



Fall colors in and around Little Lake Chocorua. / Alex Moot

CLC Public Lands: A History of Access

Thanks to Charles P Bowditch, there is a 140-year tradition of privately owned land around Chocorua Lake available to local residents and visitors for swimming, picnicking, boating, fishing, hiking and other forms of recreation.

In the 1870s, Charles P Bowditch purchased 80% of the land around Chocorua Lake, starting a tradition of providing local residents with access to private lands for the benefit of all.

CP Bowditch and his descendants always made it clear that the public was welcome to use the parcels now called the Grove, the Island, and Sand Beach, even though it was all

private property.

In 1966, a New Hampshire commission issued a report entitled "Land-Water-Recreation," a sweeping review of the mounting needs for outdoor recreation facilities – public and private – and an inventory of the State's relevant physical assets. The report included this recommendation regarding Chocorua Lake:

"This highly attractive and popular lake has been protected for many years through the efforts of thoughtful and farsighted property owners. Negotiations should be started for public protection of the shoreline areas to insure that the character of the lake will remain as it is."

In response to this recommendation and other issues, local landowners in 1968 formed the Chocorua Lake Association and Chocorua Lake Conservation Foundation, sister organizations which merged in 2014 to form the Chocorua Lake Conservancy.

Today, the CLC owns and manages almost 1,000 acres of conservation land across 16 properties in the Chocorua Lake Basin. The CLC provides public access to Chocorua Lake and the Little Lake at two CLC-owned, lakefront properties: a three-acre area known as "the Grove" by the bridge at the

Public Lands, continued on page 2.

south end of the lake; and a 17-acre area known as “the Island” adjacent to Old Route 16 on the east side of the lake. The CLC also maintains the picnic and swimming area for use by Tamworth residents just north of the Island on the east side of the lake, known as Sand Beach.

The CLC maintains 5,800 feet of publicly accessible shoreline on Chocorua Lake and the Little Lake. About 40% of the Chocorua Lake shoreline is accessible for public use, which is more than any other lake in New Hampshire excluding state parks.

About 30% of donations received by the CLC each year are spent on maintaining its two public lakefront areas and other CLC-owned properties. The CLC funds new plantings and annual maintenance projects in the Grove and the Island to maintain each public access area’s natural beauty, reduce erosion, and prevent sediment runoff into the lake. The CLC built and maintains the historic wooden railings on the Narrows Bridge, and the CLC also owns and maintains the dam below the Little Lake. The CLC receives no town or state funding.

The CLC carries out the vision of CP Bowditch and maintains the tradition of public access through the thoughtful planning, hard work, and generous contributions of CLC members, donors, community partners, and volunteers.

WILDLIFE NOTES



You won’t get warts! With cooler temps coming, American toads (*Bufo americanus*) make their way to their hibernacula somewhere below the frost line to wait out the short snowy days. In spring, they emerge just a bit after the wood frogs and make their way to ponds, vernal pools and lakes to trill their spring songs. Eggs laid in long pearl-like strings hatch within a week. In a few weeks they’ve grown legs and left their wetland nursery to begin life on land for the rest of the summer and fall. Garden toads help control a variety of pests, including slugs! In forests and fields, they often hide in a shady spot during the heat of the day and emerge in the evenings to forage for food.

Most amphibians need clean water for breeding and uplands for summer foraging and a safe winter “sleep.” The Chocorua Lake watershed provides the habitats they need throughout the year. With the warm fall we’ve had, they have been out and about well through October!

PHOTO BY LYNNE FLACCUS: AMERICAN TOAD ALONG CHOCORUA RIVER; IN A COOL AND DAMP RESTING SPOT

HAVE A WILDLIFE NOTE TO SHARE?

Email it to laura_cannon@chocorualakeconservancy.org

CLC CONSERVATION LANDS MILESTONES

1969 - Evelyn Bolles Phenix, daughter of Frank Bolles, grants 247 acres northwest of Chocorua Lake to The Nature Conservancy. (The Bolles Preserve is still owned by TNC but is maintained by the CLC.)

1972 - Forrester A Clark donates 277 acres on the west side of the Bolles Preserve.

1972 - The Tamworth Foundation donates the Little Lake Dam.

1976-1980 - Mary P. Scott donates 73 acres east of the Bolles Preserve.

1981 - J Henry Korson donates the 14.2-acre Abigail Adams Scott Korson Nature Reserve.

1986 - Stanley C. Snow donates 7 acres.

1987 - CLC acquires the 3-acre Grove lakefront area.

1990 - CLC purchases the 17-acre Island lakefront area.

1991 - CLC purchases the 18-acre Woodhouse Reserve at the north end of the lake.

1995 - Charles Tewksbury donates 27 acres.

1999 - CLC buys the 150-acre Brown Lot on the east side of Rte 16.

