceremony was attended by a number of organizations whose efforts and dedication to Michael Dunn's vision for the property resulted in a unique agreement between state and federal Fish & Wildlife agencies. Represented at the dedication were the estate trustees Community Financial Services Group, Vermont Land Trust, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Missisquoi NWR manager Ken Sturm and VT Fish & Wildlife manager Paul Hamelin, as well as federal, state, and local representatives. Also attending were local residents, friends of Michael Dunn, MWA members, and students from the Student Conservation Association who had been working on establishing trails and other amenities. Emphasized at the ceremony were the opportunities for public access to the area including hiking, wildlife observation, hunting, fishing, primitive camping, and access to the lake in winter. It was pointed out that Eagle Point has already been a successful breeding area for osprey, bobolinks, and Savannah sparrows, species key to the grassland habitat. One of the most outstanding features of the property is the number of habitats that are found there, from hardwood forest to grassland to wetlands to undeveloped shoreline. Also found in the wildlife management area are a number of rare and/or endangered species. MWA was involved with the effort to conserve Eagle Point prior to the transfer of title from Mr. Dunn's estate to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and continues its involvement with VT. Fish & Wildlife manager Paul Hamelin. This summer MWA helped remove brush and debris and invasive plant species, and blaze trails. We look forward to continuing our relationship with the Eagle Point WMA. We also look forward to working with our colleagues in Quebec as they develop the Canadian side of the property as a Biodiversity Reserve. The properties on both sides of the border are an unparalleled asset to both the human and natural communities.



Continued from front page...

Species get less press than the noisy loon, or a trophy trout, they are important water quality indicators – easily disturbed by shoreline disturbance and pollution from run-off and nutrient loading that occurs on shore. The biotic index, representing the total number of species living in a certain location, is directly linked to the health of water.

The final workshop in the Initiative was a Vermont Invasive Patrollers (VIP) Training on Lake Memphremagog conducted by VT DEC staff Misha Center and Bethany Sargent. In the morning participants learned about the threats that invasive species pose to our lakes and ponds, and how to identify them. Eurasian Watermilfoil and cyanobacterias were given particular attention as primary concerns within the Memphremagog Watershed. In the afternoon, VIPs were trained on the lake, putting their knowledge to work. Participants were given resources for identifying invasive species and directions on how to report this with the State.

Overall, more than 90 participants took part in the NEK Healthy Waters Initiative. Eleven collaborating organizations throughout the watershed joined to expand understanding of our watershed at work. Professionals from state agencies, academic institutions, and conservation organizations helped to share education and resources with participants – facilitating stewardship throughout the watershed. And, most importantly, the initiative to support healthy waters in the Northeast Kingdom gained momentum, much like water does, by collecting energy and volume from a wide area to come together for a shared result. Watch for more MWA plans for 2013 and join in!



President Don Hendrich presenting MWA Scholarship to Adam Allen , Craftsbury Academy

MWA Scholarships

Once again, in 2013, MWA will be awarding scholarship monies for graduating secondary students interested in pursuing further education in the sciences, particularly but not limited to environmental science. Scholarship applications will be available at all secondary schools in the watershed. Completed applications will be due by March 31, 2013. Scholarships will be awarded on the basis of merit. Pictured are the two 2012 scholarship recipients. If you are the parent of, or know a high school senior interested in science, tell them to ask their guidance department about the MWA scholarship.



President Don Hendrich presenting MWA Scholarship to Lindsay Cotnoir, NCUHS



MWA Parade float with Eagle Point Refuge theme

TIPS for those who enjoy ice fishing and/or snowmobiling in Vermont winters

*Ice fishing season opens the 3rd Saturday in January and closes March 15. Vermont law requires the name and address of the owner be on an ice shanty. Shanties must be removed before the ice becomes unsafe or before the last Sunday in March, whichever comes first.

*Respect and protect Vermont waters by following the rules and regulations of Vermont Fish & Wildlife. Do not litter the ice or shorelines, especially with potentially harmful things like fishing line, oil containers, styrofoam, etc. Know and follow the rules re baitfish to protect fish and prevent the release of non-native species. To help prevent the spread of VHS fish disease, "A person may buy, possess, transport and use only Vermont approved species of baitfish."

*Snowmobilers should respect the land generously allowed for trails by showing courtesy and not littering.

MWA Coming Events

- Tuesday, Jan 15 4:00 PM Board Meeting
- NC Career Center—public welcome
- April—Home Show MWA booth
- May 4—Native Species Plant Sale OCNRCD, Newport
- June—Annual Meeting Keynote on Wetlands
- Summer—NEK Healthy Waters Initiative
- WatershedFest

Editor's note: In the Spring 2012 Newsletter we failed to give Sylvia Beauregard credit for her outstanding photograph of a Loon at Eagle Point.



MWA at work cleaning up Eagle Point Refuge



MWA at work cleaning up Eagle Point Refuge



Touring Eagle Point on Mike Dunn Dedication Day



MWA T-Shirts available

Men's, women's & children's- all sizes \$20.00



MWA July 4th parade Float

Check out our new website:

www.memphremagogwatershedassociation.com

Let us know what you think and what you would like to see on the site.

Memphremagog Watershed Association

P O Box 1071

Derby, VT 05829

E-mail: memphremagogwatershed@gmail.com