



Lake Nipmuc Newsletter

The Lake Nipmuc
Association

Volume 1, Issue 1
July 3, 2008

A Few Words From The President

Greetings! We're excited to bring this first issue to print! Much has happened in the short time since the Lake Nipmuc Association was formed. Membership in the association is strong. Participation has been earnest and great strides have been made in many areas. The web site (www.lakenipmuc.com) has been extended and updated with new information. Lots of issues have been discussed and debated. Significant progress has been made in addressing storm runoff issues from Route 16. A new logo for the asso-



ciation has been created. Water testing initiated. And now we bring you the first issue of this newsletter, which we hope you will find informative. Membership in the association is open to anyone who may have an interest in supporting Lake Nipmuc and its habitat. It's certainly a great community resource to be valued and enjoyed as well as protected. Have a wonderful summer and enjoy!

Thanks Ted King,
President, Lake Nipmuc Association

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Lake Nipmuc Water Quality Monitoring Program

As you all know, the Mendon Board of Health closed the lake to swimming on Thursday, June 12th because test results from Microbac of Marlborough showed high counts of E. coli. It is believed that the recent hot weather had caused the bacteria counts to be higher. By Wednesday, June 17th, the count had dropped to near zero and the lake was reopened.

In addition to the Board of Health's weekly testing of the town beach area, the Lake Nipmuc Association is conducting monthly water quality monitoring. Members voted for this program at the April meeting. The first testing was done on May 15th and a second on June 22nd. These will continue on a monthly basis through November. Tammy Gilpatrick, with the assistance of Association members, is performing these tests. Tammy is from the Blackstone River Coalition in Worcester and supervises the Blackstone River Watershed Association's Water Quality Monitoring Program. The BRWA laboratory facility in Uxbridge is being used to analyze the samples. A number of physical and chemical parameters are being tested at six to eight different locations around the lake. These include temperature, turbidity, dissolved oxygen, oxygen saturation, conductivity, nitrates, orthophosphates, and e coli. Several testing's will be necessary in order to gather enough information to form any conclusions. Our last testing, however, did show high e. coli readings in the southeast corner of the lake. A second testing has been done. In the Old Taft Ave. area, phosphate readings were extremely high. Phosphates can cause rampant weed growth. *Continued on Page 3*

President
Ted King

Vice President
Laura Tosches

Treasurer
Ileen Matthews

Secretary
Michelle Walsh

Lake Nipmuc Association
PO Box
Mendon, MA 01756

Website:
www.lakenipmuc.com



How to Get Rid of Geese

A Google search of the above phrase will turn up a dozen or more excellent web sites with a wide range of solutions.

Editor's Note:

**We Welcome
Letters on
issues
affecting the
Lake.**

Route 16 Storm Water Run Off Update

By now everyone has heard about the notorious Lake Nipmuc sandbar that had been formed from decades of Route 16 storm runoff. Articles and pictures have appeared in the Milford Daily News, the Mendon Upton Town Crier, and the Blackstone Watershed Association Spring Newsletter. These pictures were a part of the evidence in the Charles River Watershed Association's lawsuit against Mass Highway for violation of the Clean Water Act. On June 4th, Federal Judge William Young ruled against Mass Highway and said they have "...long ignored their legal responsibility to protect the Commonwealth's water resources for the health of all residents."

William Clougherty, a Mass Highway engineer, has reported to the Association that they hired an engineering consultant, the BSC Group, to perform a survey of the existing Route 16 drainage system. This survey has been completed

and the results are currently being reviewed and discussed with the Department of Environmental Protection.

One option being considered is the installation of deep sump catch basins at the low points of the system. Before this can be done, however, the sediment contribution from the steep driveway on Rte. 16 directly across from Old Taft Ave must be addressed.

For those who missed it, a letter thanking our State Representative John Fernandes for his invaluable assistance with this long standing problem was sent to the Editor of the Milford Daily News. The letter was subsequently published and the representative sent a gracious thank you to the entire Association.

Watch for the minutes of our monthly meetings and future newsletters to learn of the progress in this very important part of the Association's commitment to protect and preserve the quality of the waters of Lake Nipmuc.

All About Buffers

Many of our rivers, streams, and lakes are grossly over-fertilized by nutrients, particularly nitrates and phosphates. These nutrients cause aquatic plants to grow like crazy. The excess growth impedes water flow and lowers oxygen levels. Each year in the United States, 100 million dollars is spent to have noxious invasive weeds killed by chemical or other methods.

A number of these homes have lawns that go to the edge of the water. If even a portion of these homes were to put in a buffer zone, it could help keep these nutrients from washing into the lake.

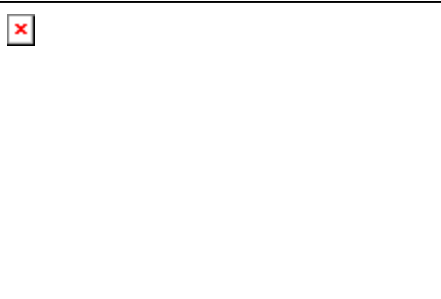
What is a buffer?

- A buffer is a strip of natural vegetation along the bank of the

lake that separates the water from the lawn.

What purposes does a buffer serve?

