

Merrymeeting News

The Newsletter of Friends of Merrymeeting Bay • P.O. Box 233 • Richmond Maine 04357

FALL 2001

To Preserve, Protect and Improve the Unique Ecosystems of Merrymeeting Bay.

Friends of Merrymeeting Bay is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Support comes from members' tax-deductible donations and grants.

Education

Hands Around the Bay, Speaker Series, field trips.

Conservation & Stewardship

Protecting natural resources through private and public ownership, easements and stewardship.

Membership Events

Paddle tours of the Bay, field trips, conservation meetings, potluck suppers and shoreline clean-ups.

Research and Advocacy

Water quality, data collection, toxics, fisheries restoration.

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On-Line

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fomb@gwi.net

LAND PROTECTION FINALIZED

At the end of October and the beginning of November titles to both Choice View Farm (CVF) and a 40-acre Pork Pt. property were transferred to the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife (MDIF&W). FOMB led both of these protection efforts, the former taking two years and the later less than one. Interim purchase of Dresden's CVF by a bridge buyer was necessary to protect this property from development. Funding for permanent protection came from FOMB donors, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA), Land for Maine's Future (LMF), and the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF).

An adjacent landowner exercised her right of first refusal on the Pork Pt. property in Bowdoinham and then cooperated with FOMB in protecting the land for the future. With property now protected at the south and north ends of Pork Point Road, we hope to work with landowners in between on conservation easements or other options, thereby protecting this wonderful landscape in its entirety. Bridge funding for this piece came from FOMB and TNC. Permanent funding has come from NAWCA through the Maine Wetlands Protection Coalition. We thank all those individuals and organizations involved for their support of both protection efforts.

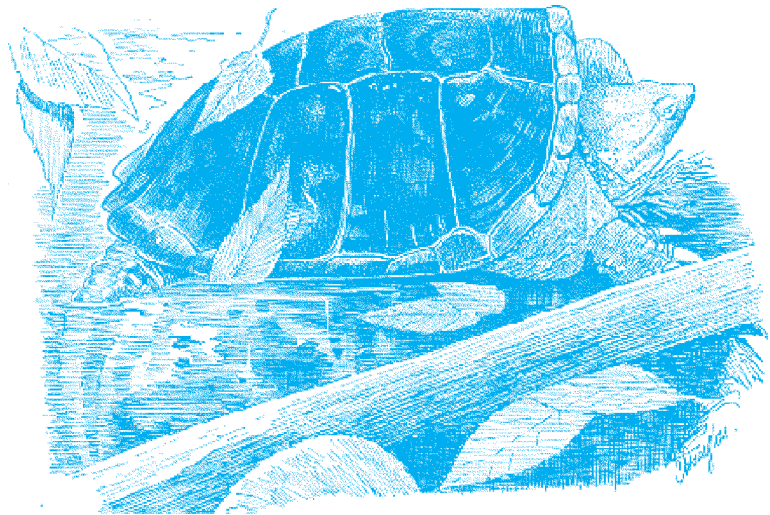
Ed Friedman

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- JANUARY 9 PESTICIDES - USE AND ABUSE.**
Kathleen McGee, Maine Toxics Action Coalition.
7:00 Beam Classroom, Bowdoin College
- FEBRUARY 13 BALD EAGLES OF THE BAY.**
Charlie Todd, Wildlife Biologist, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.
7:00 Beam Classroom, Bowdoin College
- MARCH 13 THE POPHAM COLONY.**
Bud Warren, Marine Historian.
7:00 Beam Classroom, Bowdoin College
- APRIL 10 NUTRIENT FLOW IN THE MERRYMEETING BAY WATERSHED.**
Ted Loder, Chris Hunt, University of New Hampshire.
7:00 Beam Classroom, Bowdoin College
- MAY 8 LISTENING TO THE VOICE OF THE BAY.**
Gary Lawless, Poet.
7:00 Bridge Academy, Dresden

SNAPPING TURTLES

Common snapping turtles (Chelydra serpentina serpentina) are a large, highly aquatic species that occur from the Gulf of Mexico to southern Canada east of the Rocky Mountains.



