



CASIN' THE BASIN E-NEWS

Issue #2 | DECEMBER 2007

Dear Friend of Lake Champlain,

Welcome to the second issue of the Lake Champlain Basin Program's e-news. Although activities on the Lake have slowed for the winter (except for ice fishing and a few hardy snowmobilers, skaters, and kite boarders) the LCBP staff remains very busy. In addition to our daily program activities, we are writing a new *State of the Lake* report and updating the management plan *Opportunities for Action*. We are also working on the required management plan for the new Champlain Valley Heritage Partnership. Public information meetings will be held for these activities in 2008. The LCBP is also supporting the Lake Champlain Quadricentennial that will be commemorated starting in January 2009 (see update below).

The LCBP relies heavily on the US Federal Budget for program support and as December closes, we have learned that our FY 2008 funding will be maintained. Our delegation of four US Senators and three US Representatives have consistently been strong advocates for a cleaner Lake Champlain. Senator Leahy's work on the Appropriations Committee was especially helpful during this challenging budget process. We thank the entire delegation for their support for Lake Champlain and the LCBP.

Wishing you a safe, warm winter and Happy Holidays,

*Bill Howland, Manager
Lake Champlain Basin Program*

What's in This Issue...

- LAKE CHAMPLAIN RESEARCH CONFERENCE
- TEACHING ABOUT THE CHAMPLAIN WATERSHED
- QUEBEC STUDENTS STUDY MISSISQUOI BAY
- 2007 CYANOBACTERIA MONITORING SEASON REVIEW
- WATERSHED RESTORATION PROJECT UPDATE
- NEW REPORT ON WATER QUALITY BMP EFFECTIVENESS
- DON'T "P" ON YOUR LAWN TAKES ROOT
- CITIZENS' VIEWS ON LAKE MANAGEMENT HEARD
- 2009 "QUAD" UPDATE
- INVASIVE SPECIES PREVENTION UPDATES
- NYSDEC AWARDS GRANTS TO ERADICATE INVADERS
- VOLUNTEER THIS WINTER AT ECHO



LAKE CHAMPLAIN RESEARCH CONFERENCE COMING IN JANUARY

On January 8th and 9th, 2008, lake researchers will convene for the "Lake Champlain: Our Lake, Our Future" conference to discuss current research,



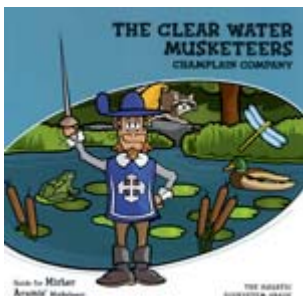
research applications, and future research priorities regarding the Lake and its basin. The Lake Champlain Research Consortium (LCRC) and the Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) are coordinating the conference, which will take place at the Sheraton Conference Center in Burlington, VT. A broad range of topics will be covered on the first day, including sessions on nutrient runoff, hydrodynamics, toxic contaminants, watershed processes, and fish and wildlife. The second day will feature moderated panels to synthesize and discuss research priorities. To register and view a schedule, visit the [LCRC website](#) or contact Molly Michaud, LCBP Technical Coordinator at mmichaud@lcbp.org. The registration deadline is December 28th.

TEACHING ABOUT THE LAKE CHAMPLAIN WATERSHED



Seventeen educators from New York and Vermont joined the Champlain Basin Education Initiative (CBEI) partners on October 19-20 to explore the Adirondack portion of the Champlain watershed. At International Paper in Ticonderoga, the educators discussed both the economic and environmental aspects of the paper manufacturing plant with a panel of experts. They also measured physical and chemical water quality parameters of the AuSable River, learned about Adirondack history, and explored the Adirondack Park Agency Visitor Interpretive Center at Paul Smith's. Together, these dynamic educators will reach more than 400 students. Each participant will design their own curriculum based on local service learning opportunities within their sub-watershed. The teachers will meet again in February in Burlington and then finish their year-long training in May. This 11-day training program is financially supported by the LCBP and the Vermont Clean and Clear Program, and receives technical and curriculum assistance from the CBEI partner organizations, including the LCBP. Learn more about [CBEI here](#) or contact LCBP Education and Outreach Coordinator, Colleen Hickey at chickey@lcbp.org.

