

# **Moose Pond Association Annual Meeting Notes**

**Saturday, July 13, 2024 at 9:00a**

## **Pleasant Mountain Ski Area – Main Lodge**

On Saturday, July 13, 2024 the Moose Pond Association (MPA) board and +/- 80 interested others met for the MPA's Annual meeting at Pleasant Mountain's main lodge. The following board members were present including Chip Wendler (President), Ruth Neagle (Treasurer), Anne Munstedt (Clerk), Scott Frame, Mark Patterson, Shawn Hagerty, Stephanie Searce, Paul Dwyer, Josh Harrington and Richard Niedel. Not able to attend were Zach Clayton, Bill Monroe, Bill Dexter, Laurie Vance, Bill Muir and Steve Petter.

### **Welcome and Agenda Overview by Chip Wendler (President)**

Chip reviewed the proposed agenda (which is attached to this note) and mentioned that the entire presentation deck will be available on the MPA website a few days after the meeting concludes. He said that we want the attendees at this meeting to walk away from it feeling like they understand the MPA and our efforts to protect Moose Pond and so please feel free to ask questions during the presentations and give us feedback after the meeting in terms of how we might make it more valuable to the membership.

Chip also mentioned that a number of nearby property owners are concerned about the new quarry in west Bridgton being proposed by Rolfe Industries and, though it is not on the MPA meeting agenda because the pit is not in the Moose Pond watershed (it is in the Kezar watershed), a member of the Knights Hill Neighborhood Association will be standing in the back of the room after the MPA meeting concludes to discuss the topic with anyone who may be interested in it. We also plan to ask LEA's Colin Holme to comment on it during his section of the presentation.

Chip thanked the MPA members for their financial support and the Courtesy Boat Inspectors for their efforts to help protect the lake that we love. The CBI's are our first line of defense as we try to prevent invasive plants from making their way into our lake.

Chip also thanked Colin Holme and his team at the Maine Lakes Environmental Association (LEA) for being an invaluable partner in the pond protection process. We literally could not do our work without LEA's help and want to thank them for their efforts to protect Moose Pond and many other lakes in Maine. Chip encouraged members to support both the MPA and LEA.

Lastly, Chip pulled up a map of Maine showing dozens of lakes in southwestern Maine that are infested with invasive plants including Variable Leaf Milfoil. Moose Pond is literally surrounded by invasive plant hot spots. We are doing our best to help prevent an infestation from making its way into Moose Pond but, to be honest, it is really a matter of when, not if. A couple years ago a group of MPA Board members and a few

members of the LEA team visited Lake Arrowhead where there is a huge problem with Milfoil and several other invasive aquatic plants. They spend about \$100,000 per year to clear pathways through the milfoil from their docks to the open water. You cannot fish or swim near their shoreline. Property prices on Lake Arrowhead have fallen. The MPA is trying to prevent this on Moose Pond.

### **Pleasant Mountain Update – Boyne’s Ralph Lewis**

President, Chip Wendler, reported out on Ralph Lewis’s behalf as Ralph contracted COVID a few days before the annual meeting.

Chip expressed our appreciation for Ralph and Boyne for letting us use the main lodge as a venue for our meeting each year and for the generous donation to the MPA that we have continued to receive even after the mountain’s change of ownership.

Regarding the new high-speed quad that is being installed at the resort, local residents have been hearing both blasting and helicopters as that installation process moves forward. The helicopters have been pouring the huge cement footings on which the lift towers will be installed. They hope to have the towers erected by the end of September and then they will begin the complicated process of cabling. Things look good for this all to be completed before the next ski season and the new lift will cut the time it takes to get up the mountain in half.

On Ralph’s behalf Chip mentioned that Blizzard’s Pub will be operating on Friday’s and Saturdays throughout the summer until Labor Day and he hopes that local residents will take advantage of it. Some nights they plan to have live music. The more we take advantage of it this summer, the more likely it will be open for future summers.

### **Report on Lake Health – Colin Holme**

As a follow-up to our discussion about the negative impact that wake boats can have on lakes if used improperly, Maine’s state legislature just passed a new “wake sports zone” which requires wake boats to operate 300 feet back from the shoreline and in at least 15 feet of water as opposed to the historic 200 foot setback for other watercraft. LEA was pushing for a setback of 500 feet, and 20 depth of 20 feet, but we got 300 feet and 15 feet instead. LEA has produced a waterproof booklet about Moose Pond that includes a depth chart and a visible depiction of what a 300-foot setback looks like. On the back of the brochure it gives information about invasive species, buoys, etc.

LEA recently hosted a “gravel road workshop” to let people know how to maintain gravel roads properly to make sure that water quality is protected. They also had a benefit concert at the Deertrees Theater in Harrison.

