



The Chocorua Lake Association Newsletter

Fall-Winter 2007

BOX 105, CHOCORUA, N.H. 03817

To preserve the quality of Chocorua Lake and its viewscape, in partnership with the larger communities. Draft mission statement

Substitute Editor: Toby Page

The Annual Meeting

At the annual meeting, the voting members amended the CLA bylaws to allow associate as well as voting members to serve on the CLA Board of Directors. This allows Becky verPlanck and others outside the Basin to serve on the board consistent with the Bylaws. A second motion was tabled.

Blair Folts, of the Green Mountain Conservation Group, was our speaker and gave us insightful ideas for the retreat and our future.

Larry Nickerson reported that discussions with the Selectmen on the historic railings of the Narrows Bridge are proceeding well. The town's funding for the bridge's safety may be possible next year.

The Retreat

Jim Bowditch, Acting CLA President. On October 8, the CLA and CLCF boards/trustees met in Runnells Hall for a 6-hour retreat to share ideas about the missions of each organization, our visions for the future of the Chocorua Lake basin/watershed and the steps needed to realize those visions. The meeting was very ably facilitated by Dave Chase, an experienced consultant from Sandwich.

1. We started with an exercise in which were listed what those present thought the area should look/be like in 2048. The date was chosen because each organization has been in existence forty years, so look ahead another forty. In no order of priority, the following were listed: the same view(s) as now; all land, shore and watershed protected; water quality and wildlife habitats preserved; threats to the area known and responded to, dealing with inevitable changes; natural resources preserved as appropriate; useful/necessary partners identified and effectively utilized; and an effective financial plan in place.

2. To bring everyone up-to-date on basic issues, Neely, Toby, Peg Wheeler, and Pat Miller made brief presentations (see statements for the Newsletter below).

3. Then we broke up into groups to look at properties in the watershed that were deemed necessary to either acquire or get easements on. This led to discussion about various "lenses" that might influence priorities: protecting water quality, fauna and flora habitats, views, etc.

4. After lunch, we reconvened in groups to talk about ten-year, five-year and one-year goals. Dave Chase suggested that we focus on necessary resources: human, natural, financial,

informational and organizational. We came up with some immediate things: start community, state and national outreach for establishing a broader volunteer group; the need, in both organizations, for an annual as well as a long-term operational and financial plan, a set of immediate and long-term objectives and discussion of what organizational structure best serves the preservation/conservation goals we all share.

The retreat was, in my view, a valuable step in the right direction: the cooperative effort to conserve the natural and aesthetic gifts we, our children, grandchildren and many others will be able to savor and enjoy long after we at the retreat have gone. It is an enormous and humbling task. We have made impressive strides in that direction, but clearly more must be done. The retreat has helped to point the way. Now we need to follow up, hopefully with the community and the younger generations pitching in to help the vision become a reality.



Photo by Peg Wheeler. Left to right: Betsey Watt, Neely Lanou, Steve Weld, Don Johnson, Donna Veilleux, Larry Nickerson

Neely Lanou, CLCF President. David Chase ably facilitated the joint CLCF and the CLA Boards in a series of wide-ranging discussions on what each organization has done in the past and what the challenges are now out there facing our efforts to protect the Lake and its whole watershed, extending up to the Chocorua River's beginnings in the WMNF. It was obvious that both organizations shared a common goal of maintaining the Lake's high water quality and the basic Basin watershed as well as determining new standards of resource protection on covenanted as well as CLCF-owned lands. Each organization learned more of the

complexities involved as we tried to envisage what we hope to accomplish in the next forty years.

With the help of some handsome and fascinating maps provided by Pat Miller (with a lot of assistance from various sources including David Little), every participant had a chance to grasp the extent of properties that have already been protected in the Basin as well as vulnerable properties, especially north of the Lake, that lack such protection. While an attempt at prioritization was made, we as usual have to be alert to whatever and whenever an opportunity may present itself.

A comprehensive list of major and minor tasks undertaken by both organizations was drafted by the pre-retreat working committee and discussed. From this, the next steps will include working up an annual operations plan – who does what and under whose auspices. The CLCF should have an annual maintenance plan, particularly for the heavily used Grove, Island and beach areas. We should investigate taking a bio-inventory on all our lands. We should increase CLCF's community outreach efforts, for example, by producing our new trail map, a brochure and input for the Chocorua Lake webpage valiantly maintained by Toby. We should ensure the younger generation's participation in our work to pump up our volunteer base and ensure our future's stability.

