

April 15, 2012

Letter from the LRA Board

As spring has arrived in Vermont it is time to once again update our membership with the events on and around Lake Rescue. The ice was off the lake this year on March 22, a new record! The previous earliest date was April 6, in 2010. While the winter months have taken some of us away from Vermont we have remained engaged with the ongoing challenges that we all will face this coming season. We have no definite answers or solutions at this time, but we have made some progress on a number of fronts.

At the end of October we submitted a proposal to Better Back Roads (BBR) for a grant to make further repairs on Archibald Lane. The aim of these repairs is to reduce runoff into the lake. In March we received word that the project on Archibald Lane was approved. We have been successful in receiving these grants for 4 years now and are grateful for the help.

In December we submitted a VT Water Quality Grant proposal. The proposal addressed some additional studies in the Patch Brook and Buffalo Creek watersheds. Subsequently, this proposal was turned down. Disappointments are an inevitable part of the process.

In early January we submitted an application to the VT Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to dredge the newly deposited Irene sediment to restore navigability in the lake. While state officials indicated that they will look favorably on our application, we are not yet near getting approval. Many technical problems remain. Most of the difficulties relate to the precise location and volume of the material to be dredged. We have identified two new sand bars that have appeared since the flood of last August: one is to the east of the river delta in Round Pond and the other is in the main lake, south and east of Discovery Island. After several false starts we now feel we can obtain the necessary measurements. We have retained our long term Milfoil diver, Chris Sheldon, to make a visual inspection of the sand bars, and we have retained the firm of Griggs-Lang Consulting Geologists to make the precise measurements necessary to obtain realistic cost estimates of the dredging. It is likely that Chris Sheldon will be able to do the dredging if and when we have state approval. This will be an important step forward in moving toward dredging, but it is probable that even in the best case the dredging will take place only at the end of the boating season in September.

Another issue that we are only slowly coming to understand is how much sediment will continue to flow our way due to devastating damage further upstream. In recent years we have concentrated our attention on the streams in our immediate neighborhood, namely, Patch Brook and Buffalo Creek, ½ - 1 mile upstream. Now we are learning that there has been so much devastation above Hawk Resort, 5-6 miles upstream, that we may be feeling the effects for years to come. The brook in question is called Money Brook and flows from the west crossing Rt. 100 about a mile north of Hawk in Plymouth. Below are before and after aerial photos of the brook flowing from left to right and the mud flat that was created in the meadow that was along Rt. 100.

This area remains highly unstable and muddy water continues to flow through the Black River in our direction. The state is very concerned about this but it is unknown at this time what can/will be done to address the problem. The washed out hillsides west of Rt. 100 are 50-60 ft. high in a rugged, inaccessible area.



New information is coming in all the time. Just in the last week Chris Sheldon did his inspection dive and was able to tell us that there is about 3 feet of water clearance at the sand bar south of the channel. The information from Round Pond is still being analyzed but it appears that the delta at the mouth of the river has grown and the additional sediment deposited is significant. The geologists are scheduled to visit the lake later this week. All new information will be posted on our website and Facebook page as it becomes available.

The water testing done last week is encouraging. There is no e.coli in the water and all other values are in the normal range for this time of year. The state monitors all lakes for water quality and the first readings taken this spring show that water clarity, while not as good as recent years, was also within normal levels; we can expect further improvement as we move toward summer. Although the water has a greenish color the fish appear to be back. We have had several reports of fish rising to the surface when it is calm. **This is very good news!! We have every reason to expect the water to be safe for swimming and fishing this summer.**

To summarize, we are still gathering information on the condition of the lake. Should dredging prove to be necessary we have done a great deal of research and feel more confident that all aspects are being evaluated and considered. If we are granted the dredging permit, paying for it will be a challenge. We will need to raise money to pay for this and to replenish the Lake Restoration Fund. In the coming month you will receive a request to donate to the 'Rescue Our Lakes' campaign. Please consider our request very seriously—this is a unique problem that all of us who love and enjoy Lakes Rescue and Pauline share. We are also seeking funding from other sources, such as local foundations. If you have information or can be of assistance as we pursue funding sources, please be in touch.

Sincerely,

Your LRA Board