One of LEA’s significant initiatives over time has been to push for increased funding to fight the spread of invasive plants and animals. LEA had a big win recently as the

legislature agreed to increase the boat inspection sticker by another \$10. The additional funds will support efforts to control infestations and enable increased CBI coverage.

New legislation was also passed that gives towns more support in their efforts to make sure that shoreline zoning laws can be enforced equally across the board – regardless of the property owner’s wealth. In the past, property owners with “deep pockets” have threatened towns with lawsuits that could potentially bankrupt them and this law provides protection against such threats.

LEA is also supporting a national study to understand the impact of fireworks – what are the remnants of those fireworks doing to the lake (especially with the chemical residue that they contain).

A new hot topic is Environmental DNA – taking water sample to see if you have DNA from those invasive plants in the sample, especially since we have native milfoil. It’s an imperfect science at this point but is still another great tool to have available and use.

Songo River Bayou – milfoil is growing like crazy, it’s blooming nearly every summer now where it used to only bloom every six years or so. This nearby infestation is a stark reminder as to why you all should stay diligent.

Proposed Quarry at the new Rolfe Gravel Pit – it’s not in the Moose Pond watershed but LEA is still reviewing the situation and have submitted comments to developer and are going to the site walk. Quarry has good barriers but the potential noise pollution and trucking of materials (with their related dust) near lakes is definitely a concern.

Working with Ralph Lewis at Pleasant Mountain – LEA was very impressed with the erosion control that they have implemented, and the team at Boyne. They are doing everything by the book and working closely with the LEA.

Chip mentioned the issue of the significant sediment-laden runoff that has been traveling from Mountain Road into the lake during some of the major storms that we have been experiencing. Gravel (and sometimes significant pieces of pavement) are making their way into the lake. Chip said that he was in contact with Bridgton’s town manager about the Mountain Road run-off situation. He learned that Bridgton received funding to hire an engineering firm to perform a study of Mountain Road’s culvert/run-off situation but the results of the study are not out yet. For the time being. It’s up to you to look at the culverts in your area and notify the towns when they are blocked up.

If you find suspicious plants, you can take photographs of the plants floating in pond water on a white background and send them to [mary@mainelakes.org](mailto:mary@mainelakes.org) or bring it into the LEA. If you do so, please note the time, date and location where you harvested the suspicious plant and keep it refrigerated and covered in the pond water in a plastic bag.

Fortunately, no invasive plants or animals were found in Moose Pond last year when LEA did their hot spot inspections.

Water quality – last year it rained a lot, clarity was lower, nutrients were higher and more sediment was seen. Chlorophyll did not increase.

Long term trends – we are seeing slight trends of decreasing clarity in north and south basins, which may have to do with a reduction of acid rain, slight increase in phosphorus in south basin. Slight decrease in Chlorophyll, except in the north basin.

Q: It's been warmer this year, how does that effect your readings?

A: It promotes plant growth, and increases the number of people going in the water, people bring bacteria which isn't good

Q: Is the lake higher this year?

A: Yes, higher than normal, Chip reached out to Betty Legoff (Denmark Town Manager) and asked to understand more about how the level is managed. New person in charge of the dam, but hasn't gotten back to Chip yet, but Chip is going to follow up.

Q: I had a beach, it's gone now and the higher water level now is eroding the grass, what can be done about this?

A: Chip will follow up on the issue with Denmark

Colin said that the higher water level also has implications for loon nesting/breeding.

This winter LEA made two visits to the main basin. We witnessed the shortest period of ice cover on record, about half the length of time as normal, people falling through the ice. In future many lakes will no longer freeze over, so this may impact LEA's ability to perform winter monitoring.

No bottom hypoxia which is good, phosphorus and chlorophyll concentrations are comparable to summer averages. Secchi depths (clarity) deeper than 2023 but still less clear than summer average.

Loons – LEA are continuing to put out loon rafts for the second or maybe third year they remain unused, but one of the rafts is near another nest in the south basin. Issues with high boat traffic. It's helpful to know where the nests are so they can be avoided. They will try a raft one more time next year and continue to monitor known pairs.

Thank you to Chip for helping get the new Clean, Drain and Dry signs up at Denmark and Bridgton boat launches.

### **Loon Update – Anne Munsted**

This year there were three nesting pairs by end May/early June. I surveyed the three nesting spots. An eagle got the eggs in turtle cove. A big rain washed out another nest within 4 hours. Two chicks had been born, but they didn't make it through the night.

Q: Should all eggs be hatched out by now?

A: By mid-July, yes.

## **CBI Update given by Chip Wendler for Bill Monroe**

In 2023, 1,571 inspections were performed at the two boat launches. 10 fragments were found but, thankfully, none of them were found to be invasive plants.

