

## President's Message

Whenever I mention to people that I am from Vermont, whether I am traveling or talking to visitors in our state, the reaction is always very positive. More often than not, they tell me we have a very beautiful state and that we are lucky to be able to live here. I always agree. For me, the Vermont I know is a beautiful landscape of magnificent green mountains, expansive forests, family farms, clean, clear, waterways, and blue lakes, where we find grazing cattle, tasseled corn, swimming holes, brilliant fall colors, and snow covered cedars. We are fortunate at Echo Lake, because we live in that setting.

My goal is to maintain and improve our water quality, and prevent any invasive species from establishing itself in our waters or shoreline. The many volunteers and paid staff over the years have worked very tirelessly to maintain the quality of Echo Lake, and the current board is dedicated to continuing these efforts. I would like to see our membership increase, which I believe we can do as a result of improved communication and education. I have a goal to expand our inspections, including VIP programs, lay monitoring, and our milfoil watch (Greeter Program.) To do so requires that we increase our funding. It would be lovely to have sufficient funding so that we could support our milfoil program ourselves, without reliance on grants, as there is no guarantee there will be future funding available. That means we must become a 501 c (3) nonprofit corporation. I would also like to expand our existing excellent relationship with the Town of Charleston, the State, and other associations. In the fall I attended a meeting of many of the Memphremagog Watershed Area Lake Association representatives, and found this to be very informative. It has led to increased communication, information and idea sharing among the lake associations.

If each of us around the lake does their small share to help keep Echo Lake beautiful, we will enable generations to come to enjoy our beautiful slice of Vermont, and our many visitors will continue to tell us how lucky we are!

## Town of Charleston

The voters of Charleston voted to increase the funding they provide our Milfoil Project from \$800 to \$1,000. Thank you to Peggy Stevens and Maryanne O'Brien for speaking on our behalf.

The Town now has a Town Plan available for reading on the Town website. Echo Lake and ELPA are prominently mentioned, as is the association's efforts at mitigating risks to Echo Lake.

## VIP Training

**Be a VIP: Vermont Invasive Patroller!** Early detection is vital to protecting Vermont's waterbodies from harmful invasive plants. Vermont Invasive Patrollers (VIPs) monitor local waterbodies for new introductions of invasive species while also learning about native aquatic plants and animals and their habitats. Each year the State of Vermont conducts a four hour workshop where you learn how to identify both good and invasive plants. It is a small investment of time, but the payback to Echo Lake can be enormous, as VIPs our first line of defense in identifying milfoil. We have 15 VIPs on Echo Lake. It would be wonderful if every homeowner were a VIP, and we surveyed our own waterfront. Interested? Contact Maryanne O'Brien or Tom Wagner.

## Grants

Cindy Swanson has been very successful at writing and obtaining our grants. Not only have we received grants in previous years to fully fund our Milfoil Project, but she has helped the Town obtain Better Back Roads Grants that improve roadside drainage to prevent runoff into our lake and the Clyde River, and improve the West Echo Lake Road, and Dane Hill Road. However we did not receive a Watershed Grant of \$5,000 to help with our Milfoil Project this year. We also received only \$4,000 of the Aquatic Nuisance Grant instead of \$10,000 previously received.

## Northwoods Stewardship Center Trails

The Northwoods Stewardship Center has been busy building two trails on the property conserved by Lydia Spitzer. Both start on Echo Lake Road, where there is off road parking. One winds along the banks of Echo Lake. The other heads into the woods and goes over the hill with an exit on the Jordan Road. They are relatively short trails worth exploring. Thank you to Echo Lake's own Nancy Engels, Chairman of the Stewardship Center Board for all of her good work.



## Our Mission

The mission of our association is to maintain the quality of Echo Lake, the waters, native wildlife, and the habitat for all to enjoy for generations to come.

## Logo, Website, and Newsletter

We have been working with a very talented group of students at Lyndon State College who took on as a class project, the design of a logo, which ELPA had not previously had, a new newsletter layout, and a revamped website. The class has done a lot of research on Echo Lake, loons, and other lakes and their associations to help create these new images. Thank you, LSC students, for your very creative work.

## Annual Meeting

Hold the date! Saturday, July 27, 10:00a.m., once again graciously hosted by Peter and Nancy Engels.

