



NEWICHAWANNOCK NEWS

GELIA Salutes Charlie Crespi

On behalf of the GELIA community, the Board would like to express its deep appreciation to Charlie Crespi who will step down as GELIA president when his term expires in July. He has served in this capacity for the past eight years.

Charlie has been unwavering in his commitment to Great East Lake, devoting countless hours to furthering the mission of the association and the preservation of the lake. Charlie first connected with GELIA as a volunteer loon counter and weed watcher. As a board member he served as treasurer before becoming President.

Charlie's background as a scientist and businessman has served the lake well. He brings a seriousness of purpose, professionalism and strong leadership to every endeavor and has inspired us all to do more and do better.

It's hard to make a short list of all that Charlie has done, but we will try:

- A champion of water quality—Charlie stepped up to address the complex challenges of natural and developmental threats to the lake from soil erosion and pollution.
- Our chief weed watcher—who tirelessly travels the shoreline each season in search of invasive plants using the glass bottom pontoon boat he donated for this purpose, the iconic Weed Warrior
- Master fundraiser and super organizer—no job is too small for Charlie, whether it's collecting water quality samples, setting out loon markers, making post office runs for the GELIA mail or coordinating volunteers for the annual meeting.

Most of all, we appreciate Charlie as a teacher and educator. He helps us all to better understand the scientific basis for our work such as drawing the connections between phosphorus and cyanobacteria growth, bringing in experts to collect water quality data and set monitoring baselines,



and educating us on all the things we must do to keep phosphorous and other nutrients and toxins out of the lake.

The good news for GELIA is that Charlie isn't going far. He will continue to serve on the board and will stay engaged in all things related to our water quality. The good news for Charlie is that he and his wife, Dorothy, will have more time for enjoying family and guests at their lake house in the second basin, sugaring in the spring, grape growing in the summer, winemaking in the fall and pizza making as often as possible.

We salute you, Charlie, for your service, leadership and accomplishment. Great East Lake is in a better place thanks to you.

President's Column

*By Charles Crespi
President, GELIA*

Great East Lake is extraordinary. Due to a confluence of geology and geography, Great East Lake is a deep headwater lake with exceptional water quality. The vast majority of Great East Lake's watershed has remained forested. Forested watersheds are essential for high water quality. Trees slow down stormwater giving it time to soak into the ground where plants and soil minerals absorb nutrients and purify the water. At the lakefront, the stewardship of property owners, AWWA and GELIA have mitigated nutrient inflow from soil erosion and other sources.

Great East Lake is also less than a two-hour drive from a major metropolitan area. Proximity has brought development pressures to the lake. We have all seen decades-old simple camps replaced by larger modern residences. The result is fewer trees and more impervious surfaces.

Great East Lake is experiencing the impact of climate change. Ice-in is happening later and ice-out is happening earlier than in prior decades. In summer, the surface water temperatures are warmer, reducing water oxygen levels. At a regional scale, people are moving north to cooler climate zones. In this warming climate, development pressures on both lakefront and upland property are expected to increase.

It is time to preserve and protect more land in Great East Lake's watershed. GELIA is partnering with a Moose Mountains Regional Greenways (MMRG, the New Hampshire land trust active in Wakefield, NH) to protect a 34-acre parcel which contains a tributary stream in the Scribner River sub-watershed. You can learn more about this project in the accompanying article by Jill Eldredge, the Executive Director of MMRG.

Finally, it looks like my stint as GELIA President is coming to an end. I am looking forward to continuing to monitor and protect Great East Lake as the Immediate Past President.

Attention Acton Private Road Associations

Great East Lake is an oligotrophic lake with low nutrients and exceptional clarity and quality. Poorly maintained private and public roads can be a significant source of nutrient-bearing sediment entering lakes and tributary streams that reduce water quality.

