



## Summer Newsletter

We are so happy to see lights coming on around the lake and boats returning with happy children and fishermen, too. We just offered a Buffer and a Milfoil Hand-Pulling workshop and we have two plant paddles that teach kayaking techniques and plant identification. We can only do so much to control the climate but there is a lot we can do to keep pollution from run-off out of the lake. If you live on the lake, call to request a free visit from our Lake Smart team. They will walk around your property with you to let you know where you can improve your buffer, halt run-off, build up low spots, etc. Any work you do to your property to keep run-off out of the lake helps. This service is free and voluntary.

Courtesy Boat Inspectors will be at both of our boat launches this summer. CBIs inspect boats entering and exiting our lake to check for invasive plants and stop their spread. CBIs have caught invasive plants that we don't yet have. They're an important part of keeping our lake clear and clean. If you'd like to work or volunteer as a CBI please call our partners, 7 Lakes Alliance, 207-495-6039.

Our Hand-Pulling crew will be on the lake mapping milfoil beds and pulling milfoil that we can't reach with the DASH boat and laying benthic barriers to keep the regrowth down.

New England Milfoil will return in October to do DASH harvesting of the big beds of milfoil around the lake. Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting is an efficient way to attack big beds of milfoil. The DASH team works two half-day shifts four days a week. Volunteers transport tons of pulled plants to a Sidney farm for composting.

*Please boat carefully when you see divers in the water!*

We now have two loon nests on the lake. Loons are protected by law. Please keep at least a 200 foot distance from loons at all times. Loons nest very close to the water and it's of the utmost importance to pass by with NO WAKE! We have lost several loon nests, particularly over past 4th of July weekends, because of careless boaters driving too quickly and too close to the shore.

*NO WAKE ZONE is any area within 200 feet of any shore.*

We welcome your participation in FOM and hope you will volunteer as a Courtesy Boat Inspector, on our Board, serve as the eyes and ears around the lake and please, please consider joining FOM. We all have a stake in protecting our lake.

I look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting on July 29th at 4pm.

Linda Warner, President

**Friends of Messalonskee • PO Box 532 • Oakland, ME 04963 • Phone: (207) 618-8723  
Email: [friendsofmessalonskee@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofmessalonskee@gmail.com) • [www.friendsofmessalonskee.com](http://www.friendsofmessalonskee.com) • Find us on Facebook**

**July 4th Boat Parade: 3:00 pm**  
**Meet in front of the New England Music Camp at the sunken island.**

Decorate your boat and meet in front of the music camp. Captain Gary Bennett will lead us again this year. This year he's thinking he'll go south along the west shore, cross the lake near Greeley's Island, and come up the east shore, around Willey Point to Brown Island where it'll end. By the end of the parade last year, we had 40+ boats. Help us beat that record.

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**Calendar**

June 20: Buffer Workshop at Oakland Cemetery

June 24: Hand Pulling Workshop *9am*

July 4: Boat Parade *3:00pm*

July 15: Loon Count *7am*

July 24: Plant Paddle (sign up at <https://midmaine.maineadulted.org/>)

July 28-29: Oakfest

July 29: Annual Meeting - Lakeside Lodge, 28 Marigold Dr., Sidney (RSVP 207-618-8723) *4-6pm*

August 14: Plant Paddle (sign up at <https://midmaine.maineadulted.org/>)

Our Social Committee is looking for more volunteers. If you'd like to join a fun group, if you have some ideas about activities we'd love to hear from you. Please email [friendsofmessalonskee@mail.com](mailto:friendsofmessalonskee@mail.com) and put SOCIAL in the subject.

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**Calling all Members!**

Friends of Messalonskee needs you to join our organization. Costs are growing and we need to expand our membership participation to keep working for our lake.

Together, we can keep Messalonskee clean and clear for generations to come. Please visit our website, [www.FriendsOfMessalonskee.com](http://www.FriendsOfMessalonskee.com), to join. You can also mail a check to Friends of Messalonskee at PO Box 532, Oakland, ME 04963.

