

Winnisquam Watershed Network 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes

The Annual Meeting was held on July 22, 2023 at the Belmont Town Beach. The meeting began at 10:10 am with approximately 40 people in attendance. Lisa Eggleston, President, welcomed people to the meeting, and discussed the Network's long time partnership with NH Lakes. NH Lakes was instrumental in the launch of the WWN, and is a tremendous resource to our organization on various subjects. Lisa then introduced our guest speaker, Andrea Lamoreaux, President of NH Lakes.

Andrea Lamoreaux discussed NH Lakes current mission to restore and preserve lakes, and the 3 major challenges currently facing NH lakes and ponds. The challenges include runoff/erosion, invasive species, and climate change. Runoff and climate change contribute to cyanobacteria blooms, which are on the rise in NH. NH Lakes has 3 main programs aimed at restoring and preserving lakes: Lake Host, Lake Smart, and Lake Advocacy with NH state representatives. Andrea discussed these programs and what attendees can do to help. There was audience participation and prizes awarded during Andrea's talk.

WWN Program summaries:

Wildlife monitoring – Lisa

- In conjunction with the Loon Preservation Committee, WWN performs loon monitoring and participated in this year's loon census. Twenty-five loons were counted during the census. The loon pair at the north end hatched 1 chick which survived for several weeks but has disappeared in the last week. The loon pair at Three Islands hatched 2 chicks, which are still active.
- The eagles in Gilson cove did not have any chicks this year after successfully fledging many over the last several years. The eagles at the southern end of the lake had 2 chicks and both are active out of the nest. WWN keeps NH F&G updated on the eagles.

Water quality monitoring – Ed Stephenson

Volunteer Lake Assessment Program (VLAP) - Ed discussed the frequency, location and depth of our deep water and near shore sample testing done in conjunction with NH DES VLAP. Testing began in mid May. Water samples, several key indicators and depth of water clarity are captured. During the July monitoring, volunteers noted a 2meter loss in clarity over previous tests this year and previous years, likely due to the heavy rains over the prior month.

Volunteer River Assessment Program (VRAP) - WWN also participates in NH DES VRAP. Testing began in June. Volunteers sample and record several key indicators from 8 inflows into the lake and 1 outflow.

Lisa discussed what the biggest contributor to phosphorus loading in the lake is. It's not fertilizer and it's not septic systems. It's erosion and runoff from streets and properties.

Invasive species management – Lisa

Aqualogic, the company performing the Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting (DASH), has spent 102 dive hours over 15 days, and has collected 561 gallons of aquatic invasive species including variable milfoil and water violet, a new invasive found in Jays Marina. They have 2-3 days left to complete their work. We're in the 6th year of our Comprehensive Variable Milfoil Management Plan.

Weed Watchers – Lisa

Weed watchers are our volunteer eyes on the lake. They're tasked with looking for invasive water resident plants and animals (such as Chinese mystery snail). And this summer we've also tasked them with keeping an eye out for cyanobacteria blooms.

Lake Hosts – Dean Anson

Winnisquam has 2 full time staff that work at the NHF&G public launch in Laconia. We're extremely lucky to have staff that has experience inspecting boats and trailers for several years. This year with the high water levels and increase in cyanobacteria blooms, the hosts also caution boaters on what to look for to stay safe. They also explain where the 2 loon families that are raising chicks this summer are generally located so boaters can be aware to watch out for them.

Watershed Management – Cindy O'Connell

Our watershed management plan is a 10year plan that was developed based on Clean Water Act prescribed processes. The plan was completed and approved last summer. We're now working on plans to restore 3 high priority sites identified during shoreline surveys, which have significant erosion issues. These sites will be models for future work by towns facing similar issues. The sites are: Deer Park in Meredith, Kaulback Rd in Sanbornton where it crosses Black Brook, and Gale Ave Park in Laconia. Large display maps were presented to show the locations of each site. Comprehensive Environmental Inc. is the company hired to help with the design for all 3 locations. Cindy, Lisa and the team from CEI are hoping to meet with the various groups at NH Department of Environmental Services prior to Labor Day to review the designs to ensure there are no potential code issues when they're submitted for approval.

2nd Annual Lake Winnisquam Summer Social

On August 12 from 3 – 6pm we'll be holding our 2nd summer social to bring together our lake community and have some fun. This is a family oriented event that will be held at the Waldron Bay Clubhouse in Meredith. It's an indoor/outdoor facility, so the event will be held rain or shine. There will be food trucks, live music, a visit from Wildlife Encounters, games and a silent auction. Bring your friends and family. Flyers are being distributed to businesses around the area.

Business meeting

WWN Officer and Board of Director Elections – VP Kath Keen presented the slate of board members and officers whose 2-year term was ending, seeking reelection, including Tom Camp, Bob Day, Dawn Dupack, Lisa Eggleston, Judy Hughes and Ed Stephenson. She also presented a

new candidate for the board, Lyn Kobsa, and asked for a vote. A member motioned to accept, and a unanimous approval followed.

Committee structure proposal – Kath presented a new structure that the board of directors is planning to adopt. The board generally meets monthly with all in attendance. The new structure will reduce the number of meetings with all in attendance and will add several meetings for the specific committees. Those committees include: Lake & Land, Education & Community Involvement, Finance, and Fundraising & Membership.

WWN Operating Budget – A copy of the 2023 and 2024 budgets was distributed and Lisa discussed the details, including the 2023 Budget, Projected Actual 2023 Budget, and Proposed 2024 Budget. The 2023 budget is significantly higher than past budgets due to the 319 grant of \$125,000 the WWN received for the watershed management plan projects. These dollars will be used to pay the contractors involved in designing and implementing the projects. The 2024 proposed budget includes increases for our lake host and milfoil management programs. A vote was requested, a member motioned to accept, and a unanimous approval followed.

Open discussion

Several topics followed during our open discussion including:

- documenting drainage locations so they can be watched and any public safety issues reported
- which entity has the authority to issue a No Wake Zone on a lake? Is there anything that can be done to speed the process during heavy rain occurrences like we've experienced this summer.
- does Marine Patrol play a role when lake levels are high?

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45.