

A LITTLE NEWS FROM OUR LITTLE LAKE SUNAPEE



Peter Bloch, EarthAerial Productions

Letter From The President

Healthy Lakes, Healthy Future: Rethinking Shoreline Stewardship

New Hampshire's lakes are among the most valuable natural resources we share. They provide clean water, habitat for fish and wildlife, and a place of retreat for recreation and reflection. The health of these cherished waters depends directly on the way we care for the land that surrounds them.

One of the greatest threats to water quality is “non-point source pollution”—runoff from rain or melting snow that carries soil, fertilizers, salt, pesticides, oil, and other contaminants into the lake. Unlike pollution from a single pipe, this type of pollution comes from many scattered sources, making it harder to control. Even well-meaning homeowners can inadvertently contribute to this problem when lawns extend to the water's edge or when natural shoreline vegetation is removed.

To protect lake health, we can begin by reimagining the aesthetic of our shorelines. Instead of manicured turf grass that demands fertilizer and offers minimal erosion control, a natural shoreline planted with native grasses, shrubs, and trees can filter runoff, stabilize soil, and create vital wildlife habitat. A shoreline rich in vegetation also adds beauty through seasonal colors, textures, and movement—reminding us that “neat” doesn't have to mean “sparse.” We are fortunate on Little Lake Sunapee in having significant parcels of forest land protected through conservation easements.

Letter From The President Continued

Preserving and restoring natural shoreline vegetation is one of the most effective actions we can take to maintain water quality. A simple buffer strip—just a few feet wide—can greatly reduce sediment and nutrients loading into the lake. Reducing the flow of nutrients into a lake can cut down on the incidence of Cyanobacteria blooms. Over time, these living shorelines become self-sustaining, requiring less maintenance while providing significant benefits to the ecosystem.

Healthy lakes are not just for today—they are a precious legacy for future generations. By embracing shoreline stewardship now, we can pass on waters that are clean, resilient, and teeming with life. Each of us has a role to play: buffering the shoreline, reducing pollution, and prizing natural beauty for what it truly is—a living and protective connection between land and water.

Deborah D Hoover, LLSPA President

Shoreland Buffering Project- Wallula

LLSPA Board member Amy Bucklin coordinated with Geoff Lizotte from LSPA to begin a shoreline buffer restoration project. This collaboration with Wallula Community Homeowner Association and LSPA involved planting hardy native ground-covers to stabilize soil and slow stormwater runoff. These efforts reduce the amount of nutrients and other pollutants entering Little Lake Sunapee, improving water quality and reducing the risk of Cyanobacteria blooms. Thank you to all who volunteered!



Annual Meeting

Thank you to all who attended our Annual Meeting this past July. We thanked our dedicated outgoing board member, Bill McCormick, who for many years helped on our website committee, provided us with history lessons about our beloved little lake, was a constant voice of reason and a great person to have on our team. We also thanked our Waste Warrior, Dale Conly (who you may have read about in a previous issue of The Point!). We heard from water quality volunteer Mike Thomas, who provided us with key information regarding potential threats to our lake and how we can mitigate those threats. Andrea LaMoreaux of NH LAKES was our keynote speaker.

Andrea's presentation was anchored in giving us the tools to help Little Lake Sunapee be resilient to Mother Nature and Us. With climate changes such as flooding, droughts, shorter periods of ice cover and warmer summers, as well as increasing lake-side development and recreation, and, of course, roadside runoff, our lakes are taking a hit. Some lakes are hitting a tipping point. Andrea highlighted that it is our job to work to care for our lakes! With Little Lake Sunapee's increasing cyanobacteria blooms, it is important to keep monitoring the water quality, preventing the introduction of new invasive species (thank you, Lake Hosts and responsible boaters!), detecting any new invasives (thank you, Weed Watchers!), and educating our community. It is also helpful to consider becoming Lake Smart or becoming a Watershed Wise partner.

