

LAKE LIFE

Lake Monomonac **SPRING 2023**

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

President's Message

The WSLA has been fortunate over the past many years to have a full complement of board members. We have also had prior board members volunteering behind the scenes helping with activities including the golf tournament. Because board members brought different skills, experience and interests we have been able to accomplish a lot while allowing members to work on projects that interest them. This year, for a variety of reasons, the board is losing several members who have been instrumental to our success.

The purpose of the WSLA is to serve and promote the residential and recreational interests of lake property owners with a special focus on water quality. WSLA activities include identifying environmental concerns, providing informational outreach, monitoring for invasive species, negotiating for weed control, collecting samples for water testing, promoting water safety and of course fundraising.

The Association interfaces with key organizations and officials. These include the Conservation Commission, Department of Public Works, Department of Health and the state Department of Environmental Protection. The WSLA also works cooperatively with our sister organization in New Hampshire, the Monomonac Lake Property Owners Association.

I encourage interested lake residents to consider joining the board. If interested, email wsla.monomonac@gmail.com or join us for the annual meeting.

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:

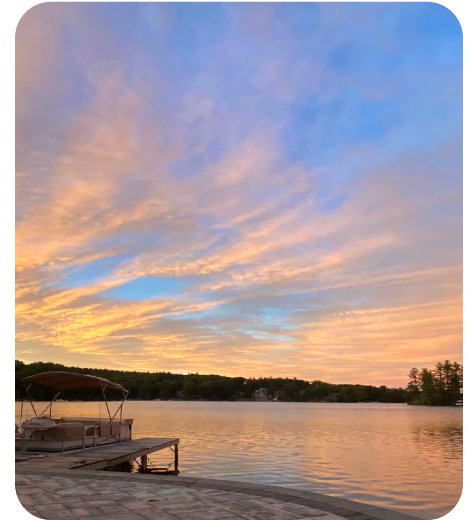


CHECKS: made payable to WSLA, mail to:
PO Box 411, Winchendon, MA 01475



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

Scan
here
to pay
online!



UPCOMING 2023 EVENTS

WSLA Annual Meeting
June 24, 2023 @ 9 am
Winchendon Legion
295 School Street
Winchendon, MA

Boat Concert
July 8, 2023; 4-7pm

Golf Tournament
Sept 9, 2023
Westminster Country Club

WSLA

WINCHENDON SPRINGS
LAKE ASSOCIATION

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wsla.us | Like us on

White's Mill Dam Breached

White's Mill Dam was finally decommissioned in December 2022. The Town of Winchendon was able to obtain a \$740,225 grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental affairs via its Dam and Seawall Program for the project. Built around 1860, the dam had been designated as a "high hazard" dam and inspections found the dam in "poor condition" as far back as the 1980's.

Concerns about the water level in White's Mill Pond had been an ongoing issue that had affected the routine drawdown and refill of Lake Monomonac. Fear that the dam could be overtopped and fail had forced the DPW on one occasion to prematurely re-insert boards at the Lake Monomonac dam. This action redirected outflow to the RT 202 spillway and around White's Mill Pond. It also raised the water level in Lake Monomonac prematurely causing property damage to shoreline structures from wind driven floating ice.



The original plan to breach the dam was derailed due to concerns that property values for residents of White's Mill Pond would fall if the Pond disappeared. These concerns appear to be overblown. A new "White's Mill Dam" has already been constructed by beavers partially refilling the upper two thirds of the pond. This new dam does not appear to be a threat and there is no plan to remove it at this time.

Sunken Boat Removed from Lake Monomonac



Great collaborative effort today recovering this sunken/abandoned boat from Lake Monomonac. Special thanks to Winchendon Fire Dept./Dive Team members, Bryan Vaine, Tyler Pelkey and Patrick Connor. Also, thank you Brooks Automotive for your assistance. Lastly, special thanks to Rindge, NH residents, Reeves Maclellan and her son Michael for allowing us use of their land to access the boat.

