



OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS

Laurie Gee, President
Ann Hunsicker, Treasurer
Susan Czerepak, Secretary
Holly Bull
Steve Gratton
Lori Kempton
Pam Koenigsbauer
Carol Martin
Samantha Stevens

ELPA Spring Newsletter **April 2021**

President's Message

Dear Members and Friends,

It's most definitely spring at Echo: the road is squishy, the town grader has been through for the first pass, most of the snow has melted, and there are open water areas all along the shore of the lake. And hope is in the air! Not only is vaccine availability rolling out to younger and younger age bands, I understand that Sweet Scoops plans to open the second weekend of April. I can hardly wait for my first Maple Creemee of the year...I know I am not alone in sometimes allowing one to replace lunch...or dinner!

Regarding COVID-19 vaccines, unless Vermont is your primary residence you can NOT receive a vaccine here under the current guidelines, and we have not heard anything to lead us to think that will change. If you qualify in your home state, please be sure to be fully vaccinated before traveling to the lake

this spring or summer. Governor Scott keeps talking about "life in Vermont looking closer to normal by July 4th"—let's hope! And let's do everything we can to keep each other healthy and safe.

We are optimistic that we might be able to hold our July 17 Annual Meeting in person, and we'll make a decision about that at our May board meeting. Even better is dreaming of being able to gather for our August 7 Annual Picnic. I think a decision on that will be announced at the Annual Meeting, but save the date!

What a year. When we put this newsletter together a year ago, we were just a few weeks into the pandemic, without a clue we would suffer so many, many losses and hardships. Your ELPA board and committees have continued to work together via email and virtual meetings, so please read on for news and updates. You'll also find fond

remembrances of those we have lost in our local community. It's been such a tough year-plus for so many healthcare workers, teachers, students, other frontline workers, restaurants, retail establishments...the list goes on. One thing we can do is patronize the local businesses that have supported ELPA. The list of past Color Challenge sponsors and prize

donors is printed in this newsletter as a reminder. Let's all do what we can to support ELPA, the wider community, and each other. Be kind, be safe, get your vaccinations, and we'll see you at the lake!

Laurie Gee, ELPA Board President

Our Finances by Ann Hunsicker

ELPA weathered the first year of the pandemic in good financial shape. We received substantial support in 2020 from the State of Vermont as well as our members. We again received two grants from the state, totaling \$14,609. Our thanks to Laurie Gee, intrepid grant writer, and the Town of Charleston for facilitating our grants. We also received \$4,355 in dues payments and \$5,925 in donations, both increases from 2019. In addition, we received a grant from the Town of Charleston for \$1000. The Color Challenge had to be cancelled in 2020 due to COVID-19, however we had begun fundraising from our sponsors before that occurred so we did receive \$600 in sponsorships which a few generous companies agreed to give as regular donations. Unfortunately, we have decided the Color Challenge will have to be cancelled for 2021, so we will again be without that funding source.

We continued to run our Access Greeter program, our largest expense. The Board elected to continue having the greeters

available past Labor Day so our costs for this program were slightly higher in 2020. We also continued to fund two programs at the Charleston Elementary School. An anonymous donor helped us see how valuable this is to our town, our lake and the people who live here. They have gradually reduced the amount of funding and your ELPA Board has been able to continue the programs with other resources. We will be searching for other funding sources in the future.

It is again hard to predict what will happen with our finances in 2021. We do not yet have word of what we will receive from the grants we have applied for. Our membership committee will continue to ask people to contribute in the form of dues and donations, and remember, your dues and donations received earlier in the year help the board plan our monitoring and other events for the coming season. We are a 501(c)3 organization so all dues and donations are tax deductible! You can mail your contributions or we now

have the ability to receive payments through PayPal.

Thanks again to all our members who contribute financially and with their time.

REMINDER

DON'T FORGET TO PAY YOUR 2021 MEMBERSHIP DUES

JUST GO TO echolakeassociation.net

Click Support ELPA

REGISTER TO PAY ELECTRONICALLY OR BY MAIL

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Green Up Day – May 1, 2021

By Ann Hunsicker

Green Up Day is almost upon us! This year it will be held on Saturday, May 1st. Although delayed by COVID-19 and with new social distancing guidelines, last year's Green Up Day was a great success. Our thanks to all who participated. It's great to have the lakeside looking so clean as we get into the season. We can always use more volunteers if you want

to participate and get outside with us! Please let Ann know if you can volunteer this year by emailing her at ahunsicker17@gmail.com. It doesn't take long and is an important part of keeping our lake healthy. If there are any new restrictions from the state regarding COVID-19 we will let our volunteers know before May 1.