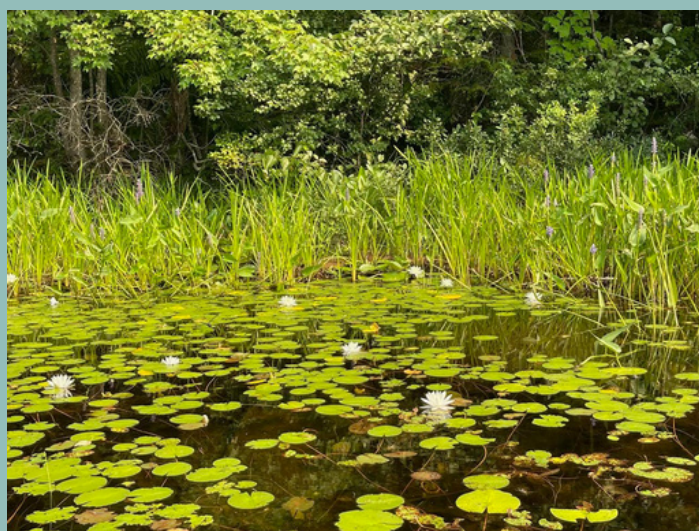


August Aquatic Paddle

LLSPA Aquatic Invasive expert Susie Burbridge and Aquatic Invasive committee chair Dave Beardsley led a 2-hour kayak excursion on the Western Basin of Little Lake Sunapee in early August. Fourteen of our LLSPA Weed Watchers (and puppy, Scarlett!) enjoyed learning about our aquatic plant and animal life.

Some seasoned weed watchers were surprised to learn that many sightings of what they thought was Water Celery was indeed Floating Bur-reed. Newer volunteers were delighted to see Pickerel Weed and Yellow and White Water Lilies for the first time.

Not only was this a learning experience for our volunteers, but also a chance to get to know neighbors from other areas around the lake. Many thanks to LLSPA Board members Roger Bloch, the Invasive Watch Coordinator for Little Sunapee, and Nancy Girald, fellow Weed Watcher and director, for helping to arrange this informative paddle.



Autumnal Reset: How Fall Transforms Our Lakes

With the crisp air and streaks of crimson, ochre and citrine lighting up our trees happening above water, the lake is undergoing its own changes below.

During the warm summer, most New Hampshire lakes separate into distinct layers. The sun warms the surface water, creating a warmer, less dense, oxygen-rich layer on top, while the deeper water remains cold, dense, and low in oxygen. These layers stay separate all summer long—like oil and water—each becoming increasingly out of balance. By late summer, Oxygen is scarce at the bottom and nutrients are locked deep below, far from the surface.

Once the temperatures begin to cool, the oxygen from the top of the lake sinks and the nutrients rise. This helps support fish and aquatic life, allowing fish to move deeper into the lake. It also helps prepare the lake (and its creatures!) for its stagnant season of winter, by making sure each member of the aquatic ecosystem has enough sustenance to survive the winter.

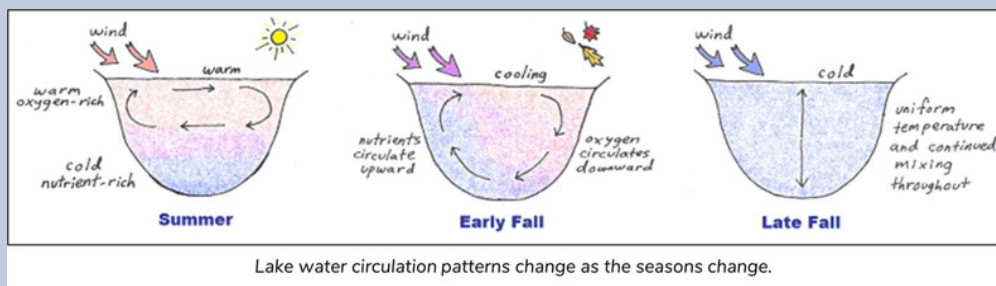


Image From NHLakes.com

Closing Up Camp? Protect Your Lake While You're At It!

As summer winds down and the leaves start to change, it's the perfect time to start thinking about your property—not just for the cold months ahead, but for the spring to come. Your regular fall chores can help make your property more lake-friendly:

- Fix bare spots and erosion
- Reroute runoff from roofs and paths
- Plant native shrubs and grasses
- Check your septic system
- Plan your snow storage and ice management
- Do not rake your leaves into the lake
- Start planning for next spring!

Little changes now = a healthier lake year-round.

Top 10 Ways to Be a Good Septic Owner

- ✓ Have your system inspected every three years by a qualified professional or according to your state/ local health department's recommendations
- ✓ Have your septic tank pumped, when necessary, generally every three to five years
- ✓ Avoid pouring harsh products (e.g., oils, grease, chemicals, paint, medications) down the drain
- ✓ Discard non-degradable products in the trash (e.g., floss, disposable wipes, cat litter) instead of flushing them
- ✓ Keep cars and heavy vehicles parked away from the drainfield and tank
- ✓ Follow the system manufacturer's directions when using septic tank cleaners and additives
- ✓ Repair leaks and use water efficient fixtures to avoid overloading the system
- ✓ Maintain plants and vegetation near the system to ensure roots do not block drains
- ✓ Use soaps and detergents that are low-suds, biodegradable, and low- or phosphate-free
- ✓ Prevent system freezing during cold weather by inspecting and insulating vulnerable system parts (e.g., the inspection pipe and soil treatment area)



Awards!

