



The Sebec Lake Current

The Official Newsletter of The Sebec Lake Association

Spring 2021

Next Meeting

Be sure to check the Sebec Lake Association web page for all the latest information regarding our next annual meeting.

<https://sebeclakeassoc.org/>



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In this issue:

- New owners of the dam, Page 8
- Lake Level & the Salmon, page 16
- Invasive plant watch, page 3

And lots more!

President's Message

Sebec Lake Association

First, for those of you who lost loved ones during the pandemic, our hearts and prayers go out to you. We may or may not personally know you, but we hope you had loved ones around you to help you along.

Second, I imagine you noticed the new name of the newsletter....The Sebec Lake Current. One of our goals is to keep you 'current' with key aspects of the Association and its activities to Protect and Preserve. Congratulations to Steve Robinson, who won the naming contest.

Third, I am pleased to introduce two new board members...Ellen McDermott and Nick Swett. Both have gotten fully engaged and will be working on key tasks relative to the Association's goals. Welcome, Ellen and Nick!!

Wow, what a crazy year!! I am not sure what happened at your Camp last summer, but in our family, Camp became the place to escape to from those crazy lockdowns. And while all our visitors followed all the requirements to visit, it was clear by the end of their stays that some semblance of sanity had returned to their lives. Sebec Lake.... It became much more than it usually is...a place to have some fun fishing, tubing, skiing and sitting by the campfire; it became a safe haven, the place where all could be a kid again, and perhaps put the misery of the pandemic out of one's mind for a little while. (I know it did for one of my grandsons, whose essay about Camp you'll find elsewhere in this newsletter.) *(Editor's note: Page 18)*

And yet, isn't that pretty much what Sebec Lake is all the time? That special place? I suspect so. Keeping it so takes a lot of commitment, work and volunteerism. For 50 years now, the Sebec Lake Association has worked to engage our motto...To Protect and Preserve. With our 50th anniversary the responsibility and needs are even greater as we face ongoing threats to the beauty and pristine nature of the lake.

Despite the pandemic, the Association's activities continued.

(Continued on page 6)

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Invasive Plant Patrol Update

Brian Krause

The Sebec Lake Association's Invasive Plant Patrol was forced to curtail summer surveying with groups of people. The IPP shifted gears, and started retrofitting the aluminum boat that was donated to the SLA the previous year. The boat will be completed by the end of summer 2021, and will be put to use in the continuous survey and monitoring of Sebec Lake for invasive aquatic species.

Calls for the team to survey private properties had declined last summer as well, but the team still visited to three camps throughout the summer, and all sites that were checked did not have any invasive species present.



Brian Woodworth cutting the openings for the viewing windows

<p>Piscataquis Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Denise Buzzelli Executive Director Piscataquis Chamber of Commerce 1033 South St. Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426 (207) 564-7533 www.piscataquischamber.com</p>	
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(Continued from page 3)

We monitored the lake level and water quality all last summer, interacting with state agencies, with the owners of the Sebec Village dam, and the various cities and towns around the lake. The work of the Lake Mapping / Invasive Plant Patrol program continues, with the building in 2020 of a glass bottom boat to facilitate easier and more efficient evaluation of the lake shore zone. We look forward to putting her in the water this summer.

But we still need your help. Of the nearly 1000 property owners around the lake, only 208 are members. And while that's up from 171 last year, we can do better! I urge you to join, it's \$20 well spent. And, to those of you who are members, we can't thank you enough for the support you show year after year.

Our 2021 Annual Meeting is tentatively scheduled for Saturday July 10th at the Mayo Regional Hospital at 9:30 a.m. in the Piscataquis Room. The meeting will be preceded by the Board meeting at 8 a.m. Please plan to attend, but check the website....we may need to go virtual.

Finally, you'll notice that many local area businesses advertise in the 'Current'. As they support the Association, please support them when you are at the lake; your patronage can make or break their year.

See you soon!

