

Dexter Lakes Association

DLA ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

JULY 2024

Message from the Dexter Town Manager

It was an interesting year on Lake Wassoogee. The 2023 summer and fall were very wet and the start of winter was warm. The water levels were high through the entire summer and into fall. We now have a council member observing the water levels and hopefully we can become more consistent with our monitoring in the future.

Due to the warmer temperatures last fall and early winter, the lake didn't have any safe ice for fishing until mid-January. The fishing derby was a success, but again the warmer winter weather resulted in a short ice fishing season. The catch during our short season was good but the number of smelts continues to be down. This smelt shortage concerns the future of the salmon in the lake because their diet consists mainly of smelts.

Some exciting things are happening around the lake this summer, beginning with the revitalization of our public beach, the addition of a dock, as well as swimming lessons this summer. Although there has been a significant amount of work completed this spring, there is still a lot more we would like to do in order to be considered finished. Please check out our new designs for the beach area located at the Town Office and if you would like to donate to these efforts to clean up this beautiful land, please contact the Dexter Development Association at 924-0180.

One of the prominent issues facing our beach is the presence of Canadian Geese, but this year we received permits to help eradicate our geese issues and minimize the population. The lethal take is not to be the primary means of control. Active hazing, harassment or other non-lethal techniques must continue in conjunction with any lethal take of migratory birds. We will continue these efforts moving forward in years to come.

Dexter Sunrise Kiwanis will again be hosting the work camp kids on June 26th at the beach for a cookout, games, swimming and kayaking.

The plan is to still hold our parades, both road and boat, on the 4th of July, with our fireworks being launched on July 3rd. We may need to reconsider where the fireworks are launched due to the height of the trees now interfering with the view of the show.

Thank you all for all you do to help us keep our lakes clean and safe. Enjoy your summer.

Sincerely, Trampas King

Dexter, Town Manager



BOAT PARADE

JULY 4TH

12:00 PM

GENERAL

MEMBERSHIP

MEETING

WEDNESDAY

JULY 10

VFW HALL

CEDAR ST.

SOCIAL TIME

6:30 PM

MEETING

7:00 PM



Dexter Lake Association



The purpose of the DLA is help preserve and protect the health of Lake Wassoogee and Echo Lake.

DLA Board Members

President, Dan Hutchins	207-717-9091	Director, Ron Apel	207-924-0180
Vice President Cathi Frost	207-924-7032	Director, JC Forgotson	207-232-6647
Treasurer, Michael Ann Wells,	301-704-7107	Director, Valerie Silverman	561-309-5977
Membership, Adam Briggs	401-524-0852	Director, Debra Lee Morse	207-512-0596
Secretary, Ruth Fogg	207-924-0180	Director Heather Mullen	207-240-0062
Advisor, Janie Snyder	207-924-3823		

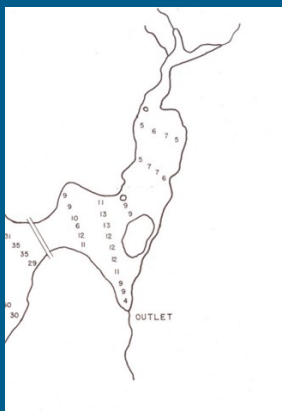


Good News!!

The Dexter Lakes Association website: www.dexterlakesassociation.com is being updated.

Great stuff! Check it out! We want your photos and stories.

Lake Depth of the Little Lake Wassookeag Max Depth 13'



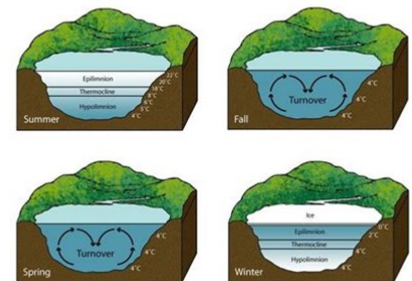
Winter News

Ice In: Jan 2, 2024, 7 days earlier than last year
Ice Out: April 11, 2024, 7 days earlier than last year
 Average ice thickness: 14 inches (approx) compared to about 17 inches last year.
 In general, the fishing was not the best this winter with very few smelts, like last year. A warm February resulted in the melting of the ice along the shore and ice shacks were off the lake about 2 weeks earlier than normal.
 The Dexter Fish and Game Ice Fishing Derby was held on Feb 16-18, 2024 (a month later than usual). A 5.5 lb 27" togue was caught along with salmon, pickerel, bass and perch. No brook trout were caught that weekend.

