



Website: www.norwaylakes.org
Email: laon@norwaylakes.org
P.O. Box 505, Norway, ME 04268

ANNUAL MEETING
SATURDAY JULY 9th, 1:30-3pm
Town Office, 19 Danforth St.
(behind Norway Savings Bank)

**Join us to get results of our first
Watershed Survey, learn from our
guest speaker about planting
shoreline buffers... and much more!**

SUMMER 2016 NEWSLETTER

To borrow a phrase, this might be an inconvenient truth, but without attention our lakes could suffer greatly in the not too distant future. Two facts that get our attention are the lakes surrounding us already have invasive plants, and three of **our** lakes suffer oxygen depletion. Their potential impacts will be explained on the following pages.

If our lakes were to become unhealthy, we wouldn't want to go swimming or boating here. Fish stocks would decline and loons and other wildlife would be unlikely to return in the spring. LAON is the only organization dedicated to protecting Norway's lakes, for ourselves and for the generations to follow us.

We are mailing this newsletter, even if we have your email address, to provide the enclosed Lake Smart brochure from the Maine Lakes Society on what to do around your home to protect lake water quality. (The brochure is also on our website.) We hope you use it and share it. Our collaboration with Maine Lakes is just one of our partnerships with other local and statewide groups and agencies. We are not only staying alert to persistent and developing threats but are also learning about best responsive practices.

LAON took a significant step in protecting our lakes last season. While still monitoring the health of our lakes, we added an emphasis on being proactive to prevent damage. It was the natural thing to do if we wanted to be serious about our mission. As the 2016 summer season starts, LAON is working to preserve the health of our lakes by confronting two equally alarming threats, invasive plant infestations and the effects of harmful storm water runoff. **Addressing** either one after the problem hits takes an enormous amount of time and money (and success is far from guaranteed), so **prevention** is the only smart and effective thing to do.

AN APPEAL FROM LAON'S PRESIDENT

Of the 454 lakeshore property owners on our four lakes, only a few are actively involved with LAON's projects and less than 40% pay dues. If you agree that we should do our best to preserve our lakes, please join LAON. If you have a little energy, please become an active member! Write to me at laon@norwaylakes.org, or call me at (207) 743-1808 so we can talk about some ways you could volunteer that would fit well with your interests, skills, and available time. Some projects take a little time, some can take more. **We need your help and involvement to sustain our prevention programs.** I hope you can attend our annual meeting to learn more.

Sal Girifalco

This newsletter reports the results of last year's work, describes our prevention plans more fully, and highlights our plans for the summer. Without your support, we won't be able to do all that needs to be done!

Water Quality

Water Chemistry

We will maintain our schedule of taking regular readings at each lake on visibility, phosphorus, oxygen levels, and other indicators, using new technical instruments to get more precise data. The volunteer monitor commitment is only about an hour per month after one instrument training session. **Let us know if you would like to become a lake water quality monitor.**

2015 Season Monitoring Results Summary

(full report is at www.norwaylakes.org)

Because there can be significant yearly fluctuations, year to year comparisons are not always meaningful. Therefore, our comparisons are to our historical averages (40+ years). We had two monthly values that were much higher than the other months and the historical averages. While there could be some unknown cause for the high values, it is quite likely that they are invalid, possibly due to sample contamination. They are not represented in the averages within the table below but their effect can be seen in the footnotes and they are in the full report.

Our water quality analysis indicates mostly good news. Concentrations of total phosphorus were lower or the same (lower is better) in all our lakes. Algal abundance, as measured by chlorophyll concentrations, also declined or stayed the same as the historical value in all our lakes (lower is better). Secchi depth is a measure of water clarity in meters (larger is better) and only Sand Pond exceeded the historical averages in 2015. It is unclear why water clarity would decline in the other lakes despite improvements in total phosphorus and chlorophyll.

While a portion of our data is largely positive, we cannot relax our vigilance. A recent study reveals that an unknown process is dumping phosphorus into streams and lakes across the U.S. A related article, "Monitoring Uncovers Mysterious Phosphorus Pollution," is on our website under Healthy Lakes News.

A significant concern is the low level of dissolved oxygen at the bottom of three of our lakes (oxygen depletion). Levels for all lakes except North Pond were low, ranging from 0.73 to 2.90 (below 3 ppm is considered too low for fish populations). Being shallow, North Pond benefits from the effects of wind, which mixes oxygen rich surface water throughout the water column. A summary table follows.

	Phos (ug/L)	Chl (mg/L)	Secchi (m)	Oxygen (ppm at bottom)
Sand	3.2 (5.9)	1.1 (2.8)	8.7 (7.4)	2.90
Penn	7.4 (9)	*2.6 (4.3)	4.6 (5.8)	1.67
North	15.6 (17)	2.8 (2.8)	2.4 (2.8)	7.21
Hobbs	**6.7 (6.7)	2.0 (4.3)	4.9 (5.2)	0.73

ug/L is microgram per liter, mg/L is milligram per liter, ppm is parts per million

Numbers in parentheses are the long term average (up to 40+ years)

*If extraordinary value was included, Penn Chl average would be 15.4

** If extraordinary value was included, Hobbs Phos average would be 10.2

Watershed Surveys

Because the natural filtering of storm water runoff decreases with development, more phosphorus flows into our lakes, feeding algae blooms. Algae blooms aren't just unsightly; they can be deadly because they cause oxygen depletion which would eventually destroy fish habitats. No fish...no fishing...no loons. Algae also thrive as our climate warms. There is not much we can do about our lakes becoming warmer, but we can - and must - reduce the impact of runoff by restoring some natural filtering of phosphorus. In June teams of LAON members under the guidance of Technical Leaders will conduct our first full watershed survey of one of our lakes to help us identify areas of particular concern and suggest potential solutions. The results will be discussed at our annual meeting. **Let us know if you would like to participate in future surveys.**

Invasive Plants

To keep invasive plants out, LAON will provide *Courtesy Boat Inspectors* (CBI) at the same level as 2015. Since surrounding lakes are battling invasive plants, any visiting boat could easily deposit an unwanted sprig that could start a virulent infestation. Last summer we conducted 1,650 inspections; **each of the 600 boats not from Norway** was a potential invasive plant carrier. We actually found plants over 3 dozen times.