Rudy Davis, President
Sebec Lake Association



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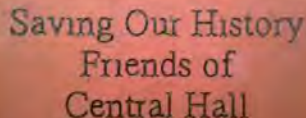
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Sebec Village Dam changes hands, improvements already underway

Nick Swett & Rudy Davis

The Sebec Village dam is an extremely vital element in the health of Sebec lake, controlling the lake level, helping with fisheries management and shoreline erosion / protection. It probably doesn't need stating, but without it, the lake would be tremendously smaller and our trek 'down to the water' a lot longer. As such, the Association has maintained a strong working relationship with local personnel and the managers / owners of the dam from virtually day one of the association forming.

On December 22, 2020, Ampersand Energy sold the Sebec Hydroelectric dam (Project No. 7253) to Dichotomy Capital of Mahopac, NY. Dichotomy's website states that it is a *"investment manager that utilizes intensive research to find attractive opportunities in the public and private markets"* and *"Dichotomy utilizes deep fundamental research focused on the power markets to guide investments in public and private investment vehicles."* Dichotomy also owns hydro-electric dams in New Hampshire and Massachusetts.

In an effort to continue the relationship and work with the new owners to protect the lake, the Association has reached out to local personnel from Dichotomy and has some excellent news to report. Dichotomy, per their local personnel, is highly committed to improving the function and efficiency of the dam while meeting its commitments relative to maintaining lake levels per the agreement with the State.

As evidence of Dichotomy's commitment, we've learned that they have overhauled / rebuilt and are currently re-installing the main turbine / generator and have performed significant upgrades to the switch gear electronics that control the generators. The second, smaller turbine / generator is scheduled to be rebuilt /overhauled this summer with plans to have it installed before the fall lake level draw down. We anticipate that the long standing strong relationship the Association has had with the dam owners will continue, and look forward to working with the new owners. We encourage you to visit the SLA website periodically as the relationship grows to learn more.

And, as always, if you have questions or concerns regarding its operation, please email us at director7@sebeclakeassoc.com

To learn more about Dichotomy Capital, please visit:
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SEBEC LAKE SUMMER READING

Take a hammock break this summer from working on the dock or trying to get the outboard running, and settle down with these murder mysteries set in the Sebec Lake region of central Maine.



The Ice Maiden. In this award-winning debut novel by local author B. D. Smith, the twisting plot line features Detective Doug Bateman and Investigator Anne Quinn investigate a series of bizarre murders occurring right here on and around Sebec Lake.

Black Frog. In the second book in the series, the scene shifts to Greenville and Moosehead Lake, where Bateman hunts for a killer attacking environmentalists opposed to a development project on Moosehead Lake, while Anne Quinn is conducting a parallel investigation of assaults on young women living in the small towns of Piscataquis County. Are the cases related?

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Thank you to everyone who has supported us during the pandemic. We would not be here without you!!!



Check our
schedule for
events and movies
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2nd Screen!!

And keep your fingers crossed for an
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Saturday, October 2nd at the
Piscataquis Valley Fairgrounds!



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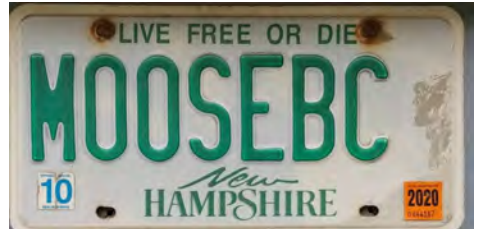
The newsletter has a name!

The Sebec Lake Current

In the Spring 2020 issue we ran a contest to help give this newsletter a formal name. There were many submissions, and the Sebec Lake Association Board had a tough time coming up with a winner. But in the end the winner was Steve Robinson, who submitted the winning name. Steve's won the prize of a year's membership in the Sebec Lake Association. (Turns out Steve went ahead and paid his dues anyway.)

Congratulations to Steve !

