

From: Watchic Lake Association <p3mcnulty@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 9, 2023 8:01 PM
To: Paul McNulty
Subject: Fall Update: Cyanobacteria, Free Stope the Spread Signs, Dam Opening Nov 1

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Volunteers protecting and
improving Watchic Lake

Watchic Lake Association

Hi Paul, our long wet summer is winding down. Hopefully we'll have some enjoyable fall weather to end the year.

Read on to learn more about impacts of the late summer algal blooms, how to help keep out invasives, and an update on the dam.

Your ongoing support of the lake with your [membership and donations](#) helps us evaluate issues like those below, and recommend solutions,

Paul

PS: **Let's keep invasive plants out of Watchic Lake.** PLEASE ensure all boats, kayaks/canoes, tubes/boards, fishing gear, life jackets, etc. entering the lake from your property are free of all plant life!

Cyanobacteria Summer Blooms – Watchic Impact and Actions

During early September, a number of shoreline Cyanobacteria blooms were identified around the lake. Cyanobacteria are native to the Maine lakes, however phosphorus-rich runoff, exacerbated by warm weather and heavy rains this summer, can cause populations to bloom. Depending on the concentration of Cyanobacteria, it can be harmful to humans and pets. To learn more about Cyanobacteria, its health effects, and how to avoid it, see [Maine DEP Cyanobacteria \(Blue-Green Algae\)](#). The WLA will continue to

monitor the lake and stay in contact with the DEP on this matter.

The impact on Watchic is real. Sadly, these blooms affected our enjoyment of the lake over Labor Day Weekend. One property owner reported illness after swimming in a bloom. Another property owner decided to cancel their Labor Day weekend party on the lake. And another property owner had renters cancel their stay due to health risks of Cyanobacteria.

With warming summer temperatures and more people on the lake, its **critical that all property owners take action to reduce stormwater crossing their property and entering the lake.**

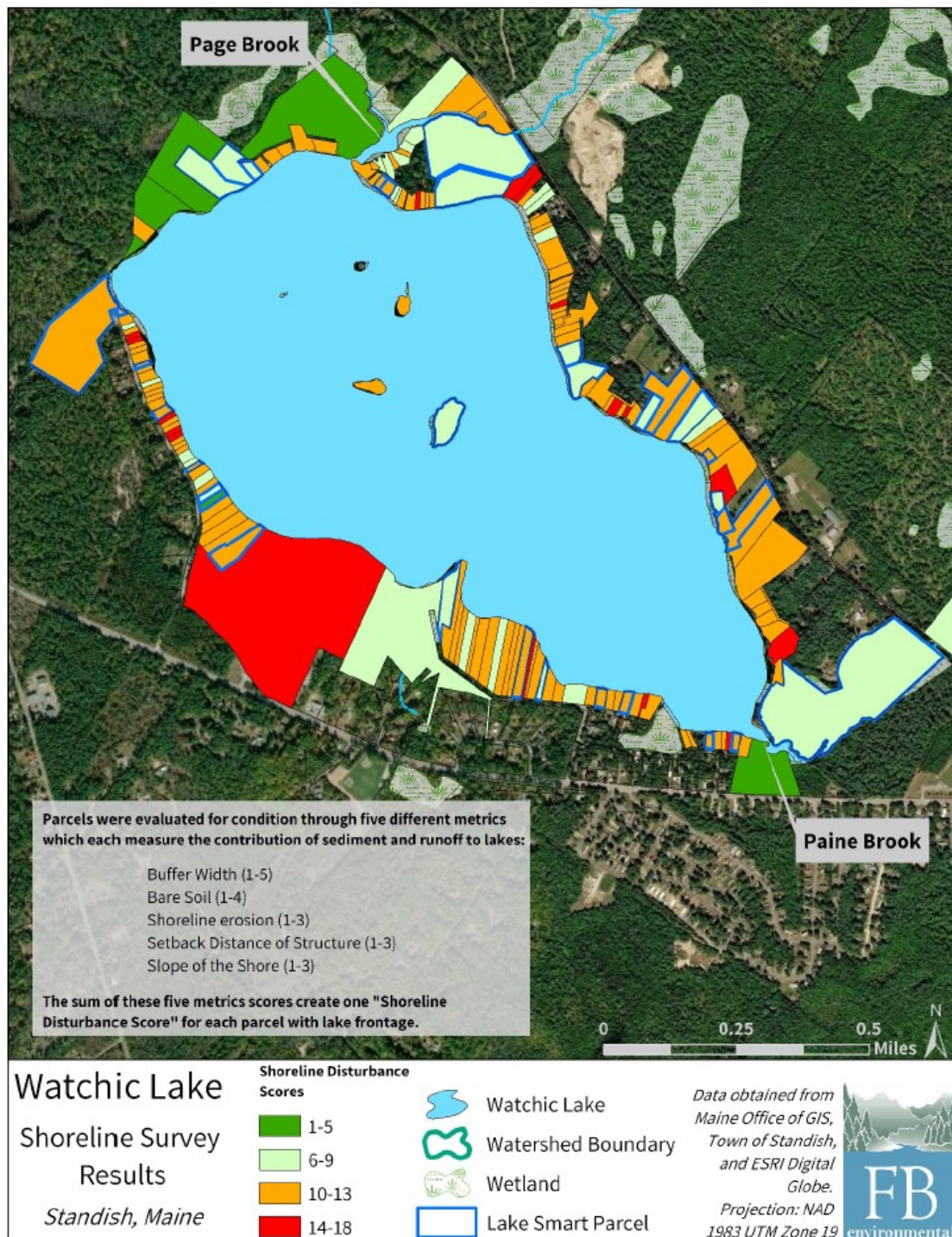
Please do your part by managing erosion on your property, diverting stormwater runoff through areas that allow the water to infiltrate, or sink into the soils, maintain a vegetation buffer along the shoreline, avoid the use of phosphorus-based fertilizers, and pick up and dispose of pet waste.