The Town of Acton provides up to \$3,000 to private road associations to carry out work to mitigate stormwater runoff and associated erosion. To be eligible, road associations must complete an Article 43 application form and must meet certain defined requirements prescribed in state statute. The application is on the Acton website under Road Committee. Visit ActonMaine.org to learn more.

The Acton Road Committee is available to help with the application or other requirements. Please reach out to the town administrator or the road committee chair, Jay Ward at yajdraw10@yahoo.com for assistance.

The message is being shared at the request of the Acton Road Committee.

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For the term July 2024 through July 2025

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AWWA Receives Funding to Help Homeowners Restore Natural Shorelines

The Acton Wakefield Watersheds Alliance has received a grant from the Great Bay 2030 Initiative, funded by the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, to launch a new cost-share program for shoreline homeowners. The Vegetated Buffer Cost-Share Program offers financial incentives for homeowners to establish native plant buffers along their waterfront properties, helping to protect water quality.



A vegetated buffer prevents erosion and reduces stormwater runoff, which carries sediment and harmful pollutants into the lake—factors that contribute to algae and cyanobacteria blooms. It also strengthens the shoreline with deep-rooted plants, protecting against wave action and winter ice damage.

Approved homeowners will receive between \$500 and \$1,000 to implement their buffer projects. The minimum \$500 grant ensures that even projects requiring no direct costs—such as simply allowing native vegetation to regrow by stopping mowing—are eligible for funding.

How could my buffer project cost nothing to install?

One of the most effective ways to establish a buffer is by doing less! Simply designating a "no-mow" area and allowing native plants to regrow naturally can create an excellent buffer at no cost. Homeowners who take this simple step still qualify for the minimum \$500 cost-share grant.

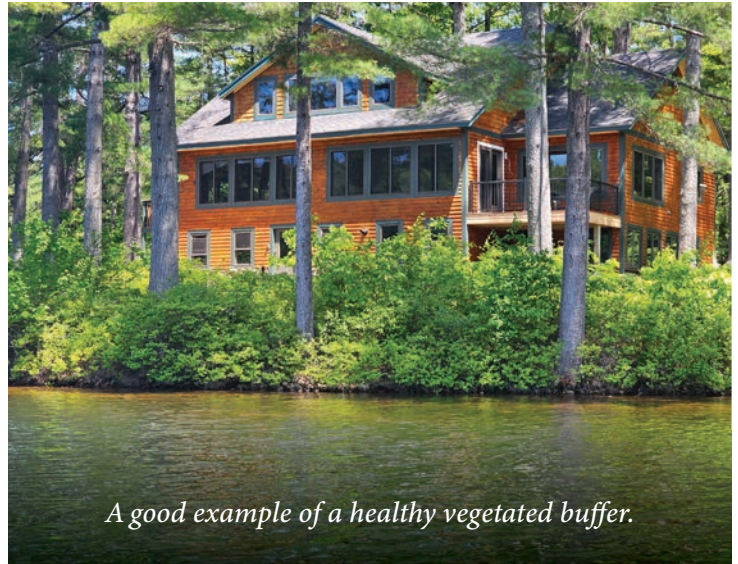
For properties requiring additional work, funds up to \$1,000 are available to help with the cost of plants, seeds, or mulch.

Limited funding—apply soon!

AWWA staff will work with you to design a buffer that suits your property. Once your buffer is established, you will receive the cost-share funds. Funding is limited, and the program will close once funds are exhausted. Depending on project costs, we may only be able to award as few as 20 grants in 2025.

This is a pilot year for the program—if it proves successful, the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation will consider extending funding for an additional two years.

Don't miss this opportunity to enhance your shoreline and protect Great East Lake! Apply today at awwatersheds.org or call 603-473-2500 for more information.



A good example of a healthy vegetated buffer.

Spring Update from Great East Lake – Membership and More

By Effie Jaramillo

Spring has arrived in full bloom here at Great East Lake, and it's already shaping up to be one of the most beautiful seasons in recent memory. The ice cleared early, the loons are calling, and the shoreline is waking up with color and life.

