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**Volunteers protecting and  
improving Watchic Lake**

## Watchic Lake Association

Hi Paul, although spring is still a few months away, we still have some lake news to share. Over the past year WLA volunteers have continued to manage and maintain the dam, completed a number runoff remediation projects, monitored water quality and invasives, and addressed other issues as they come up. Read on to learn about:

- Water quality update
- Maine Act to Strengthen Shoreland Zoning
- Boating safety class March 17, 2024
- WLA Annual Meeting planned for July 6, 2024
- Membership reminder



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.

Paul

## 2023 Water Quality Report - Summary

2023 was a difficult year for the lake. Watchic continues to be under a lot of pressure from an increase in year-round homes, and other development around the lake, leading to the lake having the ominous distinction of being included in Maine's threatened lakes.

The summer of 2023 was rainy with several rain events greater than one inch. June, July, and August averaged around six inches of rainfall. Historically, Watchic Lake has its worst years of water clarity when there is greater than normal rainfall. Using a Secchi disk and scope twice a month, the Watchic Lake volunteer monitors recorded lower water clarity readings than the 2016-2022 average. Many of the readings were in the 3-4 meter depths as opposed to an average around 5.5 meters. Going back to data since 1977, 2023 is a year that stands out with low Secchi disk readings. See chart below.

Many people noticed a change in the color of the water which was recorded as higher than normal. Due to high precipitation totals causing increased runoff, Total Phosphorus levels were some of the highest ever recorded on Watchic. High Total Phosphorus means trouble for lakes because it is food for more plant growth.

Along with increasing water temperatures, 2023 was the first year that Watchic experienced a visible [Cyanobacteria](#) bloom. We thank the property owners for reporting the presence of this neon green paint-like appearance of Cyanobacteria. Whereas New Hampshire issued 69 advisories for toxic Cyanobacteria on 44 lakes in 2023, Maine has fewer cases to date, but NH may be a good indicator of Maine's future. Several Watchic samples were analyzed, and several types of Cyanobacteria were identified.

**We can all help keep our lake clean and healthy! Please remain vigilant this year.**

- Take action to reduce rain water runoff into the lake. Contact [Stephanie Parker](#) for best practices to avoid runoff.
- Note any changes in water color or large/unusual algal blooms by contacting [David Burnell](#).

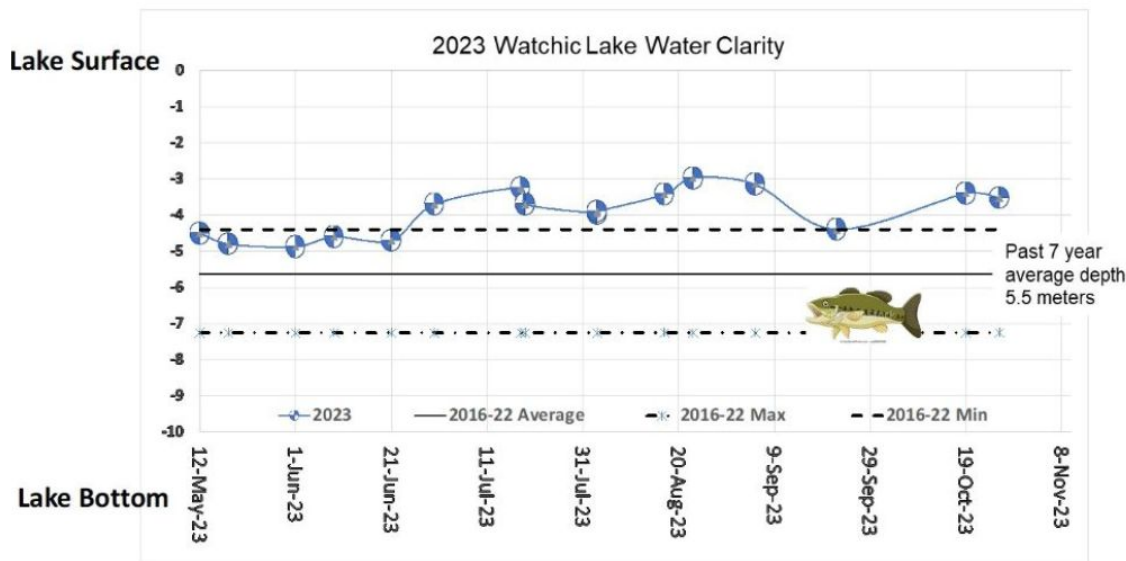
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Early detection is the key, and we appreciate your cooperation to preserve our threatened lake.