Seen around the lake:



Are we missing any? Yours perhaps? If so please take a picture and e-mail to: Drew Daubenspeck (vp@sebeclakeassoc.com) for inclusion in next year's soon to be award winning Sebec Lake Association newsletter!

Sebec Lake Association Annual Meeting, July 10, 2021

The 2021 Annual Meeting will probably be held at the Mayo Regional Hospital on Saturday, July 11 at 9:30 a.m. in the Piscataquis Room. Be sure to check the Sebec Lake Association website (www.SebecLakeAssoc.org) under “Announcements” for the latest annual meeting information regarding date, time and location. With the Covid-19 virus still being an issue, you just never know. If it all works out we look forward to seeing you there!

If held, the meeting will be preceded by the Board meeting at 8 a.m. To get to the Piscataquis Room, park at the back of the hospital in the lot on Dwelley Street and enter through the door at the back of the building. The Piscataquis Room is on your left.

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Sebec Lake Levels, the dam and salmon

Tim Obrey

Fisheries Resource Supervisor, Moosehead Lake Region

I enjoy working in the woodshop in my spare time. I make all kinds of things: furniture, fish boards, canoe accessories, picture frames, and lots of shop projects. It's nice at the end of the day to dust myself off and have something to show for my efforts. It's not always that way with Fisheries work. Many of our projects are long-term. I swear some are more like a marriage: Till death do us part...

One project that required several years to see the fruits of our labor involved the passage of wild salmon at Earley's Falls on Wilson Stream in Willimantic. In the early 1990's, we began to take a closer look at the salmon fishery at Sebec Lake. The lake had a reputation for smaller salmon but also grew some monster lake trout. I've seen a handful in the 25-pound range. Overall, the salmon were on the thinner side, but there were some decent fish too. We began by surveying all of the tributaries to Sebec Lake. This included habitat surveys and electrofishing. Now, electrofishing is just what it sounds like. We run a current of electricity through the water which temporarily stuns the nearby fish. This is where I throw in the obligatory "Don't try this at home". We are able to scoop them up with dip nets and can use a mark and recapture technique to generate a population estimate. We marched up and down Ship Pond Stream, Wilson Stream, and all of the smaller tributaries to Sebec Lake. We were able to determine that most of the wild salmon reproduction was located in Wilson Stream from Earley's Falls to Tobey Falls. Tobey Falls is impassable to salmon most, if not all, of the time. There is a 4-foot vertical drop at Earley's Falls which presents a serious challenge to salmon and it is located at the confluence with Sebec Lake. All of the salmon spawning and nursery habitat is above Earley's Falls. If the salmon don't make it over this set of falls, they will not be able to spawn. Game over.

It became apparent early in the project that salmon were having difficulty passing Earley's Falls. I would sit for hours at the falls watching salmon jump into the rush of water dropping over the massive ledges. I never saw

(Continued on page 21)

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Mike Russell

Owner

Maine Trip by Noah Davis

Third Grade, 8 years old, Hartland, Michigan

"Ring" "Ring" I jumped up and turned off my alarm. I ran downstairs as fast as I could because we were going to maine.

But it was a very long drive, about fifteen hours. When we got there it was almost tenoclock. We got in our beds when we got there, and in the morning finished unpacking. We all ate breakfast and started getting ready to go down to the lake.

I shoved my bathing suit on. We ran down to the lake with my two brothers grandpa and dad, my little sister mom and grandma were waiting. When we got there the first thing I did was jump strait off the end of the dock. It felt good in the very hot sun shining on us.

I climbed up the wooden ladder and jumped into the water again then me and my brothers swam out to see the two enormous rocks in the lake. I looked down in the water and saw a rock bigger than a school rug! Then I swam over to a certain part of the lake and saw a rock the size of a refrigerator!

A few days later I started making up jumps into the lake like running far away from the dock and running straight off the end of the dock. The next day I woke up and ran upstairs to breakfast. It was my little sisters birthday!