Late last summer, we also started a fledgling *Invasive Plant Patrol* (IPP) program to put many "eyes on the lakes." This easy and powerful program teaches very basic plant identification techniques. It enables anyone who plays, swims, boats, or floats to look for potentially invasive plants while having fun. The more people on an IPP while enjoying their section of the lake, the safer our lakes will be. It only takes a half day training to become prepared to patrol.

Let us know if you can help with managing CBI or want to become part of our IPP.



LAON members at an IPP training session or "Plant Paddle."

Outreach

We know that simply talking about LAON's work is the best way to get people involved. While this newsletter provides a good base for those conversations, we need to continue to create more informational resources for outreach. **Do you have any design, writing, editing, or layout skills? Can you work on our website or Facebook page? We need your help to grow!**

Membership Support

There are many ways you can help to strengthen LAON:

- **Help us save** printing and mailing expenses by providing **your email address**. (We'll only use it for a minimum number of LAON related messages.) If you haven't received any emails from us, please provide your email address again on the return envelope (please print clearly). It would help avoid errors if you could also enter your email address on our website under Membership and Support.
- **Participate** (Water Quality Monitoring, Watershed Surveys, CBI Management, Invasive Plant Patrol, or Outreach) or **volunteer** at a special event. We only have a small number of active members; we need you!
- **Send your annual dues today** in the enclosed envelope. LAON relies on your annual membership contribution to defend our lakes and to maintain the value of our properties. We must also build our Emergency Remediation Fund so that we can quickly attack any emerging problem before it becomes a crisis. Please be as generous as you can. Thank you.

As the chart below reveals, much less than half of all lakeshore owners contribute to preserving the value of their properties related to the health of the lakes. Let's improve these percentages! If you are already a member, please take the time to **urge your neighbors to join** LAON now.

Lake	# of Property Owners	# of Dues Paying Members	Percentage
Hobbs Pond	37	12	32%
Sand Pond	58	23	40%
North Pond	87	25	29%
Pennesseewassee	272	110	40%

- VOLUNTEERS ALWAYS WELCOME!

There are many opportunities big and small to contribute to make a big difference in our community. Please email us and we will certainly be in touch: LAON@norwaylakes.org

- **Consider becoming a Board Member.** We only meet a few times each year but each of us takes on other tasks between meetings. There is no specific time requirement for becoming a Board Member. We welcome new members but particularly need representatives from Lake Pennesseewassee.



LAON BOARD

Officers:

President: Sal Girifalco • VP: Jeanne Silverman
Treasurer: Tom Webster • Secretary: Vacant

Directors:

Hobbs Pond: Ray Snedeker • Tom Curtis

Lake Pennesseewassee: David Dow • Susan Jacoby • Stephen Zeeman

North Pond: Eric Grondhal • Sal Girifalco • Ed Stone • Tom Webster

Sand Pond: Pat Daniels • Jeanne Silverman

Please Support Our Business Sponsors

Our Sponsors have been quite generous to LAON. Their support reflects their commitment to our community and the health of our lakes. ***Be sure to thank and support them!***

- Ari's Pizza & Subs
- Brooks Family Trust
- Café Nomad
- Dow's Law Office
- Joel Speakman/Edward Jones Investments
- Norway Lake Marina/Keller Place
- Norway Savings Bank
- Oxford Federal Credit Union
- Oxford/Norway Laundry Services
- Paris Cape Realty
- The Lake Store
- White's Marina
- Woodman's Sporting Goods

Lane/Road Associations

Cove to Cove Lane Association • Valhalla Shores Association
Please encourage your association to support LAON!

2015 Individual/Family Contributors (\$150 or more)

Cushman & Pamela Andrews • Bob & Anne Blair • Erick & Pamela Bourbon •
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Gary & Anne Stuer • Fred & Barbara Sutherland • Richard & Lisa Ullman •
Frank & Janet Vogt • Michael & Randa White •

The Town of Norway recognizes the critical nature of our work by providing financial and administrative support. We thank them for their ongoing support.

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection deserves our thanks for awarding LAON a CBI grant in both 2015 and 2016.

Free way to donate to LAON:

Want to help LAON? Well, here is an easy way. The next time you purchase from Amazon, use Amazon Smile. Amazon donates .5% of your purchase directly to LAON. It does not cost you anything. To start, just use this link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/30-0034585>, and simply use Amazon as you normally would. Remember to use Amazon Smile each time you purchase. This is also explained on our website.



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3pm at the Norway Town Office, 19 Danforth St.**

What is LAON?

LAON is a community based volunteer organization dedicated to preserving the health and beauty of Norway's four lakes: Sand Pond, Hobbs Pond, North Pond and Lake Pennessewassee. We were incorporated in 1971 and are a tax exempt nonprofit for educational and scientific purposes.

LAON:

- works to protect the lakes from harmful invasive plants and pollutants
- monitors the lakes and reports on their condition
- supports a broad based awareness campaign to reach our entire watershed community

LAON sponsors are local businesses which recognize the connection between a healthy environment and the economic vitality of the entire Norway area.

Our members help protect our lakes. They also enjoy swimming, boating, fishing and other water sports during the summer and ice fishing, snowmobiling, cross country skiing and skating on the lakes all winter.