We are always trying to gather volunteers for when CBIs call in sick or when we lack coverage. Please consider signing up to be a back-up CBI by adding your name to the list you will see on the table near the exit door.

In 2024, there are a total of 1,320 hours projected for CBI's, which is more hours than were scheduled in 2023.

CBI's are provided and managed by LEA, but paid for by MPA member donations. MPA also applies for a DEP cost-share grant, which is funded through milfoil sticker sales. We received \$4,830 last year and expect a similar amount in 2024.

The MPA also strongly advocates for the use of boat wash stations encouraging boat owners to wash their boats and trailers before and after they enter/depart Moose Pond. As Colin Home just mentioned, we recently added new "Clean, Drain, Dry" signs at both boat launch ramps.

Collins plumbing helps us with Denmark wash station by commissioning it each spring and winterizing it each fall. The Bridgton fire chief does it at the Bridgton route 302 fire station. A big thank you to Collins Plumbing and the Bridgton Fire Chief.

## **No-Wake Zones and Wake Wise Reminder – Scott Frame**

Back in April the bill got passed to require a 300' setback and at least 15' water depth for wake boats. Regular boats still have 200' setbacks.

Great that the legislation has passed but it is now a matter of how the new law will be enforced. Game warden boater behavior enforcement activity is limited and is funding constrained. Enforcement would be easier if Bridgton hired a dedicated Harbor Master (aka Marine Safety Officer). Still we have an opportunity to raise boater awareness and consideration of the impact that their wakes can have on shoreline erosion, other boaters and loon nesting sites through things like signage and education. We have developed and produced Wake Wise signs and bumper stickers to that end. Please position the signs in high traffic areas like on lake access roads and near marinas. Please take a Wake Wise bumper sticker and place it on your car and/or boat.

If you have issues with wakes, please send an email to Colin so that they have a record of the issues to bring to legislature.

## **Roy Lambert – Regional LakeSmart Coordinator**

What is Lakesmart?

LakeSmart is an education and outreach program that rewards lakefront homeowners who manage their land to protect water quality. The program is free, non-regulatory, and voluntary. Participating homeowners receive individualized suggestions for keeping pollutants from storm water out of your lake.

Lake Smart is concerned with things like uncontrolled algae growth. Storm water runoff that brings phosphorus into the lake is what causes the algae blooms. There are solutions to remediate alga blooms once they occur, but there is a tremendous cost and the solutions are only temporary. It is much better (and much less costly) to prevent the blooms from happening in the first place. A well-trained Lake Smart inspector surveys your property for free and makes suggestions to you about how to make your property more lake friendly. You're under no obligation to do any of the changes and the inspector will not report your information to anyone but you!

With your permission, the inspector walks the property first without you to formulate suggestions about how you might make your property more lake friendly. They will then walk the property a second time with you and will follow up with a written report and separate documents that will hopefully help you to implement their recommendations.

Once your property is considered to be Lake Smart you will receive two Lake Smart award signs to proudly post on your property. Many residents including most MPA Board Members have had their properties inspected. It is free and painless and really helps the lake!

Sample suggestions to adjust your property might include:

- Stabilize soil
- Infiltrate storm water
- Divert storm water (by installing rubber razor diverter blades)
- Extract nutrients from the runoff by adding vegetation
- Lay down erosion control Mix/Mulch
- Stabilize an unstable shoreline by adding riprap (which will need a permit from DEP and local CEO)
- Plant a rain garden
- Crown driveways and/or roads
- Add open-topped culverts to your pathways leading to the lake

If you would like to participate please contact: Emlyn Emerock, (LEA LakeSmart Manager) [emlyn@mainlakes.org](mailto:emlyn@mainlakes.org), Roy Lambert (Volunteer LEA LakeSmart Coordinator) [rdl.lambert@icloud.com](mailto:rdl.lambert@icloud.com), Bill Dexter (Moose Pond LakeSmart coordinator) [dexathome@gmail.com](mailto:dexathome@gmail.com)

## **Lake Section Captain Program Report – Chip Wendler for Zach Clayton**

It is great that MPA pays LEA (using MPA member donations) to have the LEA dive team closely inspect a small number of potential problem invasive plant infestation hot spots one time each year (e.g. the two boat launches, a few private marinas and the north and south basin narrows) but their inspection only covers a very small percentage of the lake. That leaves 95% of the lake unchecked by LEA and that is why we started the Lake Section Captain Program back in 2022.

We have 17 dedicated volunteers (most of them are MPA Board Members) who have agreed to closely examine the shoreline of “their section of the lake” two times each year. Around end July and again at the end of September looking for suspicious plants (or animals) and reporting them to LEA for further inspection if that makes sense. Our hope is to catch an infestation early so that when and if one occurs we can eradicate it very quickly and at a much lower cost than would be the case if we let an infestation take hold and grow in an out-of-control manner for a significant period of time as we have seen on both Long Lake and Sebago.

