



Lake Champlain Basin Program

CASIN' THE BASIN E-NEWS

Lake Champlain
Basin Program

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Dear Nicole,

What a summer! Despite all the rain and now the heat, crowds have been turning out for Quadricentennial events at towns around Lake Champlain to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Samuel de Champlain's voyage to the region. Here at the LCBP, work continues with the International Joint Commission Missisquoi Bay Project, the Champlain Valley National Heritage draft plan, and a forthcoming revision to the management plan, *Opportunities for Action*.

As the summer celebration continues, take a minute to appreciate the Lake and all that it provides for us. And remember that we need to keep the Lake clean.

Sincerely,

Bill Howland, LCBP Program Manager

IJC MISSISQUOI BAY BASIN PROJECT UPDATE

In August 2008, the International Joint Commission (IJC) was tasked by the U.S. and Canadian federal governments with coordinating a research program to identify sources of phosphorus inputs to the Missisquoi Bay. To help target limited resources to reduce phosphorus pollution, the IJC partnered with the LCBP to:

- Identify areas of the Missisquoi Basin that contribute disproportionately large amounts of nutrient pollution to the Bay (critical source areas);
- acquire and compile necessary data and imagery to support the critical source area (CSA) analysis; and
- monitor water quality and meteorology in the Basin over a two-year period.



In early 2009, the LCBP conducted a series of public workshops to help guide the project. Topics of the workshops included: possible monitoring types and locations, potential models for CSA identification, and available, relevant data for the region. This fall, the LCBP will release a request for proposals (RFP) for a geo-spatial modeling effort that will identify sources of nutrient pollution within the Basin. For more information, please visit <http://www.lcbp.org/ijc.htm> or contact Nicole Grohoski at ngrohoski@lcbp.org.

IMAGE: Missisquoi River delta wetlands.

LCBP FUNDS BLUE-GREEN ALGAE MONITORING

Scientists from the UVM Rubenstein Lab are being funded by the LCBP to sample water for the presence of blue-green algae (cyanobacteria) toxins throughout the Lake, including Missisquoi Bay, St. Albans Bay, and Burlington Bay. The Rubenstein Lab will also work with the Vermont and New York DEC's to monitor 15 stations lakewide. This grant also supports the Lake Champlain Committee's efforts to sample 18 sites along the shoreline with the help of volunteers.



Technical reports for each monitoring season are published by the LCBP. Look for these reports as well as weekly updates on blue green algae at <http://www.lcbp.org/bgalgae.htm>.

IMAGE: A Blue-green algal bloom in Missisquoi Bay causeway in 2008.

EDUCATORS DIVE INTO LAKE CHAMPLAIN PLACE-BASED EDUCATION

Ten New York, Vermont and Quebec educators recently finished an 11 day "Watershed for Every Classroom" teacher training program hosted by the Champlain Basin Education Initiative (CBEI). CBEI is a consortium of environmental institutions that have collectively taught about the Lake Champlain Watershed since 1992. Base funding for the program is provided by the LCBP with EPA support. Since 1992, nearly 650 educators have participated in CBEI workshops and forums. In the past two years alone, participating educators have helped students design and implement the following types of projects:



- Introduce no idling policies for school busses to improve air quality;
- observe and report new amphibian sightings which are now included in the Vermont Reptile and Amphibian Atlas;
- develop and plant rain gardens to filter stormwater runoff; and
- develop a wetlands interpretation trail on public land.

The curriculum units completed by 27 recent CBEI participants are available for review at the

LCBP Resource Room (top floor of ECHO at Leahy Center for Lake Champlain). CBEI expects to host a one-day workshop in October 2009, featuring 10-12 workshop selections. If interested, please contact Colleen Hickey at 802-372-3213 ext. 11. To learn more about the CBEI Educator Program visit <http://www.lcbp.org/cbei.htm> or email chickey@lcbp.org.

IMAGE: A local teacher uses a Secchi disc as a part of a CBEI alumni event.

IN THE NEWS: SPINY WATER FLEA

The Spiny water flea has become a household topic as media coverage on the invasive species' potential threat to Lake Champlain grows. Spiny water fleas are not fleas at all, but small crustaceans that grow to be about 3/8 of an inch in size. These troublesome zooplankton invaded the Great Lakes in the 1980s and recently were discovered in Great Sacandaga Lake in New York. Senator Leahy secured \$100,000 to conduct a feasibility study to determine if the species can be prevented from passing from Great Sacandaga Lake through the Glens Falls Feeder Canal which empties into the Champlain Canal in the Lake Champlain Basin ([click here to see press release](#)). Spiny water flea spread easily from bait buckets, bilge water, fishing line, and fishing gear.