We recently mailed out this year's membership letter, and we want to thank those of you who have already responded. Your continued support helps protect the lake we all love and allows us to keep programs like water quality testing, educational outreach, and invasive species prevention going strong.

If you haven't renewed your membership yet, now is a great time! Whether you're a year-round resident or a summer visitor, being a member keeps you connected to important updates and events happening around the lake.

Stay tuned for upcoming announcements, including details about our summer events, volunteer opportunities, and ways to get involved in protecting Great East Lake for generations to come.

Wishing you a joyful start to the season—we can't wait to see you on the water!

Cyanobacteria

By Charles Crespi

Cyanobacteria are photosynthetic microorganisms which are native to our lakes. Cyanobacteria are known to produce toxins which, at high levels, can cause illness and death in humans and pets.

Cyanobacteria are normally present at low levels but when the lake water is warm and nutrients enter the lake (for example from a heavy rainfall) the amounts of cyanobacteria can increase dramatically and it can appear at the surface.

In mid-August 2024 there were some areas of elevated cyanobacteria in the Second Basin, primarily the shore along Fulton Road and Red Gate Lane. The variety was Planktothrix, which typically looks like flecks of green paint either on the surface or in the water column. Only trace amounts were observed on September 6th and none thereafter. In late August, relatively low levels (widely dispersed white clusters) of the variety Gloeotrichia were observed in the main lake near Veazey Point.

Whatever lake you are entering always assess the condition of water before entering. Harmful levels of Cyanobacteria are readily observable to the trained eye. In many lakes there will be a bright green scum on the water. This has never been observed with Great East Lake.

Typical late summer levels of Gloeotrichia look like widely dispersed white dots. Potentially harmful levels of Gloeotrichia will be very dense and give the water the appearance of dilute milk. This has been observed once when wind concentrated the cyanobacteria in a cove.

Planktothrix forms green “flakes” of various sizes in the water column or on the surface. These have been observed in limited areas of the Second Basin on multiple occasions. There can be a lot of cyanobacteria in a single “flake.” Don’t swim among them.

One should also be suspicious of anything which looks like pollen in the water after the pine pollen clears up in June. If you are suspicious, keep humans and pets out of the suspect water.

Here are links to more information from New Hampshire DES and Maine DEP:

des.nh.gov/water/healthy-swimming/harmful-algal-blooms

maine.gov/dep/water/lakes/algalbloom.html

This article discusses cyanobacteria in the context of exposure during recreational water use (ingestion of a few ounces of lake water). Standards for public water supplies are much more stringent. Great East Lake is not a public water supply. Both NH DES and ME DEP do not recommend the use of lake water for domestic purposes.



Planktothrix



Typical levels of Gloeotrichia



Concerning levels of Gloeotrichia



The Night Sky

Stargazing here at Great East has been a pastime for many of us and our amazing night sky continues to impress many a city guest who rarely sees so many stars. For some of us, Great East is the only place we've ever seen such clear views of the Milky Way galaxy.

As the population in the surrounding region continues to grow, however, ambient light from both near and afar can make it more difficult to see as many stars as we've seen in the past. Growth and development marches on and these have many benefits for society, of course, but some of their impacts on our natural environment are unfortunate. Our ability to see the stars in our night sky is one of these.

The residents and guests of Great East Lake can't do anything about the light coming from surrounding regions, but there are steps we can take to minimize the impact of lighting on our own properties.

DarkSky International (darksky.org) promotes principles for responsible outdoor lighting that is shared in the graphic below. On their website you can also find recommended lighting fixtures for all kinds of applications—from decks and stairs to driveways and security.



To learn more, scan the QR code or visit darksky.org/what-we-do/darksky-approved/darksky-approved-luminaires-program/luminaires/#!/Search-by-Use/c/19306351.

Five Lighting Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting



DarkSky



Illuminating
ENGINEERING SOCIETY

Responsible outdoor lighting is

1 Useful

Use light only if it is needed

All light should have a clear purpose. Consider how the use of light will impact the area, including wildlife and their habitats.