Grant Funding Update

By Laurie Gee

We have just received our 2021 Watershed Management Grant notification. Because funding was cut across the board this year, our grant was partially funded at \$4,000—down from \$5,000 in previous years. We use monies from this source to partially fund our hands-on ecosystem education programs for Charleston Elementary students, as well as to pay Access

Greeters to help keep aquatic invasive species out of Echo Lake. The ELPA board is looking for alternative funding sources so that we can continue strong support of our popular school programs. We haven't yet received notice of our Aquatic Nuisance Prevention grant for this year.

Lakebed Survey

By Peggy Stevens

The 2021 Lakebed Survey will resume in late June of this year, as has been the case for the past many years. The lakebed survey serves as our second line of defense, after our Access Greeter Program. Our lakebed surveyors are volunteers, trained as Vermont Invasive Patrollers (VIPs) by the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) to identify aquatic species that are not native to our lake.

In the event an invasive species makes it past the access inspection station, our surveyors may be able to locate where an infestation has begun to take hold and the Lakebed Survey coordinator, Peggy Stevens, 723-5951, is notified and plans made to have Vermont Natural Resources personnel immediately address the situation. Patrollers are not encouraged to try to remove invasives on their own as this can make the problem worse, not better. Samples obtained by access inspectors are handed over to the coordinator who then sends samples or photos to ANR.

Last year we were fortunate to have a dozen surveyors, who each took responsibility for inspecting a section or more of the lake. By sharing the responsibility, we were able to

provide two inspections of the lakebed, the first at the end of June when any invasive species would begin to show up. The second survey is completed between the end of August to mid-September, and would identify any invasives that have established themselves. We hope all of last year's surveyors will continue in their capacity this year.

We also welcome all lake shore property owners to keep an eye on their lakebed, become familiar with aquatic plants growing there, and let Peggy know of any unusual new species that may appear. ELPA will let you know if and when ANR VIP trainings may be offered this summer for those interested in learning more about naturally occurring and invasive species in our NEK lakes and ponds.

Prevention and early identification of problems are the way we have managed to keep our lake free of invasive aquatic species. Thanks to all our inspectors- access greeters and lakebed surveyors- for their vigilance!

And if you would like to join the Lake Survey team just contact Peggy. Many hands make light work! No VIP certification required.

Investment Committee Report

By Peter Bestenbostel

The Echo Lake Protective Association contingency fund is currently invested in a one-year CD with Community National Bank at an interest rate of 0.75%. The CD comes due in September 2021 and is currently valued at \$48,569. This includes the \$5,000 addition authorized by the board last year. Interest rates continue to be low. We hope to add to the fund again this year as we move slowly toward the goal established by the Board. The board agreed upon an initial target for the fund of \$100,000. The funds stated purpose is to provide funding to assist in remediation of any invasive species contamination in Echo Lake.

**Echo Lake Protective Association
PO Box 41
East Charleston, Vermont 05833**

For more information, visit our
website -
<https://www.echolakeassociation.net/>



Aerial Photo of Echo Lake by Doug Gimler at www.nekwildlifephoto.com

Echo Lake Receives LaRosa Grant Award

By Holly Bull

Echo Lake Protective Association (ELPA) has been awarded a 2021 LaRosa Tributary Testing Grant. The LaRosa Partnership Program assists organizations in need of water quality assessment by alleviating the financial burden of laboratory analysis costs. ELPA volunteers will sample the selected streams flowing into Echo. These samples will be sent to LaRosa's lab to be evaluated for nutrient levels and contaminants.

The results will be helpful as the first step in determining why Echo Lake's phosphorus levels have been increasing. A big thank you to the landowners who have given permission for access to these streams located on their properties. It is this kind of community support and cooperation that makes Echo Lake such a special place.

Do You Have a Story?

We'd love to have contributions for the ELPA newsletters. Perhaps you have something you'd like to share. Prose or poetry or photo. Some adventure or observation or special event or knowledge or concern or reflection? Our goal is to have this newsletter be informative and attuned to the sense of community. Any contributions can be sent to Susan Czerepak at susanczerepak@gmail.com.

