

# Lake Breezes

Lake Rescue Association, P.O.Box 372, Ludlow, VT 05149  
www.lakerescue.org

June 2017

## Milfoil Update

Our divers, Cat and Shane Yoder, returned on May 23rd and have now been here a total of eight days finding and removing milfoil plants. They have removed about 150 - 200 milfoil plants from Round Pond, the Narrows and in northern Lake Rescue. In each case the divers attempt to remove the root to prevent regrowth, but this weed is persistent and even a small speck will regrow. We must be equally persistent in our efforts. Cat and Shane will be coming twice a week until August 25, for a total of 28 days. In addition, we will expand our 'greeter program' at the boat launch to cover more days and hours for boat inspections. We have budgeted nearly \$20,000 for this year's diver and greeter programs and expect to receive \$6,110 back from the state. (In 2016, we spent \$12,750 for the milfoil programs and received \$7,580 back from the state.)

In addition to our efforts we need your help. Here is what milfoil looks like:



- Grows in **shallow** water, less than 20 feet
- The top of the plant is often **red**
- Each leaf has **12-21 paired leaflets**

If you see this plant DO NOT try to remove it. Mark the location and email us at [lakerescueassn@gmail.com](mailto:lakerescueassn@gmail.com).

Thank you!

## In Other News...

- Bridge 99 spanning Branch Brook, located at the intersection of VT 100 and VT 103 has had its deck replaced. The superstructure and substructure of the 1966 bridge was in 'good' condition and therefore only the deck was replaced at a cost of \$910,584. The bridge should last another 30 - 40 years.
- Walker Bridge in the center of Ludlow is being replaced this summer. A pre-closure period began on May 27th, with one lane alternating traffic. Full closure will be for 35 days beginning on June 10. Workdays will include nights and weekends. Post-closure will be another 14 days with one lane alternating traffic. The local detour is North Depot St. to High St., in both directions.
- Later this summer, an old culvert will be replaced on Andover St., at the intersection of Hemingway Hill. There will be one-lane traffic on Andover St. during the construction.
- TDI New England Will be installing an electrical line along East Lake Rd., possibly next summer, 2018.

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## Save The Dates

**Lake Rescue Picnic**  
**July 1, Noon (Rain, July 2)**  
Adults \$12, Kids \$7  
RSVP to [MRB1@tds.net](mailto:MRB1@tds.net)

**Annual Meeting**  
**August 5, 9:00**  
Ludlow Community Center

## Unleashing Rivers

More than 14,000 dams dot the New England landscape. Built a century or two ago, they were engineering feats of the industrial revolution. Most are small, less than 12 feet high, and powered sawmills, textile mills and grist mills. But this manufacturing left behind an environmental mess. Before the Clean Water Act of 1972, workers would routinely dump leftover dyes into rivers and fumes from polluted water would peel paint from riverside homes. That has all changed over the past 45 years. As river waters have become cleaner, the attention of ecologists is now more focused on restoring natural fish habitats and migratory patterns. Fish habitats are truncated by dams and they cannot swim upstream to more desirable locations for egg laying. And, in summer water temperatures rise to unnatural levels and oxygen levels drop because of slow river flows. This has led to a movement to remove obsolete, and in many cases, dangerous dams.

Of the 1,200 or so dams in Vermont, at least 200 have been identified as derelict, according to The Nature Conservancy, Vermont. On Lake Rescue, the first dam at the southern end was built in 1835 for the purpose of generating water power. We don't know who used this water power in the early days but in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, until about 1950, the water power was used for a woolen mill in Cavendish. When there wasn't enough water flow to process cloth in Cavendish, the flash boards (temporary boards in the dam which exist to this day) would be removed to increase the water flow until increased rainfall permitted replacing the boards.

While ponds created by dams have been part of the Vermont landscape for generations, maintaining aging dams is both costly and in most cases no longer serves a useful purpose. Only about 150 dams are still generating electricity, helping with flood control or creating a reservoir for water supply. Another 300-400 serve recreational purposes. Our Red Bridge dam is in this category as Lake Rescue has been a popular recreational destination since the early 1900's.