I helped make pancakes for breakfast and that night we ate cake and started getting ready for bed. We woke up early and started packing up to leave. We all got in the car.

And as I got home I thought to myself that was fun and that I was excited to go, but now sad we left because we only go once a year.

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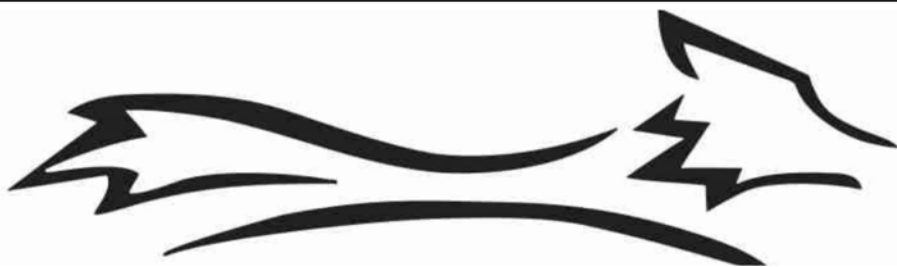
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a salmon jump over the falls. Not one. They would leap from the water pooled below the falls, but as soon as they touched the fast-moving water, they were pushed back into the lake. It was clear none of these fish were ever going to jump over this impasse. Then, one evening, I moved upstream of the falls after watching them jump futilely. I saw a salmon upstream of the falls, resting in a crevice in the ledge. This fish had passed upstream, but how? I sat and watched and miraculously, another magically appeared. It popped up from nowhere. I moved in closer and I saw a salmon actually swim up the vertical flume of water in the center of the falls. It fought to make the last push up and over the ledge. I actually saw the coloration of the fish change as it struggled. It only took a few seconds, but this salmon made it up and over. It never broke the surface of the rushing, frothing water. It had managed to stay in that flume the entire time. It must have felt like it was swimming to the moon, straight up. The fish immediately sunk down into one of the many deep crevices in the ledge and rested. The salmon stayed there with its buddies for over 30 minutes to recover, then they slowly made their way upstream together.

This was very eye-opening. It was an awesome, yet bitter-sweet demonstration of what happens in the wild. Clearly, many of the adult salmon coming into the falls to make their spawning run meet a brutal fate. Most will never successfully negotiate the falls. Those that do, will go on to spawn and hopefully complete the life cycle, but it's a difficult journey and there will be high mortality rates even for those few successful fish.

We have worked diligently to improve conditions for the salmon. Of course, the first option would be to install some type of fish ladder at the site. But for various reasons, that is not an option. So, we began to look at manipulating stream flows and the lake level in Sebec to improve successful passage at the falls. We learned early on that a significant rain event in September can be a disaster. There is a dam upstream on Wilson Pond, but much of this streams' s drainage area is untamed. Heavy rain creates prolonged high flows in this enor-

(Continued from page 21)

mous drainage. Salmon are not able to swim up over the ledge falls in these flows. We had set up flow stations in Wilson Stream during the project, so we were able to compare fish passage with estimated flows in the stream to determine the best conditions. We were able to document several years of little to no successful reproduction in Wilson Stream using our electrofishing gear. That's scary. The lack of fish was the result of high flows in the fall combined with a September drawdown in Sebec Lake, which was standard at the time.

