

# LAKE SIDE

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF NEW HAMPSHIRE LAKES ASSOCIATION

## LakeFest 2013: Hands Across the Water



NH LAKES is excited to announce that this year's LakeFest event will be held on Saturday, September 7, 2013, at Weirs Beach on Lake Winnepesaukee in Laconia. LakeFest 2013 will be centered around the "Hands Across the Water" festival which promises to be both fun and educational as we raise awareness about preventing the spread of aquatic nuisance plants and animals while attempting to break the world record for assembling the largest raft of canoes and kayaks on a single body of water. With the current record standing at 1,902 we are expecting a large and enthusiastic turnout!

In addition to a growing number of local business and civic supporters, the Lake Winnepesaukee Watershed Association (LWWA) is looking forward to this year's LakeFest. Pat Tarpey, Executive Director of the LWWA explains, "As the local lake association, we are excited to be a key partner in this effort to raise awareness regarding the threat of nuisance plants and animals to Lake Winnepesaukee. We plan to

help publicize the event, recruit and coordinate volunteers and participants, and join in the fun!"

The LWWA, founded in the 1970s, works to preserve and protect the natural resources of Lake Winnepesaukee and its watershed. The organization serves 18 area communities around the lake by providing natural resource education, coordination of water quality monitoring programs, technical assistance and expertise, and the creation of community partnerships within the Lake Winnepesaukee watershed. LWWA recently launched the award-winning "Winnepesaukee Gateway" website ([www.winnepesaukeegateway.org](http://www.winnepesaukeegateway.org)). The site serves as an information resource on water quality data, land use, as well as other lake-specific information. LWWA also joins with other lake associations and organizations on issues at both the local and statewide level.

To learn more about LakeFest 2013, including how to volunteer and participate either as an individual or as part of an association team, visit the event website at [www.nhlakefest.org](http://www.nhlakefest.org) or contact the New Hampshire Lakes Association at [info@nhlakes.org](mailto:info@nhlakes.org) or (603) 226-0299.



Join us on Saturday, September 7, 2013, at Weirs Beach on Lake Winnepesaukee to help celebrate and protect our lakes and set a world record!

Protecting New Hampshire's lakes and their watersheds.

# From the President...

## LAKESIDE

published quarterly by the

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Spring has sprung! And a beautiful day it is as I write to you on this seventh day of spring. Hopefully, by the time you receive this issue of *Lakeside*, ice will be out on your favorite lake and you may even have ventured out onto the water. Please be mindful that the water may be quite cold, so if you do get out in a boat this spring, don't forget to wear your life jacket. Thankfully, warmer weather and warmer water temperatures will be here before we know it.

In addition to all that is happening outside this time of year, there is a lot going on here at NH LAKES. In this issue of *Lakeside* you will learn about our upcoming programs and events and more! Here are just some of the highlights...

Our 20th annual *Lakes Congress* will be on June 21 at Colby Sawyer College in New London. Space is limited so if you haven't registered yet, don't wait to do so. Our theme this year is "*Volunteering for Our Lakes*." We hope to see you there!

The Lake Host, Lake Conservation Corps, and Summer Youth Employment Programs are

also getting underway and we are pleased to announce the unveiling of a new program—"Let's Get the Lead Out, NH!"—a grassroots campaign to protect loons and other waterbirds from lead poisoning caused by the ingestion of lead fishing tackle. If your lake association would like to participate in any of these programs, let us know!

And, building on the success of our annual *LakeFest*, on September 7th we will be hosting a kayak and canoe extravaganza at Weirs Beach on Lake Winnepesaukee in Laconia. "*LakeFest 2013: Hands Across the Water*" is going to be an educational and fun day that you will not want to miss! While raising awareness about how to prevent the spread of aquatic nuisance species, more than 2,000 paddlers will literally 'hold hands' across the bows of their boats for thirty seconds to set this world record—putting the paddlers of New Hampshire ON THE MAP! All I can say is, "Yahoo... I can't wait!"

