

Great East Lake Improvement Association
2024 Annual Meeting
Condensed Minutes for Social Media

Committee Reports:

Lake Host

Jodi Carlberg reported that the lake host program is off to a great start this summer. There are 12 Lake Hosts performing complementary inspections at the boat ramp, staffed during the hours of 6am to 6pm, 7 days a week with two staff members working together on each shift. The staff inspect boats entering and exiting the lake looking for invasive plants. Any potential find is documented, photographed, and sent to the state for positive identification. So far this season there have been 1,242 total inspections since opening on Memorial Day with only two finds. Both finds were identified by the state to be native – not invasive – species.

Treasurer's Report

Sergio Jarmillo gave a brief overview of the Association's financial status, revenues, and major expenditures. Membership contributions to date are running similar to last year at this time.

To date, income is \$39,227 and are expenses \$36,042. Assets are \$207,638 including the Invasive Species Defense Fund. Sergio concluded that the association continues to be in a strong financial position and that copies of the financial report were available for members to see at the Membership table.

Loons

Charlie Crespi reported that wildlife biologist Michael Glasby was on the lake yesterday for the third or fourth time this season. Five or six loons were spotted. The Copp Brook pair nested but the chick died within about a week after hatching. There has been no evidence of nesting for the Scribner River and Second Basin pairs. The Loon Island pair nested but shortly thereafter a personal watercraft crashed into the island at night. This incident spooked the loons who then abandoned their nest and egg. This pair might have nested again but the status could not be confirmed during yesterday's observations.

Water Quality

Charlie reported that in partnership with Lay Lake Monitoring Program from UNH, two water quality surveys have been conducted on the lake so far this year and another is scheduled for July 25th. Visibility was down slightly in 2023 likely due to the high rainfall. Phosphorus levels are still low and very good.

Charlie discussed his article on page 8 of the summer 2024 GELIA newsletter regarding metals in the lake sediment. Essentially, there is enough phosphorus in the sediments to create a significant phosphorus release should the oxygen levels drop near the lake bottom. It has not happened because the phosphorus levels in the water column are low. We all need to take steps to minimize phosphorus pollutants from entering the lake. Failed septic systems, erosion/sedimentation, and lawn fertilizers are some of the primary sources of phosphorus pollution.

He reviewed where GELIA is going from here in regards to water quality testing. We are now collecting more data on phosphorus inputs into the lake. This includes tributary sampling at 12 sites, four or five times each season in order to measure and monitor phosphorus inflow. Charlie informed the membership that a copy of last year's water quality report is available on the Membership table.

Member question: Is aluminum seeding a viable option? Charlie explained that it does work but it's very expensive. Another lake in the region that is one-tenth the size of ours spent about \$1 million to seed their lake. Such treatments are temporary solutions if the sources of excess phosphorus are not eliminated.

Member question: How to you differentiate between cyanobacteria and algae? Charlie explained that in Great East Lake cyanobacteria looks like pollen in the water (pollen should not be present in the summer and fall) or small flecks of green paint (Second Basin). Furthermore, on the main body of the lake cyanobacteria looks like tiny white points or balls which are about size of pin heads. Low concentrations of both are normal and are not considered a health risk for swimming/boating. Concerns arise when the concentration increases (green flecks larger than a pencil head in the Second Basin and water having a dilute milky appearance in the main body).

Charlie informed members this guidance is based on small, incidental exposures that may occur while swimming. They do not apply to drinking water or domestic water where exposures can be much higher. Both NH DES and ME DEP recommend that domestic water should not be drawn from the lake.

Membership

Effie Jaramillo reported that she has taken over membership this year after Suzi Alvino's 10-year run. Suzi did an amazing job and will be missed. She reported that membership is doing well and on track with last year. Many members are taking advantage of the GELIA website to renew their memberships. Reminders will be going out shortly to those members who have not yet renewed. Total membership has been running about 400 in recent years but Effie mentioned that she hopes to increase this number as there are about 800 properties on the lake.

Love Our Lake

Rich Sigel reviewed the Love Our Lake mission aimed at education and strengthening community support for protecting the lake. He also brought attention to the Love Our Lake article on page 7 of the GELIA summer 2024 newsletter and reviewed the connection between phosphorus cyanobacteria and highlighted steps we can take to help keep phosphorus out of the lake, including the minimization of erosion, septic system management, keeping firework debris out of the lake, and minimizing powerboat churn of lake bottom sediment in shallow areas. He reviewed the bill that passed recently in the ME legislature that requires wake boats to operate no closer than 300 feet of the shoreline and in a minimum of 15 feet of water depth. Another bill passed in ME requiring a boating safety course for power boat and personal water craft operators. Charlie added that the NH state legislature came very close this session to passing a wake boat bill that is similar to the one that ME passed.

Invasive Plants

Charlie reported that the Weed Warrior has been launched for the season and will begin its annual search for invasive plants. None were found last year. Volunteers are needed to assist in this process and Charlie will post the dates on Facebook.

AWWA

James Shimansky, the AWWA program coordinator, summarized AWWA's mission and accomplishments. AWWA is a non-profit started in 2005 that is focused on helping landowners and road associations solve erosion issues through storm water management. Since 2005, AWWA has conducted over 450 BMPs and made over 200 Technical Assistance (TA) visits in the local watersheds. 84 of those visits have been made on Great East Lake alone. He reported that these projects have reduced the amount of sediment running into the local lakes by 125 tons and reduced phosphorus by 107 pounds. James reminded members that the Youth Conservation Corps is available to perform many such projects at low cost to the landowner. There is no charge for labor. Landowner only pays for the materials.

Nominations

Tom Lynch, head of GELIA's Nominating Committee, made special mention to note that three veteran Board Members will be leaving the Board as of this Annual Meeting because of the ten year term limit contained in the GELIA By-Laws. All three are knowledgeable, sensible, and have done a ton of work for the benefit of GELIA and this lake. Sincere gratitude was given to each. The board members departing are: Dave Mankus, John Crespi, and Susi Alvino.

Tom brought forth the nominating business for the meeting - proposing to add one new GELIA Director and for three other current Directors to serve additional two year terms. This requires formal approval by the GELIA membership. Tom made the first motion as follows: that Cheryl Peters be elected today to serve her first two year term on the GELIA Board of Directors. The motion was seconded and carried by a show of hands from the membership. Tom made the second motion as follows: that we elect Mike Russo to serve a second Two Year Term on the GELIA Board and that Carol Ward and Rich Segal both be elected to serve a third and final two year term on the GELIA Board. The motion was seconded and carried by a show of hands from the membership.

With official nomination business concluded, Tom made a final comment that there's quite regular coming and goings on the GELIA Board and there seems like there's more new work for GELIA to do. If you think you might be interested in doing some of that work as a member of the Board, please speak up to or contact any of us to express your interest.

Closing Remarks

Charlie mentioned that the GELIA calendars will be ready next month and members will be notified by email and Facebook how to place their orders. Charlie reminded everyone that GELIA is a volunteer board with limited terms and that we're always in need of new members. Contact him or submit your interest using the Contact Us page on the GELIA website. Charlie thanked the membership for their support of GELIA. Mentioned that snack and raffle would be directly following the meeting.

Motion to Adjourn

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 11:15am.