QUEBEC STUDENTS STUDY MISSISQUOI BAY



This summer, the Corporation Bassin Versant Baie Missisquoi finished the second phase of a four-year watershed curriculum for English and French speaking schools, known as *The Clear Water Musketeer* program. Phase 2, "Mister Aramis", focuses on the Bay's aquatic ecosystem. During the 2006-2007 academic years, nearly 1,200 students from local schools participated in the classroom study of the Missisquoi Bay watershed and ecosystem. Most communities in the watershed have contributed financially to the program and English versions of the curricula were supported by the LCBP. To learn more about this program, contact Chantal d'Auteuil at cdauteuil@videotron.ca.

2007 CYANOBACTERIA (BLUE-GREEN ALGAE) MONITORING SEASON REVIEW



The summer of 2007 was marked by warm, beautiful weather

and also relatively few cyanobacteria (also known as blue-green algae) blooms in Lake Champlain. The LCBP helped fund monitoring by the Rubenstein Lab at the University of Vermont, Citizen volunteers coordinated by the Lake Champlain Committee, and the New York and Vermont DEC's. Although visible blooms occurred in a few parts of the northern lake, such as St. Albans Bay, there were no blooms this summer that had high enough toxin levels to cause public health concerns. Missisquoi Bay, the location of greatest concern in the previous few years, stayed nearly bloom-free, with just a short duration bloom in Quebec in September.

There were, however, several nuisance non-toxic green algae blooms throughout the summer. These algae, which sometimes appear yellowish or even brownish in color, can form floating clumps and mats that wash up along the shoreline and interfere with recreation. However, they do not pose a health risk to people in the way that cyanobacteria can. For more information about blue-green algae and how to identify it, visit the LCBP's [blue-green algae webpage](#). The next monitoring season will begin in June 2008.

WATERSHED RESTORATION PROJECT UPDATE



Since it was initiated in 2004, six projects have been approved to receive technical assistance through the Lake Champlain Watershed Environmental Assistance Program. With Senator Leahy's support, this program has been funded by the US Army Corps of Engineers through the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) and is administered in cooperation with the Lake Champlain Basin Program. In fall 2007, the US Congress reauthorized WRDA and increased the limit for the Lake Champlain program from \$20 million to \$32 million.

The Lake George Stormwater Improvement Project which consisted of the design and construction of stormwater infiltration structures in the Beach Road parking lot in the Village of Lake George, New York was recently completed. Five other projects are underway in Plattsburgh and Keene, New York, and St. Albans, Burlington and South Burlington, Vermont. For more information about these projects, visit the [LCBP website](#).

In June 2007, the program guidelines were updated so that projects may now be submitted at any time in a Letter of Request to the US Army Corps of Engineers. Applicants must be governmental entities, or organizations representing governments having jurisdiction in the Lake Champlain Basin (New York or Vermont). Rural and/or urban projects are eligible. Information about how to submit a project for evaluation is available on the [LCBP website](#) or by contacting LCBP Technical Associate, Kris Joppe-Mercure at kjoppemercure@lcbp.org.

NEW REPORT ASSESSES THE EFFECTIVENESS OF URBAN AND AGRICULTURAL WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES



A new report by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), prepared in cooperation with the LCBP, VT DEC and City of Burlington,

summarizes a six-year monitoring effort aimed at determining the effectiveness of urban and agricultural best-management practices (BMPs). BMPs are created to reduce the amount of nutrient runoff on land surrounding waterways, with the intent of reducing phosphorus and sediment pollution in streams. The study was conducted from 1999-2005 in the urbanized Englesby Brook watershed in Burlington and South Burlington, Vermont and in the agricultural Little Otter Creek watershed in Ferrisburg, Vermont. Water quality data collected from the Englesby Brook watershed suggest that the construction of irrigation and settling pond BMPs has reduced phosphorus and suspended sediment concentrations when the brook is flowing quickly after rainstorms. Data from Little Otter Creek, however, showed no significant changes in stream water quality following the construction of BMPs on a single farm that included barnyard paving and installing barn roof gutters and milk-waste treatment.