We look forward to seeing you soon through your participation in these programs and events. (And, if you haven't yet invited NH LAKES to speak at your annual association meeting, email [info@nhlakes.org](mailto:info@nhlakes.org) today as our schedules are filling up!) In the meantime, enjoy your reading of *Lakeside* and continue to let us know how we can better serve you. Together we will protect our lakes for today and tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Tom

### NH LAKES gratefully acknowledges the support of:



[info@MyLakeTown.com](mailto:info@MyLakeTown.com)

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### Our partner in lake protection.

### Have you seen your new NH LAKES website?

The address is still the same—[www.nhlakes.org](http://www.nhlakes.org)—but the site is much improved. Be sure to check it out to see what it offers all NH LAKES members—individual, association, and corporate members alike.

# Let's Get The Lead Out, NH!

Protect our Wildlife



**Individuals, anglers, local lake and pond associations, and retailers are invited to join the “Let’s Get the Lead Out, NH!” campaign** to help protect loons and other waterbirds from lead poisoning in New Hampshire.

**Lead is a toxic metal. It can have adverse effects on the nervous and reproductive systems of birds, mammals, and humans.**

To reduce human exposure, we no longer allow lead in our gasoline, paint, or water supply plumbing. Yet, many of us still handle lead, sometimes without even realizing it—often when fishing with old fishing sinkers and jigs. Some new fishing tackle still contains lead.

**Not only is lead harmful to humans, it can be lethal to many wildlife species.** Loons,

eagles, swans, cranes, and other waterbirds can die from lead poisoning after swallowing lead fishing sinkers and jigs lost by anglers. Many ducks and other waterbirds find food in the muddy bottom of lakes and they eat stones to help grind up their food—sometimes they accidentally eat lead sinkers mixed in with the stones. Loons, eagles, and other fish-eating birds may also ingest lead by eating fish that have swallowed lead fishing tackle.

**Lead poisoning in our wildlife is preventable.** Alternatives to lead fishing tackle are readily available and inexpensive. Anglers can use sinkers and jigs made from non-toxic materials such as steel, tin, brass, tungsten, and bismuth.

**The health of the waterbird population in New Hampshire will depend on the**

**extent to which local groups, individuals, anglers, and retailers join the “Let’s Get the Lead Out, NH!” campaign and pledge to take action.** Through this campaign, local groups are provided with information and tools to host lead fishing tackle collection and exchange events, anglers are encouraged to use lead-free fishing tackle, and retailers are encouraged to sell lead-free fishing tackle. This campaign is spearheaded by NH LAKES with support from the Loon Preservation Committee and funding from Patagonia.

**For more information, and to pledge to take action to protect our waterbirds from lead poisoning, visit [www.nhlakes.org/lead](http://www.nhlakes.org/lead).** Also, be sure to sign up to attend the “Loons and Lead” presentation at the NH LAKES 2013 Lakes Congress.



**Have you registered for this year’s Lakes Congress?** This annual all-day educational conference and networking event will be held on Friday, June 21, at Colby Sawyer College in New London. Space is limited!

**The theme of the 2013 Lakes Congress is “Volunteering for Our Lakes.”** Lakes Congress offers a unique opportunity for lake enthusiasts, lake and watershed association members, management and planning professionals, state agency personnel, researchers, and political leaders to exchange information, ideas, and experiences as well as to introduce new approaches, products, and services to help better manage and protect our lakes and ponds and their watersheds.

Among the thirteen presentations that will be held throughout the day, sessions about volunteer recruitment, aquatic nuisance species prevention, climate change and stormwater runoff, the new “Let’s Get the Lead Out, NH!” campaign, and three field trips—a water quality sampling outing, a loon cruise, and a lake-friendly landscaping tour—will be offered. In addition, you’ll have an opportunity to ask the ‘Experts’ questions about your lake association organizational needs and challenges.