CREDIT: TOWN OF WINCHENDON POLICE DEPARTMENT FACEBOOK PAGE

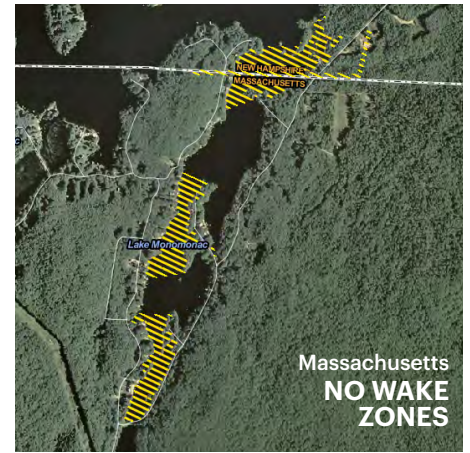
What to Keep in Mind While Enjoying Boating & Recreational Activities on Lake Monomonac

SAFE BOATING CERTIFICATION: Safe Boating Certification is required. Lake Monomonac is located in both Massachusetts and New Hampshire, and all boaters 16 yrs and older operating a motorboat over 25hp or ski craft are required to have Safe Boating Certification Card/License. For more information, or to see if your certificate or license is accepted, visit: <https://www.boat-ed.com/newhampshire/>

LIFE JACKETS: Life jacket wear is mandatory for: children 12 and under at all times, underway, and above deck; everyone riding on a personal watercraft; anyone being towed in any way on or through the water; canoeists, kayakers and paddle boarders operating between September 15th and May 15th https://www.usps.org/e_stuff/documents/massachusetts-boating-law.pdf

"NO WAKE ZONE": There are a number of no wake zones on Lake Monomonac—what do they mean? Boats entering a no wake zone should be operating at a speed of 5 miles or less and have no wake. Additionally, the no wake zones in the narrows section in Massachusetts are also a **No Tow Zone**, as there is not enough legal clearance to the shoreline & docks.

MARKERS - HAZARDS: There are many markers on our lake marking channels and hazards. Know where they are and what they mean. Additionally be aware that although many hazards are marked, some are not. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with our lake, and be aware of very shallow areas and hazards, both marked and unmarked.



Boating Certification Reminder



Lake Monomonac is partly in MA and partly in NH. Boaters are required a Boater Education Card for anyone at least 16 years old, operating a motorboat over 25hp or ski craft.

For more information, or to see if your certificate or license is accepted, visit: [boat-ed.com/newhampshire](https://www.boat-ed.com/newhampshire)



Let's work together to keep our neighborhood clean!
WSLA has an annual clean up day every spring, but litter continues to pop up throughout the year. The best way to keep our roads, yards, and lake clean is to pick up litter when you see it. We appreciate all efforts to keep our neighborhood beautiful.

5th Annual

GOLF

TOURNAMENT

SATURDAY 09.09.2023



\$125
PER PLAYER

WESTMINSTER COUNTRY CLUB
TEAMS OF FOUR • MEAL INCLUDED, FOLLOWING TOURNAMENT

8 AM
SIGN IN

PRIZES & AWARDS

LONGEST DRIVE • CLOSEST TO PIN • PUTTING CONTEST
Winner of the **PUTTING CONTEST** has a chance to **WIN \$5,000!**

For more information, visit [WSLA.US/GOLF-TOURNAMENT](https://www.wsla.us/golf-tournament)

Big Strides Made to Protect Lake Monomonac in 2023

When several hundred acres on the Winchendon side of Lake Monomonac went up for sale last year, it marked a potential turning point for the health of the lake. Developing this mostly forested land would have significant impact on the lake and White's Mill Pond, as well as on the protected Winchendon Springs Wildlife Management Area nearby.

Almost immediately, a coalition aiming to protect as much of this land as possible drew together. Partners including North County Land Trust, Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust, the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Monomonac Lake Property Owners Association, the Winchendon Springs Lake Association, and a local landowner who offered to help purchase the property.

"This is a critical piece of property that directly affects our watershed and is important to the lake and to the Millers River," said Renee Tambling of WSLA. "We banded together to see what we could do to purchase and protect it, not only for today but future generations and that will entail doing some fundraising because purchasing this land is pretty expensive."