We worked with the hydro operators at Wilson Pond, upstream of the falls, and the hydro operators at the outlet of Sebec Lake. The goal was to keep Sebec Lake nearly full during September which would decrease the distance the fish had to swim vertically, and a full lake kept a large ledge in the gut of the falls underwater which created yet another obstacle for the salmon. At the same time, we needed to get fish over the falls before significant rain events occurred in the fall. The salmon run at Wilson Stream is a little unique. The salmon will move early in September, compared to other wild salmon runs like the Roach River where they typically come into the river in late September and in October. That's a good thing because early September is usually drier. So, our stream management strategy is to release a burst of water from Wilson Pond in Greenville soon after Labor Day to create an attraction flow. This usually lasts for a week. The salmon in the lake can sense the increase in flow, pack their bags, and head for the stream to begin their annual spawning journey. When we determine there are good numbers of salmon below the falls, we ask the dam operator to cut the flow back to a minimum. This reduces the turbulence in the falls and makes it easier for salmon to pass upstream. On a good year, we can pull this off twice before the rains come. There is still a high mortality for salmon. They don't all make it. But it's the best we can do. It's likely that one of the reasons Sebec Lake is noted for smaller salmon is because the vast majority of these adult fish will perish on their first spawning run. Most salmon at Sebec Lake mature around 14 to 16 inches and many never see a second year of spawning in Wilson Stream. We spend a lot of time at the falls

(Continued on page 23)

(Continued from page 22)

documenting the fish movement. It's a bit of a balancing act sometimes. The campowners at Wilson Pd would prefer not to have the water pulled down too far in September since many seasonal camps have become year-round residences. But we do need the water for the salmon and a fall drawdown protects overwintering wild lake trout eggs. At the same time, the campowners at Sebec Lake don't want the lake too high in case a hurricane or heavy rains come through, which can cause shore erosion. All understandable, all things to consider and balance with the management of one of Maine's original native landlocked salmon waters. We want to thank the folks at Kruger Energy (Wilson Pd Dam operators) and Dichotomy Sebec Lake Hydro (Sebec Lake Dam operators) for their cooperation.

This year we were able to use our underwater drone to help evaluate the arrival of salmon at the falls and upstream passage. I've posted some related videos here:

<https://youtu.be/ymx3S2QMouc>

<https://youtu.be/T9czRGAsa8g>

Thanks to Tim Obrey for allowing The Current to reproduce his article.



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Coming Events in and around Sebec Lake 2021*

April

April 16th Taoist Healing Arts: Tai Chi , 10:00am at The Commons at Central Hall, Dover-Foxcroft, Maine

April 18th Renovating Old Apples Trees with CJ Walke,
For information & to register: www.piscataquisswcd.org

April 26th The Durham County Poets, Blues & Folk Band, 7:00pm at The Commons at Central Hall, Dover-Foxcroft, Maine

May

May 2nd 10:00am Annual Bird Walk at the Law Farm with Bob Duchesne -For information & to register:

www.piscataquisswcd.org

May 9th 9:00am Tree and Plant Sale, 76 North St. D-F

For information: www.piscataquisswcd.org

June

June 3rd 9:30 Invasive Plants Workshop For information & to register : www.piscataquisswcd.org

June 20th 9:00am “Forestry for Maine Birds” workshop.

For information & to register : www.piscataquisswcd.org

July

July 10th - Annual Sebec Lake Association Meeting.

See <http://sebeclakeassoc.org> for details.

July 21 st—23rd. Teen Wilderness Expedition For information & to register: www.piscataquisswcd.org

July - Annual Kiwanis Auction, To confirm event & for information: <http://doverfoxcroftkiwanis.org>

July - Ice Cream Social & a movie, Sebec Village Reading Room.
See website below for details.

July 25th - Annual Piscataquis River Festival –See website for details

July 25th 4:00pm Clean Water, Brews & You: Conservation District Fundraiser at Bissell Brothers Three Rivers, Milo

August

August - Annual Shiretown Homecoming Celebration

Beach Party, Concessions, Entertainment & Fireworks

Municipal Beach - Greeley's Landing, Dover-Foxcroft

Check the Shiretown Homecoming Facebook page for updates

Aug. 7th 2:00pm—8th 11:00am. Families in the Outdoors: Camp Out!