As a means of protecting our credibility with the community and with increasing legal restrictions, the CLCF has accepted the guidelines suggested by the Land Trust Alliance. Among those discussed at our meeting are increased financial controls and long-range financial planning. This could involve creative means to support increased monitoring and stewardship costs once we have effectively finished our acquisition phase.

The retreat gave us all an opportunity to better know both the CLCF and CLA and to offer a base of shared goals for the place we all cherish and want to protect for the generations to come. Some of the specific means to achieve these goals are known, others remain as follow-up tasks which will be spelled out over the coming months.

Toby. Because of a long term *demographic shift* in the summer community – fewer childhood summers, more week and weekend visits, and more dispersed families; and an *economic shift*, with increasing property values, increasing taxes, and increasing development, we are facing the challenge of a more dispersed volunteer base along with increased development and economic pressures. But there are opportunities as well: increasing commitments to conservation, more organizations, more partnerships, more grants, and more donations of effort and money (and more competition for these resources). With the future in the balance, Pat Miller was right in proposing the Retreat and making it happen.

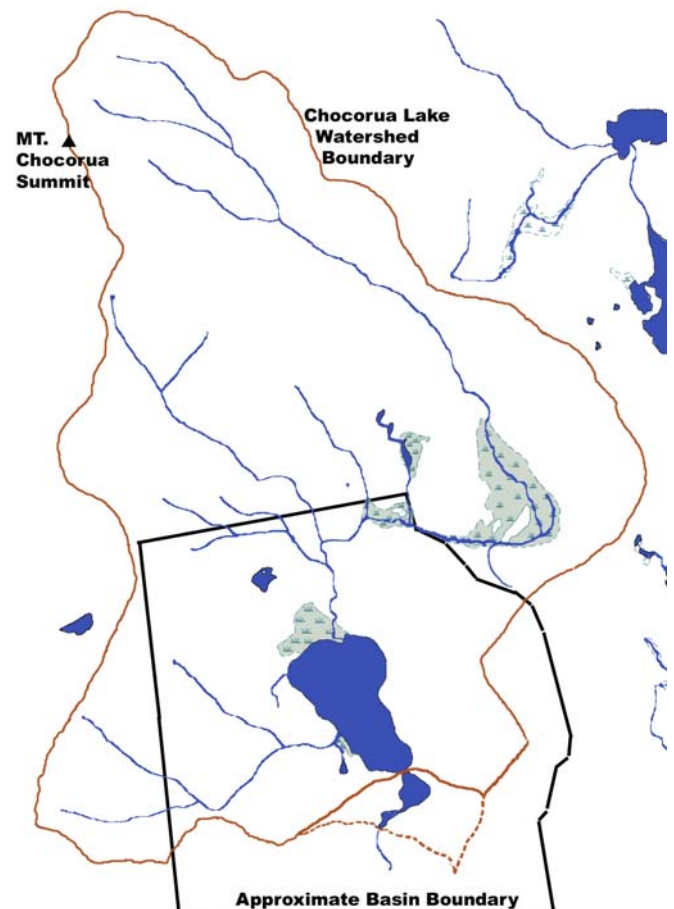
I learned much in the preparation of the Retreat, in meeting with managers of the Squam Lakes Association, Squam Lakes Conservation Society, Green Mountain Conservation Group, and Aquidneck Land Trust. I found that all four groups raised much of their funding from grants, and all had paid staff and executive managers financed from this, combined with dues and donations. All operated 12 months a year.

Pat Miller. Both boards worked throughout the day to develop a long range vision for the Chocorua Lake watershed,

and began the process of developing an implementation plan. Additionally, several board members gave presentations on the "state of the watershed" including topics such as water quality, natural resources mapping, current easements, legal overview of CLCF's responsibilities, and the Land Trust Alliance standards. There was much discussion regarding the process by which future land protection opportunities should be prioritized, and regarding the funding and the human resources required to sustain our organizations. The group will meet again in the early part of 2008 to finalize the strategic plan.

What's the Basin?

In establishing the CLA and CLCF, the founders used "basin" to mean a particular area around the lake (see the map). This area is part of the definition of a Voting Member of the CLA. Sometimes, though, "basin" is used to mean the watershed, which is a bigger area. Confusing. The map and more details are on the website www.chocorualake.org. On the website go to the heading CONSERVATION.



Toward the Future

Here is a “vision statement,” developed over last year, and refined in preparation and at the Retreat. I hope others will offer their “vision statements” and the Newsletter can facilitate a dialogue. The invitation goes to not just those who went to the Retreat but to others as well.