The LCBP Long Term Biological Monitoring Program has expanded its monitoring this summer and has sampled for them in the Glens Falls Feeder Canal and the Champlain Canal four times- none has found in any of the samples. Spiny water fleas have not yet been found in Lake Champlain. Help prevent the spread of spiny water fleas and other aquatic invasive species by checking, cleaning, and drying all equipment when you move from one body of water to another. For more information about the spiny water flea see <http://www.lcbp.org/ansthreats.htm#fleas>, visit the LCBP Resource Room (top floor of ECHO at the Leahy Center for Lake Champlain), or talk with one of our friendly Lake Stewards at a fishing access near you. For more information on aquatic invasive species and threats contact Meg Modley at mmodley@lcbp.org.

IMAGE: Spiny waterflea on fishing gear

PHOTO CREDIT: Jeff Gunderson, Minnesota Sea Grant

MITIGATING STORMWATER RUNOFF INTO LAKE GEORGE

The Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District (WCSWCD) has installed a stormwater mitigation project along Flat Rock Road in Lake George, with funding through the LCBP. During rainstorms, runoff from a steep section of the road rushes into English Brook, which drains to Lake George. This forms a large sediment delta and lowers water quality in the Lake. Working with the Lake George Association and the Town of Lake George Highway



Department, the WCSWCD installed five strategically located dry wells that collect stormwater from the sub-watersheds along the road. The dry wells are a cost effective method to reduce the total water load into the tributary along with the pollutants the water carries. To learn more about

the Flat Rock Road Project contact [Eric Howe](#) at 802-372-3213 ext. 18. For more information on the effects of stormwater on waterbodies and what can be done, visit <http://www.lcbp.org/storm.htm>.

IMAGE: Stormwater mitigation project

PHOTO CREDIT: Warren County Soil & Water Conservation District

RAIN BARRELS WITH PIZZAZZ!

Twelve local artists and two youth groups donated their time and creative energy to turn rain barrels into works of art! The LCBP helped fund the collaborative "Artistic Rain Barrel Project" spearheaded by the Winooski Natural Resource Conservation District (WNRCD), Extension Lake Champlain Sea Grant, and the Vermont DEC. Inspired by the Lake, the Land, and the People of the Champlain Valley, the rain barrels were on display at the Quadricentennial Waterfront Art Festival in July. The event and proceeds from sales of the rain barrels help to further the public's understanding of stormwater, water quality, and what actions can be taken. Head to the Resource Room at ECHO to see one of the painted rain barrels or visit http://vacd.org/winooski/winooski_rainbarrels.shtml to learn more about rain barrels and the Artistic Rain Barrel Project.



IMAGE: Painted rain barrel.

PHOTO CREDIT: Winooski NRCD.

ABOVE THE BORDER: QUEBEC UDATES

In efforts to control blue-green algae blooms in Missisquoi Bay and other Quebec lakes, the Quebec Ministère du Développement Durable de l'Environnement et des Parcs/Ministry of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks (MDDEP) has recently awarded one million dollars (CAD) to two environmental agencies to implement actions described in the Provincial Blue-Green Algae Plan 2007-2017. In May, the Missisquoi Bay Watershed Organization (OBVBM) distributed 8,000 trees to Quebec citizens around the Bay. The OBVBM also produced a guide for stakeholders to protect shorelines and lakes. The Prime-Vert Program of The Ministère de l'Agriculture des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec/The Quebec Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food (MAPAQ) continues to assist farmers in obtaining environmental compliance. The Program has a new section to control nonpoint source pollution that goes above and beyond the MDDEP's regulations. The Program has also identified critical source areas around the Missisquoi to support implementation of best management practices. To learn more about Quebec's programs and efforts contact Martin Mimeault at martin.mimeault@mddep.gouv.qc.ca.

LOOK FOR THESE LCBP FUNDED PROGRAMS!

Bike to the Islands!

The Causeway Bike Ferry service connecting Colchester and



South Hero along the Island Line Trail is up and running! Local Motion will continue to run the bike ferry on all weekends in August and Labor Day Weekend. Check out <http://www.localmotionvt.org/> for schedules and updates!

Waterway to War: Historic Sites Near Ticonderoga

The Fort Ticonderoga Association has created a website linking people with historic battle sites in Vermont and New York and the waterways that have played a pivotal role in the history and current affairs of the United States. The website highlights the proximity and value of these historic, cultural, and educational sites along Lake Champlain and the Hudson River. Funded by the LCBP, the Fort Ticonderoga Association is also creating a brochure and poster to promote the project. To learn more check out <http://www.fort-ticonderoga.org/visit/waterways-to-war/index.htm!>

Don't Miss the Canal Schooner *Lois McClure*

The Lake Champlain Maritime Museum's replica canal boat has seven more ports of call in the southern portions of Lake Champlain and the Champlain Canal between now and September. Check the schedule here: http://www.lcmm.org/our_fleet/lois_mcclure_schedule.htm.

The LCBP has funded more than \$3.3 million to local projects since 1992. To learn more, visit <http://www.lcbp.org/grantrfp.htm>.

IMAGE: Local Motion's Causeway Bike Ferry

Photo Credit: Local Motion

ECHO's VOICES FOR THE LAKE- VISITING A LIBRARY NEAR YOU!

Bridget Butler of ECHO Lake Aquarium & Science Center is touring Vermont libraries as they host Voices for the Lake video capture sessions. Check the schedule and head to a participating library to share your stories and concerns about Lake Champlain and to hear others! Visit <http://www.echovermont.org/media/voicesontheroad.html> or email bbutler@echovermont.org for more information.



IMAGE: Bridget Butler calls out for your Lake stories!

FAREWELL AND WELCOMES!

Kris Joppe-Mercure, our Technical Coordinator for the past year, recently left the LCBP to pursue a new career path. Kris is enrolled in the Physical Therapist training program at the University of Vermont. We wish her the best with her studies!

The LCBP welcomes **Eric Howe** as the new Technical Coordinator. Eric holds a Ph.D. in Natural Resources and an M.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Biology from the University of Vermont. His work in water quality and aquatic plants will serve Eric and the LCBP well as he coordinates the LCBP Technical Advisory Committee and manages Basin-oriented research grants at the federal, state, and local level.

Bob Paquin recently left his longtime position at Senator Leahy's office when he was appointed the State Executive Director of USDA's Farm Service Agency for Vermont. We'll greatly miss Bob's insight and help with the LCBP, but we look forward to working with him on agricultural issues affecting Lake Champlain in his new post.

We were delighted to hear that **Tom Berry** will fill Bob's position at Senator Leahy's office. Tom is very familiar with Lake and LCBP programs as he was most recently Lake Champlain Coordinator for The Nature Conservancy and was previously the LCBP liaison at Senator Jeffords' office.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

Festival of Nations - September 18-20th

Celebrate the cultural heritage of the Nations as Crown Point, NY and Chimney Point, VT State Historic Sites team up for this Signature Quadricentennial Event. Festival of Nations will run from September 18-20 with music, crafts, performances, food and more! A rededication ceremony of the Crown Point Lighthouse will occur at 4:30 on September 19th, followed by The US Merchant Marine Corps Band and fireworks over the Lake. For more information visit <http://www.lakechamplainregion.com/quad09.cfm>.



Save the Date: Missisquoi Bay Corporation 10th Anniversary!

An event will be held on Saturday, October 3rd in Quebec to celebrate the accomplishments of the Missisquoi Bay Corporation over the past 10 years. For more information, contact Chantal D'Auteuil at cdauteuil@videotron.ca.

For LCBP meetings see <http://www.lcbp.org/events.htm>.

For other events, check out the [LCBP Watershed Activity Calendar](#).

IMAGE: Kayaking during Friend's of the Winooski River Winooksi Sojourn: Look for it next year!

CONTACT US!

Main Office in Grand Isle:

54 West Shore Road
Grand Isle, VT 05458
(802) 372-3213 or (800) 468-5227 (toll-free in NY & VT)

LCBP Resource Room: The Resource Room at The Leahy Center for Lake Champlain (top floor of ECHO Lake Aquarium & Science Center) is open to the public seven days/week. Call (802) 864-1848 ext. 109 for more information.