2 Targeted

Direct light so it falls only where it is needed

Use shielding and careful aiming to target the direction of the light beam so that it points downward and does not spill beyond where it is needed.



3 Low Level

Light should be no brighter than necessary

Use the lowest light level required. Be mindful of surface conditions, as some surfaces may reflect more light into the night sky than intended.



4 Controlled

Use light only when it is needed

Use controls such as timers or motion detectors to ensure that light is available when it is needed, dimmed when possible, and turned off when not needed.



5 Warm-colored

Use warmer color lights where possible

Limit the amount of shorter wavelength (blue-violet) light to the least amount needed.



Love Our Lake!

The Great East Lake Improvement Association traces its roots back to 1932. Our mission statement says GELIA is “dedicated to welfare of the lake, its wildlife and environment. We see education as a primary function of the organization. Only through vigilant action and financial support can we hope to ensure that future generations will share the experience of stewardship for the treasure that is Great East Lake.” The Board is made up of volunteers, who are elected by members, to help carry out this mission. Anyone who wishes to serve on the Board or volunteer to help with our many GELIA programs please be in touch at GreatEastLake.org/Contact-Us.

GELIA runs a variety of programs and activities to help further this mission. These include:

Lake Hosts. The Lake Host Program is a courtesy boat inspection program aimed at preventing the introduction of invasive species, plants and animals into the lake. Paid staff and volunteers are at the boat launch throughout the summer season conducting voluntary inspections of boats coming into and out of the lake.

Weed Watchers. The Weed Watcher program runs throughout the summer, monitoring the lake bottom for invasive plant species. You may see the Weed Warrior, our modified pontoon boat with glass bottom monitoring tubes, going slowly by your shoreline during the summer. Our volunteers also use kayaks to monitor our lake’s very shallow and marshy areas.

Water Quality Monitoring. GELIA has been conducting water quality monitoring together with UNH over the last five decades. Recently, we have begun a program to monitor phosphorus, which we know is the leading contributor to cyanobacterial growth. Historically, the water in Great East Lake has been excellent, but continued vigilance by our entire lake community is needed to keep it that way.

Navigational Markers. GELIA works in cooperation with the States of Maine and New Hampshire to place navigational markers around the lake. New Hampshire Marine Patrol is responsible for placing markers on the New Hampshire side of the lake, and GELIA places markers on the Maine side.

AWWA Partnership. The Acton Wakefield Watershed Alliance is dedicated to protecting and restoring the water quality of lakes, rivers and ponds in the Wakefield and Acton



region, and they are an important GELIA partner. AWWA is a tremendous resource for information about how we can protect our lake and runs a summer youth program to assist property owners with erosion control projects. GELIA’s 2021 watershed survey was conducted in conjunction with AWWA, and AWWA remains available to assist property owners with remediation projects recommended by the survey.