These turtles live and thrive in a variety of habitats, from freshwater to brackish and, for limited periods of time, even saltwater. Despite this adaptability, they are currently subject to exploitation and their survival is at risk, including right here in Maine.

Today's snapping turtles have hardly changed from 215 million years ago when Proganochelys, the most primitive turtle known, lived. Turtles were one of the few reptile groups that survived the impact of a six mile wide meteorite on earth and the following nuclear winter about 65 million years ago, which is known as the K-T boundary.

Like all reptiles, snapping turtles are ectotherms. Ectotherms do not produce their own body heat, but regulate their body temperature by moving about in the environment, (often by sunning themselves). Snappers have temperature dependent sex determination; to achieve a 50:50 male to female ratio snapping turtle eggs need to incubate at exactly 28°C. If a juvenile turtle beats the strong odds against hatching there is still only a 1-1.8% chance of reaching sexual maturity. Surviving turtles are, thankfully, extremely long-lived.

Snapping turtles are highly aquatic and spend most of their lives in the water, except when they crawl out on logs to sun themselves. They are a bottom walking species, which means that instead of swimming they crawl or bounce along the bottom in shallow water. Snappers only float as long as they hold a significant amount of air in their lungs. They like obstructed or covered areas to live in and prefer substrates of soft mud (very important), organic debris, dense vegetation, and water lilies. They prefer to be able to reach the surface with their head while in contact with the bottom, and are therefore usually found only in water up to 3 feet deep, with a depth of only 20 inches preferred, and a usual maximum possible water depth of 8 feet. Snappers can swim across deep areas but do not live in them.

The hunting technique of snapping turtles involves very little active movement. Snapping turtles usually forage on the bottom or lie still in the mud, waiting for something to swim close by. When they stalk prey they move extremely slowly.

Throughout history snapping turtles have been falsely demonized. They have been held responsible for waterfowl and game fish declines and people frequently believe that they will attack humans. The facts, however, do not support these myths. Snapping turtles eat vegetation as the main part of their diet, followed by slow, non-game fish, carrion, invertebrates, and assorted other items. Although they do take the occasional waterfowl, it has been shown by several studies that their impact on waterfowl populations is negligible. In the northern part of their range snapping turtles only eat their own weight in food each year. Addressing concerns of sportsmen, I believe snapping turtles may have a positive impact on game fish populations by reducing the number of, and therefore the competition from, slow moving, bottom feeding fish, (trash fish).

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Merrymeeting News

is the newsletter of **Friends of Merrymeeting Bay**, P.O. Box 233, Richmond, Maine 04357, and is published seasonally.

Merrymeeting News is sent to FOMB members and other friends of the Bay. For information call Warren Whitney, Executive Director, at 666-3376.

Snapping turtles are not as aggressive as commonly believed. They will defend themselves if cornered and cut off from the water by striking out with their head, which can reach almost all the way back along the shell.

Snappers do not attack people in the water. Over the course of my research I have handled over 40 different wild snapping turtles ranging up to 16 inches in size and have never been bitten. Because of their position in the food chain snapping turtles are not afraid, but they are also not aggressive. An annoyed snapping turtle will back into a corner and lunge at you, stopping about an inch short of you. If you do not move away, it will lunge at you with open jaws but close them a fraction of an inch before it touches you and just bump you. Only if you violate a very tight zone around a snapping turtle's head with a small object (something it judges it could get its jaws around) will it strike, bite, and sometimes hold on. If you do happen to get bitten, do not attempt to remove the turtle. It will let go by itself after a short while if you leave it in the water. Snapping turtles examine things by touching them with their nose, so a very curious snapper might bump a swimmer carefully.

A serious threat to snapping turtles in Maine is vehicle traffic. Each year many females get killed in their search for nesting sites. Adults and hatchlings are often run over because of a driver's dislike (and ignorance) of them. Their nests on roadsides and in gravel pits are often destroyed as well.

