

# LAKE LIFE

Lake Monomonac FALL 2022

The official  
newsletter of  
**Winchendon Springs  
Lake Association**

## President's Message

A major focus of the WSLA is water quality. We keep track of new science for old problems such as weed control and look for emerging issues that could put the lake at risk. As our climate warms there has been an increased focus on the need to mitigate storm water runoff which can bring excess nutrients, especially phosphorus, into lake waters. These nutrients can lead to cyanobacteria blooms. This October there have been multiple confirmed blooms in Lake Monomonac both in New Hampshire and in Massachusetts.

Rising concerns regarding cyanobacteria have led the Association to Preserve Cape Cod (APCC) to begin a program to proactively monitor bacteria levels in 150 ponds on Cape Cod. The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Security now has a "Cyanobacteria Hotline."

It has been known for a long time that cyanobacteria produce toxins that can cause illness in humans and kill pets. Most research has concentrated on exposure to cyanobacteria toxins from contact with or ingestion of cyanobacteria in water. But the risks may be even greater than previously thought. Two recent studies have examined the potential risks of air-born cyanobacteria toxins.

University of Florida scientists studied how a cyanobacteria toxin called microcystin-LR reacts in air. The toxins are aerosolized by bursting air bubbles caused by winds over the surface of the water. The good news is that the toxins are decayed typically within about two hours depending on the intensity of sunlight and amount of ozone in the atmosphere. The bad news is that even with a gentle breeze, areas within 10 miles of a cyanobacteria bloom could be impacted by inhalable algal toxins.

Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center researchers found a cluster of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) cases around Lake Mascoma in Enfield NH. Lake Mascoma has a history of serious cyanobacteria blooms. Certain cyanobacteria neurotoxins have been linked to ALS. The incidence of ALS near Lake Mascoma is 10-25 times the statistical normal. Smaller clusters have been found around other New England lakes as well. DMHC is planning to publish their findings this fall.

Maintaining water quality is up to all of us. An excellent booklet regarding how to keep our lake safe is provided by [nhlakes.org](http://nhlakes.org). It is available on the internet. To view the booklet online enter "Your Guide to lake friendly living in New Hampshire."

Jon Lewandowski  
WSLA President

## Membership Fees and Donations

We ask all lakefront owners to pay WSLA membership dues (\$50/year) and to consider an additional contribution. This is essential for continuing to maintain the quality of the lake in all its natural beauty.

**Dues and additional tax deductible donations can be paid in 2 ways:**



**CHECKS:** made payable to WSLA, mail to:  
PO Box 411, Winchendon, MA 01475



**PAYPAL:** visit our website [wsla.us](http://wsla.us), right bottom side of homepage



# WSLA

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# WSLA's 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Tournament

Golfers were greeted with bright sunny skies early on the morning of Sept.10th,2022, which made for a perfect start for the Winchendon Springs Lake Association fourth annual golf tournament at the Westminster Country Club.

When the 24 foursomes arrived to register, they found steaming hot coffee (donated by Dunkin Donuts at 93 Gardner Rd.) and variety of delicious donuts (donated by the Winchendon Central Street and Rindge N.H. Dunkin Donuts) awaiting them along side a enticing raffle table where they bought a few chances.

By 9:00 o'clock all took to the course and were teeing off with hopes of a win for 1st, 2nd or 3rd place. As they golfed their way through the course they all had an opportunity to try their luck at not only a hole in one contest but also the much anticipated putting contest where 1st prize was a \$5,000 dollar purse. One of the first putters in the contest saw an 11 year old sink it in the cup advancing him to a play off putt. As his age became great conversation it was also noted that the oldest player was a young 88. Of the 13 golfers that moved to the putt-off only one, Jeff Lamontagne, made it to the \$5,000 final putt coming within inches of a win.

The day wrapped up in the Club House Banquet Room with hand carved roast beef and tasty sides, great cocktails and conversation.

### Tournament Winners were:

**1st place:** Ryan Braman, Mike L'Etoile, Cory Rocheleau, and Ross Letoile

**2nd place:** Stephen Hunt, Dalton Hunt, Roland McConnell, and Peter McConnell

**3rd place:** Chad Hebert, Michael Hebert, Ryan Hebert, and John Johnson

**Many thanks to our sponsors and players, board members and volunteers who helped in making the event was a huge success!**

CREDIT: Winchendon Courier, Week of September 22 to September 29, 2022

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**Save the Date**  
for next year's  
**WSLA Golf**  
**Tournament!**  
**Sept 9, 2023**  
Westminster Country Club

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# W5LA

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## **Monomonac Forest: Conserving the Millers River Watershed**

One of the best ways to protect Lake Monomonac is to limit development within the Lake Monomonac watershed. To Rising from the hills of New Hampshire's Wapack Range, the Millers River flows south over the Massachusetts border. In Winchendon, dams dating back to the colonial era turn the river into Lake Monomonac—a 700+ acre lake with a long, low-rising peninsula at its southern end.

