



Schoodic Lake Association

SLA NEWSLETTER

2023

TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT

WWW.SCHOODICLAKE.ME

PRESIDENT'S GREETING

First of all, I would like to say hello to all my fellow Schoodic Lake property owners. I know I speak for many when I say I am looking forward to another beautiful summer spent on Schoodic Lake making memories with family and friends.

Throughout my childhood, my grandparents had a camp on fire road 13 and my fondest memories come from the countless hours spent there. I must admit, however, I seem to be getting soft as I age because as a child, I never cared how cold the water was when I was swimming in Schoodic. In fact, I remember the adults needing to tell me when my lips turned purple, that it was time to get out of the water to warm up. This is no longer the case for me, as now I like to allow the lake to warm up a bit before jumping in. I find it funny how, as time goes on, so many things change yet so many things stay the same. Now that I am grown and own my own camp on the lake, I get to watch my own children enjoy the lake the same way I did many years ago and yes, I must admit the rule at my camp is when the kids' lips turn purple, it's time to get out of the water and warm up.

With that being said, I grew up unaware of the many things required to make life on the lake so enjoyable. As someone who now has spent the last 20 years in one form or another working professionally on dams and hydro stations throughout the state, I found myself wanting to learn more about the Schoodic Lake Association and all that they do. Whether it's running the day-to-day operations of the dam that maintains our precious lake levels, doing repairs to the dam to keep it safe and operational for years to come, or helping to educate and spread the word of how each and every one of our actions effect the lake. The things this group does are invaluable to our beautiful body of water. I also found that none of the important work the Schoodic Lake Association does year in and year out would be possible without each and every member who donates and helps to support us. It takes a lot of effort and money to accomplish everything that needs to be done involving a dam and that money comes from donations from all of you. I am truly amazed at how far the SLA has been able to stretch a dime to keep the Schoodic Lake dam in good, working condition. This is no small task and the board members that have graciously volunteered their time over the years have done a phenomenal job.

Schoodic is such a wonderful and amazing place that it somehow seems to touch the heart of everyone that has had the chance to spend any time here. I love Schoodic the same way I'm sure everyone reading this newsletter does, and the goal and mission of the Schoodic Lake Association has always been and will continue to be 'To preserve and protect the lake'. I hope that as you read this newsletter, you will take a moment to reflect on all the beautiful memories you have of your time spent on the lake and know that it could have been a truly different place if it weren't for the efforts of the Schoodic Lake Association and all of its members and supporters over the years.

Sincerely, Brian Gormley – President of the Schoodic Lake Association

**SCHOODIC LAKE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING
9:00AM SATURDAY AUGUST 5, 2023 MILO TOWN HALL
DOORS OPEN AT 8:30**

Spring at the Schoodic Dam

Peter Hamlin, Dam Operator

April and May each year is a crucial time frame for establishing the lake level for the upcoming summer activity. We actually begin with the prior fall. Most lakes in Maine, including Schoodic, perform an annual drawdown of the lake level. For Schoodic, the drawdown begins the last few days of September continuing thru October 15. The level of the lake on October 15 is maintained until the gates of the dam are closed prior to freeze up, usually at or near year's end. The purpose of the drawdown is to relieve the pressure on the dam and surrounding protective berm, to cleanse the algae growth along the shoreline and to prevent shore erosion due to high winter water levels.

The October deadline date was established in concert with the Maine Inland Fisheries biologists. The Togue spawn is protected from damage as the eggs are being laid farther from shore. Subsequent rising of winter water levels keeps ice formation away from the delicate eggs.

The optimum summer lake level is 6' as measured at the dam and at a corresponding benchmark at Lakeview landing. The lake level after the draw down averages 4'2" to 4'6". With the gates closed prior to freeze up, the lake level rises during the winter due mostly to the springs feeding the lake. The average rise is about a foot, bringing the level at the dam to between 5'2" to 5'6".

Spring at the lake and dam is marked by diligent monitoring of snowpack, spring runoff and rain levels. These factors combine to restore the additional 6 to 10 inches of water needed to reach the summer level of 6'. Usually, the gates need to be opened to let out excess water above the summer level. The last several years the level hasn't exceeded 6'4" and is brought down by gate adjustments. Too high a lake level after ice out causes issues with shore erosion and the placement of docks and boat lifts.

The keys to maintaining the spring/summer lake level is often micro-managing the gate activity. Recent changes in weather patterns are a cause for concern. Low snowpack, lower moisture content and less spring rain/run off are worrisome trends.

While fall and spring are busy times making gate adjustments, the spring level is the most crucial. With rain patterns trending drier, it is imperative to maintain the 6' level going into summer. Lack of summer rain and evaporation during the hot summer days can seriously impact late summer water levels. Last summer, (2022) was prime example. In mid-May last spring, I closed the gates at the 6' level. Spring rain was historically low and a dry summer followed. The dam gates were not opened again until the beginning of the fall drawdown. With many area lakes struggling with low water Schoodic stayed within a couple inches of optimum levels.

The one constant for managing water levels in Maine is that no two years bring the same weather conditions. Weather forecasts, rain measurement, lake level checks, intuition and a little luck all contribute to good summer water levels for swimming, boating, and fishing every year at Schoodic.

EUTROPHICATION....WHAT IS IT AND HOW DOES IT IMPACT SCHOODIC LAKE?

