

the *Loon Flyer*



Published by the Squam Lakes Association Winter 2002

President's Letter

Dear SLA Member,

It is a beautiful, clear, crisp January morning on Squam, and as I write this letter, I am watching a glorious sunrise emerge above Moon Island. The scenery in the Squam Lakes region is spectacular at this time of year, and there is a sense of quiet and tranquility that is reassuring. There are no ice houses, snowmobiles, or cross country skiers on Big Squam because the ice is not yet safe following an unseasonably warm fall weather pattern. This is the season when the Squam Lakes environment recovers from the heavy onslaught of human activity that occurs every summer.

The level of activity is not so quiet at the SLA, which remains in full operation during the winter months pursuing its mission of protecting and preserving the Squam Lakes Region. On January 18th, Chris Devine and I attended a public hearing in Holderness held by the N.H. Department of Agriculture concerning the proposed plan to manage the invasive milfoil in Kimbell Marina on Little Squam Lake. Only one individual, an attorney representing an abutter, spoke in opposition to the plan to apply a mild herbicide this spring in an effort to stop the spread of milfoil on Little Squam and prevent it from spreading further throughout the watershed. The individual who spoke in opposition to the plan was followed by Arthur Shores, a neighbor who made an eloquent and passionate plea to proceed with the plan as currently proposed by the SLA and the State. By the time you receive this issue of the Loon Flyer, I am hopeful that the Department of Agriculture will have approved the application to apply the herbicide.

This winter, the SLA Committees are hard at work preparing for the busy summer season. The Wildlife Committee (formerly the Loon Committee), under the leadership of Peter Sorlein has increased the scope of its activities to promote balance among all of the species in the Squam Lakes Watershed and to preserve habitats. After all, in addition to loons we have an abundance of wildlife, including birds, fish, mammals, and a wide variety of plant species. The SLA staff and



Squam Winterfest 2002 was a huge success as winter enthusiasts enjoyed skating, cross-country skiing, animal exhibits, hot chocolate, chili and clam chowder. See the story on page 6. Photo by Eric Morse.

Board of Directors are developing plans to improve and renovate the SLA facilities involving badly needed repairs to the building and an upgrade for our septic system. We are also considering the possibility of recruiting a part-time environmental coordinator. This new staff position would enable the SLA to become more proactive in monitoring water quality and managing the Squam Lakes eco-environment.

I am pleased to report that the Association's 2001 annual appeal raised a total of \$81,000, meeting our goal and assuring that the SLA will conclude the year with positive cash flow. Over 325 members gave generously to the appeal, and as always, we are extremely grateful for your ongoing support.

I want to wish you and your families a happy, healthy and prosperous 2002.

Sincerely,

The Loon Flyer is published quarterly by



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The Squam Lakes Association is dedicated to conserving for the public benefit the natural beauty, peaceful character and unique resource values of the lakes and surrounding area. In cooperation with local and state authorities and other conservation organizations, the Association promotes the protection, careful use and shared enjoyment of the lakes, mountains, forests, open spaces and wildlife of the Squam Lakes region.

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THE CONCORD BEAT...

HB592-FN-A is a bill to create a milfoil prevention and research grant program. Currently a \$1.50 fee is collected from boat registrations to fund state efforts for aquatic plant management. This bill would increase this funding and allow municipalities and lake associations to apply for matching grant funds. In January 2002, after prior consideration of alternate funding mechanisms, this bill passed in an overwhelming House vote of 331 to 26. The bill was then sent to the House Finance Committee for fiscal review.

SB146 is a bill to create a definition for personal watercraft that would include the currently regulated 1 and 2 person 'skicraft' as well as the larger 3 or more person craft. This bill would not result in further prohibitions or bans but would allow for consistent regulation of similar craft. In September 2001, a hearing was held before the Senate Wildlife Committee with opposing sides presenting their views. In early January 2002, the committee voted 3 to 2 in favor of the bill and it is scheduled for a full Senate vote in late January 2002.

