



NEWICHAWANNOCK NEWS

Greetings from Beechwood Park

By Bob Stearns, GELIA President

Greetings from Beechwood Park Road, one of the many wonderful places on Great East Lake. It is here that a man named Charles Prior of Malden, MA purchased a piece of shorefront property and built a camp in 1900. And some 125 years later it is here that I am fortunate to share ownership with my brothers, aunt and cousins. Great East has made such a strong impression on my life that hardly a day goes by that I don't pinch myself to be sure I'm not dreaming.

Memories from my childhood here run strong and deep. It's always been a magical place to run free, play and explore. Although we came up a fair amount in the summers, my mom and dad preferred the off season, especially the winter. In fact, we celebrated Christmas on Great East for 10 straight years in the 1960's and 70's. Dandy Road wasn't plowed back then so we pulled in all our supplies—and gifts—on a cargo sled wearing snowshoes. We'd cut firewood with a 2-person crosscut saw, heat the camp with a wood stove, and chop holes in the ice for water. We learned to ski at Wildcat and Moose Mountain - but to get there we'd have to snowshoe a mile back to the car in the morning and then repeat the process upon return. My mom and dad certainly knew how to keep 3 young boys active! But the skills we learned and the memories we made are priceless.

Returning to the present, despite my 60+ years on the lake I still feel like I'm new here. I have a great deal to learn about maintaining water quality, the workings of the GELIA organization, the local ordinances, the state regulations, our partner non-profits and most importantly, all of you—my lake neighbors. It sometimes feels like a daunting list, but I'm determined.

You'll find that I'm a strong believer that our natural resources are precious and fragile. Without a conscious effort to protect them, we run the risk that they'll be lost one day. And I'm a strong believer that we need to leave things better than the way we found them, whenever we can. Life is short and we're only here for a little while. For the time being it's our turn on the lake, and before long it will be our children's turn, then onward through the generations after that.



Bob with his daughter, Neve – the next generation on Great East.

Last month I had the pleasure to speak with a wonderful woman who spent summers on the north shore back in the 1940's. Her family moved to the Midwest at some point so for many decades she didn't visit. A few years ago she had the opportunity to come back and was able to relive some of those special memories from her youth. One of the things that stood out to her on this nostalgic trip was that the water appeared to be as clear and pristine today as she remembered it being from her youth. When I heard that it made me want to double our efforts to ensure that my children will be able to say the same thing 60 years from now.

I feel fortunate to be part of this lake community and grateful for the opportunity to take on this role. Charlie Crespi did an exceptional job as president and left large shoes to fill. I look forward to working with my fellow GELIA board members to fill those shoes.

Feel free to stop by our camp or drop me a note. I enjoy meeting new people and you'll find that I'm especially interested in early lake history. If you've got any old lake stories I'd love to hear.

Bob
pres@greateastlake.org

Beechwood Park *Cover story continued*



Bob on the left with his big brother Jay, enjoying the cool lake water on their feet.



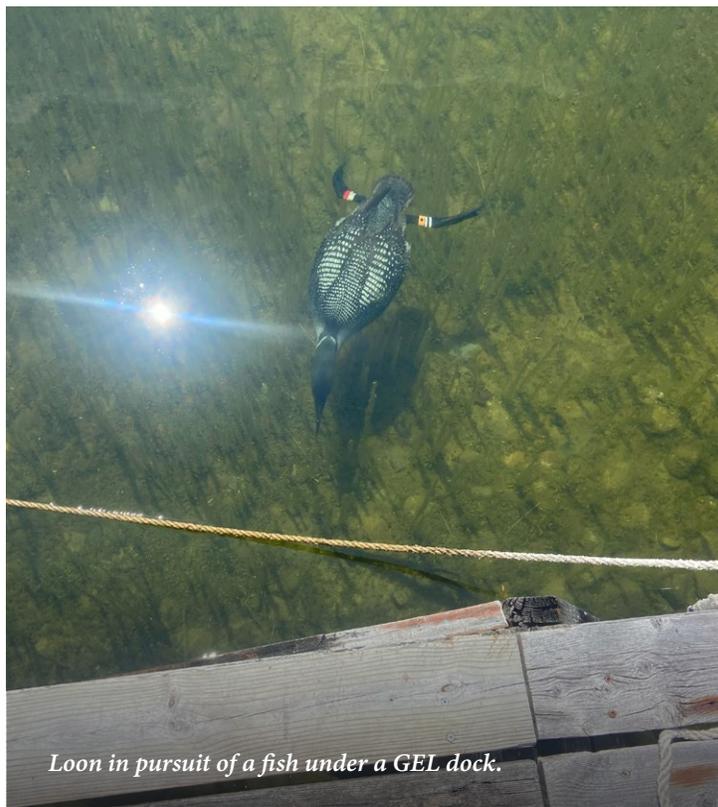
Bob and his dad wondering how they're going to upright the cargo sled without everything falling off. It often tipped over going down the big hill on Dandy Road.