The Maine Lake Society has some great information describing ways you can improve your property to help the lake. More here at "[LakeSmart Laker's Dozen](#)". WLA volunteers are also available with information on ways to improve your property, as well as potential funding sources. Please contact [Stephanie Parker](#) or [David Burnell](#) if you are interested in learning more.

Over the coming months the WLA board plans to reach out to property owners with high stormwater risk properties based on a 2019 survey and discuss options for improvements.

The map below shows properties around the lake with low to high levels of potential runoff based on a series factors. You can read the full report [here](#).



Free "Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers" Signs

Recently Maine DEP analyzed most lakes in Maine for invasive infestations and the risk of infestation. While Watchic Lake is currently invasive-free, we are considered by Maine DEP to be high risk. This is largely due to our proximity to other infested lakes and the large surrounding population. Currently invasive plants are the largest threat, although invasive mussels have recently been identified as a

potential threat to Maine lakes.

For folks with visitors and/or renters, we encourage you to educate them to ensure all boats, kayaks/canoes, tubes/boards, fishing gear, life jackets, etc. are clean, dry, and free of all plants, mussels, and snails before entering the lake from your property. Let's keep Watchic invasive free!

To help, the WLA, working together with Maine DEP, have secured **free** **"Clean, Dry, Drain"** signs for members to use on their property. Signs are 12" by 18". Please contact [Stephanie Parker](#) or [David Burnell](#) to order a sign. They'll follow up with Maine DEP and deliver the sign to you.



David Burnell is a [Maine Certified Boat Inspector](#). Contact David for a courtesy inspection and/or to learn how you can become certified as well.

Reminder – Dam Opening around November 1

The Watchic Lake dam gate will be opened on about Wednesday November 1, 2023 (plus or minus a few days depending on weather) for the winter. Following the opening, the lake level will go down to its winter level 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.

Occasionally the building housing the dam gate mechanisms require maintenance. This year, WLA volunteers stained the dam building. Otherwise, the building continues to be in good shape. Thank you, Owen Smith, Donal Drew, and Chris Martino, for your work!



2023 Membership and Support

If you have ever wondered how the WLA helps, activities like those listed above to avoid algal blooms and keep out invasives are good examples.

If you have not already, we encourage you to join the association or renew your membership. See our [membership page](#) for more details. Membership is \$40 per year for an individual and \$75 per year for two family members.

Every little bit helps, do not forget to use [Hannaford Clynk](#) to make donations to the WLA with every transaction. Clynk WLA bag tags now available at Standish Town Hall.

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

Thank you!

Paul McNulty

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