Commendation Ceremony

The Board of Directors was honored to accept a meaningful commendation from Governor Ayotte on behalf of Little Lake Sunapee Protective Association, including its entire team—members, lake hosts, weed watchers, dedicated volunteers, and partners on August 13th, 2025. We deeply appreciate this recognition of our stewardship efforts aimed at protecting Little Lake Sunapee for current and future generations.

A number of lake associations in the Lake Sunapee area who monitor water quality, limit invasive species and increase awareness of lake health were honored by the governor with a commendation for their stewardship.



Lake Smart

Our LLSPA President, Deb Hoover was awarded a Lake Smart award from NH LAKES. Quoted from NH LAKES, “We recently visited our newest board member, Deb Hoover, and her husband, John, and their pup, Cricket, on Little Lake Sunapee.

They're pouring their love of gardens and plants into their property. Deb is a master gardener and has plans to expand their already beautiful gardens. They are letting natural plants reclaim the shoreline and improving the rocky soil by installing bottomless raised beds planted with native shrubs. A vegetated shoreline buffer does it all! It soaks up runoff before it hits the lake, holds soil in place, gives wildlife a home, adds shade and privacy for your property, blocks wind, and even keeps geese away.” Hats off to the Hoover family for this dedicated effort!!



Loon Log 2025

For the first time in several years, the entire lake community was alight with the excitement of the prospect of loonlets. There were two pairs of nesting loons in June: one pair on the artificial loon nest, and the other on land. Both sets of loon parents took turns keeping the eggs warm and safe. Though there were two eggs on the artificial nest, neither of those eggs hatched. The eggs were collected by the Loon Preservation Committee for testing by intern Josh Worma. Two eggs on the natural nest did hatch, but only one sibling survived. While we are not certain, siblicide is quite common amongst loonlets. The surviving loonlet is now quite large! What once began as a tiny chick with downy black feathers is now catching up to its parents' size, though it is still sporting youthful plumage. Little Lake Sunapee is most fortunate to have two superb photographers, Peter Bloch and Peter Jacoby, keeping their lenses focused on our loons all summer long. Peter Jacoby spent time in the West Basin where the loon chick spent most of its time, and was able to provide us with incredible photographs and observations of the new family of three over the summer. Thank you, Peter, for your keen eye, talent for snapping incredible shots, and observations that we have compiled below.

June 27, 2024:

"After several long years with no loon chicks, we have two nesting pairs on Little Lake Sunapee and I'm happy to report one of the nesting pairs is now proud parents of two chicks! (In case anyone is wondering, these were taken from a good distance.)"



June 27th, 2025 (Later That day!)

"Our loon parents are doing a good job as parents. One of them stayed on the nest with the chicks while the other grabs something small and tasty for the chicks. When the parent with the food came back to shore, it pushed itself up on shore a little way and the chicks came out from under the other to get the food... One member of the pair is banded. I got pictures of the bands and submitted them to the Loon Preservation Committee."



June 28th, 2025

"The Loon Preservation committee shared that, 'The banded loon was originally banded on Little Sunapee after nesting successfully on the raft (where this year another pair is nesting), back in 2016. So, he's at least 12 years old (given a minimum age at first breeding of 3 years), and more likely at least 15 years old, since the average New Hampshire loon is 6 years old when it first wins a territory and nests. As far as we know, this male has been on Little Sunapee each summer since 2016.'"



Loon Log 2025

July 5th, 2025

"I went out to visit our loon family shortly before sunset this evening and due to fading light was only able to get one reasonably focused shot of the little guy (does he need a name?) floating a little away from his parents and one fuzzy picture with one of his parents. He's looking larger thanks to his attentive parents who every time I've seen them are offering food. He's started diving on his own though only stays down for a very short time at this point."



July 9th, 2025

"It was a beautiful evening yesterday, so I went out to check on our loon family and they're all looking good. As usual, the parents were following the little one offering food which they sometimes took but also sometimes ignored. Judging from what I've seen, they're constantly offering food and they just can't eat it all. At one point dad did a wing flap right above the little guy (he/she could really use a name!) and then a few minutes later, the chick did one right next to dad."



July 16th, 2025

"In my last post I asked for suggestions for a name for our loonlet and got one, Little Dipper, which I like so I'm going to go ahead and use that even though a week later he's looking more like a Medium Dipper than a Little one. Anyway, all is well with Little Dipper and his parents—he's grown quite a bit in the last week!"