2000 - CLC purchases the 14-acre Burt Lot, which abuts the Chocorua River north of the lake.

2002 - The Chamberlin family donates the 67-acre Charlotte C. Browne Memorial Woods.

2011 - CLC purchases the 16-acre Moose Meadows along the Chocorua River. Along with the Burt lot, this helps to protect the water quality of the upper watershed.

Project Update: NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service)

BY LYNNE FLACCUS

Since the last newsletter, the Property Management Committee has been busy following through on projects associated with the NRCS grant we received last year. The 2017 year has included funding for projects associated with wildlife habitat and erosion control.

Starting in mid-August, we contracted with Forest Land Improvement (FLI) to conduct a timber harvest on the Clark Preserve. One of the goals was to open areas of the forest to allow sunlight to reach the forest floor and stimulate young, diverse and abundant growth. Of the 277 acres, less than 100 acres of the property were part of this plan, primarily in the southern half. Our NRCS funding will go towards grading and reseeding the log yard and woods roads. The seeding and mulch will prevent erosion and provide a mix of herbaceous growth for wildlife food; a “conservation mix” of grasses, sedges, clover and rye. We’ll be working with FLI to develop a plan for this work in November to finish up by the end of the year, weather and ground conditions permitting.

NRCS funding was also used this year to purchase wood chips for the Grove and Island. Thanks to a large and enthusiastic group of volunteers over Labor Day weekend, we were able to cover the Island beach area where foot traffic is heavy. Soil compaction at these access points impacts the health of the majestic trees so familiar along the lake. The wood chips trap moisture, add nutrients to the soils and reduce erosion.

Thank you volunteers!!

Plans for enlarging the field area on the Moose Meadows property north of the lake will make it easier to conduct annual mowing and maintain field habitat. Enlarging the meadow this fall or winter will also help us prepare the site for plantings next fall. NRCS funding will be used to purchase and plant fruiting shrubs for wildlife at Moose Meadows and the fields at Charlotte C. Browne Memorial Woods next year. We’re excited to pick out the shrubs that will do best at this site and be most useful for a variety of birds and other wildlife!

Many thanks go to John Watkins for putting together this 5 year grant and to Deb Marnich and Nels Liljedahl from NRCS for guiding us through the process!

To learn more about NRCS and NH’s NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) that provides cost share to landowners for land stewardship, go to: <http://bit.ly/2A2dVMs>



Timber harvested on the Clark Preserve. / Lynne Flaccus



A hardy crew of volunteers pitched in to spread wood chips in the Grove and Island, providing protection from the impacts of heavy foot traffic in these popular areas. / Lynne Flaccus

The CLC at the Tamworth Street Fair

BY JEAN MCKINNEY

The 2017 Tamworth Street Fair was an even greater success than 2016, with many more booths and visitors. Who knew trash compacting and disposal could be so interesting? Of course food and drink venues are always popular and tasty, including tours at the new brewery. Local businesses and nonprofits provided an eclectic variety, and even the drizzle couldn't dampen peoples' spirits. The Remick Country Doctor Museum & Farm had information about themselves, and a varied and interesting yard sale. There was even an entertainer who did marvelous things with the yo yo. Thank you to the Tamworth Economic Development Commission for organizing this wonderful event!

Lynne set up a great display illustrating the scope of lands in the watershed that are under the stewardship of the CLC either as landowner or covenant holder. This was very effective at explaining and expanding our presence to a mostly new audience. Local radio station WMWV was broadcasting live for a couple of hours, complete with a DJ. Lynne and Peg joined him for a live chat over the air, taking our coverage valley wide! Lynne also had an interactive display of the lake with many wonderful creepy crawley bugs and wildlife. Children placed the animals and insects at various lake depths, and Lynne was great at explaining all of them. Booth visitors took advantage of informational flyers and newsletters, folks signed up for volunteer opportunities, and we even sold some CLC hats!

Lynne, Peg, Penny, Alex, and I had a good time talking about the CLC to all who stopped by. We plan to do it again next year, along with Chocorua Day, a slightly smaller but equally successful event. A knowledgeable audience is one footprint we want to expand.



Volunteers staffed the CLC booth at the Tamworth Street Fair.
/Jean McKinney

WILDLIFE NOTES



True blue At least one heron has been a regular visitor to Chocorua this year, frequently spotted among the reeds in the Little Lake. Calm, quiet paddlers keeping a respectful distance were rewarded with a clear view of this large wader, which may range from blue to gray to white. Plentiful food, clean water, and no motorboats make the watershed an attractive habitat for both long-term residents and migratory visitors.

PHOTO BY STEVE LANOU; GREAT BLUE HERON, AUGUST 2017.

HAVE A WILDLIFE NOTE TO SHARE?