Vermont NPS Pollution Initiative

By Holly Bull

The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) recently released its five-year management plan to identify the causes of nonpoint source pollution (NPS) and strategies to address its effects on water quality with updated polices and new funding. Nonpoint source pollution occurs when rain or snowmelt flows across the land and absorbs pollutants on the way to a nearby stream or lake, which makes it hard to control NPS pollution because it comes from so many different places. While Echo Lake Protective Association is working to address its own increasing phosphorus levels there are areas of the new plan that will greatly assist our pursuit of water improvement.

The management plan will focus on high quality surface waters and reducing NPS pollution occurring from roads near lake shores. Pollution protection is often more feasible and

less expensive than the restoration of degraded waters.

If interested in learning more, you can read the entire Vermont Nonpoint Source Management Program Plan 2021-2025 (a mere 191 pages) at:

<https://dec.vermont.gov/sites/dec/files/wsm/erp/docs/Vermont%20NPS%20Management%20Plan%202021-2025.pdf>

To check out Echo Lake's annual water quality scorecard, which records a lake's overall health, using Google Earth Pro go to:

<https://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/lakes-ponds/data-maps/scorecard>.

The scorecard reflects the latest data submitted at the end of last summer by our lay monitors, Peter Engels and Mike Vinton. Our thanks to them.

Water Quality – How You Can Help

By Holly Bull

While the DEC has allocated \$4.7M to address NPS pollution in the lake Memphremagog Basin, there are things that each of us can do that costs nothing more than being aware and taking care.

Stop Invasives: Clear ALL plant and animal matter from your boat, kayak, paddles, anchor, fishing gear, etc. BEFORE entering the water.

Help the Loons: Do not approach the loons or their nest. Ensure your fishing tackle is lead-free.

Don't Foul the Lake: Keep trash and plant clippings out of the lake. Avoid gasoline spills. Don't bathe in the lake.

Scoop the Poop: Put all pet waste in the trash.

Share these Super Simple Steps with other members, visitors, and guests.

Membership

By Ann Beams and Tracey Shadday

Dues paying or not, all folks who live on Echo Lake are members of the association. We value your ideas and participation as we all do our best to keep our lake as healthy as possible!

One way to help is by paying annual dues to support our various monitoring tasks. We are grateful that 34 individuals and families have already paid their dues in support of our efforts in 2021. That's well over a quarter of those who paid dues 2020(92) and 2019 (98).

THANK YOU, EARLY BIRDS!!

If you haven't already done so, here is the link to pay your dues electronically or by mail...

[Dues and Donations](#)

We hope you put it on your checklist as you return to the lakeshore for boating and swimming and fishing and relaxing in the warmer days ahead!

Should COVID-19 precautions allow, we are hoping to host the annual membership picnic again on Saturday, August 7th, on the combined lakefront of the Wilsons, Koenigsbauers and Beamses on West Echo Lake Road. More to follow!

Access Greeter Program

By Laurie Gee

We are pleased that our three paid greeters— Cheryl Hryckiewicz, Steve Sheltry and Dean White—are returning to work at our access again this year. As usual, they will cover 12-hour shifts Wednesday through Sunday from Memorial Day weekend into September. We rely on our volunteers to inspect watercraft at the Access on Mondays and Tuesdays. We look

forward to welcoming and training additional volunteers to share the crucial work of keeping invasive species out of our beautiful lake! If you are willing to work one 2- or 3-hour shift a week over the summer, please contact Laurie Gee (laurie.eckels.gee@gmail.com)

MISSION STATEMENT

The objective of the Association will be to promote the welfare of Echo Lake which lies within the boundaries of the Town of Charleston, VT. The Association will work to maintain the quality of Echo Lake, the waters, native wildlife, and habitat for all to enjoy for generations to come.

Smelt Restoration Attempt

By Matt Breton

As I stepped out the door to check on my boiling sap the other night, a flashlight snapped on. Mr. George Thompson was checking the brook to see if smelt were running. Rainbow Smelt are an anadromous fish, which means that they migrate, in this case leaving the lake to spawn in streams. They are weak swimmers, so these spawning efforts may be hampered by erosion and barriers in streams. Historically, smelt were present in Echo Lake for a quite a

while, with a slow decline starting in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The smelt were both a target species for anglers as well as a forage base for other fish, such as Lake Trout. Since then, they seem to have disappeared. This is also the current situation in Seymour Lake. Attempts to restore the population were undertaken a decade ago were unsuccessful here at Echo.