The Thermocline and Lake Turn-over – Cathie Frost

We observed Mother Nature at work several years ago when our grandson, Matthew, was seven years old. We were opening camp on Lake Wassookeag over the Memorial Day weekend and Matt wanted to swim. The water was cold and Matt ventured into the lake just to his knees. When he came out of the water he looked like he was wearing socks because his legs were covered with silt. We had observed what is called "lake turnover." During the summer, the warm upper water of the lake is separated from the colder deep layer by a thin layer called the thermocline. The thermocline prevents the warmer upper layer of water from mixing with deep cool and dense water. Then again in the winter, the thermocline separates the warmer deeper water from the cold upper layer. However in the Fall and Spring the water temperature is more uniform throughout and there is no thermocline layer, so when the winds blow forcefully, the lake mixes and does a turn-over. During turnover, the upper and bottom layers of the lake mix and the clarity of the water diminishes as debris from the bottom rises to the surface. Oxygen from the surface water mixes with nutrients trapped near the bottom and mix freely throughout the lake, sometimes emitting a sulfurous or rotten egg odor. The twice-a-year lake turnover allows oxygenation of the deeper regions of the lake where the oxygen has been depleted by bacteria breaking down organic matter that had settled down to the bottom. This seasonal mixing is crucial for the health of the lake, fish and all the plants and animals who depend on the water.

Lake Turnover



Please, no pesticide use along the lake!



The use of pesticides on lawns along the lake is discouraged! Lawn-care chemicals used to wipe out tough weeds are toxic to wildlife, humans and pets. They tend to be very water-soluble and contain toxic compounds that directly harm aquatic life as well. They also contain phosphorus and nitrogen that increase unwanted algae and plant growth in the summer. When the algae dies at the end of summer, bacteria consume large amounts of oxygen to decompose the algae, depriving fish and other aquatic organisms (think smelts) of much needed oxygen. Many fish and aquatic invertebrates are so sensitive to their surroundings that it doesn't take a large amount of change in oxygen or other chemical content to kill them.



Sign on a property on the Big Lake; the little ermine on the right can't read signs.

News from Augusta

Janet Mills has signed some very important bills to help protect our lakes

LD2101: An Act to Strengthen Shoreland Zoning Enforcement. In order to protect our shorelines, this bill gives Maine towns the power to enforce shoreland zoning ordinances and to claim a lien against the offending property for all costs incurred with a violation of a shoreland ordinance. This bill was passed to help keep our lakes healthy by preventing the disturbance of the natural shoreline.

LD 1342 An Act to Increase Funding to combat Aquatic Invasive species: Beginning January 1, 2025, the Lake and River Protection boat sticker (also called the "Milfoil Sticker") will increase from \$15 to \$25 for Maine residents and from \$45 to \$60 for non-residents. Then again in 2028, these fees will increase from \$25 to \$35 for residents and from \$60 to \$75 for nonresidents. The change will generate funds to help prevent and combat invasive species in our lakes.

LD 2284 – An Act to Limit Wakesurfing: This bill prohibits a person from operating a motorboat **in less than 15 feet of water or within 300 feet** of the shoreline when the motorboat is engaged in a wakesurfing activity. This means that wakesurfing is not permitted in Little Wassookeag, since the deepest portion of the lake is 13 ft. Boat owners can be fined \$100.

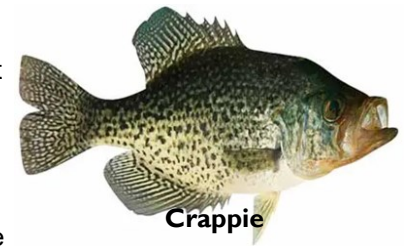
News from Jim Nichols owner of PJs Bait Shop

The Dexter Fish and Game Association donated two picnic tables to Lakeside Restaurant and will be rebuilding the pavilion over one picnic table at the Big Lake boat launch area and plan to build a new pavilion over the second table. They are also fixing the dock and replacing the cement ramp blocks of the boat launch on the Little Lake.

