

We hope this spring greeting finds you, and your family and friends well. We know that the Covid-19 pandemic makes for challenging times for everyone. During these times WLA volunteers will endeavor to continue to manage and maintain the dam, monitor water quality and invasives, and address other issues as they come up. We are in this together and our shared goal is to help improve the quality of the lake, and our enjoyment of it.

Owen

Membership and Donations During 2020

We understand that for some lake users, these unusual times may make financial support difficult. We still encourage you to join the association, but during 2020 will accept any payment you are able to make towards WLA membership. See our membership page for more details or simply note your payment amount in the enclosed return envelope.

Secondly, we will postpone the launch of our Stewardship fund raising initiatives for 2020. Our goal remains the same – raising additional fund for larger/strategic projects, but we recognize some may find it difficult to pledge support of this effort during 2020. If you are fortunate enough to be able to pledge towards our Stewardship Fund or donate to the association this year, we would greatly appreciate your support. Email Paul at p3mcnulty@gmail.com for more info.

Every little bit helps, do not forget to use Hannaford Clynk or Amazon Smile to make donations to the WLA with every transaction.

2020 Annual Meeting – Online July 11 at 10:00 am

Due to Covid-19 restrictions in the state of Maine, and for the safety of our members, the WLA will hold its annual meeting online. The meeting will be held on Saturday July 11, 2020 at 10:00 am. Similar to previous meetings, we will provide an update on the lake, the 2020 Watershed Protection Plan, and give members an opportunity to comment and vote on board positions. More details will be provided on our website and via email. Thank you in advance for your understanding during these unusual times.

If you have not already, please send us your email so we can send you annual meeting and other updates. Simply email Paul at p3mcnulty@gmail.com. Your email will only be use for WLA business.

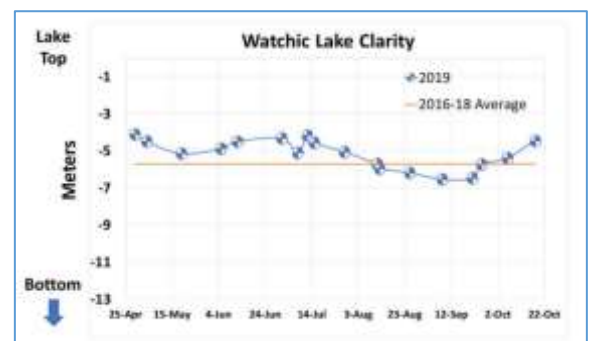
Water Quality Update

During 2019, the water quality of Watchic Lake remains good and is substantially unchanged from data collected over the previous 3 years (2016-2018). While water quality is good today, Watchic Lake remains at risk over the long term. Nutrient laden run-off from storms (especially mega-storms) can enter the watershed and lake causing negative changes in the lake's water quality. Please visit the water quality section of our website for details.

2020 Watershed Protection Plan – EPA Approved!

The WLA, with help from FB Environmental, has completed updating its 1999 watershed protection plan for Watchic Lake and the Watchic Lake Watershed. After many reviews with the US Department of Environmental Protection, and the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, our plan has been approved. EPA and DEP approval of this plan is a major milestone, as it unlocks access to Maine DEP and US EPA Section 319 grants for Watchic Lake property owners, road associations, and the town of Standish for up to ten years.

Over the past month the WLA and FBE have worked with the Town of Standish and road associations to identify runoff remediation projects suitable for Section 319 Grants. Our grant application was completed mid-May requesting DEP/EPA support of up to \$125,000 of projects on and around the lake. We will learn if our application has been approved in September of 2020, and if approved projects can be completed during 2021 and 2022.



Loon Update



As of May 25, 2020, there appear to be four loons on the northwest end of the lake and two loons on the east end. No nests have been established but the water in the inlet on the east end is still high. This may force the pairs to nest close to each other which causes deep drama between the pairs. If you notice them chasing each other across the lake, stabbing their beaks into the water, or breaching from an underwater attack, these are likely territorial arguments.

In Case of sick or injured loons: A) Do Not Pursue, B) observe from 200 feet, C) take pictures for rescue info. Then: 1) Call Diane Winn at Avian Wild Bird Rehabilitation Center in Freedom Maine (207) 382-6761, 2) contact Kim or Steve Lajoie (603) 493-2594, 3) State Warden Office (207) 287-8000. You will be advised on what steps to take. In case of harassment (i.e. loons being chased by boats) call the Standish Police Dept. **The leading cause of loon death in Maine are boat hits** – please watch out for diving loons!

We plan to participate in the Annual Maine loon count at the end of July. The state collects and tracks this data for research and information for maintaining a healthy loon population in the state.

Spring 2020 Dam Opening

This year the dam was closed March 26 (shortly after ice out) to raise the lake to the summer full pond level. Full pond is generally reached in about two to three weeks depending on the weather. Ice out occurred on about March 23 this year, a bit earlier than previous years. The dam is operated and maintained by the Watchic Lake Association dam committee. More information about the dam can be found on our website.

Route 113 Culvert Replacement and Road Closure

This summer, contractors will remove the existing concrete structure on Rt 113 near Watchic Rd 19 and replace it with a new precast concrete wildlife-friendly culvert box. They will also replace the guardrail on the approaches.

Work is planned to begin mid-July and scheduled for completion between mid-August and November 1 (ideally before). Maine DOT expects Rt 113 to be closed for 28 days during this time. Maine DOT will send out closure notifications 10 days prior to closure. There may be temporary day time lane restrictions with flaggers before and after the 28 days of closure. The marked detour will use Ossipee Trail/Rt 25 and Sokokis Avenue/Rt 11. More details can be found on the Maine.gov/mDOT website under Watchic Bridge Replacement.

Helpful Covid-19 Info for Lake Users

There are no specific Covid-19 guidelines for Watchic Lake, but we encourage lake users to familiarize themselves with the State of Maine Covid-19 guidelines. For more info we suggest checking with Governor Mills at www.maine.gov/covid19/ and the Maine CDC at www.maine.gov/dafs/covid-19.

Contact Owen Smith at omacsmith58@gmail.com or Paul McNulty at p3mcnulty@gmail.com if you want to learn more about any these or other lake related topics.

Thank you for your support!

Owen

Owen Smith,
President Watchic Lake Association