Peter Engels and George Thompson did the bulk of the work, and they shared some information:

"We planned to collect smelt eggs from Seymour for three years in a row — that was 2010, 2011 and 2012. We did this in Spring of 2010 and again in 2011. However, Tropical Storm Irene came through northern Vermont on Aug. 28, 2011, and did a lot of damage to brooks and streams. When we went out in the Spring of 2012, we found significant storm damage in the streams that we had used the two previous years, and never found any decent smelt runs. Neither George nor I were able to try again the next year. And although a few fishermen did find smelt in [the stomachs of] Lake Trout the next two years or so, there was no sign of a smelt run in Echo Lake."

Now, under the guidance and partnership of the VT Fish and Wildlife Department, several local conservation groups (Seymour Lake Association, VF&W Conservation Group) have partnered to try to re-establish the population, starting in Seymour Lake. In 2020, burlap sheets placed to catch smelt eggs were taken from brooks that have plenty of spawning smelt and transplanted in streams that feed Seymour. These burlaps and eggs are treated with a sea salt dip before being placed in their new location.

It will take about three years to know if efforts to return Rainbow Smelt to Seymour Lake are successful, measured by the presence of a spawning population. If successful, we may be able to begin work on Echo Lake -- or perhaps the smelt will find their way here on their own.

Community Outreach

By Jean Wilson

This school year we funded the Siskin/Coutts and NorthWoods educational programs at the Charleston Elementary School for \$2,400 - \$1200 each. An additional \$400, that had been budgeted for the Coutts program but was cancelled due to COVID-19 last Spring, was instead used to purchase reusable BPS-free bottles water bottles for the school for two years.

Siskin/Coutts has been working with the Charleston third grade

for five years now. Every student that enters the class looks forward to it - they love learning about Echo Lake throughout the seasons, both in class and during the three field trips to the lake throughout the year. Northwoods has been hosting an adventurous after school program for two years - Wyatt Peterson has such a great connection with the kids, and his curiosity, enthusiasm, and experience bubbles over in everything he does.

These programs will have benefits well into the future - many of these students will live in Charleston their entire life. By funding these education experiences, we are giving them a basis of knowledge and appreciation for Echo Lake, and an understanding of the wonderful resource we have in the community. The school really appreciates the funding by ELPA to make these programs happen.

NorthWoods - Wyatt Peterson



The Echo Lake Explorers from Charleston

School continue to investigate the land and water of Echo Lake and the surrounding community!



Land ethic, through the words of Aldo Leopold, has been a strong theme of after school programs with Charleston this year. From contemplating land use history around Echo Lake to building Leopold

style benches and bat boxes, it has been a year infused with carpentry as well as natural history of the area. Last week CJ Hill,



AmeriCorps member in the Conservation Corps at NorthWoods, led a snowy expedition with the group down the Echo Lake Shore Trail. Their mission to deliver a Leopold bench to the end of the trail by the water was a success. With Spring upon us, it may be

time to haul the canoes out for water exploration on Echo.

Siskin Ecological Adventures/Coutts-Moriarty Camp- Jason Brueck

What with masks and social distancing guidelines in place things look a bit different this year, but another cohort of Mrs. Lahar's third and fourth grade students are once again busy investigating Echo Lake. Thanks to a grant from the Echo Lake Protective Association, Siskin Ecological Adventures/Coutts-Moriarty Camp is delivering

another seasonal series of classroom STEM lessons and field trips designed to help Charleston students deepen their understanding and appreciation of Echo Lake while also making real life connections with the lake itself.

Throughout the program, students gain the knowledge necessary to build a deep understanding and appreciation of both the ecological and economic importance of Echo Lake. Along the way, students grapple with tongue-twisting scientific vocabulary like oligotrophic and poikilothermic, assess water quality by sampling benthic macroinvertebrate communities, and undertake a mix of hands-on investigations intended to instill a deeper understanding of the role Echo Lake plays in the larger Clyde River watershed and in the Charleston community.

Several feet of snow were still on the ground during this winter’s trip to Echo Lake. After donning snowshoes, students stomped their way down the trail that leads to the Lydia Spitzer

Demonstration Forest held by the Vermont Land Trust and managed by NorthWoods Stewardship Center. In addition to their snowshoes, students also brought with them an understanding of a wide range of ecological concepts such as why ice forms at the top of Echo Lake and not from the bottom up. Back in the classroom they had learned that water density increases as the water’s temperature drops until it reaches 39 degrees at which point it starts “acting weird” and it starts becoming less dense and rises to the surface where it ultimately becomes ice.

