MLPOA
Monomonac Lake Property Owners Association

Stewards protecting the health of Lake Monomonac in Rindge NH

Be Smart. LakeSmart.

Watershed Management Plan Complete. Now the Work Begins.

Be Smart. LakeSmart. It's more than a slogan. It's a call to action as we begin the next chapter in protecting Lake Monomonac.

The final Watershed Management Plan (WMP) was delivered on October 31, 2026, marking a major milestone in our efforts to protect and improve the lake's water quality.

Developed over the past two years, the plan provides a science-based roadmap for addressing challenges including nutrient pollution, stormwater runoff, shoreline erosion, aging septic systems, and cyanobacteria blooms.

With the planning phase complete, our focus now turns to implementation. MLPOA and the Winchendon Springs Lake Association (WSLA) have established a joint WMP Task Force to coordinate efforts on both sides of the lake. Priorities include identifying improvement projects, securing funding, building partnerships, and expanding property owner education and outreach.

An important part of that effort is **LakeSmart**, which offers free, confidential property visits and practical recommendations for protecting water quality. Over 50 properties participated in its first season, with 11 earning LakeSmart recognition. We hope to expand participation and help more property owners put recommendations into practice.

This is a long-term undertaking, but the work is already underway. Protecting Lake Monomonac will require a sustained, cooperative effort from all of us.

Learn more:
Final Watershed Management Plan
LakeSmart

LakeSmart

We look forward to adding to the number of properties that earn the award next year. If you haven't had a visit yet, please consider taking advantage of this free, *confidential* walkthrough of your property. You can call or email our Lake Monomonac Lake Ambassador (Monomonac Lake resident Kelly Vernon Stutzman) for more information and to set up a LakeSmart visit: 203-695-3737, **Kellyavs1964@gmail.com**. Or visit our **website**. The more property owners who participate and work toward earning the award, the more we can all contribute to the long-term health of Lake Monomonac!

We will let you know about upcoming lectures and send information throughout the year to help you with healthy lake implantation ideas. Read on…

LakeSmart Tips

Here are some other useful tips as we approach the end of season yard work:
Leaves—Keep leaves out of the lake. Don't rake or blow them into the water.
Lawn—Choose natural, lake-friendly alternatives to chemical fertilizers.
Laundry—Spread laundry loads throughout the week rather than doing them all in one day. This helps avoid overloading your septic system.
Leach Field—Keep your septic system healthy. If it's aging, have it evaluated and consider an upgrade if needed. Healthy systems commonly need pumping every 2–3 years, while older systems may need more frequent care.

Four simple steps—remember the 4 Ls! One healthier lake. Be LakeSmart!

Our Work has Commenced!!

As part of our Watershed Management Plan, FB Environmental (FBE) identified 21 nonpoint-source pollution sites contributing phosphorus, a key nutrient fueling cyanobacteria blooms. Each site was ranked by its importance and potential impact. The Route 119 site in Rindge ranked #2, with a "high" impact rating finding confirmed by NHDES.

Thanks to the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT), the erosion and drainage issues at this site has been addressed!

We also extend a special thank you to Steve Gray who took the lead as project manager for this first remediation effort. From researching the problem and connecting with the appropriate authorities, to coordinating and overseeing the work, Steve was instrumental in moving this project forward.

One site down, more work ahead! Every step we take to reduce phosphorus runoff helps protect Lake Monomonac and improve its water quality.



Membership & Financial Update

Your Support Makes a Difference

As we wrap up another season, we want to sincerely thank everyone who supported the MLPOA this year. Your membership dues and contributions make it possible to fund important initiatives, including milfoil and invasive species management, ongoing water quality testing, and our Lake Host program, which helps prevent invasive species from entering our lake through boat inspections.

This year, we were fortunate to receive significant grant funding that enabled us to complete our comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (WMP). The findings provide a roadmap for developing a multi-year strategy to reduce phosphorus levels, address areas of concern, and protect the long-term health of Lake Monomonac. **While the study is complete, our work has really just begun.**

We also experienced an increase in milfoil growth this year, driving our related expenses to **over $10,000**. With another lake treatment planned for next year, the financial demands of protecting our lake will continue.

Looking ahead, securing additional grants and other funding sources, along with strengthening our membership, will be essential to putting the WMP recommendations into action. As the saying goes, *it takes a village*, and protecting Lake Monomonac is truly a community effort. **We need everyone's time, talent, and financial support to achieve our goals.**

Unfortunately, membership declined this year compared to last year, but there's still time to make a difference! **Every membership matters, and every dollar helps.** Whether you enjoy boating, fishing, swimming, or simply the beauty of the lake throughout the seasons, we all share in the benefits of a healthy lake—and the responsibility to protect it.