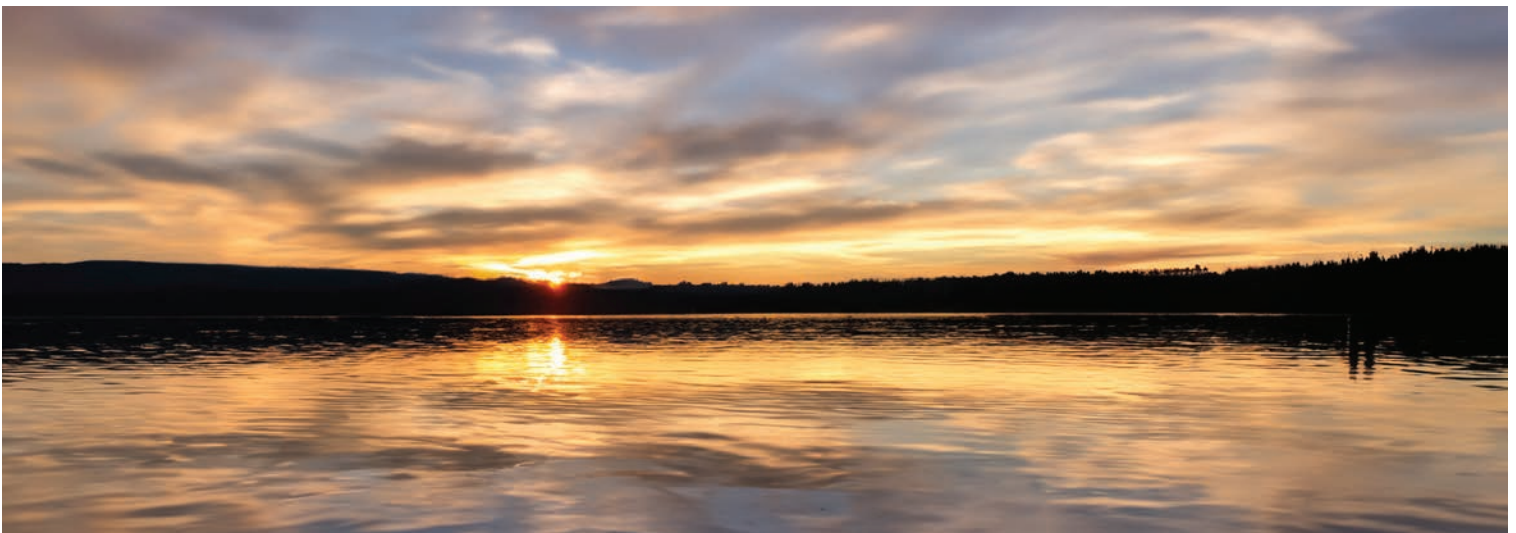
Loon Preservation. GELIA works with the NH Loon Center on loon count and monitoring and placing signs and buoys around nesting sites. Please stay at least 150 feet from loons or loon nests, and be on the alert for baby loons out with their parents in open water, especially as babies arrive during July – the busiest time of year on the lake.

Working with State Regulators. GELIA works with ME and NH state regulators on a variety of issues including water quality, cyanobacteria and the dam.

Love Our Lake. We all love Great East Lake, but keeping it special depends on each of us doing our part. Love our Lake is a GELIA project aimed at education, raising awareness and strengthening community support for protecting the lake and the quality of life for all who enjoy the lake. Here are some important, common sense things you can do to help protect our lake:

- Stop shorefront erosion. Storm water runoff is the number one pollution threat to the lake, introducing fertilizers, bacteria, pesticides and petroleum products into our water. Permits are required for shoreline alterations. There are many simple steps you can take to minimize erosion, including slowing or diverting runoff and planting vegetation buffers. AWWA is a great resource for lakefront property owners who want to take steps to stop erosion.