Toby. The goals are the same as they were first stated in the second paragraph of the CLA Articles of Association in 1968: to preserve the quality of Chocorua Lake and its viewshed (also posted on the website under ABOUT US). The goals are widely agreed upon by members and friends of the CLA and CLCF. But do we have enough resources within the Basin? Can the CLCF get enough donations of property and easements and raise enough money to purchase other needed easements? Do we have enough volunteers to do the needed projects and management? Do we have enough resources within the Basin to have a paid staff? The answer I think is no.

We had strong support within the CLA and CLCF for the Berms and Swales project, but we wouldn't have gotten the job done without partnering with 11 other organizations outside the Basin. We had essential support from the federal government, the state, and the town, including a skillful moderator and two grants of \$25,000 each from the NH Dept. of Environmental Services.

We had an amazing capital campaign with 197 donors, almost all of whom were from the Basin, but now the fund is about half spent, and there is still much more to be done.

These two experiences have convinced me that while we need to maintain and strengthen the community inside the Basin, we also need to reach out to the larger communities. It is not impossible. Chocorua Lake and Mountain are icons in the affections of the state and beyond. Now that the Old Man of the Mountain is gone this is even more true.

A CLA Wish List

At the Retreat, and in its preparation, we discussed the option of a merger between the CLA and the CLCF, partly to solve communication and coordination difficulties. An increasing number of small conservation organizations are outsourcing the management of easements by large conservation organizations, which have resources for the large tasks of regulatory compliance and other legal work. Such outsourcing might make a merger more feasible, but it might also be too expensive to undertake. Alternatively, the Squam Lakes Association and the Squam Lakes Conservation Society (the organizations somewhat parallel the CLA and CLCF), appear to have solved communication and coordination problems by having paid executive directors sharing the same office building. This is about as far as we got in discussing a merger option.

Currently, and at least for the near future, the CLA has discussed and attempted to implement a wish list of committees for getting things done. No doubt the list will change, as the CLA-CLCF strategic plan develops, and as some projects get done and others emerge. The committees do not have to be committees of directors. They can include

anyone who wants to contribute. Here's a list I have suggested over the last 14 months:

- Water Quality Committee (lake, watershed, milfoil, monitoring, data analysis, and remediation projects)
- Narrows Bridge Committee (to partner with the town in designing and constructing historic but strong railings)
- Newsletter Production Committee (duplicating, address labels, mailing)
- Database Committee (ECCO, need to construct a manual so that if Alex Moot is not around we can still get the Newsletter out, update the records, etc.)
- Website Committee (content & postings, also need a manual of a limited set of Dreamweaver and Photoshop operations, so that if Toby is not around the website can still be updated and maintained)
- Outreach Committee (Tamworth, Albany, Madison, state legislature)
- Grant Writing Committee (increasingly a critical operation; we need especially now a grant proposal to LLBean to help finance the bridge railings, and a grant to Lake Hosting, to monitor boat access and other milfoil control; as the Fund for Chocorua Lake is almost half used, the CLA-CLCF need new sources of funds; grants are now a key resource for other conservation organizations)
- Publicity Committee (newspaper articles, etc.)
- Social Events Committee (picnics, functions, events, etc., without a community there is no CLA)
- Volunteer Leadership Committee

Some of these wishes have come true, and some are in transition. Special thanks to Tom Peters and Larry Nickerson for vitalizing the Narrows Bridge Committee and working closely with the town. Special thanks to Dwight Baldwin for his work on a grant to control erosion and compaction in the Grove, and to make it more beautiful (note that Dwight is not a CLA director). Special thanks to Harriet Hofheinz for offering to lead the Newsletter Production Committee and also head the Volunteer Leadership Committee. On the latter here are her own words:

Happy to Announce a Volunteer Task Force Initiative

Harriet Hofheinz. As many of you have noticed, both the CLA and the CLCF have grown both in scope and in duties and responsibilities over these past years. This speaks to the leadership of our two organizations, but these increased responsibilities also require an increased amount of help from our Chocorua Lake community. In an attempt to answer some of these needs in a more organized and meaningful way, I

have agreed to take a stab at interesting more folks in helping out in voluntary commitments that suit their interests, skill levels, and time constraints. Our intent is to bring in more help from the entire community; a wider sweep than just the known stewards that have committed so much time and effort to so many endeavors over the years.

In an attempt to harness a wider scope of community people power for all the many tasks that need doing around the Basin, I am happy to announce that I have pulled together a great team to assist in this endeavor. They are: Steve Lanou, Nancy Roosa, Charlie Worcester, Rebecca Bradford and Penny Wheeler Abbot. As a team, we will begin to formulate a volunteer task force. This initiative will be slow at first as we ascertain all the various tasks with the duties and time involved that are needed. Some will be more intense and timely than others, of course. But if we are successful, we hope to match more folks with tasks that they would feel comfortable with and enjoy doing and with a time commitment that is realistic.