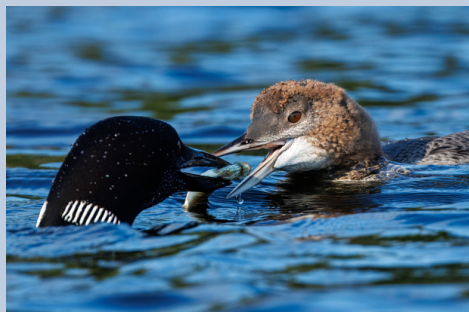
August 4th, 2025

"Little Dipper update! He/she is about 5 weeks old now, has grown a lot and has juvenile plumage coming in. His parents are giving him more space and he's diving along with them though I'm guessing he's not catching much of his own yet. His parents also seem more relaxed about his safety. Today as they moved towards me, they kept on coming in my direction and ended up closer than they had been in the past though definitely not nearly as close as adults do when there's no baby to protect."



August 13th

"Little Dipper is looking much more mature. He's lost most of the downy feathers and has most of his juvenile plumage. I saw him come up from a dive with something in his mouth so he's catching his own food but he's still being fed by his parents. The fish his parents are providing are larger now. Whenever I've seen a single parent with Little Dipper, it's been the father. I'm not sure if that's because the father spends more time with him or if the father is usually "on duty" in the evening when I tend to see them."



Loon Log 2025

August 24th

"Little Dipper is about 8 weeks old now and looking very much like a juvenile loon. The lake was very calm on Saturday morning and I found him alone just off the beach of Colby point. His parents weren't in sight, but I figured at least one of them was likely not too far away. After about 15 minutes, sure enough, dad swam into view. They must be confident that he's old enough and large enough to be safe on his own at least for short periods of time. He'll be starting to work towards his first flight over the next few weeks."



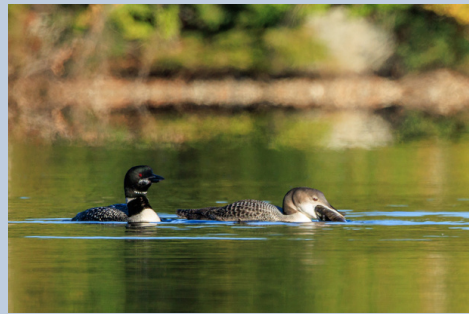
September 3rd, 2025

"Little Dipper's parents are still very attentive and this morning both of them were feeding him at the same time. It was eating everything offered. I assume they're catching some of their own food as its diving along with his parents and stays down for about 30 seconds at a time. At one point one of his parents surfaced with a fish for him and couldn't find him since LD was under water. After numerous looks under water, the parent ended up doing a wing flap while holding the fish in its mouth."



September 21st, 2025

"Little Dipper was working with something below the surface. When he finally brought that something out of the water, I was surprised to see it was a very large fish (at least very large in terms of what I've seen Little Dipper eat in the past). He tried for several minutes to swallow it but finally gave up. Clearly this was a meal that shouldn't be let go to waste, so father took it, and even *he* had some trouble getting it down but, finally, managed."



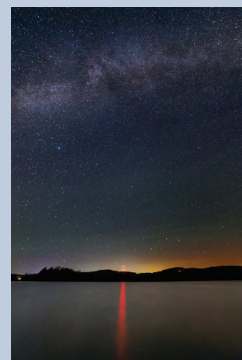
September 22nd, 2025

"Little Dipper starts flight training! It probably wasn't his first attempt but it is the first time I've seen him try."



September 28th, 2025

"A beautiful night on the lake."





Water Quality

Our water quality volunteers, Mike and Kathy Thomas, conduct Deep Water sampling in the summer months in both basins of the lake, as well as tributary sampling monthly when water flow and access permits sampling. This provides us with invaluable data; how fortunate we are to have their knowledge and expertise.

LLSPA's Board of Directors

Deborah Hoover (President)	Barry Fougere
Nancy Giraldo (Vice President)	Peter Gunn
Kathy Thomas (Treasurer)	Cynthia Kelsey
Roger Bloch (Secretary)	Cesca Koron
Steve Ensign (Director Emeritus)	Tory Lambert
Sallie Barker	Wendy Parker
Amy Bucklin	Sarah Roberts
Rich Badmington	Holly Scrivani
Don Castle	
Ann Donnery	

Thank you to Blue Loon Bakery and Old Hampshire Designs for Sponsoring The Point!



OLD HAMPSHIRE DESIGNS, INC.
NEW LONDON, NH 603.526.6945

If your business would like to sponsor the Little Lake Sunapee Protective Association, please email contact@littlesunapee.org



Peter Bloch, EarthAerial Productions

Follow us on instagram!

[@LittleLakeSunapee](https://www.instagram.com/LittleLakeSunapee)

Follow us on facebook!

[@Little Lake Sunapee Protective Association](https://www.facebook.com/LittleLakeSunapeeProtectiveAssociation)

Visit our website at

<https://littlesunapee.org/>