With the passing of the Vernal Equinox, spring may have technically sprung, but it is likely that the next round of spring classroom science visits will have already started before the more than 3 feet of ice the students drilled through melts.

2021 Calendar of Events

- **May 1 – Green Up Day**
- **May 15 – Board Meeting**
- **June 4 – FOVLAP Lake Seminar**
- **July 17– Annual Meeting**
- **August 7 – ELPA Annual Picnic**
- **September 9 – FOVLAP Annual Meeting**
- **September 18, Board Meeting**

With the uncertainty that COVID-19 imposes, all dates are tentative. We will update as necessary.

Vermont Conservation License Plates

A reminder that half of the proceeds derived from the sale of Vermont Conservation License Plates goes towards funding the Vermont Watershed Grant Program, of which we are a recipient. If you are a Vermont resident, please consider purchasing a Vermont Conservation License Plate to support this program.



ELPA Lake Wise Report

By Steve Gratton

Ann and I are excited to return to Echo Lake this spring and resume to a more “normal” post-pandemic life on the lake.

Lake Wise is a program developed by the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (VT-DEC). You may recall, Echo Lake was the first Vermont lake to receive the ‘Gold Lake Wise Award. One of DEC’s goals is to educate lakeshore owners on the best management practices for keeping our lakes and the surrounding watersheds as clean as possible for generations to come.

As the DEC website points out, traditional “lawn to lake” style projects or development sends phosphorous pollution into our lakes and increases sediment runoff. Maintaining a naturally vegetated shoreline buffer of 10-12 feet is one of the most important things lakeshore owners can do. I encourage you to use DEC information and staff as an excellent resource to provide guidance and

permitting for any shoreline project that you plan.

I hope all of you are inspired to participate in monitoring and protecting the incredibly beautiful lake that we all live on or near. Please take the time to understand and improve how your property can and does affect the quality of Echo Lake.

I highly recommend the following recently released strategic plan for Vermont Lakes and Ponds, for July 1, 2020- June 30, 2022. Follow the link below or copy and paste into your browser.

<https://dec.vermont.gov/sites/dec/files/wsm/lakes/docs/Strategic%20PlanLakes%20and%20Ponds%20Final.pdf>

If you would like more information or want your property evaluated for Lake Wise criteria, please call me at 603-848-2131. You can also email at sgratton911@gmail.com

In Remembrance

Recently, Echo Lake lost 2 long-time, well-loved residents.

Charles A. Moulton

August 1, 1934 – January 21, 2021

Our friend and neighbor Charlie Moulton died at his home on the Morgan-Charleston Road on January 21st at the age of 86. Charlie always had a friendly wave, a good story and a couple of dog biscuits at the ready as he drove slowly around the lake in his trusty Subaru. He often stopped to visit his cousins Duane and Matt at the garage, his brother and sister-in-law Butch and Marlene at their nearby home, or friends he saw walking on the road.

Charlie owned and operated Charlie's Butcher Block in Derby for many years, and he had also worked as a butcher at the East Charleston

Store in its heyday. His wife Maxine died more than 20 years ago.

Charlie was on the forefront in terms of solar power--by necessity, because the line never ran to his house--but he was really on the frontier where off-grid living was concerned. His skill as a gardener was notable. He was locally famous for his garden and for his menagerie of birds who crossed the road, or just sat in the middle of it, depending on their will. And if you got stuck waiting for the birds to cross at sunset, you were really quite lucky.





Bruno Peter Ralph Studer

April 23, 1938 - February 11, 2021

Bruno was a long-time resident of Echo Lake. He and his wife, Linda, own and operate White Birch Lodge located on the shores of Echo Lake on East Echo Lake Road.

Bruno was originally from the Bronx, New York. As a young man, Bruno served as a Lieutenant in the US Navy and traveled the world as a Third Mate in the Merchant Marines. After getting his Master Degree in Education in 1962, Bruno taught elementary and high school and worked at the World Trade Center scheduling commercial shipping of produce, in the Western Hemisphere for Prudential Grace Lines.

In 1976, Bruno and Linda, together with their four children, Dominic, Christina, Paul, and Loretta, moved to East Charleston. Bruno taught in Newport Center for the next 34 years, where he was loved and admired by his students. Bruno had a real curiosity

about and broad knowledge of science, especially ecology.

