



China Region Lakes Alliance News

by Jim Hart, CRLA President

The CRLA was founded in 1995 by the Lake Associations of China Lake, Three Mile Pond, and Webber Pond, along with the Towns of Vassalboro, Windsor, and China, and the Kennebec Water District. The idea is to cooperate on common projects that are designed to protect and improve water quality in our member lakes. This pools resources and talent, which saves time and money to the benefit of our community and Lakes. Notably, the CRLA was the first regional lake alliance in the State of Maine. Now, there are five other regional lakes organizations in the State that are adopting the same models and rationale.

For the third year running, Webber Pond enjoyed clean, clear water quality in 2015 without an algae bloom. This remarkable turnaround in water quality coincides with the 'opening of the fish ladder' on Webber Pond in 2011 which provided full access and restoration of sea-run alewife fishery to their historic habitat. To draw any other conclusion from the dramatic improvement in water quality, would overlook the long history of algae blooms on Webber Pond.

CRLA's two top priorities in 2016 are to improve water quality in China Lake and Three Mile Pond and is helping to restore alewife here too. CRLA works shoulder-to-shoulder with the Maine Rivers, the Seabasticook Regional Land Trust, and the Maine Department of Marine Resources to develop plans to realize unfettered fish passage in these streams connecting ponds to the river.

In addition, CRLA manages the boat inspection program (i.e. Courtest Boat Inspectors) on each of the public boat launches to guard against Aquatic Invasive Species and Milfoil from invading our lakes. 'An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure', when it comes to keeping these out of the lakes. CRLA operates the Youth Conservation Corp, as well. The program helps landowners address erosion and stormwater control issues on gravel roads, culverts, and vegetative buffers. An example of a rip rap job by YCC on Fire Road 10 in China is shown in Figure 1, below. These programs are terrific opportunities for high school summer jobs and applications can be obtained from the Town Office.

CRLA wishes to extend its sincere appreciation to the Town of Vassalboro for its foresight, fortitude, and support of all of these conservation efforts for our community.

Figure 1

CRLA Youth Conservation Corp
Rip rap to mitigate shoreline erosion