Smelts. The lack of smelts again this year is a big concern to all since so many fish and water fowl depend on them. Jim reported that the Maine State Biologist came at the end of April to check smelt eggs in several areas on the Big Lake which typically have spawning smelt. There were a few areas that had a few eggs such as the picnic tables, Frye Cove (intersection of Shore Rd and Rt 23), Merrill's Cove (next cove up), and Saw Mill Cove (opposite the horse farm). There were no eggs on SuckerBrook. When the eggs were laid the water was very high, however the lake level lowered very rapidly after spawning which caused a lot of eggs to be exposed and die. In the past, biologists imported smelt eggs from other areas but folks from those areas complained they were losing their smelt eggs, so smelt egg stocking has been stopped. Another reason the smelts are diminishing is the recent introduction of non-native crappie. When the biologist caught a crappie and checked its stomach, it was full of smelts. With more prey, the smelts have a harder time keeping their numbers up. Some 15" crappie have been caught in the Little Lake. They are good eating, similar to haddock, so go get 'em anglers.



Smelts



Crappie



Lake Level Control

The level of the lake is controlled by the Dexter Utility Department which implements a Lake Management Plan Schedule produced in May 2006 by engineers of MBP Consulting. This plan has been approved by the Department of Environment Protection and the Army Corps of Engineers. Basically the plan ensures a minimum of 3.5 cfs (cubic feet/sec) of water to keep water in the stream but no more than 200 cfs to prevent flooding of the downstream area. Typically there is more rain in the fall/winter/spring, so the flash boards are removed to allow more water to flow out. During summer, the flash boards are installed and a 10' valve on the bottom of the Dam is used to keep the minimum flow downstream. If we get more rain than normal during the summer as we did last year, it will take a bit longer than in the winter for the lake level to return to the target level. In general, the more water in the lake, the better in order to keep the lake cool and slow algae growth. The photo below was taken after heavy rain on Memorial Day. The lake level is right at the target level of 434' for late May. As summer continues, the target level drops to 433-433.5'.

Dexter Lakes Association

49 Bear Lane

Dexter, Maine 04930

Calendar of Events

Wed, June 26, Work Camper Fun Day at Beach, Kayaks needed 11 am.

Sun, June 30: Hancock County Bassers Tournament at Wassookeag

Thurs, July 4: Town Parade with DLA float at 10 am and Decorated Boat Parade at 12:00 noon. Boaters should meet at the causeway bridge. FMI contact Dan Hutchins, 207-717-9091.

Wed, July 10: Annual Meeting which starts at 6:30 social gathering, 7 pm Meeting at the VFW Hall on Cedar St, Dexter. Open to all. FMI contact Ruth Fogg 924-0180.

Sat, July 20, Annual Loon count 7:00 - 7:30 am. FMI contact "JC" Forgotson at 207-232-6447.

Sat, Aug 3, Kiwanis Cruise-in at the Ridgeview Middle School 10-2.

Sat, Aug 10, Dexter Red Hot Dog Days and Wings-for-Wishes Fly-In

Sat, Aug 3 - Aug 15, Invasive Plant Survey, FMI contact Dan Hutchins 207-717-9091. Volunteers needed for both lakes and training is provided. Identification of non-native invasive plants is crucial to maintaining the health of the lake.

Gift of Membership

Let's continue the Dexter Lakes Association's great tradition of lake stewardship by sponsoring a new member this year. It makes a great gift for the next generation.

If you have not paid 2024 dues, please send \$10 per member to

**Adam Briggs
49 Bear Lane Dexter ME 04930**

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More Good News!!

The Dexter Development Association (DDA) which used to be called the Dexter Revitalization Committee, whose major fund-raiser is the Red Hot Dog Festival, is very busy with the town beach area by Lakeshore Restaurant. Keep your eyes open for changes like the new dock which has been donated and kids taking swimming lessons.