- A buffer acts as a natural filter system. It traps nutrients from lawn fertilizers and pet waste and allows them to soak into the ground.
- A buffer helps stop erosion of your lake front property. Turf grasses have shallow root systems. Native plants have deep root systems that resist erosion and stabilize the shoreline.
- Discourages Canada geese. Geese love feeding on short grass and their one to one and a half pounds of droppings per bird add to the waterway's nutrient load.



**The Lake Nipmuc
Association is Dedicated to Protecting
and Preserving Lake
Nipmuc and its
Watershed.**

All About Buffers, (continued)

- Improves wild life habitat
- Beautifies your yard

How wide does the buffer have to be?

- The wider, the better, but a 6 foot wide buffer is better than no buffer at all.

What should be planted in a buffer?

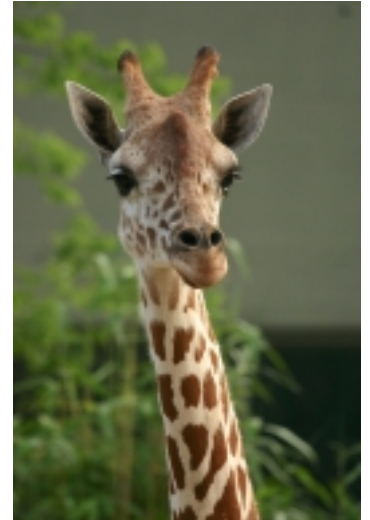
- Native plants are best. A list of native plants and where to purchase them can be found at <http://www.massnativeplants.org/>

Where can I find more information on how to build a buffer zone?

- The Lake Nipmuc Association maintains a small lending library. We have 3 copies of "The Massachusetts Buffer Manual." This 112 page publication is reader friendly and includes many color photographs.

If you would like to borrow a copy, please contact our secretary, Michelle Walsh at michelle@reed-walsh.com

We also have a number of leaflets on "Creating and Maintaining Vegetative Buffers."



Wild Things

Please share any stories you may have about observations or close encounters with Lake Nipmuc wild life.

Lake Nipmuc Water Quality Monitoring Program (Continued from front page)

The source can be excessive lawn fertilizer or failing septic systems. Some lake properties are still served by cesspools and these can also be problematic.

Only by understanding the conditions that cause contamination and other problems will the Lake Nipmuc Association be able to prevent them.

What You Should Know About *E. coli*

E. coli is a species of fecal coliform bacteria that is specific to fecal material from humans and other warm blooded animals. Possible sources of *E. coli* on Lake Nipmuc could be failing septic systems or cesspools, Canadian Geese, or pet waste. According to the EPA, testing for *E. coli* is the best indicator of health risk from contact

with recreational waters.

The *E. coli* itself is usually not harmful, but it does indicate the possible presence of disease causing bacteria, viruses, and protozoans that live in human and animal digestive systems. If these pathogenic microorganisms are in the waters of Lake Nipmuc, swimming could be a health risk. An *E. coli* count of over 235 units per 100 milliliters, will force the Board of Health to close the Mendon Town Beach to swimming. Should that occur, it is probably not a good idea to swim anywhere in the lake. Swimming should also be avoided if you have an open cut or wound. Any resident who chooses to ignore the warnings and develops symptoms of gastrointestinal illness such as vomiting or diarrhea is strongly advised to contact a doctor.

Invasive Plant Life - Weed Watchers Workshop

July 8th
7:00pm to
9:00pm at the
Mendon Senior

Blackstone River Coalition (BRC) Partners with Lake Nipmuc Association

The Blackstone River Coalition (BRC) is pleased to be working with the Lake Nipmuc Association on a pilot water quality monitoring program. The BRC has been sampling over 80 sites on the Blackstone River and its tributaries since 2004 with over 80 volunteer monitors. Working with the Lake Nipmuc Association is our first project conducting lake testing and we are excited to continue the partnership.

Shirley Smith
(member of the LNA) and Ted King
(President LNA)
taking samples on
Sunday.



**The Lake Nipmuc
Association**



PO Box 159
Mendon, MA 01756
E-mail: info@lakenipmuc.org

Dedicated to Protecting and
Preserving Lake Nipmuc.

We're on the Web!

www.lakenipmuc.org

Join The Lake Nipmuc Association Membership Form

The Lake Nipmuc Association is a volunteer organization. We rely on grants, donations and membership dues to support our programs.

Student	\$ 10.00
Individual	\$ 20.00
Family	\$ 25.00
Business	\$ 60.00
Patron	\$100.00
Benefactor	\$200.00
Steward	\$500.00

**Please make check payable to:
The Lake Nipmuc Association
PO Box 159, Mendon, MA 01756**

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

Why Join the Lake Nipmuc Association?

- Water Quality Monitoring- The LNA monitors conditions, identifies areas of concern and engages local citizens in the protection and enjoyment of Mendon's most valuable natural resource.
- Educational Forums- The LNA provides public workshops to increase public understanding and community stewardship of Lake Nipmuc.
- Newsletter- The LNA publishes four newsletters a year in the summer, fall, winter and spring.
- Meetings- The LNA holds monthly meetings on the first Thursday of the month, 7:00 PM, at the Mendon Senior Center on Providence Rd.

Meetings are open to the public.

The LNA is a volunteer organization. We rely on donations and membership dues to support our programs. Donations are tax deductible.