Bruno was a kind and caring man and had many passions. He could be seen working on the cottages at White Birch Lodge, keeping everything shipshape for his fortunate guests who could enjoy the shore, relax, and get away from it all. He loved music and was an accomplished guitarist, he loved antique cars and took great pride in the old jeep he restored. He adored his Bernese Mountain dog, Schatzie, and the two could be seen hiking daily up East Echo Lake Road. Above all Bruno was known for his profound love and devotion to his family.

Echo Lake Maps



Maps that show Echo Lake property locations and ownership are available by calling Laurie and Keith Gee (717-887-3163). These beautiful 16” x 20” maps, updated in 2018, are suitable for framing but sturdy enough to hang alone. \$20, or \$15 apiece if purchasing more than one for a household.

2021 Color Challenge is Cancelled

By Patti Lennon

As disappointing as it is for me and ELPA's Board of Directors, we are canceling our annual fundraiser, the Color Challenge. Although we are hopeful that we will be able to engage in somewhat "normal" activities with our families and friends this summer, we don't believe it will be possible to host the Color Challenge. An event of this magnitude takes months of planning and organizing; this has not been possible with Vermont's COVID-19 restrictions. Also, there is no way to predict what the state of Vermont's restrictions will be throughout the summer.

The good news is the 2022 Color Challenge is scheduled for Sunday, July 3rd. Until then, please support our local businesses that have supported us through their generous donations throughout the years.

Many local businesses are struggling due to the impacts from COVID-19. Please support these businesses by using their services, shopping or dining with them and purchasing gift cards. These businesses are not only the backbone of our community but have given much support to ELPA throughout the years.

- Century 21 Farm & Forest,
- The Chronicle, Inc.
- Columbia Forest Products
- Community National Bank
- Concept 2 Rowing
- Conley Country
- Gervais Hardware
- Hayes Ford
- Dr. Hugh's Dental
- Island Pond Health Care
- Martin Appraisal Services, Inc.
- Nadeau's Plumbing & Heating
- North Country Federal Credit Union
- North Country Hospital
- Northern Counties Health Care
- Noyle Johnson Insurance
- Passumpsic Savings Bank
- Paul DeCelles Financial Services
- Poulin Lumber
- Tardiff Heating & Mechanical,
- Taylor-Moore Agency
- WalMart
- White Birch Lodge
- Wright's Plumbing & Heating
- Agway
- All About Home
- City Cinema
- Country Thyme
- Cumberland Farms
- Derby Village Store
- Devaney Farm Stand
- Essex Tavern
- Foggy Goggle Osteria
- Hoagies Newport
- Home and Hearth
- Kinney Drugs
- L&R Automotive
- Lines & Designs,
- Louis Garneau,
- My Salon
- Nature by Design
- NEK CBD
- Newport Natural
- Orleans Country Club
- Pick & Shovel
- Pie & Pasta,
- Price Chopper
- Roasters
- Shaw's
- SubWay
- Sweet Scoops
- Vista

Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds

FOVLAP Lake Seminar – June 4, 2021

June 4, 2021. Planning is underway and Lake Morey Lake Morey Resort 82 Clubhouse Road, Fairlee, VT 05045 has been reserved. A final decision on offering the seminar remotely or in person is coming soon.

FOVLAP Annual Meeting – Sept 9, 2021

The Annual Meeting has been moved from end of July to early September; location to be announced.

ELPA is now part of AmazonSmile!

By Ann Hunsicker

ELPA has signed up to be part of AmazonSmile Foundation’s program. This means if you shop on Amazon, you can choose to have the Foundation donate 0.5% of the purchase price of your eligible products to ELPA. It won’t cost anything to you but ELPA will receive additional funds to continue our mission. If you are already an Amazon shopper, or if you want to be, please use the link below to take you to the AmazonSmile page which will direct a donation to ELPA. Then, whenever you want to shop, just go to smile.amazon.com

directly. Your account should already be set up to donate to ELPA.

The link is <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/23-7105668>. If you prefer not to click on links but want to make ELPA your AmazonSmile donation recipient, go to smile.amazon.com and then choose Echo Lake Protective Association as your recipient. Be sure to choose the one in Charleston, Vermont. You would be surprised how many Echo Lakes there are. Thank you!

