

SPRING 2022

# GPA Newsletter

News from the Georges Pond Association



*All roads lead to camp.*



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## Protecting the Pond: Steps Taken, Steps Needed

Recently GPA President John Eliasberg put together an **overview of our collective efforts** to protect Georges Pond. "The clarity of our lake will be a reflection of how well we take care of it," John notes. **Our call to action? "We can all 'beef up our buffers' and protect our investment."**

### **Watershed-Based Management Plan (WPMP) 2020-2029:**

Four algal blooms (2012 to 2018) due to high phosphorus  
Georges Pond is placed on ME DEP's "Impaired Lakes Priority List."  
Successful alum treatments in 2020 and 2021 have produced record water clarity at a cost of over \$250,000.  
Over 50% of property owners have completed LakeSmart surveys.  
GPA received a competitive 319 Phase 1 grant of \$79,066 to make improvements during 2020 and 2021 and has recently been awarded a 319 Phase 2 grant of \$140,887 for making improvements beginning in 2022.

### **Key Factors to Consider:**

Developed land produces 5 to 10 times as much phosphorus as a forested watershed.  
Developed land, making up 22% of the GP watershed, accounts for more than half of the total phosphorus entering the pond.  
Georges Pond now receives triple the natural level of phosphorus loading.  
After development, watershed management practices generally do not remove more than 50% of the elevated phosphorus load.

### **What you can do:**

#### ***Beef up your buffer!***

***Shoreline vegetation is the best (and last) line of defense to prevent dirty stormwater from running into the Pond.***

Allow buffer to grow as deep and wide as possible (minimum 10 feet).  
Have as many layers as possible (trees, understory, natural shrubs, and duff).  
Minimize grassy shorelines (better than dirt, but poor filter and stabilizer).  
Enjoy a filtered view of the lake!

#### ***Take action!***

Request a LakeSmart survey.  
Do a 319 Phase 2 improvement project on your property.  
Pump your septic.  
Maintain gravel roads.  
Join the Georges Pond Association (GPA) – and invite your neighbors and renters to do the same.

#### ***Follow Maine's Mandatory Shoreline Act (1971)***

Minimum acreage for new lots: 40,000 sq ft (just under 1 acre)  
Minimum shoreline frontage for new lots: 200 feet  
New structure setback: 100 feet

**Clearing vegetation?** Prohibited within 75 feet of the shoreline. (*Some removal is allowed under specific conditions.* Please ask for clarification and guidance.)

### Take the GPA Quiz:

Ready for summer? ✓

Eager to open camp? ✓

Renewed your GPA membership ???



Renew online or by mail.

## GPA Updates

We feel very fortunate that **Jennifer Jespersen** and her **Ecological Instincts** team will be managing the **GPA's 319 Phase 2 grant** as they did for our Phase 1 grant. During 2022 and 2023, the GPA will be upgrading gravel roads, helping residential owners with improvements to their property, and surveying septic systems among other projects.

Speaking of gravel roads, **Cousins Road** had another **washout** this winter. As James Kearns reported to the GPA in February, "[Here is a photo of the] first washout of the chute area. It drops off six inches, and lots of material ended up in the blueberry fields. Water is still streaming and eroding from the melt off. Erosion runs down past tree line. And runoff runs to opposite side of new ditch into field in that area. Thought [this photo] might help for future reference."



Cousins Road winter 2022 washout



Linda and Brian Friedmann

**Shout out to** GPA board member **Brian Friedmann**, who was celebrated recently by Lake Stewards of Maine as a long-term citizen-scientist and water monitor. Thank you, Brian, for your dedication to keeping the pond healthy and for training and supporting other GPA volunteers.

**Ice out** on Georges Pond for 2022 was reported on **April 1**. Before then, Paul Grindle ventured out on the receding ice, as shown in this photo.



Photo courtesy Lisa Branch

## Top Ten Tips for Protecting the Pond

*Adapted from the Lake George Association (Lake George, New York)*

1. **Reduce the Stormwater Entering the Lake**

Keep hard surfaces (parking lots, driveways, rooftops) at a minimum, and use permeable pavement, rain gardens, catch basins, and native plants to infiltrate stormwater into the ground before it can flow into the lake.

2. **Inspect Your Boat for Invasive Plants**

Inspect every trailered boat before entry into the water and decontaminate the vessel if necessary.

3. **Plant Vegetative Buffers and Preserve Trees**

When landscaping, preserve trees and native plants and establish vegetative buffers. They benefit the lake's water quality and overall health by stabilizing soil and reducing erosion, filtering pollutants and sediments, and deterring nuisance species.

4. **Buy Firewood Locally**

Always purchase firewood locally. Destructive invasive insects traveling via firewood can kill millions of trees. Trees are vital to keeping our lake clean and beautiful.

5. **Be Smart With Chemicals**

Don't fertilize with phosphorus; it feeds plant growth and algae in the lake. Use pesticides sparingly and consider natural alternatives, such as more native plants in your garden.

Use biodegradable soap without phosphorus.

6. **Keep Leaves, Grass, and Debris Out of the Lake**

Too many leaves, debris, and grass clippings in the lake can reduce the oxygen levels, making it more difficult for fish and aquatic animals to live. Rake it all away from the lake and, if possible, compost it.

7. **Be Kind to Septic Systems**

Inspect and pump septic systems regularly. Don't do multiple loads of laundry all in one day; spread it out instead. Don't clog pipes with diapers, coffee grounds, feminine hygiene products, paper towels, or grease and fat from cooking.