I believe everyone is committed to the Chocorua basin in some fashion or another and would like to help out in its preservation. We will attempt to be the agent to help you do just that. We will be back to you in the Spring CLA newsletter with a more organized format, but in the meantime, if you are interested in helping more, please email me with your skills such as your power saw/ tool ability, your archival ability, your swimming underwater ability, your trail blazing/ boundary marking ability, to name only a few of the tasks. And your availability/time constraints, your name, email, phone #, address and anything else you think appropriate. Harriet Hofheinz Hhofheinz@erols.com 617-868-0294, 10 Berkeley Place, Cambridge, MA 02138

Another Volunteer Effort

Harriet Hofheinz. Columbus Day weekend is always a hectic time for us Chocorua folk: getting in the wood, putting houses to bed for the winter and what not. Despite such activity, 22 people showed up at 8:30 sharp on Saturday morning and within 2 hours collected 35 bags of highway trash. Pretty impressive! There weren't many trash treasures found to speak of, with the exception of one lovely whole Monarch butterfly obviously killed by a car passing by and a discarded fanny pack. The other litter was extremely bad publicity for such organizations as Dunkin Donuts, Marlboro cigarettes, Subway and Doritos (wrappers), Bud lite (cans), and Green Mt. coffee (cups). All agents of litter!

Anyway, a thumbs up for the Columbus Day Rt. 16 trash pick up! **Many thanks goes to:** Jim Bowditch, Becky Ver Planck, John Wheeler, Martha (found the Monarch) and Claude Wintner, Anne Zwart, Anne Twitchell, Donna Veilleux, Evie Gillis (found the fanny pack), Harriet Hofheinz, Barbara Worcester, Dwight Baldwin, Peggy Rubel, Neely Lanou, Len Wheeler, Katie Wheeler, Nancy Mathews, Steve Weld, Theo and Toby Page, Kate Lanou, and our fearless leader, Bob Griffin. Hope I haven't forgotten anyone.

Wildlife Notes

Harriet Hofheinz. My sightings are short and sweet this fall of 2007. Many of you reported seeing 2 fawns roaming around the Basin this summer and early fall. There seemed no Mom in tow, but they both seemed content and somewhat fearless. It seems to me we are seeing many more deer than say 25 to 30 years ago. Speculation may be that the warmer winters over the past 30 years or so have brought the mainstream deer population further north.

A number of Ospreys were sighted late this summer and through into Columbus Day weekend. Only one Eagle was sighted Labor Day weekend. Probably more slipped through when no one was looking. Just to clear up one probable misconception. Bald Eagles, the eagle of choice and breeding here in New England, don't develop their white head and tail feathers until almost their third year. The immature eagles are dark all over and can be confused with Golden Eagles, which are only occasionally seen here and then, mostly in the winter.

Sharp-shinned Hawks, (a smallish Accipiter about the size of a pigeon) were probably breeding off of the Wheeler's field this year. They are a bird that has been on a decline in recent years. A pair was spotted there and along the waterfront all summer. My bird feeder was attacked by one later this fall. These birds are expert at moving very fast on their prey which at my house was a Goldfinch peacefully eating at my feeder.

Please let me know of any sightings you might have had. As always, I can be reached at: Hhofheinz@erols.com

Living with Bears

This fall Alan Phenix photographed this cute little guy by the Pages' apple grove just behind the barn. I wonder if this is the same cub Theo and I saw on the Heron Pond Trail a month earlier.



Theo and I and Tulip, our daughter's Australian sheep dog, were walking back down the Heron Pond Trail, about 100 yards from the junction with the Middle Trail when Tulip plunged off the trail barking. In a couple of seconds a cub appeared from the woods and started trotting down the trail towards us. Then it turned, trotted back toward the trail

junction, and climbed a tree. Mama crossed the trail at astonishing speed and disappeared. It all happened in about 6 seconds. Then it was quiet.

Earlier this summer, Jersey Nickerson was walking down Watkins Way from Bickford Heights, when a large bear jumped down from a tree, close by. A standoff, possibly a cub nearby. Jersey raised her walking sticks above her head and clacked them together. The bear was impressed by Jersey's suddenly larger stature and disappeared into the woods.