HB1235 is a bill to modify the require-

ment for mandatory boater education to apply to vessels greater than 25 horsepower. The new mandatory boating education requirement took effect on January 1, 2002 and states that the requirement is applicable to vessels greater than 15 horsepower (see related article in this issue on boating education). SB357 a similar bill, has also been entered to change the requirement from 15 to 25 horsepower, however this bill differs in that it establishes a minimum age of operation at nine years old unless an adult is present.

MILFOIL UPDATE

The SLA is taking a pro-active approach to managing the milfoil infestation. The following is an area-by-area update of activities taken since our last newsletter in the Fall of 2001.

Squam River I – the area below the primary outlet dam for the Squam Lakes to the center of Ashland has a dense infestation of milfoil with an estimated extent of 17 acres. On January 4, 2002, the NH Department of Environmental Services Dam Division began a coordinated drawdown of the Squam River in Ashland. The area will be drawn down until the beginning of February in the hope of freezing and

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The Squam Lakes Association gratefully acknowledges the support of



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whose generous contributions underwrite this issue of the Loon Flyer.

SQUAM LAKES BIO-INVENTORY PROJECT

Dr. Rick Van de Poll of Ecosystem Management Consultants in Sandwich has completed the first field session for the Squam Lakes Bio-Inventory Project. The project, conceived of and designed by the Squam Lakes Association, includes the collection of base line data on several different organisms in the Squam Lakes watershed. Phase I is to provide a year's worth of data from different locales within the watershed;



David Graham Wolf collects samples in Piper Cove. Photo by Rick Van de Poll.

Phase II is provide training to volunteers for bio-monitoring purposes at Phase I sites.

Thus far, the project has completed the base line data collection on 21 plots in both aquatic and wetland sites throughout the Squam Lakes basin. Sites were chosen based on their representativeness of the different ecosystems present. They were also chosen for their current level of impact, from severely degraded to nearly pristine.

Observations have been made on fish, birds, aquatic invertebrates, substrate, plants, fungi, and selected amphibians, as well as water quality parameters. The latter has been completed in addition to the current Lay Lakes Monitoring

Program, which has analyzed water samples from over 35 sites in the Squam Basin since 1978.

Some of the findings include the first documented presence of freshwater jellyfish in Squam Lake, a nesting American bittern, continued use of certain islands by bald eagles, and relatively rich aquatic micro-organism diversity. The latter in particular attests to the generally clean nature of both oligotrophic lakes, as well as the two dozen inflow streams.

Perhaps the most interesting find has been the number of pristine forested wetlands within the Squam basin, particularly those dominated by 400-500 year old black gum or tupelo trees. These are particularly noteworthy considering some of the dramatic lake level alterations over the past 200 years.

Human alterations to lacustrine habitats have not always been as benign, as the increasing spread of variable milfoil (*Myriophyllum heterophyllum*) attests. David Graham Wolf, Antioch New England Graduate School intern, has been assisting Dr. Van de Poll in monitoring the spread of this noxious native plant. On two occasions he has assisted the state and the SLA in laying down bottom barriers to try to pre-

vent the proliferation of milfoil to other parts of the lakes. David has also demonstrated his fisheries expertise while conducting stream sampling of both fish and macro-invertebrates.

Although summer fieldwork on the lake has ended, other seasonal fieldwork has continued. Small mammal inventories resulted in the capture and release of 44 individuals, representing 5 species and a 20% capture rate. Over 11 km of line intercept transects have been established for medium to large mammals, half of which has been surveyed so far. A total of 13 species have been recorded, including pine marten, bobcat, and otter. Also currently underway is the formidable task of identifying 51 collections of aquatic invertebrates. Forty-four taxa have been identified to date among just 5 samples! If anyone would like to provide the research team with data, or assist in any way, please contact the SLA offices and leave your name and phone number.

NEW MANDATORY BOATING EDUCATION

In April 2000, a bill (HB449) requiring mandatory boater education, was signed into law by Governor Shaheen. On January 1, 2002 the new mandatory boating education requirement took effect and there is a seven-year phase in that will result in all boaters having to be certified by 2007. Complete information on the new requirements and boating safety class schedules can be obtained at www.state.nh.us.