Over the winter, the partners have made significant progress, with more than \$510,000 already raised towards the goal of approximately \$770,000. Most of that funding has come from grants, with support received from the Community Foundation of North Central Massachusetts, the Fields Pond Foundation, the Quabbin to Cardigan Landscape Partnership, and two anonymous foundations. "We're very excited to see so much support for this project," said Emma Ellsworth, Executive Director of Mount Grace. "This is a huge opportunity to protect land that's been a priority for the Town of Winchendon and has statewide importance because of the way it links together other protected land."

Lake residents may be familiar with some of this land, which includes the peninsula jutting into the lake from the south, the southern bank of Whites Mill Pond, and some land east of Big Dam. These woods and wetlands contribute to the rural feel of

the neighborhoods they surround. Old logging roads and informal trails wind through these woods and are used by many who are seeking a quick route to get immersed in nature.

In part because of the opportunity for trails and recreation, as well as possible public access to White's Mill Pond, this corner of Winchendon was listed as one of two priority areas for land conservation in the Town's last Open Space & Recreation Plan, and these lake parcels make up the biggest single property in the area.

Besides recreation, these woods have real importance for the environment. The entire property is listed



as "core habitat" by the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program. Core habitat identifies areas that are critical for the long-term survival of rare species, exemplary natural communities, and resilient ecosystems.

Resilience—the likelihood that an ecosystem will survive climate change relatively unscathed—is becoming increasingly important as warming weather affects New England's native species. One key aspect of resilience is the connecting together of diverse landscape features such as different elevations and topography, leading to ecological variety.

That makes protecting this land a remarkable "two-for-one" deal from an environmental perspective, since not only is the land resilient in itself, it also bridges gaps between other protected land like the Winchendon Springs Wildlife Management Area and the Marchmont Trust land (protected by Mount Grace in 2012).

Taken together, more than 325 acres of land is at stake, with most of the land to be protected in phase one of the project, in which the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Wildlife takes title to the land south of Whites Mill Pond while most the peninsula is bought by North County Land Trust and additionally protected with a conservation restriction held by Mount Grace. Twelve acres west of the lake will be held for possible house lots, while the northernmost part of the peninsula and the land east of the lake will be held by the conservation buyer, with an additional conservation restriction planned for some of that land in phase two.