Snapping turtles are also frequently trapped. Because they are seen as competitors for game fish and waterfowl, laws protecting them are few or inadequate. According to *Developing Management Guidelines for Snapping Turtles*, a US Forest Service Report, the "northern population (of snapping turtles) cannot sustain even minimal exploitation by humans". Other studies have also concluded that northern populations of snapping turtles need to be completely protected to continue to exist. Snapping turtles in many areas are not suitable for human consumption. Due to their longevity, position on the food chain, and habitat snappers may bioaccumulate extremely high loads of persistent environmental pollutants such as PCBs.

How can you help snapping turtles?

- Drive slowly during June and be on the lookout for snapping turtles crossing the roads, especially from dawn to noon, and again in the evening.

- If you see a snapping turtle crossing the road, stop traffic and herd it across in the direction it was walking in. Never try to turn it back because it needs to get to some destination.

- If you need to move a snapping turtle quickly simply pick it up by the top, back edge of its shell and carry it across the road holding its head away from you.

- Snapping turtles, especially during their nesting migrations, will frequently snap. However, in the great majority of cases they simply strike in the air or touch you with closed jaws. They do not intend to bite as long as you keep your fingers away from their head.

- Snappers must not be held by the tail because that can cause serious injury to them.

- Do not eat turtle meat or collect snapping turtles and sell them to pet stores. They will only be sold as turtle meat.

- E-mail me at susan@nemaine.com to sign and/or help circulate a petition arguing for the elimination of commercial trapping of snapping turtles in Maine.

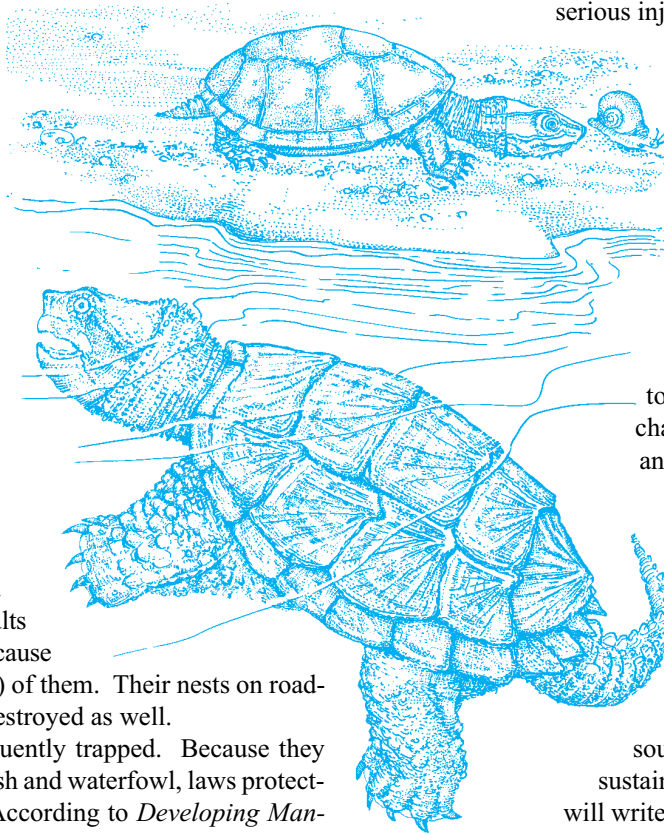
Snapping turtles are on their way to extinction if the situation does not change. One thing that can be changed and have an immediate impact is to outlaw the commercial harvest of snapping turtles. This year the Maine Legislature passed a law which authorizes the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIF&W) to restrict the commercial harvest of snapping turtles to ensure the sustainability of the resource.

The resource is, however, only sustainable if there is no harvest. MDIF&W will write the new rules this fall, and in order to stop this species from going extinct, those rules will have to include a permanent closure. If we cannot get the permanent closure implemented this year, we may be forced to watch the extinction before IF&W will finally be convinced that trapping is non-sustainable, and then it will be too late.