This year the requirement applies to those 19 and younger who operate a vessel in excess of 15 horsepower. There are efforts to change this requirement to vessels greater than 25 horsepower to be more consistent with previous legislation. There are two levels of certification offered: full which is valid for life and temporary which is

Continued on page 7

SQUAM SKATING TOUR ENJOYS PERFECT ICE

On Saturday, January 5th, the SLA offered the First Annual Squam Skating Tour, which was co-sponsored by The Nordic Skater. Jamie Hess, owner of The Nordic Skater, President of the Montshire Speedskating Club, and former resident of Sandwich co-led the ten-person tour with Eric Morse, SLA's Natural Areas Manager. We parked at SLA's Belknap Woods property, on Route 25-B at the mouth of Dog Cove and walked down the canoe and kayak access trail. The ice conditions were fantastic for the tour, with over four inches of black ice from Dog Cove to the northwest side of Great Island.

Jamie provided demo Nordic Skates, which clip into a cross country skate ski binding, cross country skate ski boots, ice claws, ice poles, and lifelines. The skates are similar to speed skating clap skates, with the advantages of being more flexible for outdoor ice and easier to put on and take off. Several of the participants were experienced skaters from the Montshire Speedskating Club and others from the Squam community were new to the sport.

"I didn't think the Nordic Skates would work, but they are fantastic. I really enjoyed skating on this beautiful ice," said Bob Snelling of Holderness.

Hess demonstrated the ice poles along the Great Island Narrows, where the ice is known to be thin due to currents. He stood on good ice and stabbed the pole into the ice. The pole went through the ice in one shot, which means the ice is not safe. Everyone took a turn with the ice poles to get the feeling.

"You need to develop a feel for how hard to stab the pole into the ice. The ice here is only two inches thick, so we would need to find another route," ex-



*The Squam Skating Tour group stopped and enjoyed the view of the Rattlesnakes.
Photo by Eric Morse*

plained Jamie Hess.

Everyone on the tour wore a pair of ice claws around their neck and Jamie and Eric had lifelines (floating throw ropes) and extra warm clothes in their backpacks. Ice claws are worn around your neck and have plastic handles with a sharp tip and are secured in a protective holster. Ice claws would enable a person to climb back onto the ice if they fell through a thin spot.

We continued along the west side of Great Island to the northern tip of the island, where broken ice had been pushed on top of the good ice by the prevailing wind. The ice poles make for easier walking over the rough ice. Jamie tested the ice thickness at the end of the pack ice and explained it was only one and a half inches. So the participants enjoyed the smooth, black ice and practiced speed skating techniques along the west side of Great Island.

According to the Cold Regions Research & Engineering Laboratory (CRREL) in Hanover, NH, four inches of black ice is the minimum thickness for skating. Snow ice, when snow is

mixed in the ice, appears gray, is not as strong as black ice and requires six to eight inches of snow ice for skating. CRREL states in "Safety on Floating Ice Sheets" that you should never go on the ice alone and let someone know your planned route.

We headed back to Great Island Narrows and found a safe route along the southeast shore of Great Island and crossed over a rock jetty. Peter Schachtschabel, a speed skater from Holland took off his clap skates and walked over the rocks with gloves on his feet. The other participants simply clicked off the Salomon SNS skate ski bindings. After inspecting the four inches of black ice, we continued along the eastern shore of Great Island to Center Harbor Neck. The wind had kept the ice from freezing in the areas between Great and Bowman Islands and Kimball Island and Center Harbor Neck. Jamie led the group around the cracks and found a safe route to Bowman, Moon and Kimball Islands.

"I am amazed that we made it all the way to Moon and Bowman. There was open water between Great and Bow-

SQUAM SKATING TOUR CONTINUED



Jamie Hess and Bob Snelling test the ice thickness with ice poles. Photo by Eric Morse.

man Islands yesterday, so I didn't expect we could get here," said Eric Morse.

The tour skated back to Belknap Woods, along Center Harbor Neck to Dog Cove. The 3-mile trip back took less than 30 minutes. On the way back Jamie Hess described a skating trip in 1993 when he skated from Sandwich Bay to Cotton Cove and back two times.