**Hope to see you there! For more information, and to register, visit [www.nhlakes.org/lakes-congress](http://www.nhlakes.org/lakes-congress).**

# Using Volunteers and Wild Brook Trout to Monitor Water Quality

by Ben Nugent, Fisheries Biologist, New Hampshire Fish and Game Department

## Are you looking for a new volunteer opportunity this year? Are you interested in fish or in protecting the health of your lake or pond?

If you answered 'yes' to any of these questions, then you are in luck—the field season for New Hampshire Fish and Game Fisheries Biologists is upon us and we are looking for volunteers from lake, pond, and watershed organizations to help us with wild brook trout watershed surveys. These surveys are performed by biologists using backpack electrofishing equipment and volunteers assisting with the identification of collected fish and macroinvertebrates (the organisms that live in and on the bottom of our waterbodies). Volunteers also assist biologists with documenting the conditions of aquatic habitats and adjacent land uses.

## Determining the presence or absence of certain fish species can be a useful complement to water quality monitoring activities.

Water quality sampling results document the condition of aquatic systems at a specific point in time. As more and more data are collected, trends can be examined to help explain variations in water quality in an aquatic system. From these analyses, the causes of degraded areas can be addressed and areas with pristine conditions can be protected. In the same sense, the ability of fish to successfully complete life cycles in an aquatic system can provide indications about water quality trends over a long period of time. Fish have evolved to specific habitat and water chemistry components in aquatic systems that vary by species. These components need to be suitable to allow for adults to successfully spawn, eggs to incubate and hatch, and juveniles to reach maturity. If part of a life cycle is disrupted by poor water quality,

local populations of a particular species may eventually cease to exist.

## The occurrence of certain fish species in our tributary rivers and streams can serve as sentinels for suitable water quality in these systems.

These specific species are sensitive to several of the same water quality impairments that can impact downstream lakes and ponds (such as excessive algal and plant growth and stormwater runoff). If the presence of these species is maintained by improving or maintaining adequate water quality conditions, the likelihood that these tributaries will impact our lakes and ponds is minimized. If fish species that are more tolerable of disturbed conditions replace the sensitive species, we sense that something in the watershed is contributing to undesirable water quality conditions in tributaries flowing into the lake or pond. An evaluation of the presence or absence of sensitive fish

that can be used to assess the condition of water quality and impacts to tributary streams within watersheds of our lakes and ponds. Brook trout are susceptible to changes in water chemistry and alterations to their physical habitat such as the removal and degradation of vegetated buffers along tributaries.

## The New Hampshire Fish and Game Department has been an active participant in the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture, one of the National Fish Habitat Partnership Programs.

This partnership consists of a number of diverse groups of public and private organizations that are working towards the protection of the wild brook trout and their habitats in states from Georgia to Maine. One component of this partnership is to assess the current status of brook trout throughout the state, which includes summarizing the population status of the species and the condition of their habitat at the watershed level.

## Over the years, we have learned that the information we collect has greater value and utility when we involve parties that have interest in protecting their local water quality and aquatic ecosystems.

It is often difficult to focus on local conservation issues when we are tasked with protecting and conserving fish species at a state-wide level. Volunteer participation on the local level is an essential component during most of our Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture data collection efforts.

The information collected during these surveys can be useful for many different purposes. Lake and pond associations can incorporate the data into waterbody management plans that offer guidance for the



Volunteers helping NH Fish and Game Biologists survey a river in Hanover, NH. (Photo Source: NH Fish and Game Department)

species within a watershed of a lake or pond allows for a more holistic approach to lake and pond management.

## In New Hampshire, wild brook trout are one example of a sentinel fish species

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protection of both water quality and fish. At the Fish and Game Department, we use the data to determine fish species distribution and how it has changed over time. An ever expanding dataset that describes the distribution of fish helps us make better informed recommendations when commenting on environmental impact permit applications. We also share our data with several conservation groups, from the local to the state level, who use this information to help prioritize areas for protection. The information is also used for research by other organizations for state specific studies and regional, multistate concerns.

