

Aziscohos Lake Preservation Committee

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Noteworthy Member Activity

The Aziscohos Lake Preservation Committee (ALPC) is devoted to preserving the heritage of the headwaters of the Upper Androscoggin Watershed. This requires us to identify and mitigate intrusions that threaten the environmental, archeological, historical and recreational heritage of the greater Lake Aziscohos region. As a group, our efforts go well beyond watching the level of the lake and fighting for its improvement.

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Among the activities of ALPC volunteers in the past year are:

- picking up litter along the roads and trails, along streams and around the lake
- helping maintain the B17 memorial
- assisting in archeological digs at the Vail site
- copying and passing on articles and stories about the lake, the region and its heritage
- recording rainfall, weather and other natural phenomenon
- developing information on proper outhouse/ septic placement and management at camps
- assisting other watersheds with similar environmental issues
- being a regional voice for the lake and surrounding environment
- watching the level of the lake and fighting for improvement.

NEEDED

Since it is apparent that reaching a far-flung constituency is a problem, the ALPC is in need of a Newsletter/ Communications Director.

See page 5 for call for Volunteers!

Progress Report

Lack of funding has hampered some, but by no means all, of the objectives slated for 2003. We are confident that a combination of donations from individuals and organizations along with grants will allow us to address several projects temporarily waiting in the wings including:

"The Sweet Water Trust has awarded us a \$5,000 grant for the second year in a row." Pg 4

- Organize and incorporate ALPC as an independent entity with IRS with 501(c)3 status
- Follow-up environmental study and water quality monitoring
- Follow-up environmental study at Parmachenee Lake, water quality
- Follow-up mercury, methylmercury, sulfate and sulfide testing
- Game fish habitat and spawning study, mercury load levels in each fish species.
- Despite this year's austere budget, we have managed to:
- Complete and distribute the final report of the environmental impact study
- Initiate communication with FPLE to seek common ground and objectives
- Set up ALPC web site with financial and technical help of David Rosenberg.
- Participate in Northern Forest Alliance meetings to explore conservation options for 629,000 acres of area land being offered for sale by Mead Westvaco
- Implement daily lake level and flow monitoring
- Obtain and analyze daily lake level data from 1913-2002
- Complete a statistical analysis of historical daily lake level elevations 1950 - 2002
- Obtain daily precipitation data from 1950-present
- Write and publish half a dozen letters to the editor and opinion pieces in Maine papers and magazines.
- Obtain lower flows and reduced white water releases throughout July and August, achieving a higher more stable lake level through late summer and fall.
- -Host a late April conference at the Grange in Wilson's Mill and distribute a newsletter.

Lake Level

"Lake Level... This was the highest Labor Day level in the last seven years."

The lake reached its highest level on June 20th at 1518.25 feet, 3 feet below full pond. As of September 1st, the lake was still 1515.25 feet. This was the highest Labor Day level in the last seven years and the fourth highest since 1980. The Labor Day weekend lake level was 3.165 feet higher than average for the last 24 years. The October 1st lake level was 1510.0, the highest we've seen in four years. It is no accident that this alteration in lake level management has coincided with our exceptionally aggressive campaign to bring the Aziscohos Lake problems to the attention of the Maine public.

Precipitation

This has been a dry year when compared to the averages for the last twenty. Through September, we are off 7 inches in total precipitation, 25% below average year to date. So far, we've had approximately the same snow and rainfall as 2001! Remember the lake levels that year!

MeadWestvaco

MeadWestvaco has reached an agreement to sell 629,000 acres, including its holdings around Aziscohos, to a group of investors led by Wagner Forest Management, Ltd., Lyme, NH. Wagner has an enviable track record for long-term sustainable forestry and does not appear to be interested in land speculation or development. They will give MeadWestVaco a fifty year supply contract for the Rumford paper mill. The purchase price is expected to exceed \$ 125 million, somewhat over \$200 per acre. We, at Aziscohos, Parmachenee and Kennebago join all our Androscoggin watershed partners in applauding this hopeful negotiation.

Squeaky Wheel

For years Aziscohos Lake has been treated as the orphan child of the Upper Androscoggin Watershed. Our detractors continue to maintain that "after all, the lake is man made," a claim that can be made of myriad lakes and dammed up rivers in Maine. We can only affect lasting change if we make noise; the squeaky wheel gets the grease. For the last two years, we have been making noise. Results are now visible. Let's turn up the heat. We encourage everyone to write a letter every time they have a complaint about how the lake is managed, or how downstream flows create problems and mail it to:

Mr. F. Allen Wiley

Director, Business and Regulatory
Affairs of FPL Energy LLC

160 Capitol Street

Augusta, ME 04330

DID YOU KNOW!