"The ice was wonderful that year, because it had been cold and there was very little snow. A snowstorm came in and by the end of the trip there were several inches of new snow on the ice. Squam is a beautiful lake and each trip to Squam is a unique memory," said Jamie.

For more information on ice safety equipment visit The Nordic Skater: www.nordicskater.com and place your order for Nordic Skates, ice claws and ice poles through the SLA Store. Weather conditions permitting, we plan to offer the 2nd Annual Squam Skating Tour in January 2003.



SQUAM LAKES HISTORY: PROHIBITION AND THE DEPRESSION ERA

Did You Know. . . that after prohibition went into effect in 1919, at least two or three stills appeared around Squam Lake? Bootleg liquor was reportedly dispensed at the small hotel known as the Alves, and Bill Schulz remembers splitting wood as a boy to stoke a still that was located near Rattlesnake Cove. Some locals made regular jaunts to Canada, hauling barrels of whiskey back by car. As one long-time summer resident recalls: "During prohibition, everyone thought nobody else drank. When they discovered that everyone was doing it, they all had begun having parties."

Prohibition was repealed in 1933, but many people continued to manufacture home brews. Selling hard cider was one way for local apple growers to make a few dollars during the Depression. Numerous other small enterprises also helped people living full-time around the lakes to make ends meet. Holderness residents, for example, recall sewing leather baseballs for the Draper & Maynard Co., a well-known manufacturer of sports equipment in Plymouth, N.H., that supplied gloves and balls to the Boston Red Sox and other major league teams. (Babe Ruth traveled to Plymouth to select his glove personally.) Making the rounds in his truck, D & M employee Stanley Chamberlain would deliver the leather and other materials used in making baseballs to local farmhouses, then return every week or so to collect the finished piece work. After D & M closed down, one of the partners, Ed Maynard, opened his bait shop in Holderness. - Rachel Carley

If you have any information about the history of the Squam Lakes and are interested in contributing to SLA's centennial history book, please contact Rachel Carley (203) 263-2842 or e-mail: rcarley@hotmail.com.



NEFFA LOG BOOK

9/12/01 *On a mountain bike ride to honor the victims and families of the cowardly terrorist attack. May they find peace.*
- David & Lisa

9/16/01 *A beautiful place - a beautiful day. God bless America and all of us. Peace to those lost.*
- Dot & Bud

MOON IS. LOG BOOK

9/15/01 *My first paddle on Squam. A gorgeous place, this, and a much needed haven after witnessing so much pain and hate the past week. Love in the path to peace. Amen.*
- Grambo

10/21/01 *It doesn't get much nicer than this. No people, no boats, except ours. Only the lake, mountains and sky with our thoughts, dreams and peace. God Bless America!*
- Joe & Syd

SQUAM WINTERFEST 2002

The Squam Lakes Association Membership Committee sponsored this year's Squam Winterfest on Saturday, January 19th and it was a great success. Attendance was overwhelming, with approximately 300 people attending and extra space in the field had to be plowed to make room for all the unexpected cars. Many families with young children as well as adults of all ages came for the ice skating and community winter fun.

Walter's Basin provided Chili and Chowder, which proved to be so popular that it was gone in one hour. SLA also served hot chocolate, coffee, tea and made available marshmallows for roasting on the warming fire.

Because of the weather conditions, the SLA staff had to work extra hard to create two ice-skating venues, one rink style and the other a skating oval. It was obvious that the crowd appreciated their efforts since both were filled with skaters all afternoon. There were even a few pick-up hockey games, but mostly people enjoyed the leisurely skating and chatting with fellow friends of Squam.

Cross-Country skiers took advantage of the excellent snow conditions to ven-



Dan Stack cross-country skis at the Squam Winterfest. Photo by Eric Morse.

ture out to Piper Cove and along Sunset Point. Skiers also explored the Mill Brook area and cones were placed to keep people from thin ice areas, where the resident beaver had kept the ice open. The warm winter weather prevented the ice from freezing to a safe and consistent thickness on the open sections of Squam, south of Perch and Potato Islands to Diamond Ledge and Moon and Bowman Islands.