Email it to laura_cannon@chocorualakeconservancy.org

PROFILE

Troy Emerson LAKE PATROL OFFICER

BY DAVE FARLEY

Four years ago Troy Emerson began his job as the Chocorua Lake Conservancy's Lake Patrol Officer. From Memorial Day weekend through mid-October, seven days a week and twice a day, he patrols the 20 acres of public access areas at the Grove and Narrows Bridge, the Island, and Sand Beach. Generally, Troy is responsible for trash pickup and disposal, interacts with the public answering questions, and ensures that rules for these sites are followed by all. He normally collects 80-90 large bags of trash during a season, as well as encountering occasional kitchen sinks, tires, an abandoned car, and selected unmentionables.

Troy reports that his most common question from members of the public is: "Will you take a photo of us?" – not surprising given the iconic beauty of Chocorua Lake and Mount Chocorua.

In addition, he has encountered various wildlife including moose, deer, bald eagles, loons, and nesting turtles.



Troy Emerson stands on the Narrows Bridge, a popular spot for visitors which he regularly patrols. / Dave Farley

Troy recounts a story from his first month on the job about a chatty fly fisherman who was standing chest-deep in the lake. After a few minutes of small talk, the fisherman walked toward shore—no problem, except that he was completely naked! When asked what happened next, Troy responded, "I got the heck out of there." Fortunately, this story was an exceptional highlight in his four years representing the CLC, not a typical occurrence.

Troy and his wife, Melissa, and children, Lucas (4) and Camile (1) are life-long residents of Tamworth. Troy and Melissa first met as students at the Brett Elementary School and graduated from Kennett High School in North Conway.

Thank you, Troy, for monitoring and protecting these important CLC sites, and for enhancing and protecting the public's access and enjoyment.

The Chocorua Lake Patrol Through the Years

BY ALEX MOOT

The Chocorua Lake Patrol was started 93 years ago. In response to a devastating 1923 forest fire in the Sandwich Range Wilderness, Ingersoll Bowditch, son of Charles P Bowditch, initiated the Chocorua Fire Patrol in 1924 to guard against possible forest fires which might be started by picnickers or campers visiting the eastern shore of Chocorua Lake. Ingersoll Bowditch hired a local man to serve as a Patrol officer and solicited voluntary contributions from local property owners. In the early years, Patrol officers patrolled by horseback, then by motorcycle. The current Patrol is done on foot.

After his death in 1938, Ingersoll's wife Sylvia continued to collect the donations from local property owners and supervised the Patrol until a few years before her death in 1964 when she was relieved by Cornelia Balch Wheeler.

By the summer of 1966, the challenges of parking, overcrowding and sanitation in the Grove, Island and Sand Beach became more pressing. In response to these and other concerns, local landowners in 1968 created the Chocorua Lake Association, assuming responsibility for the Chocorua Lake Patrol and collecting voluntary contributions from local property owners. In 2014, the Chocorua Lake Conservancy assumed responsibility for the Patrol. The Patrol officer is paid out of annual fund donations received from CLC members and friends.

Patrol duties have expanded from fire prevention to include monitoring and reporting any problems with the portable toilets, addressing concerns of public nuisance, prohibiting motor boats or boat trailers from entering the lake, intercepting any commercial activities, encouraging appropriate parking, preventing overnight camping, engaging law enforcement when necessary, and encouraging the public to enjoy and respect these public areas, for the benefit of all.

For many recent years, Everett Chase of Chocorua served as the Patrol officer and was the embodiment of the Chocorua Lake Patrol. Other local residents who have recently served as Patrol officer include: Joan Phenix (1990s); Sandy Beauschesne (late 1990s to 2003); Bob Griffin (2003-09); Jamie and Amanda Mudgett (2009-13); and Troy Emerson (2013 to present).

If you know the name(s) of Patrol officers not listed, please email amoot@chocorualakeconservancy.org and help us fill in the gaps in the history of this wonderful institution, which has kept the public lakefront access areas on Chocorua Lake safe and welcoming to visitors from all over the world since 1924.

Field Work & Follow-up

BY LYNNE FLACCUS

Stewardship Director

The fall colors are creeping along the contours of the mountains, hinting at the cooler temperatures to come. After a few days of unusually warm weather recently, it is nice to have frosty morning or two with geese honking overhead to remind us that the seasons really are changing!

I've been busy finishing up field work for the last of the Current Conditions Reports for all private property with CLC covenants, and meeting new landowners and walking boundaries. Meeting landowners to hear about family connections to the land and each other, and having opportunities to walk in the woods and fields continues to be the highlight of my work!



Lynne Flaccus

These Current Conditions Reports are an important tool that CLC and landowners can use as reference as time passes, and annual stewardship visits allow us to keep this living document current as the lands and properties change. I've been appreciative of landowners who continue to welcome me and help in the process of completing these files. Landowners with covenants or easements are stewards of their properties and along with CLC are partners in the conservation of Chocorua Basin.

