

LAKE LIFE

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

FALL 2025

Lake Monomonac

President's Message

It turns out the process of installing a new sluice gate at the main dam is not so easy.

To date the WSLA Board has identified and chosen vendors for building and installing the new sluice gate for the Main Dam, received quotes from those vendors, raised funds to finance the project with contributions from the MLPOA and the Robinson Broadhurst Foundation, provided the manufacturer with the specifications for the gate including as built measurements from inside the dam culvert and facilitated multiple meetings between the Winchendon DPW and the manufacturer including a site visit to the Main Dam. The site visit allowed the DPW and manufacturer to determine specifically where the gate would be installed in the culvert and how the controls would be accessed within the existing security fence. A purchase order has been placed with the manufacturer. That was the easy part!

The Town of Winchendon will need to file a Chapter 253 Permit Application with the Department of Conservation and Recreation Dam Safety Division. Any modification to a Dam requires state approval. The WSLA will need to file a Notice of Intent with the Department of Environmental Protection. To install the gate in the culvert at the Main Dam will require the culvert to be dewatered. This will require that stop logs be removed from the Red Dam so that Mirror Pond can be lowered. To lower Mirror Pond requires DEP approval and an Order-of-Conditions be provided by the Winchendon Conservation Commission. This process requires notification of all abutters to Mirror Pond and public hearings. Dewatering the culvert will also require the repair of the stop logs at the Main

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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:
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PAYPAL: visit our website wsla.us, right bottom side of homepage



WSLA

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Dam. The gasketing that seals the logs is partly missing which allows significant leakage into the culvert. The new gate is bolted and grouted to the concrete culvert so no water can be allowed into the culvert during installation.

Finally, once all approvals have been met the installation will require coordination among the manufacturer, installer, DPW and cooperation of the weather. The current lead time to manufacture the gate is 26 weeks. The likely installation time is next summer.

WSLA Septic Tank Maintenance Promotion

Regular septic system inspections and pump-outs are essential to keep systems working efficiently and to protect **Lake Monomonac** from runoff. Experts—from the **U.S. EPA to Bob Vila**—recommend pumping tanks every 2–5 years, depending on household size, water use, and tank capacity. Smaller households may stretch closer to five years, while larger families or heavy water users should aim for two.

To make this easier for lakeside homeowners on Lake Monomonac, **WSLA** has teamed up with **Cochran Trucking** to offer discounted pricing for members this fall. A **1,000-gallon tank will cost \$315 and a 1,500-gallon tank \$365**. Other sizes or services can be arranged directly with Cochran at (978) 297-0745—please mention you're with the Winchendon Springs Lake Association when scheduling by the end of 2025.

Look for this promotion in future WSLA newsletters—spring through early fall is an ideal time for a pump-out. Even if you don't need service this year, plan ahead to keep your system healthy and our lake clean.

Thank you for helping protect the water quality of Lake Monomonac!

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WSLA's 7th Annual Golf Tournament

On September 6th, the Winchendon Springs Lake Association held its 7th Annual Golf Tournament at the Westminster Country Club. While the day began under cloudy skies with the threat of rain, our golfers managed to complete their rounds before the skies finally opened up.

A record 25 foursomes joined us this year, starting the morning with steaming hot coffee and donuts generously donated by Dunkin' Donuts of Gardner Road and Central Street in Winchendon. Spirits were high as golfers hit the course, competing for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place finishes, along with the longest drive and closest-to-the-pin contests.

The much-anticipated putting contest had to be postponed until after dinner due to heavy rain. Unfortunately, the downpour and high winds continued into the evening. That didn't stop Jon Blodgett, who advanced to take his chance at the final 50-foot putt for the \$5,000 prize. Despite the tough conditions and a strong effort, Jon just missed the mark — but the excitement of the moment was unforgettable.

After play wrapped up, participants gathered in the Clubhouse Banquet Room for a delicious buffet dinner catered by Il Forno. The menu featured chicken piccata, meat lasagna, and a variety of sides, enjoyed alongside cocktails and great conversation.

The WSLA thanks all of our golfers, hole sponsors, prize donors, and volunteers who made this event a success. Funds raised from the tournament directly support our mission to protect and preserve Lake Monomonac.

Tournament Winners were:

1st Place: Tyler Crawford, Trevor Sicard, Donovan Powell, Zach Bingham

2nd Place: Kyle Peralta, Patrick Hawkesworth, Ryan Peralta, Seth Daneault

3rd Place: Glen Fox, Lenny Charbonneau, Jim Kuehl, Jim Angelli

Women's Longest Drive: Marcy Silva

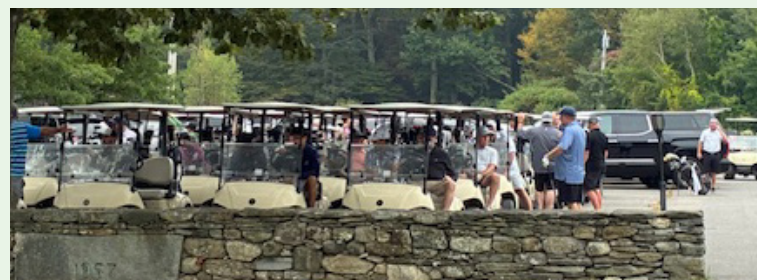
Men's Longest Drive: Gary Niles

Women's Closest to the Pin: Alicia Casper

Men's Closest to the Pin: Carl Shell

Winner of the putting contest: Jon Blodgett

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



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Save the Date!