- Don't use fertilizers (except for Lime) or other chemicals near the lake. Most fertilizers contain phosphorus, which is very damaging to the lake and promotes the growth of algae and toxic cyanobacteria. NH now has strict rules restricting the use of fertilizers near the lake. Please avoid gas spillage while fueling your boat, and do not use boat polishes or waxes while your boat is in the water.
 - Know your septic system. Effluent from failing systems is a major threat to the lake. Please know the location and condition of your septic system, and call a septic system expert to inspect your system at least once every three years and pump as needed.
 - Limit firework use. Many people enjoy fireworks to celebrate the 4th of July, but fireworks contain phosphorus and nitrogen, which are the worst pollutants to the lake. Wakefield requires a permit for fireworks, and certain fireworks are prohibited in ME. If you do use fireworks, please keep them as far away from the lake as possible and limit their use to the 4th of July.
 - Watch for invasive species. Invasive species are a problem for lakes and ponds in our area. Invasive plants like Variable Milfoil can completely change the lake, with thick mats of growth that make recreation dangerous and reduce property values. Zebra mussels pose a similar concern. These invasives are known to migrate from one body of water to another via boats and trailers. To date Great East Lake has been spared from infestation due in part to constant vigilance by boat owners and programs like the Lake Host and Weed Watchers. Please clean your boat and trailer of all aquatic vegetation, animals and mud each time you leave or enter the lake.
 - Observe headway speed laws. That means 6 mph or less when you're within 150 feet (NH) or 200 feet (ME) of shore, rafts, other boats or swimmers. The entire Copp Brook, Scribner River, First Basin, and channel leading to the boat landing are all headway speed areas. Please use care not to churn up the lake bottom in shallow areas, which can lead to increased algae and cyanobacteria growth.
 - Watch your wakes. A boat making a large wake can still cause damage to shorelines and boats tied up to docks, create erosion, damage animal and loon habitats and cause dangerous situations for swimmers, smaller boats and kayaks. Maine has passed a law prohibiting wake surfing within 300 feet of shore and in water less than 15 feet deep. If you're making a large wake for water sports, please stay as close to the center of the lake as possible and always be aware of how your wake may impact others.
 - Respect and Courtesy. As in all communities, as little courtesy goes a long way. Please remember that sound, voices and music all carry far over the water, especially at night. The Boat Owners Association of the United States urges boaters to keep music at responsible levels, especially near shore, and we think that's sound advice! Please also avoid bright shorefront lighting and keep lights focused downward and on your own property.
- For more information about how you can help protect our wonderful lake or to download a printable version of these tips to post in your camp for guests and renters, please visit GreatEastLake.org/Love-Our-Lake.



What's all the phuss about Phosphorus?

By Charles Crespi

For all fresh waterbodies, low levels of nutrients are a primary determinant of water quality. For freshwater lakes, the most important nutrient is phosphorus. Low levels of phosphorus result in high water clarity and high oxygen levels (as well as high property values). High levels of phosphorus result in excessive plant growth, cyanobacteria blooms, low oxygen levels and low water clarity (as well as lower property values). Fresh water lakes are classified as oligotrophic with less than 8 parts per billion (ppb) phosphorus (the prefix “oligo” means “just a few” and “trophic” means stimulating), mesotrophic with between 8 and 12 ppb phosphorus (the prefix “meso” means “middle”) and eutrophic with >12 ppb phosphorus (the prefix “eu” means “well”). Great East Lake is an oligotrophic lake; the average of recent phosphorus level is about 4 ppb. (This unit of measure, ppb, is extremely small. If you wanted to dilute a teaspoon of table salt to 1 ppb, you would need to dilute it with four Olympic swimming pools of water.)

Oligotrophic lakes are extremely sensitive to phosphorus pollution. For Great East Lake, primary sources of phosphorus pollution are the result of human activities such as vegetation removal, soil disturbance and the resulting erosion, human waste and fireworks debris. In this article I provide examples on the amount of water degraded by some activities.

I define degraded as taking the current oligotrophic water in Great East Lake to mesotrophic water. In other words, increasing the phosphorus from 4 ppb to 8 ppb, or a 4 ppb increase. Such a change would be expected reduce the water clarity from the current value of about 10 meters (39 feet) to 4 meters (13 feet) or less. Of course, this would be a disaster and much smaller amounts of phosphorus pollution are actually a significant issue.

Example 1: Urinating in the lake

The modern human diet is rich in phosphorus with the primary sources being grains, meats and dairy products. Excess absorbed phosphorus is excreted in the urine. The average human excretes 0.25 grams of phosphorus per day and urinates 7 times a day. Therefore, each urination contains enough phosphorus to degrade about 3,000 gallons of Great East Lake. Put two people in a lakeside house with a failed septic system and enough urine goes into the septic system to degrade about 12,000,000 gallons of Great East Lake.

Please take care of your business before going in the lake and maintain a well-functioning septic system.