**If you or your group is interested in assisting with a wild brook trout survey**, please contact Ben Nugent at [benjamin.j.nugent@wildlife.nh.gov](mailto:benjamin.j.nugent@wildlife.nh.gov) or at (603) 271-2614. Your grassroots efforts will help pass on the gift of one of New Hampshire's most popular fish, while also ensuring our lakes and ponds maintain their current recreational opportunities and water quality conditions for future generations.

**Be sure to stop by the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department exhibit at the NH LAKES 2013 Lakes Congress on June 21 to learn more about the watershed surveys and other work the department is doing as the guardian of the state's fish, wildlife, and marine resources.**



*A wild brook trout.* (Photo Source: NH Fish and Game Department)

## New for 2013: “Clean, Drain and Dry!”

**The Lake Host™ Program—NH LAKES' premier education and stewardship program—will officially kick off its twelfth year in mid-May with a new motto to share with boaters: “Clean, Drain, and Dry!”** Along with providing boaters with a new program brochure and decal, our approximately 250 hired and 500 volunteer Lake Hosts, staffing 100 of the most highly used public boat ramps throughout the state, will talk with boaters about how they can prevent the spread of additional unwanted species this year.

**During previous years, Lake Hosts have focused on teaching boaters how to prevent the spread of unwanted plants**, like variable milfoil, by showing boaters where to look for hitchhiking plant fragments on boats and trailers, removing all hitchhikers, and disposing of them properly.

**Starting this year, Lake Hosts will also talk to boaters about how they can prevent the spread of unwanted aquatic nuisance animals**; however, because these species, such as the zebra

mussel and Asian clam, are usually spread in their larval form by boaters, they are nearly impossible to see when hitchhiking on a boat or trailer. Therefore, visual inspection and hand removal is not an effective prevention option for these species. Lake Hosts will explain to boaters that they can help prevent the spread of nuisance animals by always draining water from their boat motor, bilge, live wells, and bait buckets after boating and before leaving a launch, and, if possible, letting everything that touched the water dry for at least five days before putting it back into the water. Lake Hosts will also explain that it is even more effective for boaters to rinse off

their boat, trailer, and gear after every use—the hotter and higher the pressure of the water the better—as long as the rinse water does not flow back into a nearby waterbody.

The NH LAKES Lake Host™ Program has successfully helped prevent the spread of aquatic nuisance plants in New Hampshire for over a decade—we're confident that by adopting the “Clean, Drain, and Dry!” approach, Lake Hosts can successfully help boaters prevent the spread of aquatic nuisance animals too.

**For more information about the NH LAKES Lake Host™ Program, visit [www.nhlakes.org/lake-host](http://www.nhlakes.org/lake-host). To order free copies of the new brochure “Help Protect NH's Lakes, Rivers, and You: A guide to safe boating and preventing the spread of aquatic nuisance species” email [info@nhlakes.org](mailto:info@nhlakes.org) or call (603) 226-0299.**

And, to learn more about aquatic nuisance animals, be sure to sign up to attend the “There's More than Plants to Worry About” presentation at the NH LAKES 2013 Lakes Congress.



# A Town Leading the Way: Managing Septic Systems and Protecting Lake Quality in Meredith

by Angela LaBrecque, Town Planner, Town of Meredith, and Randy Eifert, Chairman, Waukewan Watershed Advisory Committee

**It is a difficult balance to manage the water quality of a lake and the risks associated with its recreational use and privately owned shoreline.** It is an especially important balance when the lake is the single source drinking water supply for a community. Lake Waukewan, located in the towns of Meredith, New Hampton, and Center Harbor, has long been used for recreational purposes and has been the municipal water supply for the Town of Meredith since 1923. Recognizing the critical importance of this natural resource to the community, the Town of Meredith recently enacted a septic system health regulation within the Lake Waukewan Watershed—the first of its kind in New Hampshire—to protect the health of the lake, that of people who recreate in and on the lake, and of those who get their drinking water from it.