For information & to register: www.piscataquisswcd.org

August Silent Auction & breakfast, Sebec Village Reading Room, See website shown below

August Annual Piscataquis Valley Fair, See website:

<http://www.piscataquisvalleyfair.com/>

September

September Bean Supper & Ice Cream Sundae, Sebec Village Reading Room, See website shown below

October

October 2nd. Whoopie Pie Festival, See www.centertheatre.org

October Apple Festival, Apple Dessert Baking Contest, Bake Sale, Kids Games, Craft Sale. Scarecrow Contest See website shown below

October 11:00am Cider Pressing at the East Sangerville Grange, See: www.piscataquisswcd.org

November

Chicken and Biscuit Supper, See Sebec Village Reading Room website below.

December

Christmas Party - Soup and Stew with Santa, Sebec Village Reading Room, See Sebec Village Reading Room website below.

*** Please note all events are subject to change in date, time and location. At the time this newsletter went to print, many traditional events have been cancelled or changed. For the latest status please consult:**

- The D-F Kiwanis - www.doverfoxcroftkiwanis.org
- Center Theater - www.centertheatre.org
- Sebec Village Reading Room - <https://www.facebook.com/sebecreadingroom>
- Piscataquis County Soil & Water Conservation District - www.piscataquisswcd.org/eventsprograms/
- The Piscataquis Observer - <https://observer-me.com/2021/02/03/living/calendar-of-events-188/>

Contact List

SEBEC LAKE ASSOCIATION WEBSITE - www.sebeclakeassoc.com

SEBEC LAKE ASSOCIATION OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

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Director - Jennifer Rogers (Facebook page)	director8@sebeclakeassoc.com
Director - Ellen McDermott	director11@sebeclakeassoc.com
Director - Joe Guyotte (Sebec Lake Dam Liaison)	director12@sebeclakeassoc.com

COMMUNITY NUMBERS If you have an emergency call 911!

Mayo Hospital Emergency	207-564-4260
Maine State Police	207-866-2121
Piscataquis County Sheriff	207-564-3304
Dover-Foxcroft Police	207-564-8021
EMS Ambulance	911
Physician Referral Service	207-564-1224
Pine Tree Hospice	207-564-4346
Bowerbank Fire Department	207-564-3535
Dover-Foxcroft Fire Department	207-564-2310
Sebec Fire Department	207-564-2090
Willimantic Fire (Provided by Guilford)	207-876-2202

Dover-Foxcroft Transfer Station & Recycling Center

Monday Wednesday Friday - 9-5

Saturday - 8-4

Willimantic Transfer Station & Recycling Center

Wednesday and Saturday 8 - 4

**Sebec Lake Association membership is open to all
with an interest in our mission to
Protect and Preserve Sebec Lake,
whether or not you own lake property!**

To pay your dues for 2021

Go to www.SebecLakeAssoc.org, click on **Click here to Join Now or Renew your membership**, and pay your dues and/or make a donation with a credit card via PayPal. Please fill out the **Member Info form** under **Contact Us** if any information has changed. Or fill out the form below and mail it with a check for \$20 to:

**Sebec Lake Association Treasurer
P.O. Box 303, Dover-Foxcroft ME 04426**

In addition to my \$20 Dues, I have included a Donation for:

IPP initiative \$ ____ General Fund \$ ____

**(PLEASE NOTE: *Homecoming Fireworks donations* should be sent to:
Sheila Bragg, 248 Morton Ave Suite A, Dover-Foxcroft ME 04426)**

First/Last Name(s): _____

Home Street Address: _____

Home City/State/Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____

For Lake Property owners:

Lake Property Street Address: _____

Lake Property City/Zip: _____

Lake Property Map# ____ Lot# ____ (Can be found on tax bill)

Year Lake Property acquired: ____ Are you a **new** owner? Y/N: ____

Lake Property Phone: _____

To make sure all parties/all properties get membership credit:

Do you have more than one lake property? Number: ____

Do you share ownership? Name(s): _____

Email (SLA will NEVER share your email): _____

If you have already paid your dues or sent a contribution for 2021,

THANK YOU for your support of the Sebec Lake Association!



Sebec Lake Association

P.O. Box 303

Dover-Foxcroft ME 04426