Loons

By Charles Crespi

This year the very wet spring raised the lake level and made it difficult for the loons to nest. Additionally, there were several cases of overly curious people getting too close to loons attempting to nest. Only the Scribner River pair was successful in nesting and hatched a chick which survived a close encounter with a careless person on a PWC. The juvenile loon was last observed in late September. This observation was reported to the Loon Preservation Committee.

For 2026, don't be surprised if the "Loon Sanctuary" signs are put out early at the usual nesting sites for the Copp Brook, Scribner River and Loon Island pairs.



Loon in pursuit of a fish under a GEL dock.

Lake Hosts

By Jodi Carlberg

The Lake Host program had 12 staff for the 2025 season, and operated daily from Memorial Day through Labor Day, plus two additional weekends. The hosts conducted 2,747 inspections. Five specimens were sent for testing, and all turned out to be native. It was a great staff, with 50% expected to return next summer.

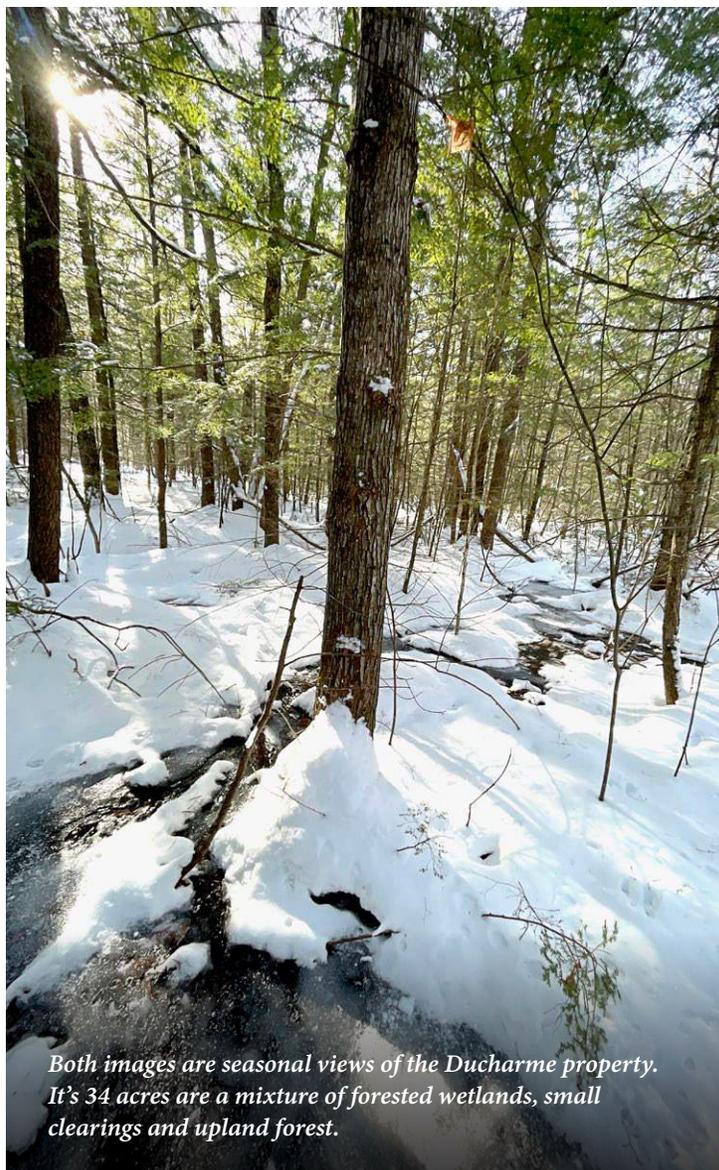
Ducharme Conservation Project Meets Fundraising Goal