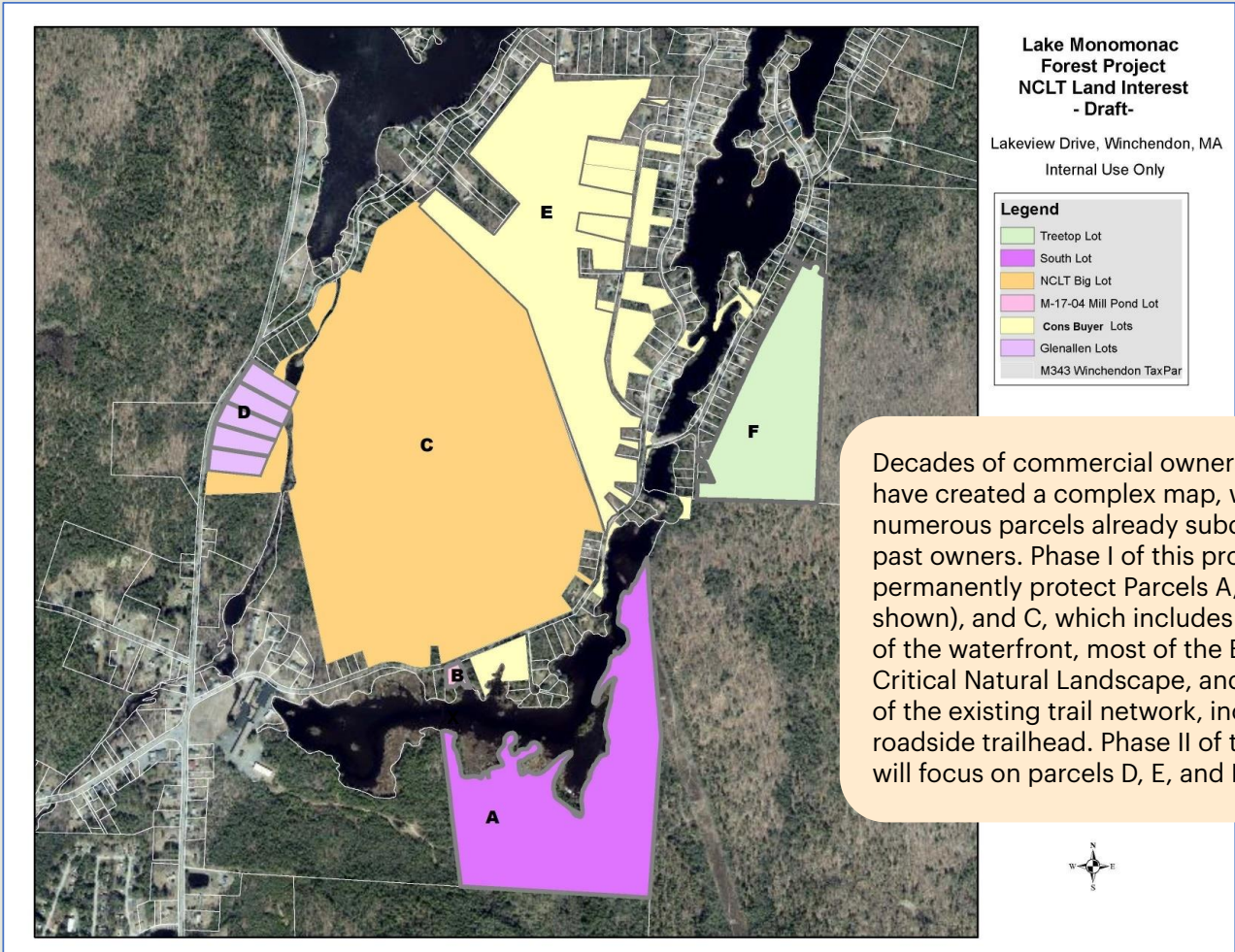
“Lake Monomonac and the surrounding land has been cherished by so many and continues to serve the greater Winchendon community. It’s exciting to see so many engaged in this project understanding the importance of this effort,” reflected Anna Wilkins, Executive Director for North County Land Trust.

While the partners have had remarkable success so far with fundraising, there is still more than \$250,000 to raise in order to protect the lake. This summer lake residents will have the opportunity to meet with representatives of both Mount Grace and North County Land Trust as the two trusts work together to conserve the land.

You can learn more and support this important initiative with your donation, please visit <https://northcountylandtrust.org/conservation-projects/monomonachill/> or www.mountgrace.org/lake-monomonac-partnership or by contacting Emma Ellsworth (MG) or Anna Wilkins (NCLT).

As climate change continues to increase pressures on native species, land conservation projects like this one—by sequestering carbon, reducing sprawl, and easing the stresses on habitat—offer local answers to a global problem.

LAKE MONOMONAC CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP MAP



Living on Our Lake: How You Can Make a Difference & Important Things to Know

We all love enjoying everything that Lake Monomonac has to offer from boating, to fishing, swimming, to just sitting and viewing it's beauty. **Our lake and environment needs each and every one of us to be more aware of the small things we can do in our everyday life to play a small part in not just maintaining, but actually improving the health of our lake.**

Don't use phosphorus fertilizers.

Instead choose natural organic fertilizers. Our lake is very acidic so it is actually really good to use lime.

Maintain your septic tank.

