

# JULY 2021 NEWSLETTER



## *FINDING BALANCE ON THE LAKE THROUGHOUT BELGRADE, OAKLAND & SIDNEY*

### *Up coming Events*

**Annual Meeting: Zoom  
August 7th,  
10am ([link below](#))**

**Plant Paddle:  
August 19th,  
2pm @ Oakland Gazebo**

**Don't forget to follow us  
on Facebook**

**Donate on our website:  
[www.friendsofmessalonskee.com](http://www.friendsofmessalonskee.com)**

Dear Neighbors,

Summer is officially here! Friends of Messalonskee (FOM) is busy at work and there is a lot happening on our lake.

FOM is calling upon every individual and family who enjoys the lake to join us. We are volunteer-run but we have one part-time administrative assistant who keeps the office ship shape. Your membership dollars help us to pay her and for our twice-yearly newsletter mailings, paper products, liability insurance, etc. In other words, general operating costs of the organization.

We have been very fortunate to receive funds from each of our surrounding towns and grants from the State of Maine and Federal Government each year to help us with the cost of milfoil mitigation in the lake. As you may (or may not) be aware, the lake is "owned" by the state. We are grateful for their support. In the past, many individuals have also donated to the milfoil projects and we thank them, too.

As you are likely aware, we were one good wind storm away from an algae bloom last summer. This summer is already on the record as one of the warmest, if not the warmest, yet. This is not good news for our water quality in Messalonskee Lake. As one Board member said, "Our problem now is Variable Leaf Milfoil. Once we have an algae bloom, we will have another major issue to deal with that negatively impacts property values and water quality." (He happens to be a professional property appraiser. A strong statement, indeed.)

If you follow us on Facebook, you'll see that our Milfoil Crew is out hand-pulling milfoil by the bag. Our Courtesy Boat Inspectors are staffing the boat launches. These jobs that we provide to area teens, college students and adults alike are essential to our mission. We hope that when you see them around the lake that you'll thank them for their good work.

New England Milfoil will be back in October to DASH (Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting) the worst spots on the lake. Our Annual Meeting is happening via zoom this year. Join us on Saturday, August 7th at 10am. We have a few events up our sleeve as well: stay tuned to FOM's Facebook Page for our FOM calendar photo contest and more!

We are so glad to have you all aboard. Reach out if you have any questions!

Mike Guarino, President and Linda Warner, Vice President

For your convenience an envelope is included with this newsletter. You can also make a donation on PayPal through our website ([www.FriendsofMessalonskee.com](http://www.FriendsofMessalonskee.com)). Business members are welcome too.

# FOM ANNUAL MEETING

The Friends of Messalonskee Watershed Annual Meeting will be held on August 7, 2021 via Zoom.

**Zoom Link:** <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/79901836339?pwd=dUhoSzZMz3JSSXBJN2tHYUgvTk5BQT09>

This year's guest speaker is Jen Jesperson, Water Resource Specialist and is Principal/Owner of EcoInstincts. FOM has contacted Jen to lead our upcoming Watershed Survey and she will discuss the project and answer questions from our membership. Jen has a combined 30 years of education and experience in the environmental field. She has worked with all of the lakes in the region for watershed planning.

Among the items to be presented to the membership at the Annual Meeting is the slate of officers for the next two years.

The Governance Committee has proposed the following slate of officers:

President - Linda Warner

Vice President - Janna Townsend

Second Vice President - Ned Hammond

Treasurer - Bob Nardi

Secretary - Rachel White



Board Members who are continuing to serve are:

Mike Guarino

JJ Jurdak

Peter Koons

Kathy Moore

Janna Townsend

Garry Bennett

Connor White

Friends of Messalonskee is allowed to have up to 17 Board of Trustees. If you would like to volunteer to serve on the Board, please email the office and we'll send you the Board application form.

Each member (membership term is January 1 - December 31 each year) may have one vote at the annual meeting. Organizations that are members may also have one vote.

Please make sure your email address is on your membership envelope or check. Thanks! See you there!

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## A LakeSmart Visit

John Veilleux is the president of Sunny Shores, a new condominium association on Messalonskee. Together they are rebuilding at every level of the STEEP property to protect the lake from erosion and other sources of pollution. FOM's LakeSmart was delighted to confirm their efforts so far, then help them to create a more extensive plan to divert the heavy waters that rush, destructively, across their land into the lake.

For a start, they've already built an effective rock-filled swale that captures the water from a culvert. Good job!

- Next steps: Build berms and swales, add rock and plantings at the top of the slope to spread the water flow.
- At the bottom, build a riprap shoreline to rebuild and protect the balding root bare soil.
- In the middle, create pathways for folk to walk that also divert rainwater away from the lake, gardens for folk to enjoy that also absorb and filter rainfall before it gets to the lake. It's a long, arduous, but loving endeavor. Thank you Sunny Shores for your efforts to protect Messalonskee!

Call/Email LakeSmart: 207-618-8723 or  
friendsofmessalonskee@gmail.com

# **Help Friends of Messalonskee: STOP the DANGEROUS PHOSPHORUS CYCLE**

Messalonskee is on the Maine Department of Environmental Protection Nonpoint Priority Watershed Threatened Lakes list. We need your help to keep it off the Impaired list.