Vermont’s Shoreland Protection Act

By Tom Wagner

Established in 2014, Vermont’s Shoreland Protection Act (SPA) was created to help prevent water quality degradation, preserve habitat, protect the natural stability of shorelines, and maintain property values by managing development near lakes and ponds. The Act requires landowners to

obtain a permit if they plan to build a new structure, add impervious surfaces (such as roads and parking lots), or remove trees, shrubs, ground cover, or the duff layer (the natural spongy ground cover including leaf litter, pine needles, mosses)

within 250 feet of a public lake or pond that is ten or more acres.

Vermont has nearly 1,500 miles of shoreline located along lakes and ponds that are ten or more acres in size. Approximately 45 percent of that shoreline has been developed in a way that impacts water quality and fish and wildlife habitat. The Shoreland Protection Act aims to protect the remaining 55 percent of Vermont's shoreline by permitting lake-friendly development. Traditional "lawn-to-lake" style development sends phosphorus pollution into lakes and increases sediment runoff. Maintaining a naturally vegetated shoreline buffer is one of the most important things a lakeshore property owner can do.

Under the Shoreland Protection Act, projects within the first 250 feet from the mean water level on lakes and ponds greater than 10 acres are required to meet the following standards for slope, impervious surface, and cleared area:

- The project site must be located on an area with a slope less than 20%
- No more than 20% of the parcel may consist of impervious surface
- No more than 40% of the parcel may consist of cleared area

For projects that surpass the slope, impervious surface, or cleared area standards, the applicant must propose a best management practice (BMP) to address the exceeded standard. The following link is a compilation of suggested lake friendly best management practices. This list is not exhaustive and any proposed best management practice not listed below must adequately address the applicable standard.

<https://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/lakes-ponds/lakeshores-lake-wise/bmp>

The Handbook for Shoreland Development provides comprehensive guidance and useful information to help understand its many aspects.

https://dec.vermont.gov/sites/dec/files/wsm/lakes/docs/Shoreland/lp_ShorelandHandbook.pdf

In the NEK we have access to a Regional Lake and Shoreland permit analyst who is available to discuss potential BMPs and to assist with sizing and locating BMP installations. Lindsay Miller lindsay.miller@vermont.gov 802-490-6200, will make site visits and guide property owners through the permit process. Matthew Houghton of All Systems Septic Design in Derby is a local source who designs septic installations and also files Shoreland Permits. 802-274-1443

If the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation does find that property owners have violated the act, they can, and have, penalized property owners. Recently there were two fines on Lake Sadawga in Southern Vermont in Whitingham. One, was a \$5,250 fine for removing 4,800 square feet of vegetation, and another at \$4,000 for removing 5,900 square feet within 25 feet and another 10,000 square feet within 250 feet of the lake. These owners were also required to revegetate these areas, which given the footage, was probably a costly repair.

From July 1, 2014 when the SPA went into effect through December 2020, there have been 633 issued Shoreland permits, 281 Shoreland registrations, and 88 Shoreland determinations. That totals 1,002 official determinations in almost six and a half years, which is close to 155 per year. In 2020 alone, there were at least 189 decisions made, about a 22% increase from past years.

Residents on Echo Lake and Seymour Lake have worked hard to implement Best Management Practices and comply with the Shoreland Protection Act. A significant number have made improvements on their property to manage stormwater for protecting water quality, and restoring and protecting natural shoreland for wildlife, bank stability, and many other property and lake benefits by participating in the Lake Wise Program. Both Lakes have received the Gold Lake Wise Award for having more than 15 % of their properties receive the Lake Wise Award, and are



the only two lakes in Vermont to achieve this status.

Not every shoreline action requires a permit. If you are

thinking about doing anything within the protected area, it makes sense to reach out to our Regional permit analyst for a site visit. After consulting with the State, Steve and Ann Gratton were able modify their shoreline to minimize erosion and runoff without any permit. They had a severe 4-5 foot

drop-off on their shoreline that was eroding into the lake. The State allowed them to grade it back to a 45-degree pitch and completely replant the resulting surface area.



They allowed only a 5 – 6-foot opening for the stone stairs. Their driveway used to dive straight down to the shoreline and would wash sediment directly into the lake with every rain storm. The repair eliminated the driveway and a new curved stone pathway acts as a water bar to slow all runoff from reaching the lake. The results of all this work took their property from being a runoff disaster to becoming a poster child for Lake Wise.