Although this study is complete, the USGS continues to monitor the Englesby Brook watershed. In 2007, the USGS expanded its monitoring to include a pair of constructed wetland BMPs that treat stormwater from two neighborhoods. This monitoring should paint a long-term picture of how well urban BMPs improve water quality in the stream and reduce the amount of phosphorus and sediment entering Lake Champlain. Learn more about the study and download a complete copy of the report at the [USGS website](#) or contact Laura Medalie at lmedalie@usgs.gov or Jamie Shanley at jshanley@usgs.gov.

DON'T "P" ON YOUR LAWN TAKES ROOT!



Over the past summer and fall the LCBP worked with several organizations to encourage local residents to switch to zero-phosphorus fertilizer. In the first summer alone, more than 5,500 brochures were distributed; displays were posted at lawn and garden shows; and several media outlets picked up the story. After an initial mailing to local retailers, 17 committed to selling zero-phosphorus products. The Vermont Agency of Agriculture also featured the "Don't P" slogan in its public service announcements. The "Lawn to Lake" partners will be contacting more retailers to participate in the program and developing point-of-purchase displays over the winter, in anticipation of a bigger campaign during the spring lawn care season. Learn more about the program and its partner groups on the [Lawn to Lake website](#).

CITIZENS' VIEWS ON LAKE MANAGEMENT HEARD



The Vermont Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) co-hosted two public meetings in recent months to hear public concerns about the Lake. More than 50 people attended the August meeting, which was held in North Hero in coordination with the Northern Lake Champlain Advisory Committee and LCBP. Concerns were voiced about the weed problems (primarily Eurasian watermilfoil) in the north lake, localized issues with algae in St. Albans Bay and Carry Bay, and runoff from rural roads. The October meeting, near Lake Bomoseen, was held in coordination with the

South Lake Group and LCBP with about 70 people attending. Citizens at that meeting also expressed concern about weed and algae growth and asked that the State continue to fund programs in their region of the Lake. Comments from these meetings will be used to inform the 2008 Vermont Lake Champlain Action Plan and were also forwarded to the Lake Champlain Steering Committee. For more details about these meetings, contact Vermont Lake Champlain Coordinator, Michaela Stickney at (802) 241-3619 or email michaela.stickney@state.vt.us. All CAC meetings are open to the public.

2009 "QUAD" UPDATE



Preparation continues in Vermont, New York and Quebec for the 400th anniversary of Samuel de Champlain's 1609 exploration of the Lake that will be kicked off on December 31, 2008. Burlington Mayor Bob Kiss has appointed Nick Warner to coordinate commemoration efforts for the city. Nick will work closely with Burlington residents and the State of Vermont, City of Plattsburgh, and the LCBP. The dates of the Burlington Signature Event Week have been set for July 2-11, 2009. Event planners and businesses are encouraged to submit items (for all of 2009) to www.celebratechamplain.org for the first round of event listings by February 15th. The Champlain Legacy Fund, the non-profit fundraising partner of the Vermont Lake Champlain Quadricentennial Commission, has hired a firm to raise money for the anniversary. Johnston Consulting of Montpelier anticipates that \$10 million is needed for the programs and events.



Educators are already getting involved with the Quad. In November, 31 teachers participated in a Social Studies education program at ECHO that was coordinated by the Vermont Department of Education. Educators learned about the Quad at the VT Teachers Conference in October. In spring 2008, the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum (LCMM) will release the standards-based curriculum for Grades K-12, *Navigating the Champlain Valley*. This curriculum for New York and Vermont students will focus on the pivotal year 1609 by looking back to the previous years of Native American history and forward to the consequences of this historic encounter. Teacher training sessions will be held in New York and Vermont this spring. Learn more at the [LCMM website](http://www.lcmm.org).