The lake gives us so much. Let's give something back.

If you haven't yet renewed your membership for 2026, please consider doing so today. Your support is an investment in the future of Lake Monomonac for generations to come.

Renew your tax-deductible membership or make a contribution today:
Click **here** to renew or donate
Or mail your check to: MLPOA 29 Conifer Road, Rindge, NH 03461

Sluice Gate Installation Update

Efforts are underway to improve how water levels are managed at Lake Monomonac’s main dam in Winchendon. A key part of this effort is the installation of a new sluice gate, which will make it easier to regulate the release of water from the lake. Currently, water flow is controlled through a system of stoplogs. These wooden boards must be manually added or removed to adjust the water level, making the process cumbersome and time-consuming. The new sluice gate will make adjustments much easier and provide greater flexibility in managing water levels, particularly during storms and changing weather conditions.

The good news is that the new gate has been shipped and is now in the possession of the Winchendon Department of Public Works. The remaining hurdle is obtaining approval from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation’s Dam Safety Division. The Town has submitted its application and is awaiting approval. We had hoped to have the gate installed by early November. However, given the remaining regulatory approvals, it is now clear that installation will need to wait until sometime in the spring. We’ll continue to provide updates as the project moves toward completion.

Funding for this project has been provided by a grant from the Robinson Broadhurst Foundation, along with contributions from MLPOA and WSLA. It's a great example of how our associations are putting membership dollars to work for the benefit of the lake.

Many thanks to the Winchendon Springs Lake Association (WSLA) for taking the lead on this important project and working collaboratively to move it forward.

Subtidal Buoy update

The yellow Subtidal buoy near the ski course has been collecting lake data since June as part of a pilot project with MLPOA.

By late September, temperatures and oxygen levels had equalized, indicating **lake turnover**—when deeper water mixes with surface water, potentially releasing phosphorus-rich sediments.

Shortly afterward, cyanobacteria blooms appeared in Coot Bay, the Narrows, and the south end of the main lake. The buoy recorded rising phycocyanin levels, a pigment associated with cyanobacteria, beginning around September 20. Levels doubled from their summer peak by September 30, coinciding with the observed blooms.

Water samples were collected and submitted to NHDES, with results also shared with Subtidal to help improve its cyanobacteria warning model. For a full report, click **here**.

What's next? The buoy is expected to remain in the lake into November. Subtidal will then provide MLPOA with a full report analyzing the data. So far, the project has helped identify the timing of lake turnover and its apparent connection to fall cyanobacteria blooms.

Stay tuned for the final report!

Lake Host Program Summary

The MLPOA NH LAKES hosts recorded 373 boat inspections and surveys at the boat launch on Rte 202 this past season: 293 incoming (79%) and 80 departing (21%). Activities included recreational boating (77%), fishing (20%), and maintenance (3%).