Susanne Kynast

Editor's note: This article has been extracted from two papers by Susanne Kynast. Both papers are extensively footnoted with a long list of cited literature. Anyone interested in seeing the full text or literature sources should contact Whit at 666-3376 or fomb@gwi.net. Susanne Kynast is studying wildlife biology at UMaine Machias. At a recent legislative hearing in Augusta, and again at an FOMB Speaker Series event earlier this year, she had some guest snappers for the audience to pick up, hold and even pet.

Everyone came away with a different perspective on snapping turtles.



TIDINGS/FALL

*Hannah, our youngest daughter,
had boarded the subway as usual*

on the morning of the 11th, gotten out at her regular stop on Canal Street, and started walking west. At the first corner, she had seen a small knot of people standing, looking down Broadway.

She was new to the city, new to the business of being a college graduate, a commuter, a person with a serious job. But she had learned enough to know that while small gatherings of spectators are usual in New York, they are not usual at rush hour. She got to the corner, looked, and saw what we have all now seen so many times.

Seen down the canyon of a city avenue, huge buildings, like mountains, appear to be both closer and smaller than they are. When she reached her office, she found it empty. She went to the window, raised the blinds, and saw that now each tower had a black hole in it and more and more smoke billowing out of it. It still looked both closer and smaller than it was, and, in the beautiful clarity of a perfect autumn morning, egregiously unreal. The desks and computers and files; the coffee machine and the cups and saucers; the memos, telephones, and framed photographs at each work station; the venetian blinds she had raised and the big plate glass window itself—all those things were real and reassuring. What she saw outside seemed in another dimension, as though the window were a flat screened television, one with brilliant optical resolution and no sound.

Her workplace got closed down for the rest of the week, and so on Friday she came home for a long weekend. I met her at the Portland bus station. Dark was just falling by the time we turned off I-95 and onto upper Main Street, in Bowdoinham. For both of us, there was more emotion than usual about leaving the highway and entering this unselfconsciously pretty street. We drove by leafy, disheveled yards and houses that have a pleasant, unfussy, lived-in look, some occupied by people we know and the others so familiar to us that we feel almost acquainted with the strangers who inhabit them. Just before the street curves past the Church of the Nazarene and runs down hill to the village and the river, Hannah said Oh. Look.

Sitting cross-legged at the very edge of a yard were three teenaged girls. Each held a candle and huddled maternally over it, to shelter its wavering flame from the wind, the darkness and the big world itself. They sat in a loose circle and their downturned faces, reflecting the soft light, looked the way candle-lit faces always do, luminous, pensive, and beautiful. We did not recognize the girls. Their anonymity linked them more powerfully than familiarity would have to the revelation of human solidarity, human fragility, awe, and selfless grieving that is the brief, sacred aftermath of tragedy.

And so we are at war. You would expect some translation into domestic policy of the willingness, and even the yearning, to share the burden of the calamity that was so evident in this country after September 11th. In the Second World

War, those who did not go off to fight understood that sacrifices and inconveniences were in order. Food and fuel were rationed, victory gardens were promoted, an unprecedentedly steep rate of taxation was imposed upon the richest citizens. These were no doubt good, practical economic policies, but they were also good psychological and spiritual policies. They created a kind of civilian morale; they insisted that we forego our luxuries and reminded us that the shadow of war, like the shadow of death, was no respecter of persons; that we were all in it together. Of course the reality was much more compromised; of course the war did not create a Utopian interlude of genuine egalitarian neighborliness in the United States. But national policy did at least foster and sustain the idea of a common good and a common goal, and people who remember that time remember it with a certain pride.

We are told that the current struggle resembles the Second World War; that it is a struggle of good against evil, of civilization against barbarism, of a secular, tolerant, and humane pluralism against a theocratic, fanatical, xenophobic absolutism. But we are also told that those of us who are not directly involved in military operations can best serve the nation by resolutely spending money, on both essential and inessential things. We are to act as though any reduction in our standard of living—in even the superfluous amenities enjoyed by the most fortunate among us, in even our consumption of those resources (petroleum, for example) that are most essential to our national security and our military operations—were a symptom of weakness, a partial victory for our enemies.