David Walker, Educator

Years ago, while attending a Maine Congress of Lakes meeting, I first learned about the natural aging process of lakes. This process is called eutrophication. Eutrophication is a natural process that results from accumulation of nutrients in lakes or other bodies of water over time and result in algae that feed on these nutrients. The algae result in diminished water quality and recreational value of the water body. We have all seen pictures of water bodies with unsightly scum on the water surface and excessive plant growth emerging from the water.

While eutrophication is a natural aging process usually occurring over thousands of years and is impacted by many factors, it is significantly accelerated as by activity within the watershed or the land area that drains to the lake. Accelerated nutrient pollution released to freshwater lakes has many potential sources but most often due to development within the watershed of the lake resulting in increased phosphorus finding its way to the lake. Lakes with a large water shed must often deal with phosphorus sources outside of their control such as industrial and agricultural sources. We are fortunate, Schoodic Lake has a relatively small watershed and therefore we can, with education and cooperative effort, slow the natural eutrophication process and preserve the Schoodic we know and enjoy for many years to come.

Attention to properly designed, installed and maintained septic systems, controlled stormwater (including snowmelt and

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camp road ditching) runoff as well as the use of non-phosphorus-based fertilizers are easy and effective ways to slow the process.

Maintaining natural buffers as well as creating buffers along the water's edge to slow the flow of these harmful nutrients to the lake are effective measures. As much as we like to rid our lot of surface water, make our lawns green and create easy access to the water, it is possible to accomplish all these while limiting damage to water quality. Non-phosphorus fertilizers are readily available and with minimal planning it is possible to avoid providing a direct path to the lake for runoff that carries these harmful nutrients such as phosphorus to the lake. The mission of the Schoodic Lake Association is to preserve and protect the lake. Awareness of the eutrophication process and some simple actions by those who spend time on and around Schoodic Lake is just one of many ways we can fulfill our mission.

**Remember the "Good Old Days"
Tom Sherman, Summer Resident**

I remember when I first started fishing Schoodic lake in 1990. I couldn't catch a fish with a hand grenade! And, if I did hook one, it was pretty small for a Togue, about 12 – 14 inches. Not very satisfying as far as fish catching, but extremely relaxing being almost alone on such a beautiful, quiet lake. The surrounding scenery was spectacular, especially Mt. Katahdin standing guard over the north end.

Well, things have really changed since then. Over the last 30 plus years that I have been a member of the Schoodic Lake Association, the lake has certainly changed not only in its improved fishery, but also in its recreational use. What used to be a very quiet, wilderness fishing lake, has become a very lively recreational lake. Schoodic has become a popular spot for serious anglers and not by accident. The Maine Fisheries and Wildlife Department in conjunction with the Schoodic Lake Association, has worked very hard to re-establish a consistently productive fishery here at Schoodic.

It all started with the establishment of a reproducing smelt population within the lake itself. This provided the food for raising larger and healthier Togue. Then the Lake association enacted a viable water level policy that not only protects the shoreline, but also protects the spawning grounds for our fishery. Because of the co-operative efforts of the association and the fishery biologists, Schoodic was designated as a "Trophy" salmon lake due to the increased growth of the introduced salmon. The results of all of this work spread over many years shows up in the creel surveys and derby results every year.

Hats off! To the Maine Fisheries biologists and the Schoodic Lake Association for keeping Schoodic one of the cleanest and best fishing lakes in Maine!!

**61st Schoodic Lake Fish Derby Results
2023**

Togue

1st	Trevor Weymouth	Charleston	26"	6.26 lbs
2nd	Lydia Chase	Veazie	27"	6.19 lbs
3rd	Jarrdel Drinkwater	Old Town	27.5"	5.80 lbs

Salmon

1st	Jack Boucher	Corinna	28"	6.86 lbs
2nd	Jeff Durant	Brownville	27.5"	6.80 lbs
3rd	Bill Bowen	Durham	27"	6.79 lbs

Trout

1st	Gail McCleary	Hudson	18.5"	2.06 lbs
2nd	Dan Palmerson	Mass	18"	1.89 lbs
3rd	Chad Washburn	Holden	17"	1.88 lbs

Perch

1st	Jake Turner	Lagrange	15"	2.17 lbs
2nd	Jake Turner	Lagrange	14.5"	1.52 lbs
3rd	Tom Hujara	Winslow	13.5"	1.38 lbs

Bass

1st	Lennon Pleasant	Conway, NH	21.5"	5.44 lbs
2nd	Jacob Valvo Jr	Milo	20.0"	4.91 lbs
3rd	Arthur Herbest	Brownville	18.0"	3.77 lbs

Cusk

1st	Greg Higgins	Bangor	30.5"	6.24 lbs
2nd	Tom Smith	Kenduskeag	28.0"	5.80 lbs
3rd	Theodore Pierson	Brownville	27.0"	5.61 lbs

Pickereel

1st	Kevin Viago	Peabody, MA	25.5"	3.85 lbs
2nd	Mark Gilman	Argyle	25.0"	3.43 lbs
3rd	Seth Gilman	Argyle	24.5"	3.33 lbs

Prize Winners

1st	Parker McNaughton - Lifetime Fishing License - Harris Lum			
2nd	Brody Grey - \$250 Visa Gift Card - Maine Highland			
3rd	Gavin Gerrish - \$100 Gift Card - Maine Savings			
	Total Fish Caught - 939			

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