Next year's
WSLA Golf
Tournament!

September 12th

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Watershed Management Plan (WMP) Fall Update

In the Spring newsletter, it was noted that the WMP funding was awarded in April. Once the funding was secured, work began on selecting a vendor. Right after that was completed, work on the WMP began in earnest and much has been completed over the summer.

This spring, the Request for Qualifications was submitted to several vendors who specialize in Watershed Management Plans and in June FB Environmental Associates (FBE) out of Dover, NH was selected to work on our WMP. By early July a contract was then negotiated with FBE, including pricing for the services falling in line with the funding that is being provided by the grant coupled with the contributions from MLPOA and WSLA.

The first task that needed to be completed was the Site Specific Project Plan which lays out much of the road map for the WMP including all the responsible parties, their roles, establishing water quality goals, identifying the specific tasks and projects to be completed, and final reporting. This was completed in early September.

Shortly thereafter, a shoreline survey was completed in mid-September. Members of the lake associations along with employees of FBE surveyed the entire shoreline of the lake via boats to assess the overall health of the shoreline. Photos and documentation of the shoreline condition were recorded to note areas of erosion, observations of vegetation and bare soil, distances of structures to the lake, and slope. Each parcel will be ranked and provided a shoreline disturbance score. More details can be found in the email blast that was issued to all WSLA members on 9/10/25.

FBE provided a draft version of Monomonic Watershed Municipal Ordinance Review for consideration and feedback. The Ordinance Review looks at zoning and building codes, DOT practices, environmental regulations, stormwater practices, and other regulations for each of the three towns included in the Monomonic watershed (i.e., Winchendon, Rindge, and Fitzwilliam) and suggests changes, improvements, and additions to these ordinances to better protect the health of the lake. This draft document is currently under review for editing and will be included in the final WMP.

A septic system survey is near completion and should be issued to all shoreline property owners this fall. FBE will also be performing a detailed evaluation of septic system records. The combined information will be used to establish phosphorus contributions to the lake. In addition, a watershed survey was completed with a focus on stormwater runoff which will also be used to establish phosphorus contributions. These are two of the major sources of phosphorus for lakes and this information will be summarized in the WMP along with suggested actions to reduce the contributions.

There is much work still to be done but we're on schedule to have our WMP completed by next fall.



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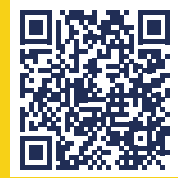
A WORD OF CAUTION

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.

- ➔ Many residents on our lake have **Aerator & De-Icer's** which can **weaken the ice >150 feet away depending on the flow**. If you have one, please clearly mark 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 Actively Supervise Children Playing On or Near Ice**
- ➔ **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/moving 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.



More on Ice Safety



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mass.gov/service-details/ice-strength-and-safety

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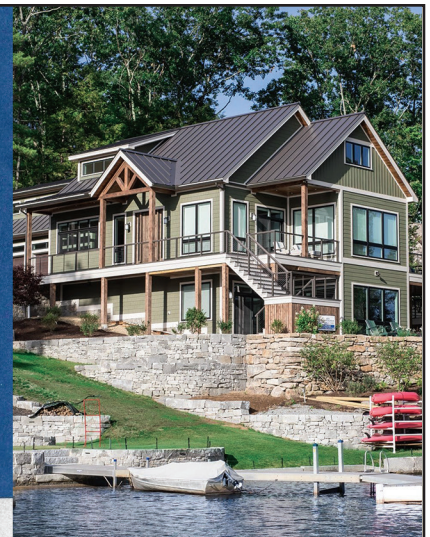
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MLPOA

Monomac Lake Property
Owners Association

Our mission is to preserve and protect the natural beauty, water quality, and recreational value of Lake Monomac and its surrounding watershed, promote responsible enjoyment of the lake, support public safety and law enforcement, educate the community about lake stewardship, and manage resources in service of these goals for the benefit of current and future generations.

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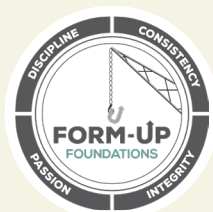


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- **MEMBERSHIPS:** Pay your dues online for 2026
- **DONATE:** Contribute towards weed control and/or other association costs
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Pay online at wsla.us or make checks payable to WSLA Inc, PO Box 411 Winchendon, MA 01475

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Winter Draw Down

Lake Monomonac's **annual draw down started October 15th** and will continue until it reaches the winter draw down level of 3 feet on or around December 1st. 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 weed control and prevents shoreline erosion.

UPCOMING 2026 EVENTS

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WSLA Annual Meeting
June 20, 2026

Live Music on the Water
July 11, 2026

Golf Tournament
September 12, 2026

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