At one point, the construction of over 200 houses was proposed on a peninsula that extends into the lake. This would have dramatically impacted the beauty of the lake and potentially harmed water quality.

***Today, a local partnership between North County Land Trust and Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust is working to permanently protect the forested peninsula and other lots near the lake.***

Conserving this land would help link two existing pieces of Massachusetts' *Winchendon Springs Wildlife Management Area*, connecting them to hundreds of acres of forest conserved by the Town of Winchendon. The resulting protected landscape would include forest, wetlands, and much of the south shore of White's Mill Pond, and would ensure that species could range unimpeded through diverse habitats likelier to provide resilience despite climate change.

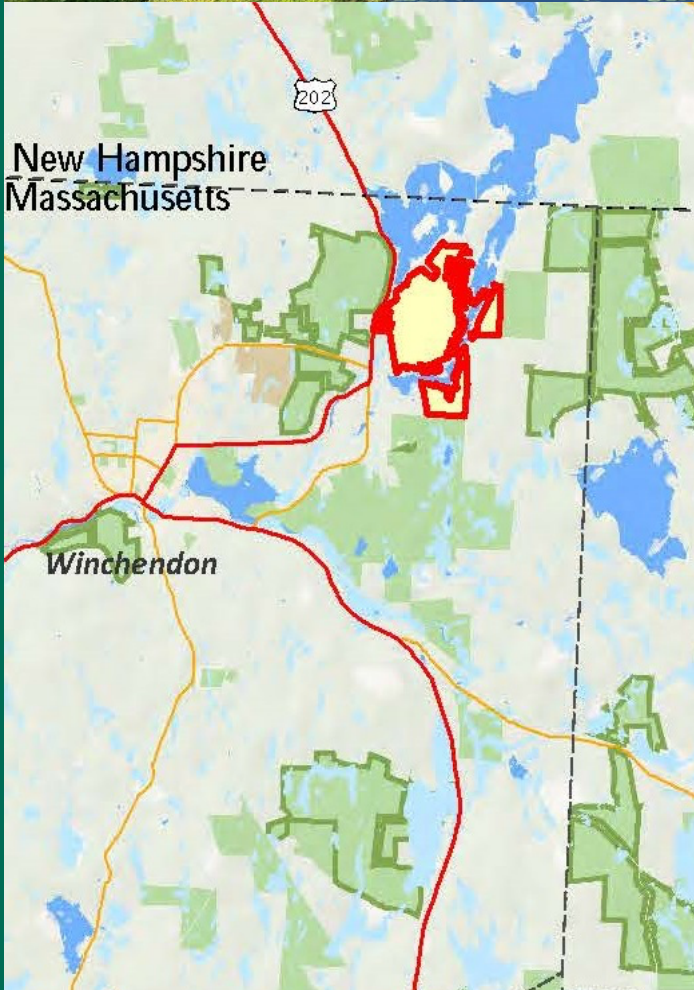
This project offers a great opportunity to add recreational land for the town. Cart and timber roads on the hill offer many potential routes for new trails. The nearby wetlands are habitat for numerous varieties of native birds. Conserving the land also helps secure the watershed of both the lake and the pond which then drain into Whitney Pond and the Millers River.

Taken together, the various parcels involve ~325 total acres, most of which will be permanently protected. North County has partnered with a conservation buyer who is generously funding a portion of the project by purchasing some of the land, with further project support provided by Mount Grace's Leigh Youngblood Conservation Opportunity Fund. Six additional lots (about 12 acres) with existing frontage on Route 202 will be reserved as housing sites, with the partners considering options for affordable housing. The rest of the land, including 200+ acres on the hill and 50 acres south of White's Mill Pond will be permanently protected and open for public use.

Conserving Monomonac Forest will require community support to help the two land trusts guarantee that the land is open to the people of Winchendon for recreation and continues to provide critical wildlife habitat on the Millers River headwaters.



# Help Protect Lake Monomonic



## Clockwise from top left:

- More than 80 different streams and springs feed the lake.
- Old cart roads crisscross the hill on the lake's southern peninsula, providing opportunities for everyone to encounter the forest.
- The hill and nearby wetlands are considered crucial habitat by Massachusetts' Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program.
- The land links together existing conservation areas in Winchendon to improve biodiversity and habitat resilience in the face of climate change.