Congress is presently considering the administration's economic response to the terrible events of September 11th, a day that was said to have changed the world. But the economic response itself has been merely a continuation of what it had been before this great struggle began. It provides a bit more token relief for ordinary taxpayers, and massive tax advantages for corporations. It does not require corporations to create new jobs, new facilities, or anything else that might alleviate a worsening economic situation at home or support our military endeavors abroad. They are free to pass what amounts to a government subsidy directly to their shareholders and their executives.

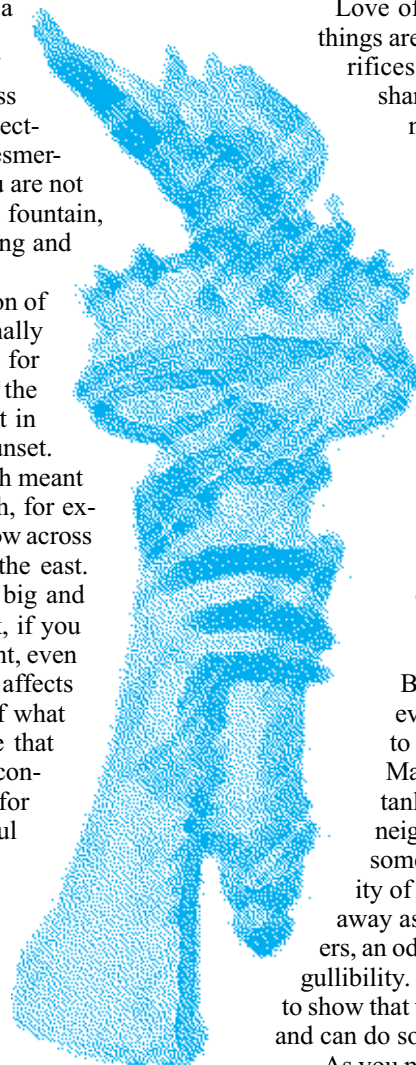
Over the course of my lifetime, which began in the early days of the Second World War, there has been a semantic shift that no one seems to have noticed. Through my boyhood and into my young adulthood, we who inhabit this country and elect its officials were typically described as citizens. Now we hear that term much less often, and in its place we hear ourselves described as either the American taxpayer or the American consumer. "Taxpayer" suggests that we have no interest in government except the negative one of how much it costs us. "Consumer" suggests that we are addicted to acquisition, incapable of looking beyond the next trip to the mall, the next day's fix. In a time of crisis and sacrifice, our government seems intent only on deflecting the resentment of the taxpayer and perpetuating the consumer's habit.

War or no war, the duck season opened on the first of October. The moon was full on the second, and all the days and all the nights of the first week of the season were fair and unseasonably mild. I went out under the big moon, motored down to wherever I intended to hunt that morning, set out my decoys, and waited on dawn. I did this for almost every day of the first week of the season. The moon

went from being full to being gibbous, to being half-full—or, to speak more accurately, half-empty, since it was waning. Each night it was higher in the sky, farther above the western horizon, than it had been the night before. Motoring by moonlight on a still October night often means motoring in a silver mist, one that is sometimes thick enough to reduce you to groping around at half-throttle, hoping to find the loom of a familiar shoreline and so to get your bearings. But sometimes it means that a chilly little breeze stirs, dissipates the mist, and there is the moon above the black silhouette of the shore, its light a broad and glittering path across the water to you. The bow wake of the boat, reflecting and scattering this light across the water, is mesmerizing, and you can watch it until you feel that you are not moving at all, but are like a man seated beside a fountain, watching its spume surging and subsiding, surging and subsiding.