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**We have enjoyed our partnership with Mid-Maine Adult Ed who have helped us to get the word out on our free workshops. We are offering three this year! Two Plant Paddles (no experience necessary) and a Milfoil Hand-pulling Workshop. All of these classes are free but require that you sign up at <https://midmaine.maineadulted.org/>**

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**Thank you to our 2023 Business Sponsors!**

**Plourde Real Estate**

**Lakeside Lodge at Bangs Beach**

**Hamlin Marine**

**Day's Store**

## Annual Meeting

We will be meeting on the last Saturday in July, July 29th at 4pm at Lakeside Lodge at Bangs Beach, 28 Marigold Lane, in Sidney. Our meeting should last an hour and we will have a speaker talk about a subject relative to our lake and living here. At 5pm we will have a short social hour. Come meet your lake-side neighbors! We thank Lakeside Lodge for making us feel so welcome.

The Governance Committee has proposed the slate of officers for our Annual Meeting. The bylaws allow up to 17 board members: 5 officers and 12 directors. Nominations will also be taken from the floor. Membership present at the meeting will vote on the following slate:

President: Kathy Moore (2026)

Vice President: Janna Townsend (2024)

2nd Vice President: Rachel White (2024)

Treasurer: Bob Nardi (2026)

Secretary: Lisa Tarzia (2024)

### Board Members Include:

Gary Bennett (2024)

Mitch Higgins (2026)

Greg Mercier (2024)

Anne Berlind (2025)

J. J. Jurdak (2024)

Kelly Smith (2025)

Connor White (2024)

Doug Fischang (2025)

Peter Koons (2026)

Bill Tiernan (2025)

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## FOR THE LOVE OF LOONS!!!

This is a loon on a nest on the shore of Messalonskee Lake. You can see that the nest is **RIGHT** on the edge of the water. Loons are larger than other aquatic birds and their bones are solid to help them dive. Their legs are also farther back on their bodies and it's very difficult if not nearly impossible for them to walk on land. So their nests are always very close to the shore.

It will only take one large wave from a passing boat or jetski to swamp this nest. If we are lucky enough to have an egg, the egg will be abandoned and the loons will try again. In past summers we have lost multiple nests to boat wakes.



The law is that you should travel at low, no wake speed 200 feet from any shore. On Messalonskee that means the islands, too. We know it's fun to race up or down the lake at high speeds but if you're near a shoreline or loon nest there are some serious repercussions: soil erosion and swamped loon nests. The 4th of July weekend has typically been the worst weekend. **PROTECT OUR LOONS - NO WAKE WITHIN 200 FEET OF ANY SHORE!**

## A FOM LakeSmart Visit 2023 by Janna Townsend

Getting a fast start on our Messalonskee Lake Watershed Protection Project 319 Grant, where we are bound to match the Federal funds of \$111,884 with volunteer hours, I've been visiting neighbors by invitation for LakeSmart Reviews.<sup>1</sup> It is astounding to see the lake from the diverse points on Messalonskee. Each sight

possesses a unique breathtaking view over its 3691 acres. This week I visited a camp on our lake's north-east shore, its tall canopy still intact, offering an inviting view through the tall oak.

**First step, the house and garage areas:** We begin by noting that the stormwater run-off around the house is



contained within log boundaries placed to direct water to areas where it can drain into the soil and become filtered by the earth.

**Next step: Outdoor Areas:** The canopy, though beautifully majestic, inhibits vegetation, even hosta struggles here. However, natural growth of fern and other shade lovers are revealed where hints of sun briefly appear. These steep and barren areas create perfect pathways for stormwater run-off, the source of phosphorus in Messalonskee.<sup>2</sup> Our job will be to create a vegetative deterrent, forming berms (a flat strip of land, raised bank or terrace, a rock or log) to encourage water away from their direct path to



the lake. Returning for photos for this article, I was astounded to see that the homeowners had already begun! Strategically placed, a log can guide water. It also creates a barrier for pine needles to collect, creating the "duff" needed to protect barren soil. Adding small natural shade gardens, built along the berm, will help absorb water, while the run-off is redirected.

Bravo to the owners for a beautiful and quick start along the steep path and just before the buffered area!



1 Call/Email Friends of Messalonskee for a Free LakeSmart visit: 207 618 8723 [friendsofmessalonskee@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofmessalonskee@gmail.com)

2 Phosphorus is an essential nutrient for plants and animals. However, excessive phosphorus in surface water can cause explosive growth of aquatic plants and algae. This can lead to a variety of water-quality problems, including low dissolved oxygen concentrations, which can cause fish kills and harm other aquatic life.