Example 2: Soft drinks

Many soft drinks contain high levels of phosphorus. For example, the fourth listed ingredient in Coke is phosphoric acid, a phosphorus-containing chemical. A 12 ounce can of Coke has enough phosphorus to degrade 4,000 gallons of Great East Lake. Hawaiian Punch is particularly high in phosphorus. A 12-ounce can contain enough phosphorus to degrade about 12,000 gallons of Great East Lake.

Please don't pour unconsumed beverages into the lake.

Example 3: All-purpose fertilizer

There are all kinds of fertilizers with a three number system to describe the amounts of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium. The middle number relates to the amount of phosphorus. A typical all-purpose fertilizer is 10-10-10. A forty-pound bag of 10-10-10 contains enough phosphorus to degrade 60,000,000 gallons of Great East Lake.

Ideally, no fertilizers would be used anywhere near the lake. If you absolutely have to use a fertilizer, pick one with “0” as the middle number.

Example 4: Cremation remains

Human cremation remains contain 47.5% phosphate. The cremation remains of an average human contain enough phosphorus to degrade 130,000,000 gallons of Great East Lake. Do not scatter cremation remains in or around Great East Lake or any other inland waterbody.

In Maine and New Hampshire it is illegal to deposit cremated remains in any waterbody or in the shoreland zone. US Federal law allows scattering cremated remains in the ocean under certain conditions. Always check federal, state and local regulations before scattering ashes.

Example 5: Erosion

One ton of soil contains an estimated 1.8 pounds of phosphorous. A project on Langley Shores Drive prevented 5.5 pounds of phosphorous from entering Great East Lake each year. 5.5 pounds of phosphorous is enough to degrade 185,000,000 gallons of Great East Lake.

If you think you may have an erosion issue on your property reach out Acton Wakefield Watersheds Alliance (AWWA) for a technical consultation on ways to address the issue.

I hope you found these examples to provide a useful perspective on how human activities can impact the lake. Should Great East Lake develop a phosphorus problem, there are limited treatment options. A recent alum treatment of a lake with 10% the surface area of Great East Lake cost \$1,000,000.

Please keep your property and activities lake-friendly. (This article first appeared in 2019.)



SAVE
the
date

GELIA Annual Meeting Saturday, July 12th

The GELIA Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, July 12th at Weeks along the north shore of the lake.

All GELIA members and those considering being members are welcome.

The meeting starts promptly at 10 a.m. but the event opens at 9 a.m. with various displays, information tables and GELIA merchandise for sale so please plan to arrive early.

Our traditional lunch of hotdogs, chips and soda will be available after the meeting, compliments of GELIA.

Ducharme Conservation Easement

By Jillian Eldredge, Executive Director of MMRG

Moose Mountains Regional Greenways (MMRG) is a local non-profit land trust that is committed to conserving our region's natural resources and educating the public about the importance of land conservation. MMRG is a membership based organization and serves the nine towns of Wakefield, Milton, Farmington, New Durham, Middleton, Ossipee, Tuftonboro, Wolfeboro and Brookfield. Please visit our website at mmrgnh.org.

Each year we hold over a dozen events appealing to a wide array of audiences. Our events include the family-centered annual Woods Water and Wildlife Festival and smaller event series such as property walks, forestry workshops, bird watches and more. To learn more about our events, visit mmrgnh.org/events.

As a land trust, MMRG holds nearly 5,000 acres in permanent conservation. These properties range from smaller parcels of 20 acres to larger 600+ acre conservation preserves. Currently, MMRG is working on a conservation project in Wakefield. The Ducharme Conservation Easement proposes to permanently protect 34 acres, including 1,000 feet of frontage on both sides of Scribner Brook (Upper Copp Brook). This Brook directly feeds Great East Lake and permanent protection of this parcel will prohibit development of this sensitive area, promote and improve water quality in Great East Lake and provide valuable natural habitat for wildlife species.

Stay tuned as we work closely with GELIA and other partners to ensure the permanent protection of this special place.