Aziscohos Lake was originally called Sawyer Lake? This predecessor to "modern" Aziscohos was created in the mid 1880s by construction of a wooden dam. At low water the timbers and rock fill of the first dam is exposed about 200 feet before the present concrete dam. The story of the building of the current Aziscohos Dam which was a significant engineering triumph of the early 1900's can be found in the History of Wilson's Mills. Did you know the founder of Bosebuck Mountain Camps was Perley Flint? Originally it was called Flint's Camps. "Sports" were lodged in cabin tents on the shore of Sawyer Lake. Perley started his venture around 1900, ten years before the present dam was constructed. If you've never visited Bosebuck, you should. It has come a long way since the cabin tents. There are many interesting photographs of "them days." Today, they serve meals to camp owners, desiring a night out, as well as to their "sports".

Don Costello informs us that the Mulak Camp has changed hands and will be purchased by Ken Kimball who is a biologist associated with the AMC. Welcome Ken Kimball!

Better Communication

The co-chairs have heard from many members that we have not been great shakes in the communication department. **We apologize and want to correct that.** It is slow and expensive to print, stuff, and mail a newsletter to everyone who wants one. It would help if we could reduce our effort somewhat by informing those of you can receive it by e-Mail. So, to speed up and improve communication (and make your dollar go much further) we'd like to add your email address to our list of addresses receiving our newsletters and announcements. If you haven't already done so, please send an email message with your address to us, Don Green<dongreen@prexar.com>, or Alan Johnson <alan@rnjohnsoninc.com>. By the same token, if you wish an actual paper newsletter let us know that, too.

Loon Report

Optimal nesting conditions for loons include lake level stability from May 20th through August. **Despite the lake level being high, it was far from stable this year during this critical period**, rising 1 ½ feet between June 1st and the 20th, then fell 2 feet between the 20th and 7/15. By 7/31 it fell 2.3 feet from its 6/20 high point.

Fund Raising

To date we have raised just over \$17,500. In this total is a \$ 5,000 grant from the Crickett Foundation for last years work, \$ 5,000 from Sweet Water Trust, \$ 2,500 from ALCA, \$ 100 from the Norway Paris Fish and Game Club, \$ 250 from Black Brook Cove Campground and the balance (\$4650) from approximately 20 individuals/camps.

The Sweet Water Trust has awarded us a \$ 5,000 grant for the second year in a row. Unfortunately, next year their finances will prevent them from funding advocacy projects. We currently have 10 other grant applications pending late fall and early winter decisions. While we can be proud of our funding successes, we still need and look forward to your financial support. We cannot achieve a long-term change in lake level management and improve the environment without your help.

Please be as generous as possible or as you see fit.

Thank you in advance for considering this donation.

"We currently have 10 other grant applications pending late fall and early winter decisions."

FERC, DEP, LURC

As this newsletter goes to press, we are filing a new formal complaint of license violations with the three licenses and permit responsible for the hydro facility at Aziscohos. A pledge that the water management regime would not change is plainly an unequivocal and central element of the current license. The just completed, statistical analysis of daily lake levels proves that the lake level regime is significantly different since operation of the hydro facility commenced. At any given time of the year, it has changed two or more feet from the 1953-1984 mean. This data combined with the bathymetric map generated by our environmental impact study allows us to project the number of acres of shoreline, wetlands, sandbars and shallows exposed for any one foot drop in level at any lake elevation.

ALPC Recognition goes to....

The ALPC gratefully recognizes the [Sweet Water Trust](#) for awarding us a grant again this year, [Faye Soderberg](#) for clipping relevant news articles we might otherwise miss, [Dave Meeker](#) for generously donating his services on the lake level statistical analysis, [David Rosenberg](#) for generously donating his services setting up our web site, the [individuals who have supported our work financially this year](#), and the [Aziscohos Lake Campers Association](#) for their strong showing of moral support and financial commitment at the Labor Day meeting. Thank you all!

Volunteers Needed!

As well, we plan to incorporate the Lake Preservation Committee as a separate entity and must have a Board of Directors. Representation from each of the several settled areas of the Aziscohos Lake, from Parmachenee, from the Magalloway Valley. from businesses and sporting camps is being sought. Please submit your nominees and suggestions to Don Green or Alan Johnson.



Looking down from Big Buck Mountain, October 2003



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WEBSITE

Have you checked out our donated website?

<http://www.aziscohos.org/>

We are seeking to archive press articles for community access. Please send articles to Alan Johnson at the ALPC address to the left.

We're on the Web!
<http://www.aziscohos.org/>

AZISCOHOS LAKE PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

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**RECIPIENT NAME
STREET ADDRESS
ADDRESS 2
CITY, ST ZIP CODE**