**In June 2005, the “Management Plan for the Waukewan Watershed” (Plan) was adopted by the Waukewan Watershed Advisory Committee (WWAC), a group of volunteers from multiple towns around the lake.** The Plan provides a framework which enables the application of management tools to achieve water resource protection goals. The Plan inventories a number of potential contamination sources in the watershed and outlines risk management measures.

Septic systems are identified in the Plan as a priority contamination source given the highly developed shoreline having on-site sewage disposal. Contamination occurs when a septic tank or leach field is not properly collecting and treating waste water. The untreated waste water ends up in ground or surface water. Septic systems can be sources of bacteria, viruses and protozoa that pose a human health risk. They can also be a source of nutrients that feed aquatic plants, algae and toxic cyanobacteria.



*Lake Waukewan provides a variety of recreational uses for the community and visitors and serves as a drinking water source.*

**In 2009, a Septic Risk Analysis using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) was conducted to evaluate the distribution of old, substandard systems around Lake Waukewan in Meredith.** Subsequently, a similar analysis was carried throughout the entire shoreline of the lake. Three variables including age of system, distance to lake and slope of the land were evaluated for all properties within 250 feet of the Lake Waukewan in Meredith. The results showed approximately one in every five septic systems had no state operational permit history. Given the lack of permit history and age of these systems, the WWAC found good cause to pursue a health regulation to mitigate the potential threat to water quality.

**The Subsurface Wastewater Disposal Systems Regulation took several years for its final draft to be adopted.** The WWAC and Town of Meredith staff consulted with New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES) Subsurface Systems Bureau and professionals in the field of septic design and installation. The two main concerns were the so-called ‘cesspools’ that predate state permitting requirements and the expansion of homes without upgrades to their existing septic systems. The regulation was crafted to address these two major issues and to establish an inspection process.

**The Board of Selectmen held several public workshops over the period of a year leading up to the adoption of the Regulation.** Public outreach regarding the importance of septic system maintenance and the Regulation was a major effort throughout the five-year process. Information was posted on the Town of Meredith website, public workshops with water quality and septic professionals were



*Lake Waukewan.* (Photo Source: J. Edgar, Town of Meredith.)

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## Call for Nominations: 2013 Morten Award for Exemplary Lake Stewardship

In September 2002, a special award was created in honor of the late John F. Morten (1914-1989), in recognition of his lifelong work to protect New Hampshire's lakes and ponds. It was his vision and grassroots efforts that helped create the Lakes Region Federation, which later became the New Hampshire Lakes Association upon its merger with the New Hampshire Lakes Legislative Coalition. It was John Morten who saw the value of a statewide umbrella organization to represent lake interests with both the legislature and state agencies.

Mr. Morten exemplified selfless dedication to the lakes he loved so much, giving generously of his time, talents, and financial resources to help protect them. He was a person who made things happen—the creative idea man, leader, and activist who was organized, determined, and persistent in the achievement of any task. It is in tribute to his vision, dedication, commitment and vigor that NH LAKES established the John F. Morten Memorial Award for Exemplary Lakes Stewardship.

**If you would like to nominate an individual for the 2013 Morten Award, visit the NH LAKES website at [www.nhlakes.org/Morten-Award](http://www.nhlakes.org/Morten-Award) to download a nomination**

**form, email [info@nhlakes.org](mailto:info@nhlakes.org), or contact the office (603) 226-0299. All nominations must be submitted by June 10, 2013.**