With many aging dams, it is better to remove the dam than spend money shoring it up for an uncertain future. There are many benefits, including restoring natural river flows and natural fish migration patterns. Not only ocean-going fish like salmon and shad travel up rivers to reproduce. Many other species of fish migrate

to find their ideal habitat for spawning. All species of trout and several species of bass migrate from larger rivers like the Connecticut River up smaller tributaries in search of the right habitat to lay eggs. Rather than trucking fish upstream to "stock" rivers, restoring the natural flow allows this to happen naturally, and requires no human

intervention. There are recreational benefits as well for anglers and paddlers as waterways are lengthened. Removing a dam is, of course, no simple matter. It requires planning from an engineering standpoint as well as community support and financial resources. Vermont has a Dam Task Force which facilitates dam removal or modification. It is a cooperative effort among federal and state agencies, private organizations and individuals. But it remains a time consuming process with on average only 3 dams per year being removed. A typical dam removal project takes 2 ½ to 3 years for completion and VT ANR estimates that the overall costs are typically in the hundred thousands. Much of the funding for these projects comes from non-profit organizations. As an example, in September of 2016, a five-foot dam was removed from the Third Branch of the White River in downtown Randolph. It took several years of collaboration of community groups, like the White River Partnership, State agencies and conservation groups. Removing the dam opened up an additional 98 miles of the river for migrating fish and recreation at a cost of \$200,000. The native brown trout attempted swimming upstream but could only jump one foot and was precluded from migrating further upstream.

Now nearly 100 miles of the river is opened up to anglers and paddlers. Here's a short video about the dam removal in Randolph:

[http://www.wcax.com/story/33086101/demolition-day-for-a-randolph-dam?autoStar\\_t=true&topVideoCatNo=default&clipId=12728027](http://www.wcax.com/story/33086101/demolition-day-for-a-randolph-dam?autoStar_t=true&topVideoCatNo=default&clipId=12728027)

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Source: Nature Conservancy Magazine, Dec 2016/ Jan 2017, pp.50 - 57;  
FreeVtRivers.org; WCAX TV, Burlington; VT Digger, Sept 13, 2016 and Oct 5, 2016; Vt Journal of Environmental Law, EcoPerspectives Blog, June 15, 2015; Wikipedia, Lake Rescue, Vermont.

## Neighborhood Concerns: Buoy Vandalism

Your safety is an important concern for the LRA. Over time, our lakes have become more congested during busy summer months, with swimmers and small and large craft boaters enjoying the lakes in increasing numbers. Serious accidents do occur occasionally on Vermont lakes - we have been fortunate so far to have been largely spared from a major tragedy and we want to keep it that way.

As most of you know, for many years, LRA has placed "no-wake" buoys in a few places around Lake Rescue. These buoys are very important safety markers that protect swimmers, small craft boaters and properties in coves and shallow areas from the dangers, congestion and wake impacts of high speed boating.

Our lake community has unfortunately been plagued by vandalism of the buoy at the entrance to Slack's Cove, at the southwest corner of the Lake, over the past several years. This buoy has been regularly damaged or removed, we believe by the same persons. Each time we have to replace that buoy, it costs the LRA (*meaning you!*) at least \$500. We would like for this to stop, and we ask if anyone sees any suspicious activity or has any information to please contact the Ludlow Police, at 228-4411. They are aware of the situation. If you have any other suggestions or ways to help, please contact the LRA.

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### The Weston Dam and Mill

Visitors to the Mill can observe the working of one of very few functioning hydro-powered mills in New England, milling grain just as was done 75 years ago. The turbine that drives the Mill can be viewed, as can the intricate system of gears, pulleys and belts that transfer power to the grindstones. Milling demonstrations are given frequently when the museum is open, Saturday and Sunday afternoons in July, August, September and through Oct. 13. Also Wednesday afternoons in July, August and through Sept. 11. Call 824-5294 for more information.

**Lake Rescue Association**

P.O. Box 372  
Ludlow, VT 05149

**Website:**

[www.LakeRescue.org](http://www.LakeRescue.org)

**Promoting Water Safety,  
Environmental Education  
&  
Improved Water Quality**

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Lake Rescue Association

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The Lake Rescue Association is a 501c3  
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