By Veronica Bodge, Land Acquisition and Stewardship Coordinator, Moose Mountains Regional Greenways



GELIA and Moose Mountains Regional Greenways (MMRG) are pleased to announce that the fundraising goal for the Ducharme Project has been met thanks to our joint effort and partnership. MMRG was recently awarded a grant from the Adelard A. and Valeda Lea Roy Foundation, and several private donors, under GELIA's leadership, have committed generous contributions. The remainder of the project costs, approximately \$35,000, will be drawn from an internal conservation fund that MMRG has for conservation projects in Wakefield.

The Ducharme Project is conserving a 34 acre parcel with 1,000 feet of frontage along the Scribner River, a tributary to Great East Lake. Its permanent protection will protect high ranking wildlife habitat and prevent an estimated 12 pounds of phosphorus from entering the lake annually, a significant amount for a lake the size of Great East Lake.



Both images are seasonal views of the Ducharme property. It's 34 acres are a mixture of forested wetlands, small clearings and upland forest.

The project is expected to reach completion in summer of 2026. Currently, the conservation easement deed is being drafted. This is the legal document which codifies the terms of the easement in perpetuity. This spring, field documentation will commence, including the Baseline Documentation Report. This is a report included in the property's closing documents that describes the conditions of the property at the time of conservation and is the basis for future property monitoring and habitat enhancement efforts.

MMRG has been extremely gratified to work with GELIA as a partner on this important watershed protection effort. The primacy of conservation efforts should serve as a credit to the GELIA community. We would like to express our appreciation and gratitude at the efforts of GELIA and its members and MMRG looks forward to the completion of this project as well as to a long term relationship with GELIA.

Acton Wakefield Watersheds Alliance Update: Stronger Shores, Stronger Community

By Stacey Herbold,
AWWA Outreach Coordinator



Awesome news! Since establishing our vegetated buffer cost-share program, five of your neighbors on Great East Lake have committed to planting shoreline vegetated buffers in 2026—a fantastic step toward protecting the lake we all love. These native shrubs and plants help absorb and naturally filter rain runoff, keeping pollutants out of the water. Through this recently launched program, participating residents can receive up to \$1,000 toward the cost of plants and installation. If you're interested in greening up your shoreline and boosting lake health, you can learn more at awwatersheds.org.

Because of your continued support, AWWA's Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) wrapped up another stellar summer working across our partner lakes to keep stormwater runoff from carrying sediment, excess nutrients, and harmful toxins into the water. Four of the nineteen projects completed this season were on Great East Lake, where the YCC crew hauled 30 yards of mulch, 11 yards of stone, and 150 feet of lumber to stabilize soils and treat runoff. You empowered our hardworking youth to directly reduce the conditions that fuel cyanobacteria blooms, while protecting wildlife and native habitats.

We're also celebrating a major regional conservation win. AWWA collaborated with Moose Mountains Regional Greenways to permanently conserve the 132-acre Hraba Forest, protecting nearly 2,000 feet of undeveloped frontage along Lovell Lake. This achievement, made possible through strong partnerships with the Lovell Lake Association and the Wakefield Conservation Commission, will help safeguard water quality, prevent erosion and runoff, and support the long-term health of the Salmon Falls River Watershed. Being only a stone's throw from Great East Lake, this is a win for your community and the 7 Lakes Region as a whole, setting a precedent of conservation in the region.

Finally, in another great collaboration, the AWWA YCC teamed up with volunteers from the Province Lake Association to plant 120 native plants and spread 40 yards of mulch along Route 153. This work strengthens a long-term shoreline protection effort aimed at reducing beach erosion and treating polluted road runoff.