FOM is conducting a Watershed Survey and developing a Watershed Management Plan! It will help us identify erosion and other sources of pollution that are contributing to changes in water quality.



Without the Watershed Survey, our lake could look like this with a full algae bloom making the lake toxic to people and animals.

## We need your help to:

- Raise \$30,000 by the end of August 2021
- Volunteer to walk the survey area with experts to learn and chart where erosion is happening.



Support this effort by making your donation here: [www.friendsofmessalonskee.com](http://www.friendsofmessalonskee.com)

To volunteer to walk an area of the lake or stream email [friendsofmessalonskee@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofmessalonskee@gmail.com).

Please include your name and contact information.

## **FOM Watershed Survey: Call for Volunteers**

The Friends of Messalonskee (FOM) is leading a watershed survey for Messalonskee Lake in September 2021 in conjunction with Jen Jersperson, owner of EcoInstincts, an environmental consulting business. The previous survey for Messalonskee Lake was conducted in 2003 and needs an update to document and address current sources of nonpoint source (NPS) pollution in the watershed. The survey will focus on developed land areas in the watershed including roads, stream/road crossings, shoreline development, other residential and commercial development, and agriculture/forestry (where applicable).

### **The watershed survey is designed to:**

- Identify and prioritize existing sources of polluted runoff, particularly soil erosion and stormwater runoff, in the Messalonskee Lake watershed;
- Raise public awareness about the connection between land use and water quality, and the impact of soil erosion on the water quality of the lake, and inspire people to become active watershed stewards;
- Provide recommendations to landowners so that they can voluntarily address NPS issues identified on their properties;
- Provide current information for the development of a Watershed-Based Protection Plan in 2021/22, and for obtaining state and federal funding to assist in addressing identified NPS sites and other water quality concerns in 2022 and beyond.

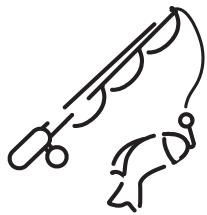
To conduct this survey the Messalonskee Watershed (64 sq miles in size) will be divided into 20 sectors and a Technical Leader will be assigned to each sector. Each Technical Leader will need at least 2 volunteers to assist them. The “on the ground” survey will most likely take place sometime in the last few weeks of September. In addition to the towns of Oakland, Belgrade and Sidney, the watershed includes sections of Manchester, Readfield and Mt. Vernon.

If you would like to receive more information about volunteering for this important effort, please contact [friendsofmessalnskee@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofmessalnskee@gmail.com).

# WHAT A CATCH!



Karen Mayer pulled this  
28-inch brown trout out  
of Messalonskee on  
June 21st!



# MESSALONKIE FISHING REPORT

The 2021 fishing season got off to quite a start this year, especially for bass and trout fishermen who experienced some of the best fishing we've seen in the last few years. People searching for brown trout and spalake caught some real nice fish trolling and casting spoons like the Mooseuk Wobbler and JB Smelt. Bass fishermen had a blast fishing shorelines and weed patches throughout the lake. Messalonskee Lake is a smallmouth factory and continues to produce some of the best smallie action in the State. During the heat of the summer, most of these fish head for deeper water to chase alewives and eat crayfish off the bottom anywhere from 15-30 feet of water. The best shallow water fishing happens early in the morning and at dusk when the big bass move shallow to feed. It's worth getting up early and hitting the lake before boat traffic and high sun sends these fish back to their deep water hangouts. For trout trollers, the thermocline generally sets up around 32 feet, so trolling depths in that range is a good place to start. Traditional hot spots around the deep hole in front of the music camp and around Midway Island always produce a few summer giants for those who put their time in.

White perch, yellow perch, and black crappie deserve more of the spotlight than they usually get. Did you know that Messo holds the state record black crappie (3.9 pounds)! During the summer months, drifting worms and small minnows near ledges and drop-offs in 15-30 feet of water is a productive way to catch these fish and can be a lot of fun. Not to mention the fish fry waiting for you when you get back to camp. There are a lot of weed beds scattered around the lake and during the hot summer months yellow perch often hang out in these areas. It's a great place to get some action, especially if you have kids in the boat! Don't be surprised if a northern pike shows up too. Pike spend a lot of the summer in deep water, but they make appearances when you least expect them and often create some of the best fish stories.

I wish you a safe and enjoyable summer fishing on the lake.

~Mike



# **FOM Plant Paddle**



Friends of Messalonskee Lake Association will offer free classes in kayaking, plant identification and watershed ecology designed for any age group. This is provided in collaboration with Mid-Maine Adult Education this summer on Thursday, August 19 from 2pm to 4pm. It will be held at the Oakland Waterfront Park. In addition to raising awareness about the importance of lake stewardship, this class is designed to create more access for those who may not have an easy way to get on the lake to enjoy the opportunities it affords such as birding and exercise. FOM can provide up to 8 open kayaks (including life jackets and paddles) for easy entry and exit. Participants are free to bring your own kayaks or canoes.

FRIENDS OF MESSALONSKEE  
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