More detailed information will be posted to the [Water Quality section](#) of our website later in the spring.

Thank you,

**David**



## Maine Act to Strengthen Shoreland Zoning

The WLA encourages you to learn more about Maine LD 2101, an Act to Strengthen Shoreland Zoning Enforcement.

From the Maine Lakes Society “*Maine’s strong shoreland zoning rules are critical to protecting lake water quality and wildlife habitat. But when rules are ignored, enforcement of shoreland zoning can be extremely difficult, if not impossible. Some homeowners and developers violate shoreland zoning rules by cutting trees along the water’s edge, removing vegetation that stabilizes shoreline and helps keep water clean, or adding jetties, stairs, rocks, boat launches, sand, and other features without the required permits. Fines may be assessed and paid as the “cost of doing business,” but the long-term damage leaves a permanent legacy of erosion and lake pollution that affects all who use the lake long into the future. LD 2101 will hold shoreland zoning violators accountable.*



Standish State Representative, Kimberly Pomerleau, is on the State and Local Government Committee and will face an important vote Thursday 2/20/2024 on LD 2101, a bill that gives municipalities and the Land Use Regulation Commission the ability to place liens on egregious shoreland violators.

Rep. Pomerleau to hear from as many of your members as possible that she should vote to pass LD 2101. If you support the legislation, the **best thing to do would be to call Rep. Pomerleau and speak with her directly at (207) 332-2555. Alternatively, an email to her at [Kimberly.Pomerleau@Legislature.Maine.gov](mailto:Kimberly.Pomerleau@Legislature.Maine.gov)** will also help (or maybe do both!)

To learn more from Maine Lakes about LD 2101 and how you can help, click here for [Maine Legislative Alert](#).

## Maine Boating Safety Course March 17, 2024 Standish

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Steep Falls, ME 04085.

Participating in a recreational boating safety education course will teach you how to safely operate and maintain a boat and introduce you to Maine boating laws and resources. The State of Maine has accepted the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) educational standards that is recognized in all 50 states and the 6 territories.

Minimum age for this class is 10 years old. There will be a \$10 fee collected at the class to assist with training materials.

After successfully passing the exam you will receive your boating safety wallet card that is recognized in all 50 states and its territories'. As a reminder, **Persons 16 years of age and under 18 years of age MAY NOT** operate a personal watercraft unless they possess on their person, identification showing proof of age and proof of successful completion of a NASBLA approved boating safety course unless they are accompanied by a person 18 years of age or older who physically occupies the personal watercraft.

Click here to [register and learn more](#).

More information is also available at the Standish Fish and Game Club by calling 207-523-0821 or emailing [standishfishandgameclub@gmail.com](mailto:standishfishandgameclub@gmail.com).

## 2024 WLA Membership

Thank you to all our members, who made 2023 another record breaking year for membership at 166 members (however only 42% of properties are members). Your support helps fund water quality testing, dam maintenance, invasive plant mitigation, and securing grants for lake property owners and road associations. [See our membership page](#) for more details. Membership is \$40 per year for an individual and \$75 per year (June to May - our fiscal 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.

## 2024 Annual Meeting July 6. Learn About Other Events



Mark your calendars - we will hold our annual meeting on Saturday July 6, 2024. Similar to previous meetings, we will provide an update on water quality, offer tips on lake friendly shoreline vegetation, and give members an opportunity to comment and vote on board positions. You can also check our website for more details at [Annual Meeting Section](#).

The WLA notes upcoming events on and around the lake on our website. For the latest info check out our [Upcoming and Recent Events](#) page,

Please feel free to forward this email to others you know on the lake, and encourage them to [sign up for our emails](#).

Contact Paul McNulty at [p3mcnulty@gmail.com](mailto: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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The Watchic Lake Association is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Your donations are tax deductible to the full amount allowed by law (check with your tax adviser).

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