

Paul McNulty

Subject: FW: 2020 Water Quality, Zebra Mussel Warning, and more

From: Watchic Lake Association
Sent: Wednesday, March 10, 2021 1:16 PM
To: Paul McNulty <p3mcnulty@gmail.com>
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**Volunteers protecting and
improving Watchic Lake**

Watchic Lake Association

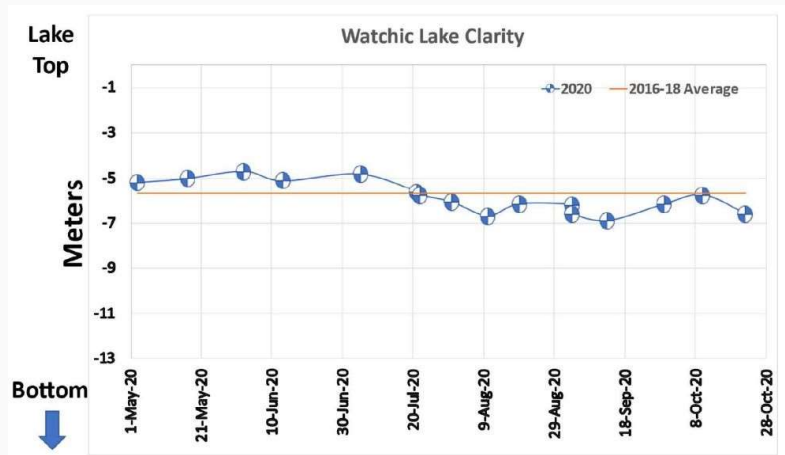
Hi Paul, our first update of 2021 includes our 2020 water quality report, invasive Zebra Mussel warning, some wonderful aerial photos of the lake, a reminder about residential property grant opportunities, and a request for people interested in renting their boat.

If you have not already, we encourage you to [Join or Renew your membership](#). Your \$35 membership helps in many ways; monitoring water quality, managing the dam, securing grants. and more... all to protect the lake and your enjoyment of it.

Feel free to share this email with others and encourage all users of Watchic Lake to subscribe to our email updates. More here at [How to Subscribe to WLA emails](#).

2020 Water Quality Report

The 2020 season was an interesting one for many reasons, most notably the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the resulting anxiety and restrictions, the Watchic Lake Water Quality Committee was able to perform the majority of the planned water quality monitoring. Based on the findings contained in our 2020 report, the water quality of Watchic Lake remains good and is substantially unchanged from data collected over the previous 4 years (2016-2019). Specifically, water clarity and total phosphorus levels are consistent with previous years and consistent with other Maine lakes like ours.



2020 had a long ice-free/algae growing period for 2020 (283 days). However, the relatively dry Spring and Summer resulted in less algae growth as measured by trophic state indicators (water clarity and core total phosphorus and chlorophyll-A levels) than observed during wetter years. As in recent years, we experience long periods of low dissolved oxygen levels in 2020. Such conditions can restrict fish populations and increase algae growth.

Like all lakes, Watchic Lake is in a delicate balance where both nature and human influences could tip the balance against it. Nutrient laden run-off from storms (especially megastorms) can wash into the watershed and lake causing negative changes in the lake's water quality. This could lead to significant algae blooms. In addition, while to-date no invasive plant or aquatic species have been identified in Watchic Lake, it only takes a little carelessness to create a big problem.

Touch or click here to read the full [2020 Watchic Lake Water Quality Report](#).

Attention Maine Aquarium Owners - Invasive Zebra Mussels

Invasive Zebra mussels have been found in "moss balls," an aquarium plant product sold in Maine. Moss balls are commonly sold under trade names such as "Betta Buddy." Zebra mussels, which so far have not become established in Maine, are one of the most destructive invasive species in North America. Zebra mussels can quickly take over once they get established in a waterbody and cause significant damage including disrupting the food chain, changing the chemistry of the water (which can cause more blue green algae outbreaks or offensive taste), and clogging water intake systems.

If you recently purchased moss balls, **immediately DESTROY them - do not dump them!** If moss balls were already placed in your aquarium, **DRAIN and clean the aquarium.**

More details on proper disposal can be found at U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services: [Invasive Zebra Mussel - Destroy! Don't Dump](#).



Left: a moss ball, Right: display of moss balls for sale at a pet store

Residential Grant Opportunities

Residential property owners may be eligible to receive grant funds as part of the DEP Watchic Lake Protection Plan. These funds can be used to make improvements that reduce runoff into the lake. For example improvements can include adding shore land vegetation, tiering paths to the lake, installing drip trenches, or adding erosion control mulch. Property owners will be asked to contribute towards the improvements with a combination of cash and/or volunteer labor.

If you are interested, please contact Martha Drew at 4650drew@twc.com. Martha will arrange for environmental experts to evaluate your property and recommend improvements. Our goal is to make improvements on six lakefront properties.

It's a Win-Win. Federal funds will help improve the lake and your property – at much lower cost to you. Plus, success with these project sets the stage for additional grants in future years. Click or touch here for more info on the [DEP Watchic Lake Protection Plan grant](#).

Funding for this project, in part, was provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act. The funding is administered by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection in partnership with EPA. EPA does not endorse any commercial products or services mentioned.

Want to Rent Your Boat?

A number of Watchic Lake property owners have contacted the WLA looking for pontoon or other boats they might rent during the summer. If you have a boat you would be willing to rent out, fill in our [General Inquiries Contact Us](#) form with your contact info and we'll send it to the interested parties.

Winter Time on Watchic Lake – from the Sky

Many of us do not have a chance to experience Watchic Lake during the winter, and certainly not from thousands of feet in the air. The photo below give sense of how precious our lake is, and how life continues on the lake...even in the winter time. Click or touch here for a full set of [Watchic in the Winter photos](#).



Please feel free to forward this email to others you know on the lake, and encourage them to [sign up for our emails](#). Emails and our website are the best way to keep informed of activities on the lake! Email addresses are not shared and will only be used for WLA business.

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!

Owen Smith and Paul McNulty

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