Amy Yaekel, a naturalist from the Squam Lakes Natural Science Center presented a red tailed hawk and a weasel, and her talks were very popular with

children and adults alike. Dogsledding was demonstrated by Gail Castonguay, and the snow and ice conditions prevented Gail from offering dogsledding rides. Many people petted the dogs and asked Gail about dogsledding.

Chris Little, Director of the JSLA Summer Camp, held a class on ice safety. Chris explained that 4 inches of black ice is the minimum for safe ice travel and explained how to use ice claws to rescue yourself after falling through the ice. Chris explained the risks associated with traveling on ice and told people to bring extra warm clothes to prevent hypothermia. Eric Morse, SLA Natural Areas Manager demonstrated Nordic Skates and ice testing poles and described the Squam Skating Tour which was held on Saturday, January 5th. The ice poles enable you to test the ice thickness as you skate or ski along the lake.

Next year's Squam Winterfest will be even bigger and better as we have a lot to live up to. SLA will also offer a Cross-Country Ski Tour at NEFFA on Saturday, February 23rd from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm. Bring your own backcountry or classic cross-country skis for this free tour.



Amy Yaekel of the Squam Lakes Natural Science Center displays a red hawk to participants of the Squam Winterfest. Photo by Eric Morse.



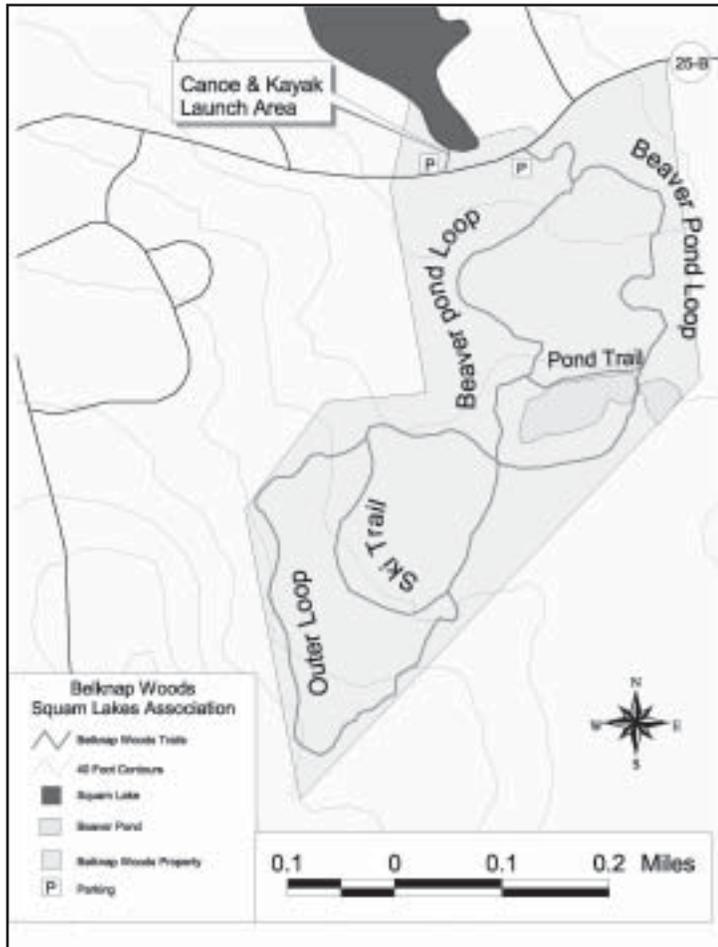
BELKNAP WOODS TRAILS COMPLETED

The SLA Trail Crew completed hiking and cross-country ski trails at the Belknap Woods property, on Rte-25B in Center Harbor. There are two main loop trails, the Beaver Pond Loop and the Outer Loop, which are each 1.0 miles. There is a shorter option for each trail that avoids steeper terrain and is a better option for cross-country skiing. The Pond Trail heads north of the Beaver Pond

and the Ski Trail avoids the steepest sections of the Outer Loop.

The Beaver Pond Loop was relocated to avoid a steep and winding section, which was impossible to ski on. The new trails are made for skiing and feature wide and straight sections on the hills.