8. **Don't Litter, and Clean Up After Your Dog**

Dog waste should be flushed down the toilet (ideally), put in the trash, or buried in your own yard.

Dog feces can contain coliform bacteria, hookworms, roundworms, tapeworms, and more. Bacteria and potential parasites can stick around the soil for years, making its way into the lake and affecting wildlife.

9. **Don't Feed Ducks or Geese**

Feeding birds causes them to unnaturally concentrate in large numbers close to people. Artificial food is bad for the birds' health. Waterfowl droppings can result in water-quality problems such as summer algal blooms. And where waterfowl congregate to feed, E-coli counts can swell to levels that make the water unsuitable for swimming.

10. **Stay informed.**

Become a member of the GPA and come to GPA events. Keep apprised of what's going on with the lake so you can help to protect it!



## Invasive Milfoil Alert!

**Invasive plant confirmed on Alamoosook Lake;  
Action plan in place for summer 2022**

In mid-February variable water-milfoil, the most widespread invasive aquatic plant in Maine, was confirmed in Alamoosook Lake, making this the first-known occurrence in Hancock County of any of the eleven invasive aquatic plants listed as **"imminent threats to Maine waters."**



While native milfoils are common in Maine lakes, invasive milfoils, such as the variable water-milfoil, **spread rapidly**, outcompeting native species. Without remediation the aggressive plants may eventually interfere with native food webs, inhibit recreational activity, and reduce water quality.



Swift, careful removal is needed to **prevent spread** to other areas of the lake and **to other waterbodies sharing boat traffic**.

Alamoosook Lake Association is working with Lake Stewards of Maine, the Maine DEP, and other partners to **develop a plan** that includes public education, improved monitoring, prevention of spread to other lakes, and, ideally, eradication of the invasive milfoil.

The Georges Pond Association is training volunteers to monitor our pond for invasive plants and to educate boaters about how to avoid accidental spread of these species.

For more information, **email [www.GeorgesPondAssociation.org](http://www.GeorgesPondAssociation.org)**.

### **From June 2018**

"As I sat on my lawn overlooking our beloved pond this noon, I was so saddened to see the whole lake covered green! Who in the world would want to swim in pea soup?"

Not !! Anyway, enclosed is my check to cover my GPA membership dues."

"Hope all our friends on the Pond stayed safe this winter. Looking forward to see you all this coming season."

"Is it too late to sign up for a LakeSmart review? And please send me info on your residential grants. I want to fix up my property."

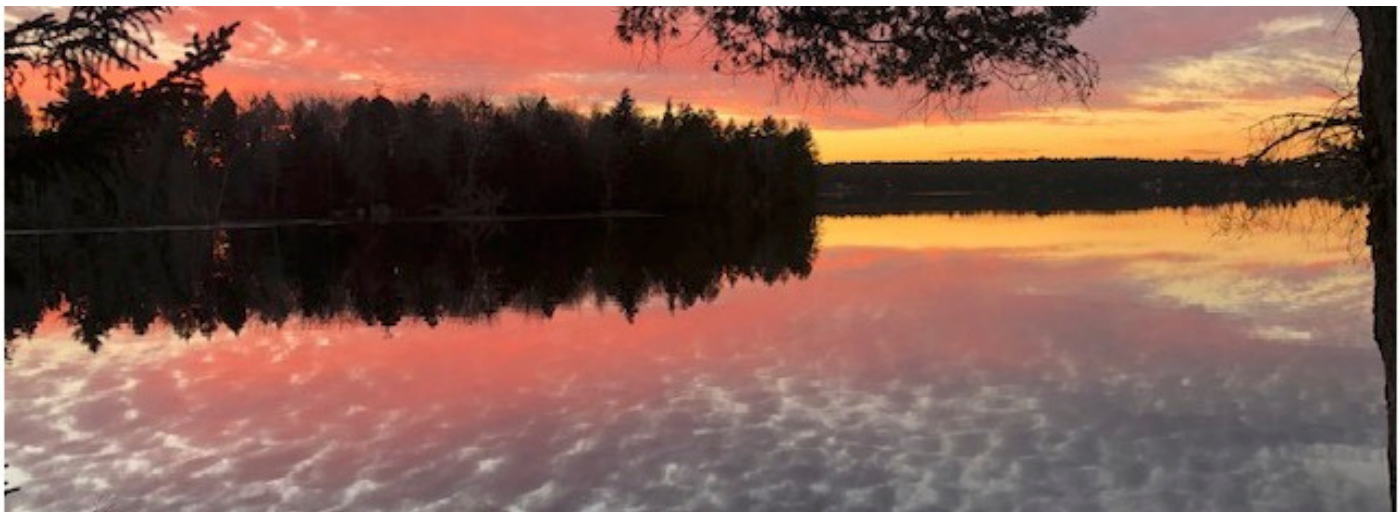


Photo courtesy Molly O'Dea

**Renew your GPA membership  
online at  
[www.GeorgesPondAssociation.org](http://www.GeorgesPondAssociation.org)  
or  
mail your check to the GPA,  
PO Box 30, Franklin, ME 04634.**

*Thank you*

Have you been wondering why your septic system never needs pumping, how often it should be pumped, why after 50+ years it is still working, or what the process is to upgrade?



- Don't "waste" your time wondering! Come to a GPA sponsored "Septic Social" this summer!
- Sign up to have your septic system and leach field evaluated for free through our Phase II Watershed Protection Grant. Email: John Eliasberg at [john.Eliasberg@gmail.com](mailto:john.Eliasberg@gmail.com) to sign up.

***Limited inspections; inquire early!***

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