The old timers are saying that the combination of warm weather, the full moon, and an exceptionally heavy rice crop was good for the ducks and bad for the hunters. The birds feed at night, clear out of the marshes an hour or so before sunrise, and sit out in open water, where they are safe as houses, until sunset. In any event, I did not have much shooting, which meant a lot of time to sit and take in the scene—to watch, for example, a pair of young eagles chasing each other low across the marsh just as the sky was growing pale in the east. They came over me at less than treetop height, big and dark and portentous. I had a lot of time to think, if you can call it that, about how a huge and horrific event, even while it seems in one sense unreal, nevertheless affects the reality of the scene around you. I thought of what Hannah had said about the objects in her office that morning—how their ordinary reality had been a consolation, so much so that, when the order came for the building to be evacuated, she felt a powerful reluctance to leave them behind her.

Of all the American anthems that have been played over and over this fall, the one that sounded right to me was “America the Beautiful,” with its celebration of our astonishing geography, and of the redemptive power we have so often ascribed to it. Sitting in the boat through all the moment-by-moment alterations of morning light and driftings of mist, I thought of the New England luminists, painting in the mid nineteenth century, in the context of a country that was developing a new kind of imperial arrogance and was pretty clearly headed toward either civil war or dissolution. The light that suffuses their work still shines on our October mornings—serene, delicate, and, although ephemeral, suggestive of that final and enduring peace which the Koran, the Talmud, and the Christian Bible all promise to their believers. To my eye, at least, the luminists did not conceive of that light as something that lay ahead of them, “at the end of the tunnel,” but as something that lay behind them, an afterglow. It is very far indeed behind us now, and the light, however beautiful, is simply the light of another ordinary day. And suddenly we would gladly settle for that—another ordinary day.



The small, familiar objects in Hannah's office were more or less the same objects that, in the World Trade Center, were hurled outward by explosion or inhaled upward by thermal convection, and that would continue for days to drift down on the city like snow or ash, fragments of transactions, records, lives, and memories. The new war threatens all things, and so we see them in a new light.

Love of country embraces many things, and often the things are not loved until they are lost. War requires sacrifices; democracy requires that those sacrifices be shared. Those of us concerned with conservation need to be more concerned than ever. It seems clear that we shall not be asked to sacrifice our SUVs but our Arctic Wildlife Refuge; to jeopardize not global capitalism but the global environment. The national interest, the war effort, the spirit of bipartisan co-operation, our brave men and women who have been put into harm's way will all be invoked, and the terrible events of September will be invoked, all to discourage any questioning of what is being sacrificed, and for whom. And we will emphatically not be asked whether, given the choice, we would prefer to drill in Alaska or to tighten our belts at home, to accelerate the depletion of our natural resources or to utilize them in more thrifty and considered ways.

It is impossible for me to spend time on the Bay and not feel lucky to be an American. And even now, six weeks later, it is impossible for me to go down to New York and walk around lower Manhattan without feeling the same thing. That cantankerous, hyperkinetic welter of egos, cultures, neighborhoods, races, languages, and antipathies has somehow improvised an impressive human solidarity of compassion and fortitude, and lit candles as far away as Bowdoinham. We are taxpayers and consumers, an odd combination of cynical suspicion and childish gullibility. But we have from time to time been called upon to show that we are also more than that, and we have done so and can do so again.

As you motor back up the Androscoggin after a morning of hunting, you pass Cow Island, go under the new highway bridge connecting Route 1 to I-95, and then under the old iron railway bridge, with its dark, rusting girders and its granite piers. If, in these very strange times, you are looking for a sign to guide you, you will find it here. Toward the Brunswick end of the bridge, on the downstream side, there is some lettering in white paint. It is too neatly and carefully applied to be graffiti. It is chipped and faded and has been there for a long time. It seems to tell us as much as any of our officials can, and perhaps we should apply it to them, as well as to the amorphous shadows of death and danger that hang over us.

BE ADVISED, it says. Just that—nothing more.