Color maps, similar to the one above have been placed at the trail junctions with a "You Are Here" arrow. The maps were made by Eric Morse, Natural Areas Manager using Geographic Information Systems and Global Positioning Systems technology. Steve Sanders, Facilities Coordinator assisted with the trail construction and has been plowing the trailhead all winter to provide year around access to the Belknap Woods.



BRING YOUR PICTURES DAY AT SLA HQ SUNDAY MARCH 24 FROM 2 - 5 PM

Come to the SLA headquarters and share your pictures and stories over tea. We would like to copy and or scan in your pictures for placement in an historical archive and potential use in the centennial history book. Please bring old and recent photographs, as we plan to use images from different eras.

BOATING ED CONTINUED

valid for 14 days. To obtain full certification the Division of Safety Services offers an 8-hour class followed by a written exam. Currently there are about 34 classes offered per month using 35 statewide locations. Also within the next few weeks, an on-line version of the course will be available at www.boat-ed.com.

MILFOIL CONTINUED

killing invasive milfoil.

Little Squam Lake I – the cove occupied by Kimbell Marina has a dense infestation with an extent of 1.6 acres. The SLA hired Lycott Environmental and prepared a detailed permit application to pursue herbicide use in early June of 2002. The application was submitted to the NH Dept of Agriculture Division of Pesticide Control on November 15, 2001 and a public hearing was held in Holderness on January 18, 2002. Approximately 40 people attending the hearing and a vast majority were in support of the application. The Division of Pesticide Control will make a decision on the permit application by February 23, 2002.

PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE FOR CENTER HARBOR

A small group of local citizens in Center Harbor has launched an effort to rezone land along Route 3 from Townhouse Road to the Holderness town line from a Rural and Agricultural to Commercial and Light Industrial.

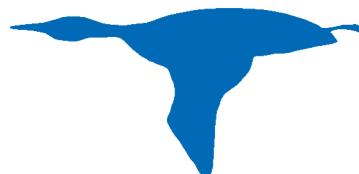
A number of citizens are concerned that the area involved is an integral part of the region's character with its undeveloped quality contributing to the sense of rural New Hampshire. It represents the antithesis of sprawl and is one of the few stretches of major roadway in the area that is not zoned for commercial development. In addition, there are concerns for the conservation of major wetlands that lie close to Route 3 in the zone.

It currently appears that the issue of the proposed zoning change will appear on the town's ballot to be voted on Town Meeting Day.

SLA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- February 23 Cross-Country Ski Tour at Neffa & Belknap Woods. Meet at Neffa 11:00 am - 2:00 pm.
March 24 Bring your Squam pictures to SLA for the history of Squam book. At SLA 2:00 - 5:00 pm.
May 18 Trail Adopter Training at Mead Base Conservation Center 9:00 am - 2:00 pm.
June 1 National Trails Day at Old Bridle Path to West Rattlesnake 9:00 am - 2:00 pm.
June 15 Trail Adopter Training at Mead Base Conservation Center 9:00 am - 2:00 pm.
June 29-30 Lightning sailboat clinic at SLA.
July 1 Summer Youth Programs commence Monday - Friday.
July 7 Lightning Races at Diamond Ledge 2:00 - 4:00 pm through August 18
July 13 SLA Pancake Breakfast at SLA 8:30 - 10:30 am.
July 14 Bike Around the Lake. Meet at SLA at 1:00 pm.
July 20 Loon Census
July 20 Squamathlon, SLA HQ 11 am - 2:00 pm
July 27 Hike for the Trails at Mead Base Conservation Center 8:00 am.
July 27-28 Kayak Instruction Camping Tour to Bowman Island. 9:00 am Sat. to 3:00 pm Sun.
August 3 SLA Annual Meeting 4:30 pm
August 4 Around the Lake Sailing Race at Piper Cove 2:00 pm.
August 17-18 Lightning Sailing Regatta at Diamond Ledge 2:00 - 5:00 pm.
August 17-18 Kayak Instruction Camping Tour to Moon Island. 9:00 am Sat. to 3:00 pm Sun.

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