*Please visit our website for more information:*  
[www.echolakeassociation.net](http://www.echolakeassociation.net)

## FOVLAP

The Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds is hosting an all-day event at Lake Morey Friday, June 7. It is a short 80 minute drive straight down I-91 and a fantastic way to learn about lakeshore management. FOVLAP's Lake Seminar is a one-day educational seminar held each year. The agenda usually focuses on aquatic invasive species and shoreline and watershed management, with numerous speakers and workshops providing the latest information on topics critical to the success of our members' lake management and protection activities. See their website for details. Tom Wagner is willing to drive!

## New Plant Species Found!

Last September 28th Bethany Sargent, an Environmental Scientist, and Misha Cetner, an Environmental Technician, from the Lakes and Ponds Management Protection Program with the State of Vermont, along with Bill Woolsey, Amy Wagner, and Tom Wagner performed an aquatic species tour of most of Echo Lake using Bill's Mother's pontoon boat. It was a beautiful sunny day to be on the lake. But, most importantly, we found no invasive species, but did find two new plants never detected in Echo Lake previously! These were identified in the northwestern area in shallow water near Bennett's camp and Simsarians. A Google search may indicate invasive, but that is not the case according to our scientists.

**A:** *Phragmites australis*, or as it is known by its common name, phragmites, an emergent wetland species.

**B:** *Potamogeton perfoliatus* or commonly called claspingleaf pondweed.



(VDEC Photo)

## Septic Social

The Memphremagog Watershed Association, which comprises all of the lakes and rivers that drain into Lake Memphremagog, has asked that we host an educational event during the summer. Echo Lake and Seymour Lake decided to work together to host a Septic Social. Erik Lessing of Seymour and Tom Wagner of Echo have agreed to participate and have volunteered their systems. A Septic Social is a unique program developed to help familiarize

homeowners with their underground treasure. During the Social, participants learn to check the sludge and scum layer as well as the flow of the system. Uncovering the system and letting people explore it from above ground takes the mystery out of how and why the system works. And we will do this while having a good time and a party! Save the date, Friday, July 19th, for this innovative event.

## Greeter Program

Maryanne O'Brien and Patti Lennon are getting ready for the start of our milfoil watch at the access. Last year we reduced the hours from 60 to 48 because we lost a grant. However, the board decided this year to increase those hours back to 60 as boat traffic was up significantly even though we received a reduced Aquatic Nuisance Grant and did not receive the Watershed Grant. Our greeter program will run from Memorial Day to after Labor Day, well in September. We are not able to staff it entirely with our paid staff, Diane Anderson and Cheryl Hryckiewicz, so reliance on our volunteers is crucial to the success of the program. Thank you Ann Beams, Mary Kennison, and Lee Topsishe for your assistance. Volunteers are still needed. If you would like to help for a couple of hours a week, it will be a big benefit to us.

## Northeast Kingdom Lakeshore Buffering Program (NEKLB)

NEKLB is a riparian buffering cost-share program for landowners on lakes and ponds within Orleans County. Orleans County NRCD is able to pay 80% of the cost of native trees and/or shrubs as well as develop the design and do the planting along your shoreline.

The goal of NEKLB is to improve or maintain water quality and improve wildlife habitat by establishing lake friendly landscaping practices. Orleans County NRCD works with landowners to come up with a species list and planting plan that works well for the area and the many uses of the waterfront area that landowners enjoy.

The benefits of buffering are numerous: water quality improvement, wildlife habitat improvement for terrestrial as well as aquatic species, and increased property value are some of the major benefits. Riparian buffers act to intercept sediment, nutrients, pesticides, and other materials in surface runoff and reduce nutrients and other pollutants in shallow subsurface water flow. They also serve to provide habitat and wildlife corridors. They can also be key in reducing erosion by providing bank stabilization. If you are interested in learning more about this program please contact: Dayna Cole at [ocnrncd@gmail.com](mailto:ocnrncd@gmail.com).

## Boat Access Greeter Programs

Invasive species are a constant and ever growing threat to the environmental and economic health of Vermont's lakes, ponds, and rivers. Spread prevention and early detection programs can limit the risk.

Boat access greeter programs are one of our first lines of defense against the spread of harmful invasive species such as Eurasian water milfoil and zebra mussels. Thinking about volunteering at the access, just want to know what an invasive species looks like, or want to be a VIP, (Vermont Invasive Patroller)? Then please attend these workshops. This year, the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (VT DEC) Aquatic Invasive Species Program is offering a workshop very close by:

- **Friday May 31, 2013, 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.**  
**Community House, Morgan, VT**
- **Registration deadline: Wednesday, May 29, 2013**

**Let Maryanne O'Brien know if you want to attend!!**

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