

Ossipee Lake Alliance
P.O. Box 173
Freedom, NH 03836

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OSSIPEE LAKE ALLIANCE 2003 ANNUAL REPORT

Preserve. Protect. Educate.

It's a prime vacation destination. The best lake in the north country for fishing, boating, and swimming. Home of New Hampshire's finest remaining examples of unique environmental habitats. It's Ossipee Lake, and there's only one organization dedicated to preserving and protecting it: Ossipee Lake Alliance. Please invest in the future of Ossipee Lake by making a tax-deductible contribution today.

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Ossipee Lake Alliance is a 501(c)(3) non-profit New Hampshire corporation.

Ossipee Lake Alliance 2003 Annual Report

OSSIPEE LAKE ALLIANCE

P.O. Box 173

FREEDOM, N.H. 03836

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Acknowledgement

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Ossipee Lake Alliance

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Officers:

David L. Smith, Executive Director

Susan M. Marks, Development Director



Ossipee Lake, Broad Bay,
Leavitt Bay, Berry Bay, and
Danforth Pond.

Ready For a New Year

Last year at this time, Ossipee Lake Alliance did not exist.

New Hampshire's seventh largest lake – a primary vacation destination, home to some of the rarest natural habitats in New England, and a significant economic contributor to its surrounding communities – did not have a permanent organization dedicated to its protection.

That changed in April when Ossipee Lake Alliance was formed to give collective voice to those who want to see that Ossipee Lake is preserved for future generations.

Years ago it mattered little if residents from

Deer Cove to Berry Bay to Danforth Pond communicated with one another. Today it matters a great deal.



SAILING ON BROAD BAY,
OSSIPEE LAKE

Our lake is under development pressure as property values and taxes continue to rise. Children's camps have curtailed weekend water sports because of crowded boat-

ing conditions. Variable milfoil has spread to a third location on the lake.

To address such issues we are creating a lake-wide community of interest based on partnerships of the type that are summarized in this report.

In the coming year we will continue and expand those partnerships, including launching a major new effort to prevent the spread of milfoil and other destructive weeds.

As we review a successful 2003 and continue to plan for the new year, we thank you for your support and cordially invite you to join us for an exciting 2004.

New Board of Directors For 2004

Ossipee Lake Alliance has announced two important changes in its Board of Directors.

Joining the board in 2004 are Howard Bouve of Freedom and Dr. Perry Fine of Center Ossipee and Salt Lake City, Utah.

The two new members will join Ossipee Lake

Alliance co-founders David Smith and Susan Marks for two-year terms that extend through the end of 2005.

Current member Katherine Ferro will continue as a board member through 2004.

During the coming year the new board will work

to deepen community relations, expand funding options, and assist in the development of the organization's programs and activities.

The Alliance thanks outgoing board members Douglas Scott and Stephen Thurston for their efforts as charter board members in 2003.

Lake Environment Assessment Program

New Hampshire's lakes are among the most desirable places in New England for boaters, vacationers, and residents. How can we keep them that way?

That was the question that led the legislature to form the Lakes Management & Protection Program, the initiative behind our effort to document the quality of recreation on Ossipee Lake.

Are the bays too crowded

with boats? Are boating laws being enforced? Is rafting a threat to the environment? While these questions are discussed regularly by the lake community, the information needed to provide answers has never been collected.

Thanks to funding by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, the Alliance and Green Mountain Conservation Group launched the Lake Environment Assess-

ment Program, or LEAP, this past summer by enlisting volunteers to complete survey forms that documented recreation patterns and the number and type of boats at various locations.

While the goal is to establish long-term trends during the next four years, the data are also being used to address with the state several safety and environmental issues that have already been identified.

Tales of Ossipee Lake

When the history of Ossipee Lake is written, one of New Hampshire's most interesting bodies of water will finally receive its due. Until then, there's the "Tales of Ossipee Lake" program.

The "Tales" program was created to spotlight the lake's human and natural history in an entertaining and informative way through presentations of-

fered to the public at no cost. In July we presented, with Green Mountain Conservation Group, the history of Ossipee Lake Natural Area, also known as Long Sands, an endangered pondshore community of a type that exists nowhere else in the world.

