

Newsletter Winter 2015



Sign of the Times



Nov. 2014 Dick Lord, Preston Samuel, Kevin Martin, Jake Poirier
Photo by Dick Lord

Travelers on Route 152 near Wadleigh Falls will notice a new sign marking Lee's only public canoe access. The site and ramp, donated to the Town of Lee by the Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee, has been open since 2011. Until just recently, the site was marked by a temporary sign. LRAC representatives Dick Lord, Preston Samuel, and Sharon Meeker led the effort to create the sign. Kevin Martin designed and built the framework. UNH student Jake Poirier helped with the installation. All costs were generously covered by the Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee. Although winter is not paddling season, the sign will be a strong reminder that the river is ours to enjoy and protect.

River Data Access

The Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee (LRAC) and the Lamprey River Watershed Association (LRWA) have long been partners in an on-going effort to measure and document basic water quality criteria. With financial help from



Photo by Breakaway Media

LRAC, volunteers from LRWA have gone out every summer and taken samples from points all along the river. They use chemical tests and meters to assess whether the river's waters are fit for fishing and swimming. Over the years, they have compiled lots of data. These data are sent to the NH Dept. of Environmental Services and are used in many reports and policy decisions. Although these data are useful to state professionals, they are not readily available or useful to the general public.

The water issues working group of LRAC has taken on the challenge of organizing the data and making them useful to the public. This new data set will include easy-to-understand maps, facts sheets, and answers to frequently asked questions. The challenge is not easy, but the process has begun. Stay tuned!

Small Grants 2014 Wrap-up

Since 2009, the Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee has funded Small Grants up to \$5000 for innovative ideas that pertain to studying or protecting the assets of the Lamprey River. In the past, these grants were open to everyone, but in 2014, the committee made the choice to pursue partnerships with the towns.

The Lee Conservation Commission identified a need, made a sound proposal, and was awarded a grant to study the conserved Rothwell Reserve on Route 152. Ibis Wildlife Consulting was brought in to do a bio-inventory and to create a stewardship plan for the thirteen acre site.



Photo by Ellen Snyder

The plan includes a description of the property, ecological and cultural features, stewardship recommendations, and maps. The Rothwell report can be accessed through the Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee website, www.lampreyriver.org, in the Multimedia Center under Lamprey River Research.

Small Grants will be offered again in 2015. Share your idea with us! For more info, click [here](#). Contact Sharon at s_meeker@comcast.net or call 659-5441.

Liking Lichens

Lichens are partnerships between fungi and algae or fungi and cyanobacteria (formerly called blue-green algae). The fungi provide a home matrix and the algae or cyanobacteria make the food. Lichens sometimes look like fungi, but often they look like small, pastel-colored seaweeds. People often assume that lichens are parasitic, because they tend to be found on older trees. They are not parasites and they are not merely bumps on a log; in fact, they make a significant contribution to the health of ecosystems where they are found.

Lichens are often the only organisms in an area that can grow on soil-free surfaces. They can grow on bare rock, sand, and tree bark. They can withstand extreme temperatures and drought. Their main requirements are light, moisture, and time to grow undisturbed. Where they are present and form a diverse community, the ecosystem is robust; when they are absent, the ecosystem has been disturbed physically or is subject to air pollution.

Lichens have one of four general growth forms:

<p style="text-align: center;">crustose</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">from www.en.wikipedia.org</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">squamulose</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">from www.nps.gov</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">foliose</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">photo by R.C. Grimsley</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">fruticose</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">from www.fs.fed.us</p>

Crustose lichens form flat, crusty patches. Squamulose lichens have small, overlapping scales. Foliose lichens are leaf-like. Fruticose lichens form small twig-like structures with or without small cups at the tips. Lichens species that resemble one another are not necessarily related; in fact, related species might look completely different. With 3600 species in the US and Canada, identifying which species is which can be tricky.

Lichens are important to nature and people. Locally, they provide food for deer, turkeys, and some insects. They provide nesting material for birds. They absorb chemicals in the air and serve as an early warning system when air is polluted. They stabilize and add nitrogen to sandy soil. Their slow growth can be used as a natural clock to date significant geologic events. They are also used as dyes and medicines in many traditional cultures.

Lichens are present year-round, but winter is an especially nice time to observe these marvels. While the ground is covered by snow and the tree canopy is bare, lichens are on tree trunks and branches offer a rich, colorful bonanza to explore and enjoy. Why not see how many different kinds you can find?

Lamprey River Appreciation

As a final project for the Junior Rangers program held in Epping this past summer, participants made posters. This poster, while clearly not the work of a third grader, was done by one of the counselors, Lorena Mancini. Beautiful!