Thanks to our Valued Members

By Effie Jaramillo

GELIA gratefully acknowledges the members who made contributions in 2024.

Stewards (\$500+)

Jeffrey P. Beale
Kevin & Deidre Bolduc
Jeff & Cindy Burbank
John & Jane Butler
Charles & Dorothy Crespi
Francis & Odalys Croteau
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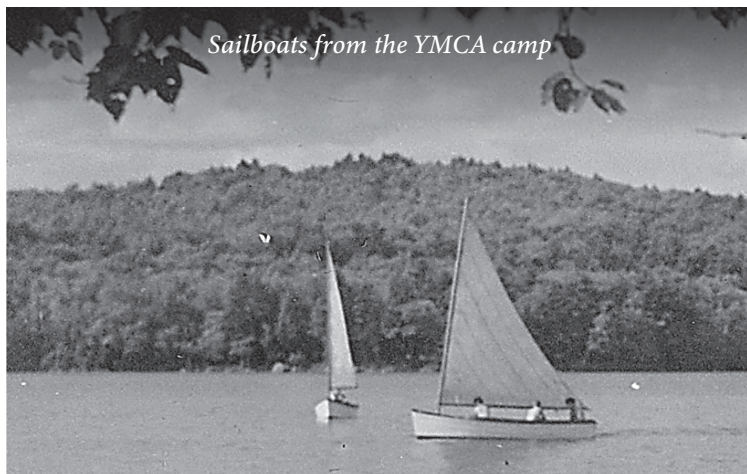
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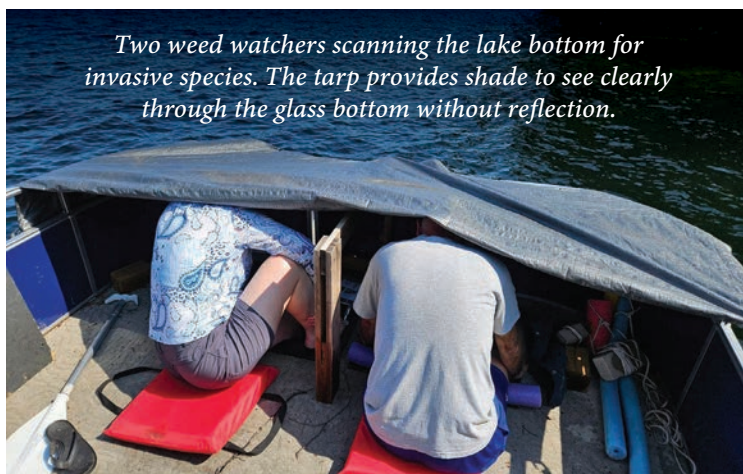
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Bruce & Heidi Bonenfant	Elizabeth Flemings	David Maloney	
	Earl & Julie Frost	Bea Marconi	

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Sailboats from the YMCA camp



Two weed watchers scanning the lake bottom for invasive species. The tarp provides shade to see clearly through the glass bottom without reflection.



Free swim at the YMCA camp



The GELIA Weed Warrior at dock

An Ideal Spot for **YOUR** Vacation.

A comfortable farmhouse, admirably situated on beautiful Great East Lake.

Fresh vegetables from our own garden.
Fresh eggs from our own hens. . . .
Fresh milk and cream from our own cows. . . . Delicious home-cooked food and plenty of it.

House is only 100 yards from, and overlooking, this lovely lake.

Own Ad Card,
1938



An advertising card from 1938



Just over New Hampshire line in Maine,
near Sanbornville, N. H.

20 miles from
Winnetoesaukee.

40 miles from
Conway, N. H.

RATES

\$15 a week per person

Children under ten, \$10

Weekends, \$3 per person

For additional information or reservations, write to

GEORGE W. MANN
EAST WAKEFIELD, N. H.

Thanks to our Valued Members

Continued from page 11

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Les & Liz Swenson	Holly Cashman
George & Jo Szirbik	Paul & Kristen Cavallaro
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