I've also been busy working with the Property Management Committee (PMC) as we implement plans that are part of our Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) grant, and engage volunteers in our Property Stewards Program. CLC owns 16 properties protected as open space; some with trails or formal access, and others informally open to the public for hunting, fishing, photography, and exploration. As stewards of the land, CLC manages these properties consistent with any covenant



Vibrant green pods with rosy spikes, Beech Nuts peek through fallen foliage. / Lynne Flaccus

restrictions in place, and strives to care for the land in a thoughtful way. We continue to look for volunteer Property Stewards for these lands who are willing to visit once a year to walk boundaries and trails, to be "eyes and ears" on the ground, check bird houses and help the PMC with management of these lands. Check out the website for more information on Property Steward roles and other volunteer opportunities!

I hope you'll stop by the office sometime in Chocorua Village to say hello, ask questions, or introduce yourself if we haven't met!

Hope to see you out and about in the forests and trails around the Basin!

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Bill Mayer

Bill is a member of the extended Pratt family, which has a summer house on Washington Hill. Bill and his wife Diane live in Newton, Massachusetts. A lawyer at Goodwin Procter in Boston, Bill served for 10 years as chair of the firm's Pro Bono Committee. He has served as Board Chair of KickStart International, a non-profit focused on lifting millions of people in Africa out of poverty quickly, cost-effectively and sustainably. Bill served on the board of RefugePoint, a non-profit developing solutions for refugees worldwide, and as counsel and board advisor to PeaceFirst and the Penikese Island School.

Andy Fisher

Andy grew up in Conway, and for the past few years Andy and his wife Beth have lived in Chocorua Village. Andy works as a surveyor at Ammonoosuc Survey in Intervale, and serves on the Tamworth Planning Board. Andy is an active member of the CLC's Property Management Committee. Andy and Beth are both avid long distance trail runners. Two years ago, they completed the Vermont 50 kilometer, and a few months ago Andy and Beth ran the Mt Washington Road Race.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Members and Friends,

This space is usually an opportunity for me to inform CLC members what is new in the Chocorua Lake Basin, but this time I am going to take a few minutes to celebrate all the things that are still the same.

I am delighted to report that the Chocorua Lake Basin is pretty much unchanged from a year ago. The lake's water quality remains pristine, the Grove and Island public lakefront areas remain beautiful and clean, there are still no houses visible from the lake, and the historic wooden railings on the Narrows Bridge are still beautiful. There are still no motorboats on the lake, there is no milfoil in the lake, the loons continue to thrive, and a bald eagle recently appeared. Thousands of visitors continue to enjoy visiting the lake, the CLC's conservation lands around the lake remain beautiful and healthy, and the entire 4,000+ acre Basin remains untouched by commercial development.

All this lack of change is no accident. Things only remain the same in the Chocorua Lake Basin thanks to the hard work and many contributions of over sixty CLC volunteers, committee members and board members, and because of the 360 households who generously donate to the CLC.

For the past 49 years, as pressure to develop land and build houses has boomed, the CLC and its predecessor organizations have continued a 140-year old tradition of conserving land, protecting the natural beauty of the Chocorua Lake Basin, and providing local residents and visitors with convenient, clean and attractive access to Chocorua Lake.

Charles P Bowditch began these important traditions in the 1870s. When he died in 1921, his will expressed his hope that these traditions would continue: *"To insure in the future, as I have attempted to insure in the past, the keeping of the shores of the Chocorua ponds in as natural and wild a state as possible."* That charge has been honored ever since by his descendants, by generations of CLA, CLCF and CLC board members, committee members and volunteers, and of course, by our members who have donated conservation land, conservation covenants or easements, or financial contributions.

Next year is the CLC's 50th anniversary. In the next couple of months, the CLC asks for the generous support of our members and friends to our year-end appeal to help cover our 2017 operating expenses. I hope you will consider as generous a year-end gift as you are able.

ALEX MOOT

President (2017-18)

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

The Chocorua Lake Conservancy publishes and distributes an educational newsletter twice a year, in the Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter. Current and past issues are posted online at chocorualakeconservancy.org/news/newsletter.

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The Chocorua Lake Conservancy is a volunteer-led land trust dedicated to its mission of protecting the natural beauty of the Chocorua Lake Basin and providing public access for present and future visitors.

DID YOU KNOW?

The CLC will celebrate our
50th Anniversary in 2018.

(Our predecessor organizations were started in 1968.)

Stay tuned for details on our Facebook page,
and don't miss the spring newsletter!

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Serenity now: an autumn paddle on the tranquil water of Lake Chocorua. /Alex Moot