Cyanobacteria (Blue-Green Algae)

By Susan Czerepak

Cyanobacteria, also known as blue-green algae, are naturally found in fresh water in the U.S. and in Lake Champlain and other Vermont waters.

Why do we need to know about cyanobacteria?

Some species of cyanobacteria are capable of producing toxins or irritants that can cause illness and even death in animals and humans. The vast amount of available information on health effects relates to animals, which typically have much higher exposures to cyanobacteria. **What are cyanotoxins?** Cyanotoxins are chemicals produced by cyanobacteria that can cause harmful effects. Depending on the toxin, acute (immediate) health effects vary and can include injury to the liver, nervous system, kidneys or skin irritation. **Where do cyanobacteria occur?** Cyanobacteria occur in a wide range of fresh and salt water environments throughout the world. They tend to flourish and bloom in relatively undisturbed bodies of water that are rich in

nutrients with optimal light and warm water conditions. **What do cyanobacteria look like?** Individual cyanobacteria are not visible to the



naked eye, but groups of cells may appear as green or greenish-blue turbid “pea soup”

areas of water, oily appearing films on the water surface, or filamentous strands. Heavy blooms result in foamy-appearing mats on the water surface. Filamentous forms of cyanobacteria should not be confused with true algae or water weeds.

In celebration of Earth Day 2021 and to promote awareness and action about cyanobacterial blooms in our New England Lakes, The New England Chapter of the North American Lake Management Society (NECNALMS) is offering a Spring two-part webinar series on “**Cyanobacteria: What you Need to Know**”.

Part 1 – April 20th, 10:30 am – noon: [Presentations on Cyanobacteria Biology and Toxicity](#)

- **Cyanobacteria biology and toxin formation**
Key aspects of cyanobacteria that make them competitive bloom formers, including N fixation, buoyancy, resting stages, toxin production by **Dr. Barry Rosen, Florida Gulf Coast University, FL**
- **Cyanobacteria toxin impacts on people, pets and wildlife**
Impacts of cyanobacteria on people, pets and wildlife, current understanding of health risks from cyanobacteria, including known exposure routes, the role of toxins, and susceptible populations by **Dr. Elizabeth Hilborn, USEPA, Office of Research and Development, NC**

Register here for Part 1: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/840558360791334157>

Part 2 – May 25th, 10:30 am – noon: [Presentations on Cyanobacteria Monitoring and Control](#)

- **Monitoring Approach to Identify and Quantify Cyanobacteria in Freshwater**
Various levels of monitoring from simple screening to detailed quantification, appropriate level of monitoring to meet goals and protocols for most effective monitoring *Mr. Hilary Snook, USEPA Region 1, MA*
- **Control of Cyanobacteria**
Methods for directly removing or preventing blooms of cyanobacteria, watershed vs inlake options, algacides vs nutrient control, and relative costs of different approaches. *Dr. Ken Wagner, Water Resource Services, Inc., MA*

Register here for Part 2: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/8175272886336926988>

Dog Poop-lution at Echo Lake

By Peter Bestenbostel

As a pet owner did you know that... Dog waste is toxic? Assuming dog feces are NOT picked up, it can take up to a year to break down in the environment, depending on climate, the dog's diet and other factors.

I know it's a crappy job but please as you walk your pet around our beautiful lake bring bags to collect pet waste. It will not biodegrade like the feces of a wild animal. Some pathogens can survive for years; for instance, roundworms and Giardia survive up to four years, E. coli can live up to four months, and salmonella up to 6 months. Giardia can survive in lakes, streams, rivers or puddle water at temperatures below 50 degrees F for as long as one to three months, but it can also survive in the soil for approximately seven weeks in soil

temperatures as low as 39 degrees F. These pathogens all wash into our lake and ...hey we swim in it! YUCK!!!!

Once on the ground, feces become a non-point source (NPS) pollutant. NPS pollution is caused by rainfall or snowmelt running over and through the ground. As the runoff moves, it picks up and carries away the nutrients (including phosphorous) and pathogens, and deposits them into groundwater, storm water runoff, streams, rivers and lakes. Yes, we are still talking dog poop here, and you thought it was all about the cows and manure spread on fields. Nope. Remember if the dog keeps poopin', we'll keep scoopin'. Thanks!

For more information please check out this link: [Liotta: The scoop on poop \(vtdigger.org\)](https://www.vtdigger.org/2020/04/10/liotta-the-scoop-on-poop/)