Bear books offer many tips, some well known, some contrary to the current wisdom. "Don't get between the mother and a cub" (every one knows this one, but mother can be with her cubs for years). "Don't run from a bear it, it stimulates its 'catch prey instinct'." "You can't outrun a bear" (obvious when you've seen one flash by you). "Don't climb a tree, it stimulates its 'catch prey instinct'." "You can't outclimb a bear" (but a few years ago Thad Berrier heard a faint call in the woods for help, he tracked down the sound to find a neighbor treed, with an angry mother and at the bottom and a cub in a nearby tree, so climbing a tree works sometimes). "If you have a close encounter and have walking sticks, raise them above your head and clack them." "Bells and talking on the trail work." "Bears avoid groups of hikers; a group of six is very unlikely to see a bear." "Pepper spray works better than bells but be careful not to spray upwind" (pepper spray costs about \$40 a can, a can runs out in about 6 seconds, and you need a can to practice with).

Although records suggest that no black bear has killed anyone in New Hampshire, the books also say that black bears sometimes maul people, or (rarely) kill or even eat people. It is better for the bear to know you are there than be surprised. They like to slip away quietly, leaving you unaware of their presence.

If you unexpectedly find yourself walking toward a bear, stop. Bears' fight or flight decision begins to kick in when you are about 100 yards away. Make some noise and walk slowly diagonally away. Not such a good idea to have dogs off leash (risk of dogs getting scared, running back to you with a bear in pursuit).

New Hampshire bears are becoming bolder and less fearful of humans. Possibly this is a result of their decreased habitat, higher human populations, and more feeding of bears; possibly a result of development.

Another Mystery

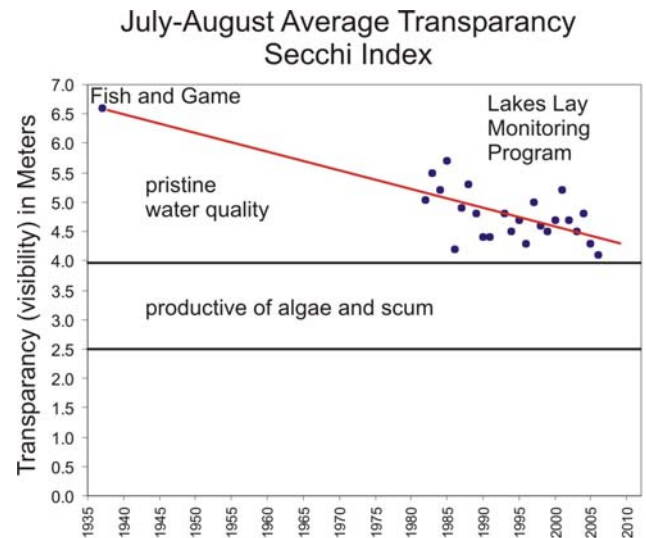
The average water clarity has deteriorated in the months of July and August, from 1982 to the present. These are the years of the volunteer monitoring under the Lakes Lay Monitoring Program. Moreover, the trend is in line with the Fish and Game's single monitoring in July 1937. Crossing the mesotrophic boundary means increasing algae and scum in the lake.

But when we graph the yearly transparency from all the months from which there are observations, there is little or no decline from 1982-2006. What is happening in July and August?

Possibly the effect could be from changes in rainfall and runoff patterns, and the spring and fall flushing, sediment

mobilization, and wetlands buffers affecting the summer differently from the spring and fall.

Possibly the "July-August effect" is from the summer's greater lake usage, more second home usage in the summer, and more disturbance of streams in the watershed.



Possibly the effect is from temperature. July and August are hotter months than May, June, September, and October, when other observations were made. It seems like a stretch, but possibly the "July-August effect" is a local impact of global warming. Under this hypothesis, with warmer summer lake temperatures there is accelerated growth of algae, and decreasing transparency. True, the lake water temperature might increase in the spring and fall too, so one might think that when these months are included in the graph, we would see an overall decline in transparency, which we are not seeing. But the warming effect is likely nonlinear. Warming the lake water a little in spring and fall might not be enough to make a significant difference in transparency, but warming the already warm water in July and August may be enough to make a significant difference in transparency. This differential difference might be observable in the July-August date alone, but be obscured by the spring, summer, and fall observations.

In other words the 2nd and 3rd possibilities may be part of the economic and demographic shifts.

In any case, we have observations on temperature, rainfall, and population so it is probably possible to distinguish between the hypotheses, or their combination. We can't turn around the largescale forces, but learning more about the "July-August effect" can help us in the timing and direction of our conservation efforts.

Another Adventure

Jim Bowditch has moved from Vice-President to Acting President and Harriet Hofheinz has taken on several responsibilities. She has also filled in as Acting Vice-President. And as for me, I will be in China teaching a graduate course titled Environmental Economics, Experimental Economics, and Game Theory. I'll be in Beijing for 5 months. It's another adventure. The CLA Board gave me a Sabbatical.

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FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED