



## BELGRADE REGIONAL CONSERVATION ALLIANCE



BRCA conserves the lands, water quality, and natural heritage of the Belgrade Lakes Watershed.

### Get Ready for the Maine Lakes Resource Center

Those of you who travel regularly through the Belgrade Lakes village must be excited, and perhaps curious about the progress on the new Maine Lakes Resource Center (MLRC) building. We're all looking forward to the grand opening this summer. But completion of the building is only half of the challenge. Behind the scenes many people are already working to ensure that once the building and grounds are finished, the center can then aspire to its mission: Making Conservation a Tradition.

The BRCA, BLA, COLA, D2D, and now the MLRC; acronym soup that can easily confuse even the most ardent supporter. Where do your donations go? How is this new building going to help preserve our lakes? Where are the docks? All good questions that need some clarification.

The MLRC is a conservation effort comprised of the Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance (BRCA), the Belgrade Lakes Association (BLA), the Maine Congress of Lake Associations (COLA), and Colby College, all supported by dozens of volunteers and hundreds of donors who are passionate about Maine Lakes and the Belgrade watershed.

The building, now in the final stages of construction and called the Resource Center began with an initiative by the BLA to replace the docks on Great Pond behind the post office, providing Great Pond residents access to the town via the water, just like they and their parents had many years ago. This project was affectionately called "Docks to Doorways". As the project progressed, Tom Klingenstein became a strong supporter and quickly realized the need to "step up" our conservation efforts to preserve our lakes, and the project morphed into the Maine Lakes Resource Center. The MLRC is a newly established, 501(c)3 organization whose mission is to get property owners on all of our lakes to adopt best conservation practices: buffer strips, rain gardens, proper drainage and more. The BLA has officially

transferred the funds that they raised for Docks to Doorways over to the MLRC.

The centerpiece of the MLRC is the 4,500-square-foot Resource Center, modeled after an early 19<sup>th</sup> century post and beam barn using original, recycled materials. The first floor includes exhibit and presentation space for up to 80 people, and a research lab for Colby College environmental scientists and students. The second floor has offices for the MLRC, BLA, BRCA and COLA. The grounds of the Resource Center will include demonstration gardens of best conservation practices, public docks and parking.



The Resource Center will make the building and other resources available to conservation groups who will use the facility for programs of their own. For example, LakeSmart (a program which recognizes lake property owners who meet best conservation practices) will use the Resource Center to explain, publicize, and promote the program. The Re-

source Center gives LakeSmart (and similar programs) public visibility, a network of conservation educators and volunteers, a venue for education displays, and a multimedia classroom for conservation education.

But the Resource Center will offer much more. Lectures will be offered on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays throughout the summer, focusing on conservation and local history. Cultural events will be held regularly throughout the summer months, and we already have some exciting gala's scheduled. Local artist Matt Russ will hold an art show at the Resource Center; Matt paints in the Kennebec Highlands and other Maine scenic wonderlands. Ellen Tipper, a local musician will serenade us with original folksy renditions. Rug-hooking demonstrations, a classical cellist, and many more events that will bring many people into the Resource Center, where conservation knowledge and best practices will surround them at every step. (cont' next pg)

## Streamside View of the New Maine Lakes Resource Center

Hikes into the Kennebec Highlands as well as canoe and kayak trips on all of our lakes will be offered, all lead by an expert guide. Winter outings are also planned. Children's events will be a key focus. Retail vendors will sell their wares on site. The Resource Center will also be available to the general public for special events (reservations will be required).

Colby College will operate scientific, education and community outreach programs at the Center as part of the College's five-year Belgrade Lakes Watershed Sustainability Project, funded by a \$500,000 National Science Foundation grant in collaboration with the University of Maine (see <http://web.colby.edu/epsco/>).



And what about those docks? Docks were installed last summer on the stream behind the Resource Center; unfortunately they will not be available until construction has been completed on the Resource Center. In the mean time work has been progressing to install docks behind the post office site and new docks are scheduled to be in operation before the end of June.

We are very excited about the progress and future impact of the Maine Lakes Resource Center collaboration. Please join us for our opening on July 4 this summer and help us make Conservation a Tradition!

Mel Croft, BRCA President

Photo above taken by Mark Gliniewicz

### Executive Director's Column

Summer is officially here! The Memorial Day switch has been closed and the quiet hum of our small, three person office through the winter has been replaced with the frenetic pace of our 40+ summer employees. We have a small army of paid and volunteer courtesy boat inspectors (CBIs), a special Milfoil SWAMP Team, and over a dozen youth conservation crewmembers, team leaders, and supervisors. We have summer visitors dropping in to buy hiking maps (many of whom join us when they find out what we do!) and shorefront owners bringing in aquatic plants to identify. Our Education and Outreach Committee, under the able leadership of Robyn LeGrand and assisted by our new Environmental Educator, Tim Perez, has published an ambitious schedule of guided hikes, canoe trips, bird watching expeditions, geolo-

gy field trips, and more, including events at our soon-to-be-open Maine Lakes Resource Center. Please check elsewhere in this newsletter for the current schedule and check our web site frequently as schedules change and we add events. Our 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday lecture series will include a lot of interesting presentations, including Susan Gallo's presentation on Loons on June 16<sup>th</sup>. Again, check the web site frequently for the latest schedule.

These outreach events are great opportunities to learn a little bit more about this special place we inhabit and are trying to protect for future generations. Our expeditions provide a great opportunity to make new friends who share your values or simply learn a new trail to hike or stream to canoe. We can even give you a chance to create a new trail or improve an old one. Dave Axelman's Stewardship Committee will be working on some of our trails (July 22<sup>nd</sup> is the next planned trail day) and will be charting routes for future trails on some of the new properties we have acquired, such as the top of McGaffey

Mtn., Fogg Island, and the top of The Mountain.

We are still continuing to try to expand our membership and encourage more volunteers to become involved in our programs. We are looking for new members who are a lot like our current members- in love with this part of Maine and concerned enough to help protect it. The best place to find those people is among the friends and families of our current members. If you have a friend or family member who shares your conservation ideals who is not yet a member, please ask them to join or consider giving them a gift membership. If you have a new neighbor, a BRCA membership is a perfect welcoming gift! Any member who refers a new member will receive a special gift as a token of our appreciation. Please contact me or stop by the office if you have any ideas about how to make BRCA more responsive to your needs.

All the best,  
Peter Kallin, BRCA Executive Director

## Summer Programs 2011: Pre-registration required, please call BRCA.

Wednesday, June 15 at 5 p.m. Wishing Well Farm	Pond Walk	Visit with Warren Balgooyen at his farm in Norridgewock to see the ponds.
Thursday, June 16th at 7 p.m. Union Church, Belgrade	Lecture: Loons In Maine	Our guest lecturer is Susan Gallo, a wildlife biologist from the <b>Maine Audubon Society will be talking about "Loons in Maine,"</b> with special focus on their natural history and the results of a loon productivity study she conducted last year on productivity of Maine loons and factors in chick survivability. Long Pond in the Belgrades was one of the focus lakes in this study.
Saturday, June 18th Time TBA Center for All Seasons, Belgrade	Geocaching	Please call BRCA at 495-6039 to sign up and get on the list to receive trip details.
Wednesday, June 22 at 6 p.m. Location TBA	Sunset Kayak Trip	Join BRCA on a sunset kayak trip to celebrate the summer solstice. Please call BRCA at 495-6039 to sign up and get on the list to receive trip details.
Wednesday, June 29 at 5 p.m. in Rome	Hike Mount Phillip	Please call BRCA at 495-6039 to sign up and get on the list to receive trip details.
Thursday, July 7th, 7:00 p.m.	Lecture Series	Lecture Series 3 of 6: TBA.
Thursday, July 21st, 7:00 p.m.	Lecture Series	Lecture Series 4 of 6: TBA.
Friday, July 22nd at 9 a.m. Location TBA	Stewardship Trail Day	Join BRCA for workday to perform stewardship on our trails and properties. Please call to sign up and for more information.
Saturday, July 30th Time TBA The Mountain, Rome	Letterboxing	Join Robyn LeGrand for a letterboxing event. Please call BRCA at 495-6039 to sign up and get on the list to receive trip details.
Thursday, August 4th, 7:00 p.m.	Lecture Series	Lecture Series 5 of 6: Ellen Tipper combines keyboard artistry with a melodic voice that covers folk, pop, jazz, and even big band sounds.
Saturday, August 13th, Time TBA	Kayak and Picnic Trip	Please call BRCA at 495-6039 to sign up and get on the list to receive trip details.
Wed., August 17th, Time TBA	Bats	Join guest, Dave Yates, to learn about bats and their habitat.
Saturday, August 20th, Time TBA	Build a Bat House	Join BRCA and learn how to build your own bat house.
Thursday, August 25th, 7:00 p.m.	Lecture Series	Lecture Series 6 of 6: TBA.
Saturday, September 3rd, 8 a.m. Camp Runoia, Belgrade	5K Race for the Lakes	4th annual 5K Race for the Lakes. Over 100 runners every years. \$15 pre-registration by 8/25 includes race shirt, \$18 day of.

The Eco-Kids Series started last summer was designed to bring awareness of the outdoors to youth. This is an audience we would like to do more with to promote the value and wonder of nature, especially in our community. Scavenger hunts and relays were the beginning of a program sure to extend and build in the future which we have by collaborating with the 2011 Camp Golden Pond at the Belgrade Community Center for All Seasons.

Our lecture series will once again lead the way with talks on historical and natural history value. We hope to have another high attendance showing great interest in the community. Please let us know if you have any suggestions for future presenters or topics.

We are continuing outreach with Camp Runoia providing night hikes and canoe trips for their campers throughout the summer. We will also continued our public guided canoe trips on various streams and ponds stretching through

the watershed. Themed hikes on French Mountain, The Mountain and Mt. Philip will also continued. Many thanks to the various activity leaders Warren Balgooyen, Mel Croft, Peter Kallin, Robin LeGrand, Don Mairs, and Margaret Pietrak.

Education and outreach has come a long way over the last five years. We started with five hikes one summer, one hike led from each trailhead. Now we are reaching more people, more interests and spreading our mission to educate stewards of our watershed. The key is you, the member. Participating in our programming, spreading the word about our programming, and even contributing to our programming strengthens the message BRCA is striving to send; to build lasting relationships between people and the natural world in order to inspire, inform and enable responsible decision making for the environment. Thank you for continuing to support education and outreach.

My name is Clark Freeman and I have been given this great opportunity to work as an Ameri-corps Volunteer as the new Conservation Corp Director for the Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance. It is a great honor to be offered this position and I consider myself lucky to be working in such a beautiful part of Maine working toward improving water quality and the natural environment.

This time last month I was down in Virginia hiking the Appalachian Trail. A friend and I started in Harpers Ferry, WV, and hiked southward to Dalesville, Virginia. It was an amazing opportunity and allowed me to appreciate the smaller things in life and develop a closer connect with the natural world, as well as made me apply a variety of skills I had learned in my years of Boy Scouting, where I obtained the rank of Eagle.

In December of 2010, I graduated from Westfield State University, Massachusetts. There, I earned a dual degree in Environmental Science & Geography and Regional Planning and also a minor in geographic information systems (GIS) which allowed me to actively study the environment to which I have a personal connection and passion. I also was fortunate enough to study abroad the spring of 2009 in the beautiful city of Christchurch, New Zealand, at the University of Canterbury, located on the eastern coast of the southern island.

### Other Stuff About Me:

Born and raised in Natick, Massachusetts. Eagle Scout - My Eagle Scout project was constructing three pathways to fishing areas to reduce erosion and constructing signs near my house in Natick. Love camping and enjoy hiking and biking. Love to Kayak. Played Football in High School (Offensive linemen). Played Lacrosse, was a goalie, and threw shot-put in indoor track.

We have a new Field Supervisor this season, Nick Betts, and also is from Massachusetts. He has just completed his undergraduate degree in landscape architecture from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst and will be a valuable asset to our Conservation Corp in making the summer run as smoothly as possible. Josh Hall is stepping up as our new crew leader serving next to our veteran, Chase Karter. Each provides a wealth of experience and leadership which will provide the technical hands on support we need to get difficult projects done and keeping our crews in motion. Ryan McLeod will be working as a Assistant Crew Leader and will be filling in for Josh Hall for several weeks. In addition, we have two new crew members joining our ranks. Chris Morris and Kaylyn Hemphill, both from Mt. Vernon will be joining our crew providing new ideas and a passion for protecting the local environment.



Clark Freeman, New BRCA Youth Conservation Corps Director

**BRCA's Youth Conservation Corps is busy preparing for its 15<sup>th</sup> season of operation this summer.** Since our inception in 1996, we have completed 681 projects in the Belgrade Lakes Watershed, and we are looking forward to another busy year in 2011. However, we are still seeking project sites for this summer. Our Conservation Corps program starts the week of June 27<sup>th</sup>. Our Conservation Corp will be completing a variety of projects throughout the Belgrade watershed with the goal of reducing shoreline erosion and improving local water quality. Our crews are available to help with buffer plantings, riprap, and a wide variety of services to control runoff and prevent soil erosion anywhere within the Belgrade Lakes Watershed. If you or anyone you know might be interested in having myself come out and assess a property I would be more than happy to do so. We still do have space for projects this upcoming season but we fill up fast and are on a first contact first service basis, so contact me as quickly as possible with your concerns.

For more information, or if you would like me to come evaluate your property, contact Clark Freeman at the BRCA office, 495-6039 or [brcacc@gwi.net](mailto:brcacc@gwi.net).

## Phosphorous and Conservation Corps Projects

We are the phosphorous prevention team, our job is to protect our lakes from the phosphorous trying to enter and harm them. If you would like, you can imagine us standing on the shoreline, the lake to our back, swords or light sabers drawn, swatting **at dancing letter P's (for phosphorous)** as they try to move towards the lake through an eroding driveway, a lawn of grass that is cut too short, or waves lapping against the shoreline with the evil intention of pulling phosphorous-carrying-dirt with it. Or you can just think of us as the Conservation Corp, building a box culvert, planting a buffer, or riprapping a shoreline with rock. Either way you want to look at it, we are kind of a big deal.

Why is phosphorous such an evil enemy? The main idea is that the more phosphorous that goes into the lake, the more algal blooms, oxygen depletion, and degradation of water quality there is. On the most basic level, it is bad for the creatures that live in the lake because their habitat is being

degraded and it is bad for humans because no one wants to swim in a lake of green muck where they feel a gulp of water might make them sick. Phosphorous is the limiting nutrient for plant life in the lake, meaning the only thing stopping the lake from being taken over by algae is the amount of phosphorous. This is because the algae has all the other nutrients and environmental conditions it needs in fully supply.

As more phosphorous gets added to the lakes it adds to the chain of events where: with more phosphorous comes more plants, with more plants comes more dead plants sinking to the bottom of the lake at the end of each growing season, with more dead plants comes more decomposition, more decomposition leads to less oxygen because the chemical process of decomposition uses up oxygen, with less-oxygen, another chemical reaction takes place that only happens in an oxygen-less (anaerobic) environment; in this reaction the iron at the bottom

of the lake releases the phosphorous that it is normally attached to and now there is even more phosphorous than we started with. In summary: Phosphorous getting into the lake from land erosion problems is not only a problem directly, but it also creates more phosphorous through a chain of reactions that releases phosphorous through a chemical reaction with iron.

How do we stop phosphorous? We stop it by stopping the things that carry it such as storm water and soil (soil contains phosphorous naturally). In order to stop phosphorous we need to stop erosion and infiltrate storm water before it reaches the lake. Erosion is the process by which soil or dirt is moved, mostly by water. Any time it rains that rain water is considered storm water. The different methods we use to infiltrate storm water and **stop erosion are called “Best Management Practices” and include things like riprap, buffers, and infiltration trenches.**

## Kennebec Highlands Phase III, Update, and Recent Grants

We are pleased to announce that with the recent addition of the 260-acre Linkletter Conservation Easement in New Sharon, we have successfully completed land acquisition for Phase III, Kennebec Highlands. During this phase, the BRCA, in partnership with the ME Department of Conservation, met our goal of adding over 1,000 acres in the Kennebec Highlands, including, the summit of McGaffey Mountain – the highest point in Kennebec County. We are now planning new trails in order to make it easier to explore these new lands. Thank you again to everyone who contributed to this campaign.

As part of this campaign we are trying to add \$200,000 to our Stewardship Endowment Fund to help us monitor our conservation easements and take care of our lands in perpetuity. Although we have added almost \$100,000 and more than doubled our existing endowment, we are still a bit short of our goal and continuing to seek donations toward stewardship. Special thanks to the Maine Community Foundation for arranging a \$25,000 stewardship challenge grant from the Ram Island Conservation Fund. We met this challenge and these funds are now in our endowment fund.

The Maine Community Foundation also provided a Community Building Grant in the amount of \$7,500 that will fund our new Environmental Educator for his 900-hour AmeriCorps tour. Again, thank you.

We also recently received a grant of almost \$2,000 from the Norcross Wildlife Fund to purchase some tools for our Stewardship Committee and additional AquaScopes and Dissecting Microscopes for our Invasive Plant Program. Norcross has been a strong supporter of BRCA over the years and we are grateful.



Looking at the Kennebec Highlands

## Education and Outreach - New Director

My name is Tim Perez and as a child, my summers were highlighted by visits to my grandparents' house outside of Machiasport, Maine. The freedom my parents granted my older siblings and me meant adventures, injuries and intellectual growth. Despite the scars I've acquired here, Maine's natural beauty left the most serious and influential mark.

My fascination with the natural world began in the forests surrounding my grandparents' home. Among other influences, the balsam fir wonderlands carpeted in sphagnum moss guided me towards a B.S. in botany and strong interest in experiential education. In the past year I was fortunate to live and work in Idaho, Florida and travel to Costa Rica, and subsequently developing my abilities as a naturalist and educator.



Tim Perez,  
New Education Director

Recently, I was hired as an AmeriCorps volunteer and Environmental Educator for the BRCA to serve a 900-hour term. What intrigued me about this position was the opportunity to educate myself and the community regarding watershed conservation, while simultaneously **augmenting my understanding of nature's patterns**. My efforts will not be limited to education, but building community. After all, if we are to be successful in **protecting the longevity of Belgrade's splendor**, it will be due to the collective efforts of **the area's inhabitants**.

To facilitate that goal the BRCA and Maine Lakes Resource Center will host a plethora of events open to the community. I sincerely extend an invitation for you to accompany me on the educational hikes, paddling trips, lectures and special events that will be occurring this summer. I am thrilled to live and learn alongside the Belgrade watershed community, while **aiding in the conservation of Maine's resources**, which continue nurture my interest in nature.

## Stewardship Program

On June Saturday 4<sup>th</sup>, the sun was shining, the birds chirping and the mosquitoes were thankfully absent. The scene was perfectly set for **BRCA's Stewardship Day on The Mountain**. **BRCA's stalwart volunteers trickled into the trailhead parking lot with tools in hand, ready to work.**

Led by trail guru Brian Alexander, the thirteen volunteers set off on the sun-speckled trail. The company of workers soon paired up and dispersed along the trail. Prominent supervisor, Pete Kallin, quickly swept the trails for downed limbs with Norb and Kay Overfield and Peggy O'kane, among others.

Other team consisting of Brian, Steve Rice, Clark Freeman, Tim Perez and Jen Koerten began erosion control projects. **Many of Saturday's** projects were aimed to prevent trail deterioration. Snow-melt and precipitation coupled with foot traffic is a recipe for erosion. The cure: water bars. Water bars, constructed of rocks or logs, diagonally dissect the trail and divert water off of the tread and into the woods away from the trail. By the end of the day, everyone had a hand in constructing at least one water bar.

By noon, a handful of new water bars had been constructed existing ones cleared of leaf and soil debris, at which point the crew was briefly assembled by chance. The chance ensemble rejoiced with discussion of rock placement theory, while Ruth Lessard and Ted Hunt happily quarried boulders for remaining water bars. At the behest of productivity the engagement quickly disassembled itself and returned to ruminating over the tool weights. Fun was had by all.

The last project of the day, located on the Long Pond Loop trail, consisted of three oak-log water bars. As the project came to completion, volunteers trickled out, just as they came, while leaving the Mountain trail system better suited for its growing number of hikers. We sincerely thank our volunteers for the time and work they put forth and know it will be appreciated by Belgrade community!



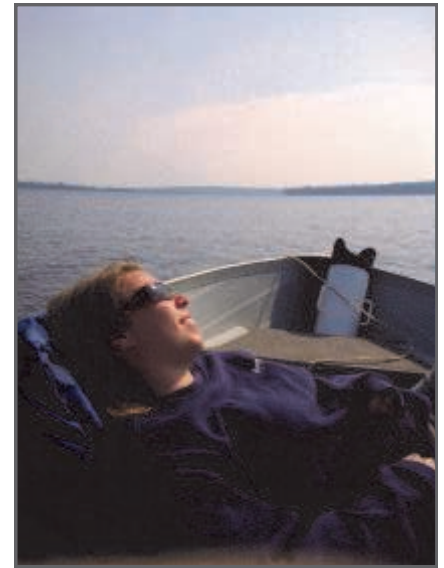
## Milfoil Program Season Begins, Program Director's Notes

Although technically the summer is not yet here, it is within reaching distance. Despite a first rainy week and a half, our new SWAMP team members, have finally gotten the chance to work outside and start showing the Milfoil **who's boss. With the help of Belgrade Lakes Association and donations, we have the funds to hire two recent college graduates to help in planning, preventing and reporting on the Milfoil infestations in the Belgrade Watershed. This summer is going to be filled with invasive plant patrols, making benthic barriers, hand pulling Milfoil and educating various groups of people. I look forward to spending the summer in the sun and water with Katie and Peter.**



Anyone interested in volunteering can contact me, Corinne Dawson, at the office, 495-6039 or by e-mail, [brcamf@gwi.net](mailto:brcamf@gwi.net). We are always looking for boat inspectors and invasive plant patrollers around the watershed, and you know it will be fun **because it's always outside!** If you live on or near Messalonskee Lake, come and learn how to help control the Milfoil infestation on June 25<sup>th</sup> at the Oakland boat landing in **town. If you don't, come and learn** about what it looks like, where it likes to be and what can be done about it. See [snowpond.org](http://snowpond.org) for more details.

Hi. My name is Peter Patenaude. I am from Augusta Maine and I attended the University of Maine at Orono where I studied Forest Ecosystem Science and Conservation. I will be spending the summer months working on the removal of invasive aquatic plants mostly from Great Pond and Great Meadow Stream. I look forward to seeing you out there.



Hi, my name is Katie Poole and I am a Milfoil Assistant this summer with the BRCA. I graduated from University of Maine Orono, last December with a BS in Wildlife Ecology. I look forward to spending the next couple months restoring the natural state of the Belgrade watershed.

### The NEW MILFOIL SWAMP TEAM

Invasive Plant Patrols (IPPs) & Milfoil Awareness Day

The BRCA and volunteers from all the local lake associations will be conducting visual surveys from small boats in all the Belgrade Lakes, especially in the vicinity of the boat ramps. Additionally, we will be working with the Friends of Messalonskee Lake to evaluate various options for pulling or harvesting the variable milfoil there. **Come to "Milfoil Awareness Day" at the Oakland boat ramp** on Saturday, June 25<sup>th</sup> to learn more. We need volunteers for all these efforts. We would love to make you a trained plant patroller and have a plant identification training workshop scheduled for the afternoon of July 12<sup>th</sup> at the Mount Vernon Community Center on Minnehonk Lake and a field methods workshop on the morning of the 16<sup>th</sup> at Taylor Pond in Mt Vernon.

If you want to attend one of these workshops, please contact the BRCA at 495-6039 and we will sign you up. Even if you think you are not ready to learn plant ID, we still need volunteers to act as safety observers for our divers and paddlers to paddle our trained observers around in canoes or tandem kayaks. If you are looking for a good excuse to dive, snorkel, or paddle around a kayak or canoe on a beautiful day, have we got a deal for you! You will make new friends who care about the lakes. Our planned patrols are listed below, including a rain date. Call Corinne Dawson at BRCA for more information. If you are interested in helping with the plant patrol on your lake, please call 495-6039 to register and get more information.

Dates are listed below with rain dates in parenthesis:

Thursday, June 16<sup>th</sup> - North Pond boat ramp (RD June 23<sup>rd</sup>)

Tuesday, June 21<sup>st</sup> - East Pond boat ramp (RD June 27<sup>th</sup>)

Thursday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> - Salmon Lake boat ramp (RD June 27<sup>th</sup>)

Tuesday, June 28<sup>th</sup> - Messalonskee (Oakland) boat ramp (RD June 30<sup>th</sup>)

Tuesday, July 12<sup>th</sup> - Great Pond boat ramp (RD July 15<sup>th</sup>)

Thursday, July 14<sup>th</sup> - Long Pond boat ramp (RD July 18<sup>th</sup>)



**BELGRADE  
REGIONAL  
CONSERVATION  
ALLIANCE**

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STEWARDSHIP WORKDAY:  
Friday, July 22nd

Save the Date  
**GOLF TOURNAMENT**

August 10,  
2011



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