***Your support will help protect the local landscape  
of the Millers River watershed!***

## WSLA partners with North County Land Trust

One of the best ways to protect Lake Monomonac is to limit development within the Lake Monomonac watershed. To this end the WSLA is engaged with the North County Land Trust (NCLT). NCLT is a 30-year-old non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of undeveloped land. The NCLT operates in 13 towns and three cities in north central Massachusetts. The NCLT has been involved in over 20 projects that resulted in the creation of conservation areas including many with public access trails. For instance, NCLT recently purchased 201 acres which included the south slope of Mount Watatic. Most of this land will be ultimately be transferred to the Department of Fish and Game to be managed for public recreation.

The NCLT is working with Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust to structure a collaborative, multi-phase project to purchase the majority of land once owned by Monomonac Lake Shores Inc. If successful, this land would then be permanently protected from development. One parcel, which lies between Lakeview Drive and Monomonac Road West is more than 200 acres. Another 60 acres will be added to the Winchendon Springs Wildlife Management Area on the south side of White's Mill Pond. Working with the Department of Fish and Game, Mount Grace, a local private conservation buyer, town administrators, the WSLA, and many concerned Winchendon folks, NCLT is pulling the necessary partners together to get this project off the ground.

The NCLT is funded by individuals, businesses and charitable foundations. The WSLA encourages everyone to support the NCLT. For more information or to make a contribution contact [northcountylandtrust.org](http://northcountylandtrust.org)



## Ice Safety Tips

- ➔ Many residents on our lake have bubblers which can weaken the ice >150 feet away depending on the flow. If you have one, please clearly indicate to minimize risk for all those out on the ice.
- ➔ Don't go on the ice alone—a friend may be able to rescue you or get help.
- ➔ Always keep your pets on a leash. If a pet falls through the ice do not attempt to rescue, go for help.
- ➔ New ice is usually stronger than old. As the ice ages, the bond between the crystals decays, making it weaker, even if melting has not occurred.
- ➔ Beware of ice covered with snow. Snow can insulate ice and keep it strong, but can also keep it from freezing. Snow can also hide cracks, weak, or open ice.
- ➔ Slush is a danger sign that ice can be weak or deteriorating.
- ➔ Ice formed over flowing water (containing a large number of springs) is generally 15% weaker.
- ➔ Ice seldom freezes or thaws at a uniform rate. It can be one **foot** thick and one **inch** thick 10 feet apart.



**A WORD OF CAUTION TO OUR COMMUNITY:** If a lower water level is achieved, this will expose structures such as rocks. When the lake freezes, structures that may normally be under the ice may show or may just be barely covered by ice or snow. With the snowfall, these structures may be camouflaged, so we urge all people, particularly snowmobile riders, to use extreme caution. Some of these exposed structures may include The Reef (rock pile) entering the big part of the lake on the NH side, as well as rocks near Blueberry Island heading toward the Marina.

▶ For more info on ice safety, visit:  
[mass.gov/service-details/ice-strength-and-safety](http://mass.gov/service-details/ice-strength-and-safety)





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*All proceeds go to WSLA in their mission to support the health  
& welfare of Lake Monomonic & surrounding community.*

**MORE INFO:**

[allthingsrepurposed@yahoo.com](mailto:allthingsrepurposed@yahoo.com)

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- **MEMBERSHIPS:** Pay your dues online for 2022
- **DONATE:** Contribute towards weed control and/or other association costs  
*Please email [wsla.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:wsla.treasurer@gmail.com) if you want to donate to a specific cause.*

Pay online at [wsla.us](http://wsla.us) or make checks payable to WSLA Inc, PO Box 411 Winchendon, MA 01475

Visit  
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for more  
information

## Winter Draw Down

Lake Monomonic's annual draw down started October 15<sup>th</sup> and continues until it reaches the winter draw down level of 3 feet on or around December 1<sup>st</sup>. The drop in the water level during the winter months allows property owners to do maintenance to their waterfront, including docks, walls, and beaches. It also helps with the weed control.

## 2022 Calendar of Events

- Earth/Lake Clean-up Day..... Saturday April 22, 2023**
- WSLA Annual Meeting ..... Saturday June 24, 2023**
- Music on the Water ..... Saturday July 8, 2023**
- Golf Tournament.....Saturday September 9, 2023**

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about WSLA news & events!

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*Thank you to Neon Alley for a great concert on the water!*