## Incentive Grants to Provide Assistance to Septic Owners

**The Lake Winnepesaukee Watershed Association (LWWA) is offering Lake Waukewan Watershed property owners assistance in complying with the Town of Meredith new septic health regulation.** Through LWWA's Septic System Improvement Initiative, property owners in the Lake Waukewan Watershed are eligible to apply for cost sharing grants to have their septic systems evaluated and certified as properly functioning, with potential cost sharing grants available for the upgrade or replacement of failing systems. These programs are funded through grants awarded to LWWA by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. **For more information, contact Pat Tarpey, LWWA Executive Director, at [ptarpey@winnepesaukee.org](mailto:ptarpey@winnepesaukee.org) or (603) 581-6632.**

*Meredith, continued from page 6*

held, and articles in the local newspaper were published about the Regulation and its purpose. It was evident through all of the outreach and meetings that water quality is a shared value by individual property owners on the lake, the Town of Meredith as source water for the community, the homes and businesses that are served by the water system, as well as those that fish, swim or boat on the lake.

**The Regulation was adopted by the Board of Selectmen on December 3, 2012, following a public hearing.** It is administered by the Health Officer and it has a two-year phase in period. It requires the installation of new septic designs within 250 feet of Lake

Waukewan for any proposed building expansion or conversion that increases the number of bedrooms beyond the existing state design approval and any proposed expanded living area associated with properties not having a state system approval. Additionally, owners of developed properties within 250 feet of Lake Waukewan having no state approvals will be required to have their septic systems inspected and evaluated on a five-year interval to ensure that the system is properly functioning and not in failure. Lastly, any proposal to expand lot coverage, other than living area (i.e. detached garage), on properties within 250 feet of the lake would be required to obtain a design approval from DES if the

existing system has no state approval on file. The regulation can be found online at [http://meredithnh.org/Joomla/images/stories/WWAC/SEPTIC\\_REGS\\_.pdf](http://meredithnh.org/Joomla/images/stories/WWAC/SEPTIC_REGS_.pdf).

**Meredith is the first community in New Hampshire to adopt a health regulation of this type and its impact has yet to be observed since it is so new.** The path to implement this septic health regulation was long, but in the end it was a well-earned accomplishment and is an important piece of the water quality protection puzzle.

**For more information,** contact Angela LaBrecque, Meredith Town Planner, at [alabrecque@meredithnh.org](mailto:alabrecque@meredithnh.org) or (603) 677-4228.

*Would you, or someone you know, like to sit on the NH LAKES Board of Directors?*

**NH LAKES' success over the last twenty-one years is due largely to its volunteer Board members**—all our current board members as well as those that served before them. If you or someone you know loves New Hampshire lakes and is interested in contributing their time, talents, and treasure to this organization, please contact any of the Board members or President, Tom O'Brien, at [tobrien@nhlakes.org](mailto:tobrien@nhlakes.org) for more information.

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## Support NH LAKES by donating your vehicle!

**Have you been wondering what to do with the old boat or other vehicle in your yard or garage?** If 'yes' why not donate it to NH LAKES?!

**Donating your boat—or your car, truck, van, SUV, motorcycle, jet ski, ATV, RV, trailer, or airplane—has never been easier!** Simply go to the NH LAKES website ([www.nhlakes.org](http://www.nhlakes.org)) and under the "Donate" tab select the "Donate Your Vehicle" page or call the NH LAKES donation hotline at 855-500-RIDE (7433) and you will be guided through the donation process. Pick up of your donated vehicle is always free and most vehicle donations can be picked up within 24-72 hours. You will be provided with a receipt upon pickup that may be used for a tax deduction.

**Free yourself from the hassles of selling your vehicle and give something to NH LAKES at the same time.** This program helps support the mission of NH LAKES.



## Membership Matters

*January 8 through March 29, 2013*

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## Upcoming Events

**June 12, 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.:** NH LAKES Annual Meeting. Squam Lakes Natural Science Center, Holderness, NH.

**June 21, 8 a.m. – 3 p.m.:** 2013 Lakes Congress. Colby Sawyer College, New London, NH.

**September 7:** *LakeFest 2013: Hands Across the Water.* Weirs Beach on Lake Winnepesaukee, Laconia, NH.