We encourage everyone to do this in front of your own property as well. The more eyes, the better! If you see something, say something.

## **Mark Patterson – Member Communication**

Thanks to Chip for all of the heavy lifting as MPA president

Less than 1/3 of the 900+ property owners around the lake are paying members of the MPA. This number should be much higher and, if we had more in the way of annual member donations, we could be doing even more to protect the lake that you love.

Also, prevention is much more cost efficient than remediation. A milfoil infestation could decrease your property’s value by 30-40%. It should certainly be worth it to you to spend at least \$75 or \$100 each year for a MPA membership donation to help keep our pond safe and enjoyable for generations to come.

This year we are offering advertising spots in our Moose Pond Matters annual newsletter to help underwrite the cost of producing it and sending it out. If you know a local business who would benefit from getting their name in front of >900 local families, please let us know.

Lastly, a great way to stay in touch with us is by joining the Moose Pond Association’s Facebook site or by visiting the MPA’s website and [www.moosepondassociation.org](http://www.moosepondassociation.org). We also have a second Facebook page called Moose Pond for Sale or Rent where you can sell goods and/or services or look to buy same.

## **Membership Health Report – Treasurer Ruth Neagle**

Membership increased by 30 people year-on-year, but membership is still very low compared to the number of properties around the lake. As Mark mentioned, less than 1/3 of the property owners are paying annual members. Our ambitious near-term goal is to make it to 50% by the time that we celebrate our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a lake association in 2028 and so please promote the MPA with your neighbors and at neighborhood association meetings. President Chip Wendler would be happy to present in person at your association's annual meeting if you think that would help the cause.

## **Financial health Report – Chip Wendler on Behalf of VP Laurie Vance**

MPA's financial health is strong with more than \$100,000 in longer-term savings and enough shorter-term cash in the bank to pay for the services that we use to monitor and protect your lake.

The longer-term savings are there for two purposes. One is to act as a Rapid Response Fund so that if (when?) we discover an infestation in Moose Pond we can act quickly to remediate it by working with LEA to hire divers to harvest the plants and lay down benthic barriers to prevent sunlight from reaching any new growth. Second we are using the fund to help property owners who cannot afford to implement Lake Smart recommendations to do so. We want most property owners to pay for the work themselves but will provide matching funds to those property owners who could otherwise not afford to do the work.

Besides selling advertising spots in the Moose Pond Matters newsletter (as Mark just mentioned), we are also selling Nancy Campbell's beautiful Scenes of Moose Pond calendars which adds between \$1000-2000 to our bottom line each year.

Our largest expenditures each year are:

- Payments to LEA for the hiring and staffing of the CBIs
- Payments to LEA for water quality monitoring and testing
- Member education and communication
- Adding to our Rapid Response Fund

## **Board Nominations and Elections**

All current MPA board members said that they are willing to serve again and were voted back in for another term by the membership present at the annual meeting.



## Board Member Remaining Term Expiration Year

- Zach Clayton 2026
- Bill Dexter 2025
- Paul Dwyer 2025
- Shawn Hagerty 2027
- Josh Harrington 2026
- Scott Frame 2026
- Bill Monroe 2025
- Bill Muir 2025
- Anne Munstedt (Clerk) 2026
- Ruth Neagle (Treasurer) 2027
- Richard Niedel 2027
- Steve Petter 2027
- Mark Patterson 2027
- Stephanie Searce 2027
- Laurie Vance (Vice President) 2027
- Chip Wendler (President) 2027

After the meeting, all current officers were re-elected to their roles by a unanimous vote of the other Board Members present.

### **Questions and Comments:**

Member: Please consider the idea of picking up trash when you are walking down Mountain Road.

Member: Thank you for the work you do, this is the first summer we noticed water clarity going down so appreciate the work you do.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:44 a.m.

# Moose Pond Association Annual Meeting Agenda

July 13, 2024

## Pleasant Mountain's Main Lodge

- Welcome and Agenda Overview Chip Wendler
- Quick Boyne/Pleasant Mountain Update  
Manager of PM Ralph Lewis, General
- Report on Lake Health LEA's Colin Holme
- Loon Update Anne Munstedt
- CBI Activities and Boat Wash Stations Bill Monroe
- No Wake Zones and Wake Wise Program Scott Frame
- LakeSmart Program Update LakeSmart's Roy Lambert
- Lake Section Captain Initiative Zach Clayton
- Member Communication Mark Patterson
- Membership Health Ruth Neagle/Chip Wendler
- Financial Health Ruth Neagle/Chip Wendler
- Board Nominations and Elections Chip Wendler
- Question and Answer Session All