Quadricentennial Links:

[Vermont](#)

[New York](#)

[Quebec City 2008](#)

INVASIVE SPECIES PREVENTION UPDATES



Twenty-two New York and Vermont state employees involved with fish hatchery management, fish surveys, and other academic and scientific research attended a Hazard Analysis and

Critical Control Point Training at the LCBP offices in Grand Isle that was co-instructed by Mike Goehle of the US Fish and Wildlife Service and Mark Malchoff of Lake Champlain Sea Grant. Presentations about Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS) rules in Vermont and New York were presented by Shawn Good and Ken Cox of the VT Department of Fish and Wildlife and Bill Schoch of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Participants learned how to write invasive species management plans and identify critical control points in their daily procedures to prevent the spread of invasive species.

Four LCBP "Lake Stewards" greeted more than 2,000 boaters at launches this past summer. Covering New York and Vermont accesses, the stewards informed boaters about invasive species spread prevention. Many boaters were also willing to put "Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers" stickers on their trailers. Learn more about this and other invasive species programs by contacting LCBP Aquatic Nuisance Species Coordinator, Meg Modley, at mmodley@lcbp.org.

NYSDEC AWARDS GRANTS TO ERADICATE INVADERS



Eurasian Watermilfoil

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has awarded more than 30 municipalities and organizations a total of \$1.4 million to help reduce infestations of nonnative aquatic species across the state. Six grants for a total of \$200,228 were awarded in the Lake Champlain Basin. The Aquatic Invasive Species Eradication grants will be used by recipients to help fight zebra mussels, water chestnuts, Eurasian watermilfoil, purple loosestrife, and phragmites, and other invasive threats. Grants for terrestrial invasive species eradication programs will be awarded separately in early 2008.

The local grants included:

- **Town of Crown Point** - \$55,000 to eradicate seven acres of Eurasian watermilfoil in Eagle Lake.
- **Paradox Lake Association** - \$31,000 to eradicate five acres of purple loosestrife from wetlands adjacent to the eastern basin of Paradox Lake.
- **Upper Saranac Lake Foundation** - \$100,000 to continue their lake-wide Eurasian watermilfoil eradication program in Upper Saranac Lake.
- **The Adirondack Institute** - \$42,896 to eradicate one acre of Eurasian watermilfoil in Follensby Clear Pond.
- **The Adirondack Institute** - \$41,332 to eradicate 14 acres of Eurasian watermilfoil in Horseshoe Pond.
- **Lake Colby Association** - \$30,000 to eradicate 35 acres of Eurasian watermilfoil in Lake Colby.

For additional information, please call the DEC at (518) 402-8970 or visit the DEC's [Aquatic Invasive Species Eradication Grant Program website](#).

VOLUNTEER THIS WINTER AT ECHO!

ECHO at the Leahy Center for Lake Champlain has a new volunteer opportunity! Youth ages 13 - 15 can volunteer with an adult to form an exhibit interpreter or public program

assistant team. Application, interview and training required. Contact Becca Rimmel, Volunteer Coordinator at (802) 864-1848 x116 or email brimmel@echovermont.org. Adult volunteers are needed in the LCBP Resource Room at ECHO. To learn more, contact Laura Hollowell at lhollowell@lcbp.org or (802) 864-1848 x109.

QUICK LINKS & UPCOMING EVENTS

[Lake Champlain Basin Program Website](#)

[Watershed Activity Calendar](#)

[Upcoming Committee Meeting Dates](#)

CONTACT US

Main Office in Grand Isle: (802) 372-3213 or (800) 468-5227 (toll-free in NY & VT)
Resource Room at ECHO: The Resource Room at ECHO Leahy Center for Lake Champlain is open to the public 7 days/week. Call (802) 864-1848 ext. 109 for more information or learn more [here](#).

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