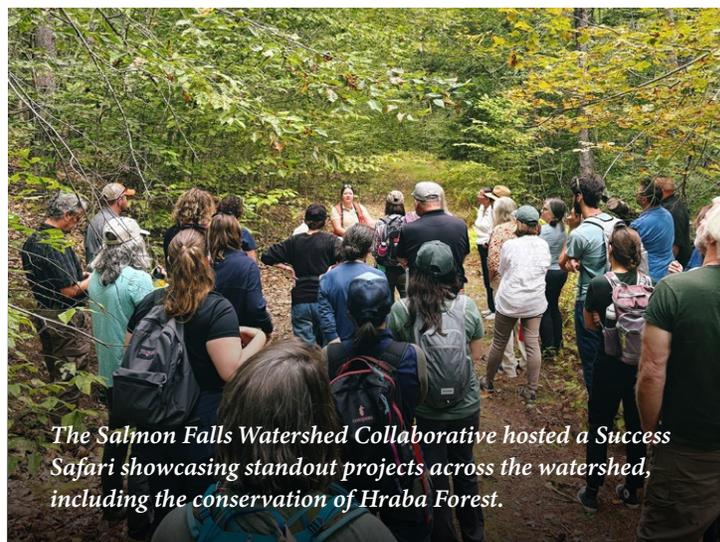
Cheers to the progress made in 2025 and your continued support for clean lakes in 2026!



This low-growing natural buffer is doing its job, stabilizing soil and filtering pollutants.



A vegetated buffer along Province Lake planted by AWWA Youth Conservation Corps.



The Salmon Falls Watershed Collaborative hosted a Success Safari showcasing standout projects across the watershed, including the conservation of Hraba Forest.

A finished YCC stormwater control project on GEL! The crew installed water bars along a sloping driveway, guiding rainwater into the surrounding trees where it can soak in. The fix prevents driveway erosion and keeps dirty stormwater from washing into the lake.



Water Quality and Cyanobacteria

By Charles Crespi

The scientists from UNH were on the lake three times this year sampling water and taking measurements. The fourth sampling and measurements were done by GELIA volunteers. We will get the report next spring or early summer.

As you know, the summer and fall seasons were very dry. Little rain means little runoff with sediment and nutrient pollution, which reduce water clarity. The water clarity measurements (Secchi Disk) in the main lake for August and September were all over 10 meters (33 feet). For the September measurements, I could see the Secchi Disk sitting on the lake bottom in The Narrows.

Together with Don Kretchmer, a lake scientist, we established twelve tributary sampling locations around Great East Lake. We also installed two flow meters. We have started taking water samples for analysis of phosphorus levels. The goal is to better understand the flow of phosphorus into the lake and develop better plans to manage phosphorus pollution. Flow meter calibration was completed in late spring. However, the lack of rain in the summer meant little to no flow in the tributaries and we were unable to obtain samples over the summer and early fall. In November, there was enough flow to sample five tributaries.

Harmful levels of cyanobacteria are readily observable to the trained eye. In the Spring Newsletter we provided information on how to assess the suitability of the water for recreational purposes.

In mid-August there were some areas of elevated cyanobacteria in the Second Basin, primarily the shore along Fulton Road/Sunset Blvd. The variety was Planktothrix, which typically looks like flecks of green paint either on the surface or in the water column. We took a sample for detailed analysis. The results confirmed that it was Planktothrix and the level was 162,000 cells per mL. A picture of the area

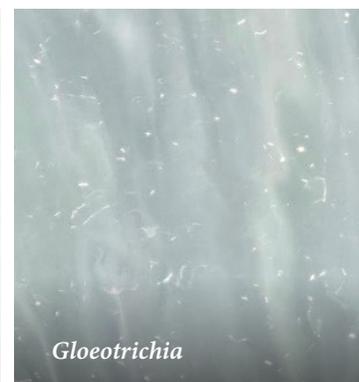
sampled is included. The cyanobacteria are the green areas on the surface. The yellow areas are rocks on the lake bottom.

Maine DEP considers a bloom to be harmful if the water clarity is less than 1 meter (39 inches). We did not have equipment to measure water clarity when we took the sample.