Then in August, we explored a turn of the century murder and the reports that a ghost haunts the spot

on the lake where the victim died.

Funding for the "Tales" program was provided by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services and facilities were provided by Calumet Conference Center.

The attendance figures helped us make an important decision: we should tell more "Tales" in 2004.

Protecting Rare Habitats

One of the reasons Ossipee Lake is so highly prized as a place to swim, boat, and watch the stars at night is the unusual quality of its natural environment.

Increasing the public's awareness of the need to protect that environment is one of our ongoing goals. Ossipee Lake has one of the highest levels of biodi-

versity of any lake in New Hampshire. It is the location of the state's largest stratified drift aquifer and it has two rare pondshore communities, one of which is unlike any other habitat in the world.

It has an extensive range of pine barrens with rare moths and butterflies, and its Heath Pond kettlehole

quaking bog is a federally-designated National Natural Landmark.

Ossipee Lake's rare habitats are the finest remaining examples of their type in the state, and they will be highlighted in a new brochure we are preparing for 2004 thanks to generous partnership funding from Northeast Utilities.



"LEAP" RESEARCH TEAM AT WORK ON THE BIG LAKE

RARE PLANTS, EARTHQUAKES, AND GHOSTS – THE HISTORY OF OSS�PEE LAKE IS AN ENDLESS FASCINATION.



THE "QUAKING BOG" AT HEATH POND

Water Quality Monitoring

Like other lakes, Ossipee Lake is under pressure from increased population, commercial and residential development, and expanded recreational use. That makes a comprehensive water quality monitoring program a necessity.

Monitoring water quality is a long-term process. Once a baseline measure of the water has been established, annual results will show whether changes have occurred. If warranted,

such changes can be traced to their source and resolved before the lake is severely affected.

In years past, many volunteers have sampled water on the lake, but there has never been a lake-wide approach to such testing. In 2003 the Alliance created such an approach by forming a partnership with Green Mountain Conservation Group and its RIVERS program, which tests water extensively through-

out the Ossipee Watershed.

With funding from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, water sampling took place at the lake's 14 tributaries and five deep spots, thanks to volunteers from the lake's children's camps and property owner associations.

Water quality monitoring is an ongoing goal of the Alliance and it will continue in 2004.



CAMP DIRECTORS MEET ON WATER SAMPLING PLAN

Lake Host Program

Partnering for a second year with Green Mountain Conservation Group, the Alliance obtained funding from the New Hampshire Lakes Association to hire Lake Hosts to inspect boats for milfoil at the Pine River public boat ramp in Center Ossipee.

The 2003 program had six trained Lake Hosts who worked every weekend and holiday from June 14th

through Labor Day, 8 AM to 7 PM.

The Lake Hosts inspected 764 boats this past summer and distributed many hundreds of pamphlets, provided by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, advising boaters of the environmental and economic threats posed by non-native species such as milfoil and hydrilla.

Despite the program's success at the Pine River ramp, new milfoil entered the lake at Phillips Brook, a tributary on Leavitt Bay.

Since there are at least 20 boat access points on the lake, all but two privately owned, the Alliance is developing a new volunteer invasive weed prevention program as a primary organization objective for 2004.

A LAKE-WIDE INITIATIVE WILL BE DEVELOPED TO ENSURE VOLUNTARY MILFOIL INSPECTIONS AT ALL OF THE LAKE'S ACCESS POINTS.

Capacity Building Initiatives

As a new organization challenged with representing the varied interests of Ossipee Lake's stakeholders – from individuals to lake associations to children's camps in three different communities – we recognized early on that we needed assistance with our communications strategies.

That assistance was pro-

vided through partnership grants from two superb organizations.

The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation provided a grant for us to establish a centralized database and a consistent approach to storing, distributing, and analyzing information so as to maximize our operating effectiveness.

The New England Grassroots Environment Fund helped support our operations and outreach, including the partnership programs we developed with the lake's children's camps.

Early-stage funding for these initiatives was integral to our success in 2003, and we are grateful for the support of both organizations.



PLANNING THE FUTURE WITH STATE OFFICIALS