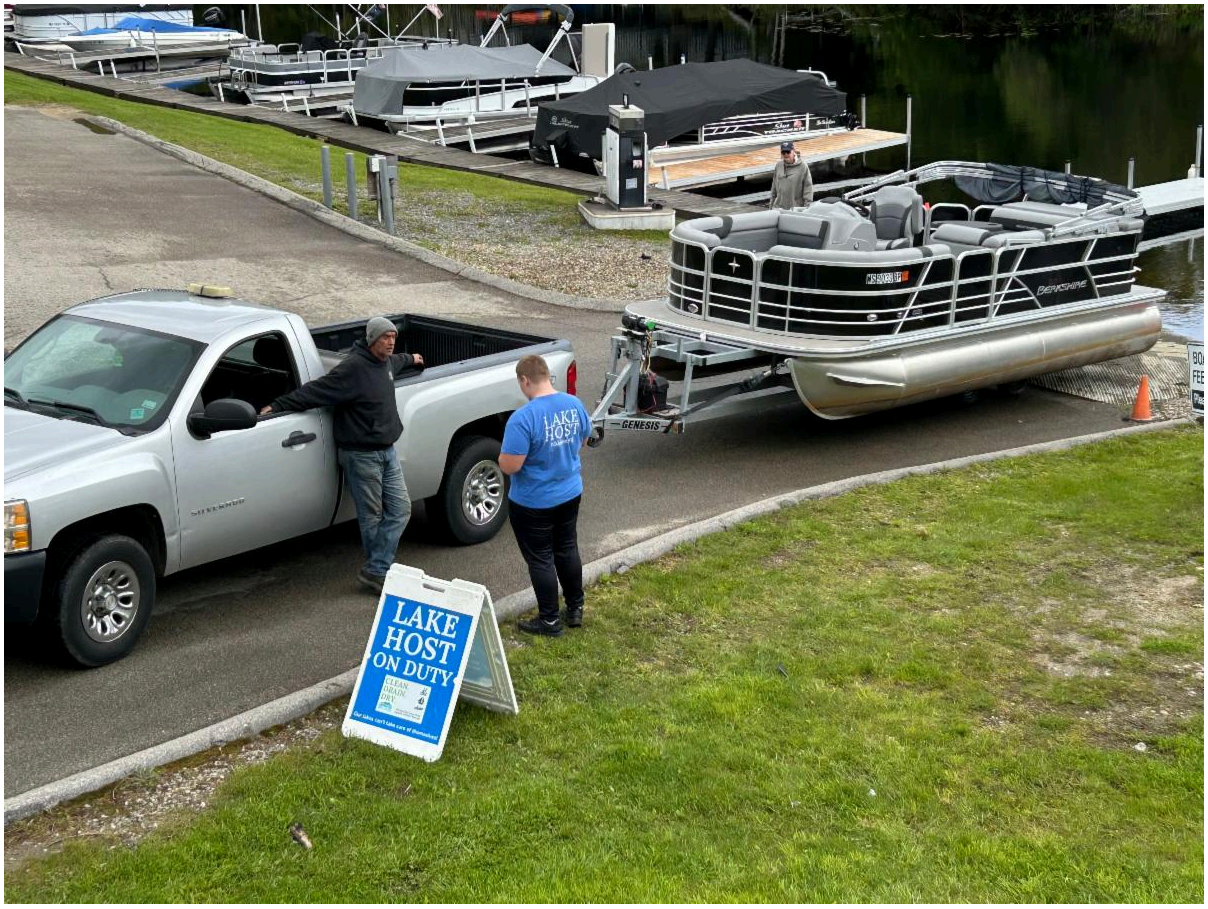
Aquatic Invasive Species: Plants or animals were found during 15 inspections (4%). Two written comments described material that might have been milfoil, but no confirmed invasive milfoil findings were reported.

Boater Education: Surveyed boaters reported high rates of prevention practices:
• 94% clean boats and equipment.
• 96% drain water.
• 94% dry boats and equipment.

Approximately 45% had never spoken with a Lake Host, highlighting the program's educational value.

The Lake Host program provides important inspection and education services. Continued coverage and promotion of Clean, Drain, Dry practices are essential to protecting Lake Monomonac from aquatic invasive species.

For more information: click **here**.



Volunteer Needed: Lake Education Day Coordinator

Help bring Lake Monomonac to life for local fifth graders! Each spring, students head out on the lake with volunteer boat captains and NH DES limnologists to learn about water quality and lake ecology.

The coordinator organizes the event by contacting schools and NH DES, lining up boats and captains, coordinating lunch and refreshments for the volunteers, and making sure the day runs smoothly. Planning begins in the fall, with the event typically held the first Thursday in June.

You won't be doing it alone! MLPOA can help with communications, publicity, and event support. If you enjoy organizing, working with volunteers, and helping kids learn about our lake, we'd love to hear from you! Contact Jeff Eisenberg **jeffe603@outlook.com** | 603-759-3001

Interested in the history? Click **here**.

Do-It-Yourself Weed Control

Four years ago, we treated Eurasian milfoil with ProcellaCOR and saw excellent results, with minimal follow-up hand removal by divers. Unfortunately, milfoil has returned in increasing numbers, and another ProcellaCOR treatment will be needed next year.

One advantage of ProcellaCOR is that it specifically targets Eurasian milfoil without affecting naturally occurring aquatic plants. In the past, we used Diquat, a broader-spectrum herbicide that killed most native weeds along with the milfoil. While some appreciated the reduction in these weeds, their return has left many property owners wondering what they can do to manage the vegetation in front of their properties.

According to Georgia Bunnell of NH DES, property owners may hand-rake or cut up to 900 square feet of aquatic vegetation in front of their properties. Larger areas or other removal methods may require a wetlands permit.

For more details, contact the NH DES Wetlands Bureau at **603-271-2147**. The applicable regulations are outlined in Env-Wt 309.02.

Winter Tips

We work closely with NH LAKES and appreciate all the information they provide. Here are some good things to think about as winter encroaches. **Tips for Lake-Friendly Snow Storage and Removal**

WSLA news

MLPOA and WSLA are working together closely on our shared WMP/water quality issues. Attached is their latest newsletter. Click **here** for their newsletter.

Curious about past News & Updates?

You can find them **here**.

Thank you for supporting the health and future of Lake Monomonac.

Visit our Website

Connect with us
MLPOA | **mlpoanh0569@gmail.com** | **monomonac.org**

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