Simple actions can make a positive impact on your septic system, such as conserving water and fixing leaky faucets. Have your tank regularly pumped. Update failing or failed septic systems. Several technologies exist that are ideal for small lots close to the water. A great resource can be found at www.thecleansolution.com

- **Use non-salt based de-icers** in the winter.
- **Reduce use of pesticides.** Identify the pest that is a nuisance and use only products specifically designed for that species. Do not discard left over pesticides down the drain or on the ground as it will leach into the lake.
- **Choose biodegradable dish and laundry detergents** that do not contain phosphates.
- **Keep shorelines natural/use native plantings** on or near the shore to prevent erosion and run off into the lake. For beach area maintenance be aware that sand is a significant source of phosphorus. Only washed sand is allowed and a permit is required*.
- **Choose non-toxic building supplies for docks and rafts.** Pressure treated lumber, railroad ties, etc. are bad and illegal for lake usage. Use cedar, aluminum, plastic and other approved composite materials.
- **Do not store any fuel, cleaning supplies, batteries,** etc. near the water.
- **Do not feed the ducks or geese**—their waste is bad for the water.
- **Communicate and educate.** Talk to your family, neighbors, and guests. Tell them how important all of these things are.
- **Remove lawn, leaf litter, and grass clippings** so that it does not enter the water.

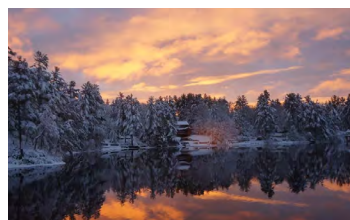
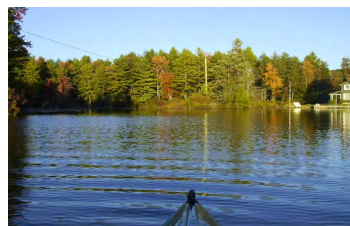
Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act

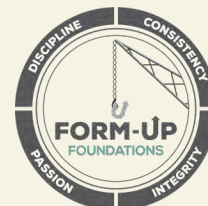
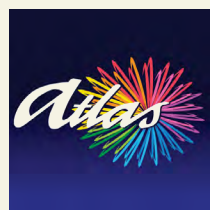
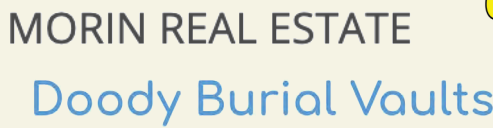
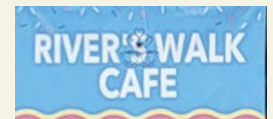
As a lake front owner your properties is directly affected by the *Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act*. Whether you are a new owner or have owned for years, some or all of your property is considered legally protected land. Any projects you want to do within the 100 foot buffer zone from the shoreline, you must comply with these laws.

The most common projects that permission and conservation permits are needed include, but not limited to:

- ➔ Construction of any kind, including repairs or alteration of any kind to any structure/s, deck & docks, driveways, sheds
- ➔ Destruction or removal of plant life including cutting of any trees,
- ➔ Dumping, discharging or filling with any material which may degrade water quality this includes beach sand*
- ➔ Removal, excavation, or dredging of soil, sand, gravel, or aggregate materials of any kind
- ➔ Drainage or other disturbance of water level or water table

For further information & to get approval &/or a permit for your project, contact the Winchendon Conservation Commission at (978) 297-3537.





Edward Jones Winchendon • T.J. Fluharty • Dave Anderson and Family
Luke LaChance and Family • James Sweeney and Family

Rindge
Central Street in Winchendon
Garnder Road in Winchendon

WSLA

WINCHENDON SPRINGS
LAKE ASSOCIATION

PO Box 411
Winchendon MA 01475

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Support WSLA!

- **SIGN UP:** Receive our newsletter and other news
- **MEMBERSHIPS:** Pay your dues online for 2023
- **DONATE:** Contribute towards weed control and/or other association costs
Please email wsla.treasurer@gmail.com if you want to donate to a specific cause.

Pay online at wsla.us or make checks payable to WSLA Inc, PO Box 411 Winchendon, MA 01475

Visit
WSLA.US
for more
information

Visit **WSLA.US** to learn more about events, lake health & safety, *and more!*



Clean Up Day 2023



Golf Tournament 2023



Winchendon Community Park

The Winchendon Community Park's Grand Opening is June 10, 2023!

The park will feature a new amphitheater, hiking trails, disc golf, soccer field, and more! *Learn more about upcoming events and activities at:*

www.townofwinchendon.com/winchendon-community-park