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Watchic Lake Earns LakeSmart Gold from the Maine Lakes Society

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Belgrade, ME - The Maine Lakes Society announced today that Watchic Lake in Standish, Maine has earned the Society's Golden Achievement Award for its LakeSmart activity. LakeSmart, an incentivized homeowner education program, provides site specific recommendations for protecting lake water quality, wildlife habitat and property value. In the 12-year life of the program, only seven other lake associations have achieved this level of involvement, with 15% of all lakeshore owners LakeSmart certified, among lake residents.

To attain their success, the Watchic Lake team publicized information about the benefits of becoming LakeSmart, visited individual lakeside homes, performed LakeSmart site evaluations to determine the capacity to prevent lake pollution, provided recommendations for helping protect and improve lake water quality, and presented the coveted LakeSmart Award to homeowners whose properties met the criteria. Awardees receive two distinctive blue and white signs for posting along the shoreline and at the roadside to help promote lake stewardship.

The [Watchic Lake Association](#) (WLA) LakeSmart Team Leader Patty Taylor had this comment *"We are thrilled to receive this award. It demonstrates the commitment Watchic Lake property owners have to maintaining and improving our lake water quality. LakeSmart is a one of a number of WLA efforts that have included working with the Town of Standish and local property owners to remediate serious runoff issues, rebuilding the Watchic Lake dam to better protect our shoreline, and working with Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program (VLMP) to keep invasive plants out of the lake. The LakeSmart program and its signature signs around the Lake draw attention to the important work the Watchic Lake homeowners and volunteers at the Maine Lakes Society do to preserve our precious lakes."*

The LakeSmart Gold Award will be presented at the 46th Annual Maine Lakes Conference this Saturday, June 25, at the Unity College Center for the Performing Arts in Unity, Maine. This year's conference focuses on the future of Maine lakes and the myriad ways citizens can get involved in lake protection. Keynote Speaker Holly Ewing of Bates College will introduce the latest research on *Gloeotrichia echinulata* blooms and GLEON, the Global Lake Ecological Observatory Network, which is helping scientists and citizens alike better understand and communicate the way lakes are responding to our changing climate. Other plenary talks will focus on Maine's developing Public Alert System for Harmful Algal Blooms, the appearance of metaphyton and other algae in our lakes and ponds, and a presentation by the local lake association, the Friends of Lake Winnecook.

Afternoon workshops on citizen science, fisheries restoration, the latest on LakeSmart, new partnerships with Maine Audubon's Stream Smart and LoonSmart programs, creative tools for translating water quality data into meaningful communications, and nature journaling offer diverse learning experiences at this great new venue in Unity, Maine.

The gathering of lake association members, scientists, freshwater managers and others interested in protecting the health of Maine lakes is made possible by the following sponsors: Allen Insurance and Financial, Stillwater Environmental Engineering, Portland Water District, Drummond & Woodsum, Ecological Instincts, Onset Corp., FB Environmental, Eaton & Peabody, Solartech Contractors, Inc., Ellie's Daylilies, The Breathable Home, Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program, Maine Audubon, and Hamlin's Marine.

For more information on the conference and other programs of the Maine Lakes Society, visit the Maine Lakes website at www.mainerlakessociety.org.

For more information on LakeSmart, go to <http://mainelakessociety.org/lakesmart-2/>.



Watchic Lake Association's LakeSmart Team: from left, Team Leader Patty Taylor, Nancy McNulty, Patty Center, Front: Elaine Bradbury and Patty Guenther.



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