

I am pleased to have been recently elected president of the association. We have a great group of volunteers and lots of support from property owners and various environmental organizations. I look forward to continuing the great work the WLA has been doing. Please reach out to me or Paul McNulty should you have any questions on the WLA.

Owen

Owen Smith

Reminder Fall 2019 Dam Opening – Columbus Day

The dam gate will be opened on about Columbus Day, Monday October 14, 2019 for the winter. Following the opening, the lake level will go down to its winter level (about 18 inches below full pond) over the course of about two to four weeks (depending in part on rainfall). Lowering the lake level protects our shoreline from winter ice damage. Plan your boat and dock removal accordingly. You can read more about the dam and the 2019 water level on our [website in Dam section](#).



WLA Volunteer Summer Activities Helping You and the Lake

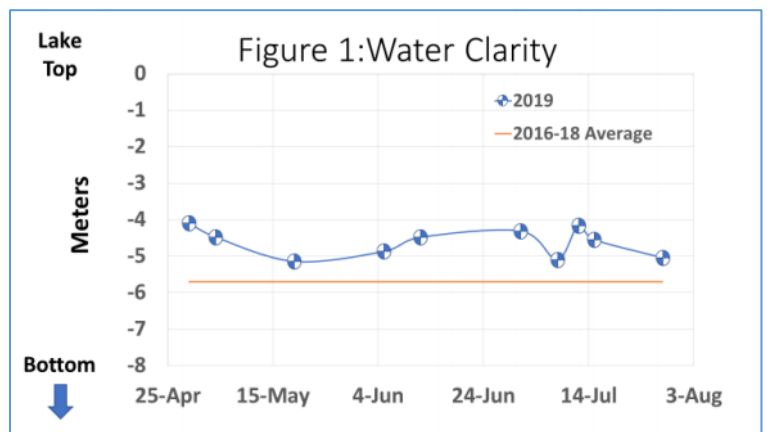
- WLA volunteers adjusted the dam gate dozens of time to keep the lake level with 3 inches of full pond, thus protecting your shoreland and wildlife on the lake.
- Monitored water quality in the lake, Page Brook, and Paine Brook about every week. This summer volunteers have monitored the metaphyton blooms near Kiwanis beach and tested for e.coli (levels found to be safe).
- Checked the Rte. 113 runoff management system and addressed any issues (this year mainly clearing storm drains).
- Checked for invasive species on August 10th. No invasives were found, and 23 native plants noted.
- Reported loon activity on the lake as part of the Maine Audubon annual loon count. Working with Kiwanis to ensure loon safety during the September 6-8 boat races. Rescued this year's loon chick.
- Completed evaluations of six potential LakeSmart properties, three of which were approved.

If you have not already, [please join, renew or donate](#), and encourage your friends and neighbors to as well! It's easy: just use the enclosed return envelope with membership form. Or sign up online at [Watchic Lake Join or Donate](#).

Summer 2019 Water Quality Update

The water quality committee has been out on the lake and brooks about 10 times this season and has completed a mid-summer water quality report which you can read in the [Water Quality section](#) of our website.

You may have noticed that the water clarity is lower than usual. Figure 1 shows the readings this year and the historical average for 2016-2018. Water clarity can change for several reasons. This year one big influencer of lower clarity is our wet spring and the resulting increase in nutrients (especially phosphorus) that was washed into the lake. **This is again a reminder to keep water from running into the lake!**



Watershed Protection Plan Update

The WLA is updating our [1999 watershed protection plan](#) for Watchic Lake and the Watchic Lake watershed. The Association has contracted with FB Environmental who has conducted field surveys of Watchic Lake in the past. Road

and shoreland surveys have been completed, including GPS mapped shoreland photos. This report is due in October and will be reviewed with WLA members and the town.

Metaphyton Blooms on Watchic

Metaphyton is cotton candy-like algae that usually floats near the top of the shallow water but can get stuck in lake vegetation and accumulate. It is not harmful, but very unpleasant to swim in. This spring large accumulations of metaphyton were reported just north of the Kiwanis Beach, in the mouth of Page Brook, and near the mouth of Paine Brook. We will continue to monitor the areas and the rest of the lake for metaphyton.



These algae, like most others, are fueled by extra nutrients entering the lake, most likely from storm run-off or septic tank issues. Keeping water from running across your property and into the lake is the best way to reduce the risk of Metaphyton.

Much Loon Activity This Summer. Unfortunately, our 2019 Loon Chicks Did Not Survive



We had one nesting pair on Middle Island and one on Blueberry Island, and large number of “teenage” loons (photo left). Two chicks were born on the lake this year. Unfortunately, neither chick survived. At the beginning of the summer the Middle Island chick appeared healthy, but over time it was clear that it had issues with its wing. A group of WLA volunteers, assisted by Lee Attix of Loon Conservation Associates, captured the chick and brought it to Avian Haven, a bird rehabilitation center in Freedom, ME. The chick was evaluated, found to have several deformities, and died shortly thereafter. The chick was well taken care of during this time.

The WLA joined the Annual Maine loon count on July 20th. Three boats joined counting the 10 adults and 1 baby.

New Watchic Lake Stewardship Program

Being prepared to protect the lake over the long term requires significant funds for larger/strategic projects. Thus, we are introducing the Watchic Lake Stewardship program with the primary goal of allowing a rapid response to an invasive infestation. In addition, these funds can help us quickly address road/culvert failures, support larger runoff remediation projects, etc. **Our goal is to raise \$350,000 over the next ten years.** Major pledges have already been made.

As reference, the funds we currently raise from dues and smaller donations are enough only to cover ongoing water quality testing, education/communications (e.g. member mailings and the website), and smaller remediation projects.

Please take a moment to learn about the program, how you can help, why its important, and the types of work it will support can be found on our website in the membership section ([Stewardship Fund](#)).

Thank you for your support!

Owen and Paul

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