Franklin Burroughs

Tidings is a regular feature of Merrymeeting News

LEGISLATIVE PREVIEW

The Second Session of the 120th Maine Legislature is an “emergency session.” The second session is shorter, running January through April, and the number of bills on the Legislature’s plate is limited. The following is a highlight of some of the topics the Legislature will be addressing in 2002 that members of Friends of Merrymeeting Bay may find of interest.

TIMBER LIQUIDATION

Timber liquidation is “the purchase of timberland followed soon thereafter by the removal of most or all commercial value in standing timber, and subsequent attempted resale of harvested land.” Timberland liquidation is generally viewed as inconsistent with accepted principles of forest stewardship and can lead to volatility in timberland prices, hasty land subdivision, and disposition of timberland with little regard for its continued use as forestland. Short-term speculation in land and timber potentially occurs on more than 10% of harvest acres and is detrimental to the long-term economic and ecological health of Maine’s forests. Most timberland liquidation in Maine can be attributed to a group of approximately 25 landowners. The Maine Legislature’s Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee is examining the issue of timber liquidation, also referred to as liquidation harvesting, and addressing what should be done to address this problem. In order to minimize the impacts of timber liquidation, multiple efforts on a variety of fronts will need to happen including: minimum stocking standards for short-term speculators, raising the standard for wood purchased by mills, minimize haphazard subdivision and sprawl (much of which starts on timberland liquidation parcels) and education and outreach to small woodland owners about timber harvest and management options.

SMALL STREAM PROTECTION

The Legislature will be asked to approve important rule changes made by Maine’s Land Use Regulation Commission (LURC) and the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) that address small stream protection. The rule changes require the Legislature to amend the Natural Resources Protection Act (NRPA) to regulate clearing and vegetation removal adjacent to natural resources, then incorporate clearing standards as an exemption in the law. Areas already subject to Municipal Shoreland Zoning (SLZ) jurisdiction will remain exempt. This essentially means that

DEP will acquire jurisdiction over cutting activities on smaller streams above the limit of SLZ authority that is up gradient of where two perennial streams come together.

The rule changes require a 75-foot setback from the edge of a first order or headwater stream. The changes will increase the protection afforded to smaller streams by adding clearing and development standards similar to those existing in SLZ.

Maintaining trees, shrubs, and ground cover adjacent to streams and other natural resources can provide a significant benefit to water quality, fisheries viability, as well as providing habitat for a variety of wildlife.

A 75-foot setback is the minimum necessary when the objective is to provide wildlife habitat, flood mitigation and sediment removal, it provides ample buffering capabilities for nitrogen removal, water temperature moderation, bank stabilization and food source for aquatic fauna. LURC is amending their rules to include the point rating system already utilized in SLZ. The rating system is designed to ensure that a certain amount of woody vegetation remains in a well-distributed fashion within the setback from the resource.

MERCURY

Mercury is extremely toxic and can form compounds that build up and persist in body tissues, causing severe health effects. Mercury levels in Maine fish, eagles and loons are among the highest in North America. This has led our Bureau of Health to issue a statewide advisory recommending that pregnant women and young children refrain from eating fresh water fish, except one meal per month of brook trout or landlocked salmon. FOMB took the lead three years ago in posting this advisory information around the Bay. Advisories have been in place since 1994 and remain in effect today because mercury levels in fish have not decreased. The New England Governors and the Eastern Canada Premiers have called for the virtual elimination of mercury emissions from human activities. The Mercury Products Advisory Committee, a stakeholders group appointed by the Governor, will be recommending legislation to the Natural Resources Committee of the Legislature. One of the Committee’s strategies for achieving the New England Governors’ and the Eastern Canada Premiers’ goal is to recommend the continued phase out, where practical, of mercury-added thermostats and electrical switches. Accurate and affordable non-mercury alternatives do exist.

Jenn Burns

WELCOME AND THANK YOU TO THESE NEW FOMB MEMBERS!