Phosphorus and River Water Quality | U.S. Geological Survey - [USGS.gov](https://www.usgs.gov/)

## Last steps: Buffer and Waterfront:

The waterfront needs support to stop erosion falling from the land as well as bouncing up from the lake. YCC (Youth Conservation Corp at 7 Lakes Alliance) is a low cost option to reduce sources of pollution in our lakes by installing armored shorelines, infiltration steps and buffers.<sup>3</sup>



A bright sun sheds warmth and light on the water's edge allowing a few sun-lovers to grow and spread over time. Already creeping phlox, bachelor button and geranium bring bright color and most importantly, plant filters to the soil protecting the waterfront.

This is the start of a rich buffer: a 10 foot wide vegetated multi-tiered growth of canopy trees (already there), mid-level growth, perennials, ground cover and duff are needed to restore Messalonskee to its original clean, blue self,

sufficiently able to support an abundance of algae, aquatic plants, birds, fish and other wildlife.



*The homeowners say, "We want to help the lake and take care of our place, so it seems great to do both at once. It was great having a volunteer offer some recommendations too."*



## Messalonskee Lake Watershed Protection Project Update

Friends of Messalonskee (FOM) members funded and participated in a Watershed Survey in the fall of 2021. Based on the results, a Watershed Protection Plan was developed in March 2022 in order to qualify for a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 319 grant. In April, the \$111,884 Messalonskee Lake Watershed Protection Project (MLWPP) grant request was approved by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, with 7 Lakes Alliance in Belgrade Lakes serving as the grantee in partnership with FOM. Jen Jespersen, Ecological Instincts, and her staff led this project endeavor.

The grant's purpose is to protect the lake by reducing nonpoint source pollution, primarily soil erosion that increases the amount of phosphorus getting into the lake. Anyone who was here during the 10-inch rainstorm in May saw the enormous amount of sediment flowing directly into the lake from various ditches, gullies, roads, driveways, and lawns.

The project underway will help property owners mitigate stormwater runoff and reduce phosphorus inputs that can lead to toxic algae blooms, decrease property values, and limit recreation. There are three major activities:

- Residential Projects- Landowners are eligible to receive free technical assistance and discounted labor and materials to make lake-friendly improvements on their property through the 7 Lakes Alliance Youth Conservation Corps (YCC). Projects may include planting vegetation along the shoreline, installing a rain garden, infiltration steps, or roof dripline trench, etc.
- Roads, Driveways & Other Projects - Road associations and property owners are eligible to receive a 50% cost-share grant for repairing and improving private gravel roads and driveways throughout the watershed. Priority is given to sites identified during the 2021 watershed survey.
- Education & Outreach - Outreach includes providing property owners free site evaluations through FOM's LakeSmart program with a goal of 24 new evaluations in 2023-2024, a Buffer Planting Workshop at Lakeview Cemetery held on June 20th, and a gravel road workshop planned for August.



During the survey, 18 private and public roads/driveways and 12 residences were identified that could benefit from the project.

Currently four of these are active projects; eight others are in various planning stages.

The LakeSmart program educates landowners about best practices to protect the lake they live on. The goal is to reduce or eliminate erosion and stormwater runoff. Properties which are particularly lake-friendly receive the LakeSmart Award with a sign for display. We are pleased to report that Greg Mercier, in Sidney, has earned a LakeSmart Award! Planting a vegetative buffer between your house and the lake is one very positive step you can take to protect the lake. If each of us makes this

effort, together we will prevent erosion, reduce water quality problems, and enhance the value of your property. Six waterfronts were assessed in May and several property owners have inquired about grant services.

To learn more about the opportunities through this grant, please contact FOM at (207) 618-8723 or email us at [friendsofmessalonskee@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofmessalonskee@gmail.com).

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## Buffer Workshop

On Tuesday, June 20th we had a great turnout for our first Buffer Workshop at the Oakland Cemetery.



We started the workshop at the Gazebo at the Oakland Boat Launch and Jen Jerspersen of Ecological Instinct presented about why we want to build a buffer and the benefits of planting native plants. We then walked over to the cemetery and dug up the lawn and planted some buffer plants along the edge of the property. We added a huge strip of blueberry sod, juniper, and other natives to the area. We all had fun, met some wonderful new neighbors and helped our lake all in one afternoon.

Thank you to the members of the Youth Conservation Corp (YCC) and our partners, 7 Lakes Alliance, Charlie Baeder, Jen Jespersen of Ecological Instincts, and our own Janna Townsend, LakeSmart Coordinator and Kathy Moore for putting together a fantastic event.





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