Also in mid-August, widely dispersed white clusters of the cyanobacteria variety Gloeotrichia were observed in the main lake in multiple locations. My qualitative assessment was that the number of organisms was somewhat elevated relative to prior years but likely well below the level considered to be hazardous.

GELIA took a sample to NH DES for evaluation. The result was 500 cells per mL, well-below the 70,000 cells per mL at which NH DES issues a warning/advisory. A picture of the area sampled is included. The gray appearance of the water is due to a reflection of clouds. The cyanobacteria are the white dots.

As a reminder, whatever lake you are entering always assess the condition of water before entering. Harmful levels of Cyanobacteria are readily observable to the trained eye. Harmful levels of Gloeotrichia will give the water the appearance of dilute milk. Planktothrix forms green flakes in the water column or on the surface. One should also be suspicious of anything which looks like pollen in the water after the pine pollen clears up in June.





Love Our Lake!

While our lake is covered over in ice, it's a perfect time to be thinking about things we all can do to protect our beautiful lake and water quality. Here are a few ideas to get a jump start on spring and summer:

Erosion Plans. Erosion from lakefront property is the main way harmful nutrients make their way into the lake, harm fish and wildlife and contribute to cyanobacteria blooms. If you have erosion issues on your property, you may be eligible for services from the Acton Wakefield Watersheds Alliance, which runs a youth conservation corps in the summer, and also offers grants to build vegetated shoreline buffers. Contact AWWA to learn more about their programs or schedule a consultation for the spring. Learn more at awwatersheds.org.

Septic Pumping. If it's been more than three years since you last had your septic system pumped or inspected, now is a good time to think about making a plan with your favorite septic service for the spring.

Lead Sinkers. Take a tour through your fishing tackle box and replace any lead sinkers or jigs with non-lead tackle. Both Maine and NH prohibit the use of small lead sinkers for fishing, and the ingestion of lead sinkers is the number one killer of loons. Both states have a buy-back program for lead fishing tackle through the Loon Preservation Committee (NH) and Maine Audubon.

Boat Waxes with PFAS. Get rid of older boat and ski waxes and polishes that may contain perfluoroalkyl substances, also known as PFAS, which are highly toxic. NH passed legislation in 2025 (HB 167) that prohibits the sale of "waxes produced for use on boats, skis, surfboards, body boards or skim boards" containing PFAS. A similar Maine laws kicks

in over the next few years. If you're unsure about whether a product contains PFAS, please check with your point of sale, and please dispose of them as you would a hazardous product.

Tracking Lake Related Legislation. Winter and spring are when the NH and Maine legislatures are in session, and both are considering bills right now that impact our lakes. If you would like to monitor these bills, or learn how to make your voice heard, check out the web site for NH Lakes (nhlakes.org) or Maine Lakes (lakes.me). You can sign up with both lake organizations for regular email updates.

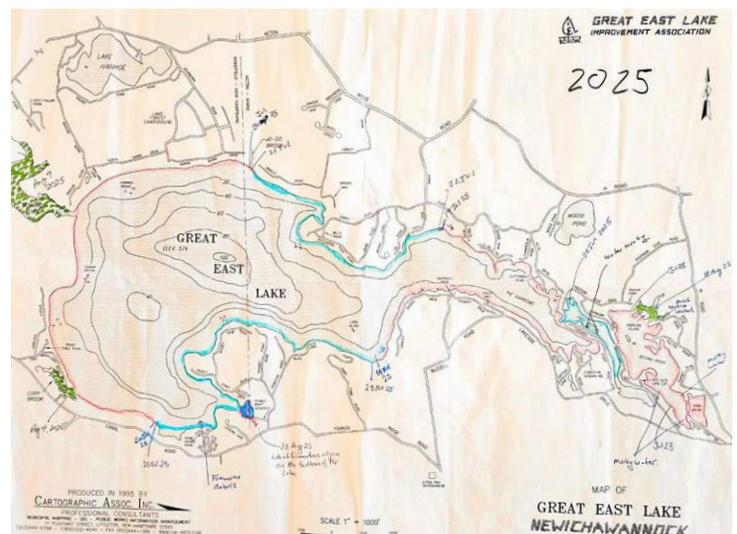
Invasive Plant Survey Update

By Charles Crespi

In July and August, numerous volunteers participated in our regular Weed Patrol with the Weed Warrior pontoon boat. The Maine Boat Launch was surveyed twice, once in the morning and once in the afternoon. Scribner River was surveyed by kayak and with the pontoon boat. **No invasive plants were found.**

An image of the map where the data were recorded is included. Different colors are used only to distinguish different days.