Jon Doyle and Capt. Terry Arford, Paul and Robin Beltramini, Gabriel & Colleen Blumer, Elizabeth Bouve, Annie Finch and Glen Brand, Donna Brent, Paul and Anne Campbell, Ann Carmichael, John Cole, Deborah Cowperthwaite, Amy Cullen, Tim Dolan and Carmel Rubin, Claire C. Dudley, Michael and Janice Ebert, John Edgecomb, Ellen Baum and Jeff Fischer, Bill Kunitz and Louise Gephart, Hope Graf, Barbara Gray, John and Kathryn Hadden, Carrie Heitsch, Donald B. Henderson, Dudley B. Henderson, Tom and Julia Henze, The Howell Family, Cynthia Hughes, Libby Hyatt, Anita-Ann and Sebastian Jerosch, Jane and DeWitt John, Sarah Cowperthwaite and Richard Keen, Rachel Ledbetter, Kathy Claerr and John Lichter, Michael Mahan, Mark Peterson, John Pottschmidt, Mark Pottschmidt, Steve Pottschmidt, Todd Pottschmidt, Harry C. Prout, Robbins Construction, Harriet Sheridan, William Waters, T.S. Williams, Rodney and Karen Woods.

If you know of anyone who cares about Merrymeeting Bay and would like to take part in its protection, please contact Whit at 666-3376 or fomb@gwi.net and he'll make sure they get membership information.

FRIENDS OF MERRYMEETING BAY
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- Jenn Burns, 6 Aspen Dr., Brunswick 04011 725-5319
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- Lauren Mofford, 454 Hockomock Rd., Woolwich 04579 443-2517
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Executive Director:

Warren Whitney, 145 Pork Point Road, Bowdoinham 04008 666-3376

Thank you to David Hansen for designing this issue of MMNews.

Friends of Merrymeeting Bay, P.O. Box 233, Richmond, Maine 04357

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS.

- \$15.00 enclosed for individual membership. \$20 Family
- \$30 Smelt \$50 Alewife \$100 Striped Bass \$250 Salmon \$500+ Sturgeon
- \$ _____ enclosed as an additional tax-deductible donation.

NAME _____

RR# OR STREET ADDRESS _____

TOWN / STATE/ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

\$6.00 enclosed for a copy of **Conservation Options: A Guide for Maine Landowners.** (\$5 for the book, \$1 for postage)

- Renewal Gift From:

ABCS & IBAS

IMPORTANT BIRD AREA: THIS SITE HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED AS BEING SIGNIFICANT FOR WORLD BIRD CONSERVATION AND OFFICIALLY DESIGNATED A GLOBALLY IMPORTANT BIRD AREA.

(ABC Sign)

At the end of August the American Bird Conservancy (ABC) designated Merrymeeting Bay as one of its Globally Important Bird Areas (IBA) (why not GIBA?) in recognition of its value to the conservation of birds and their habitats. The Bay is part of an international network of key sites designated as such in an effort to further global bird conservation.

Some places are exceptionally important - even essential - for bird conservation. Directing protection and management efforts towards these sites is crucial if viable populations of many species are to survive.

Conservationists have long understood this fact, but only in recent years has this ABC program emerged to recognize these sites formally. The ABC effort began in Europe in the

1980s and has led to the recognition and protection of some 3,500 sites. The U.S. program began in 1995 with an effort to document the top sites in each of the 50 states that would be significant at a global level.

ABC is producing the book, *The Bird Conservation Handbook, Globally Important Bird Areas of the U.S.* that will include detailed site and species information for the Bay and each of the top 500 Global IBAs. ABC's IBA Program is funded in part by The Nature Conservancy and the Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund. Other ABC programs include: Partners in Flight, North American Bird Conservation Initiative, Pesticides and Birds Campaign, and Cats Indoors! More information on ABC is available on their web site: www.abcbirds.org or by phone at 1-800-247-3624.

Ed Friedman



FRIENDS of
MERRYMEETING BAY

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Return Service Requested

SNAPPER TURTLES (pg 2)

LEGISLATIVE PREVIEW (pg 6)

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