This effort was made possible by your membership dues and dozens of volunteers who each devoted several hours to view our beautiful lake bottom and call out anything which might be suspicious. Thank you.



Board Members

For the term July 2025 through July 2026

President

Bob Stearns

Vice President

David Upton

Treasurer

Sergio Jaramillo

Secretary

Rich Sigel

Directors

Dana Bridges

Jenn Dropski

Dabney Frake

Sherri Garvey

Gregg Hunter

Effie Jaramillo

Dan Kraft

Scott Matheson

Roger Perrault

Cheryl Peters

Beth Rom

Mike Russo

Steve Scammon

Carol Ward

Doug Wood

Great East Lake Needs You!

By Scott Matheson

The Great East Lake Improvement Association (GELIA) is seeking new board member candidates. Since 1932, GELIA's mission has been to preserve the welfare, wildlife and environment of Great East Lake for future generations.

We are seeking individuals that share our love for the lake and are passionate about its preservation. Serving on the board is a great way to help care for the lake, share ideas, and support the long-term health and enjoyment of our community. No prior board experience is required; however you must own a property on, or have deeded access to, Great East Lake.

Anyone interested in serving on the board is encouraged to email pres@greastlake.org. A member of the nominating committee will follow up with you.

If you don't want to become a board member, but are interested in other ways to contribute, we are ALWAYS looking for volunteers. It's a great way to get involved and meet new friends. Please email pres@greastlake.org for volunteer opportunities.

Membership Update

By Effie Jaramillo

The Membership Committee is pleased to report a strong year on Great East Lake, with continued support from both long-time members and new faces from the New Hampshire and Maine sides of the lake. Your participation helps strengthen our shared community and supports the work we do to protect and enjoy Great East Lake.

As we look ahead to spring, we're excited to welcome new members and reconnect as the lake comes back to life. Whether you're a year-round resident or a seasonal neighbor, membership plays an important role in keeping our lake healthy and our community engaged.

Thank you for being part of a successful year—we look forward to another great season ahead.

Nominating Committee Report

By Scott Matheson

The Nominating Committee had an active 2025. Thank you to outgoing Nominating Committee Chairman Tom Lynch and all those who were involved in such a successful year. New GELIA Officers approved at the July 2025 Annual Meeting:

Bob Stearns, President

David Upton, Vice President

Rich Sigel, Secretary

Charles Crespi, Past President

We also welcomed our new GELIA board members approved at the July 2025 Annual Meeting, who began serving their first two-year term:

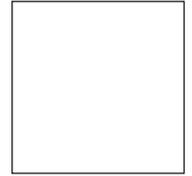
- Dabney Frake
- Sheri Garvey
- Gregg Hunter
- Roger Perreault
- Beth Rom
- Steve Scammon

Congratulations and thank you to our new officers and board members!

We had two board members who termed out after serving three two-year terms, Tom Lynch and Lindsey Berube. Thank you for serving GELIA; we appreciate all your contributions during your years of service.

We look forward to 2026 and encourage everyone to get involved with GELIA to preserve the welfare, wildlife, and environment of our lake. If you're interested in volunteering or serving on the board, email pres@greastlake.org.

GELIA
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GELIA Annual Meeting – Saturday, July 11th

The GELIA Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, July 11th at Weeks Park 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.



Moose Mountain Regional Greenway (MMRG) and GELIA are proud to announce that the funding goal has been met for this conservation project that includes 1,000 feet of frontage along both sides of Upper Copp Brook. The easement is presently being drafted and its pending implementation will protect land that encompasses an important tributary to Great East Lake from development in perpetuity.