



WINTER 2026 NEWSLETTER

Greetings IFLA Members, Friends
and Property Owners,

By all measures, 2025 was a successful year for our lakes and our association. We can report that water quality continues to be stable, with excellent clarity and oxygen content at Pleasant Lake and similarly for clarity at Mattawamkeag. Dissolved oxygen levels at Mattawamkeag continues to be lower due to water temperature and organic plant growth, which are characteristics more suitable for supporting a warm water fishery. We all experienced drought and lower water levels than usual. The warmer summer, shorter winter cycles we attribute to climate change may be precursors of water quality changes and we will all witness those changes together, if and when they occur. In the meantime, we must all be vigilant.

The Northern Maine Initiative invasive species identification surveys conducted by Lakes of Maine was a huge success. Their staff and a host of volunteers targeted six lakes in our region and were able to survey all of them and found NO invasive species in any of those lakes. Included were Pleasant, Mattawamkeag, Nickerson, Drews, Spaulding and Timony. We need now to continue monitoring our own lakes independently which creates an opportunity for volunteerism!

Other lakes nearby may not be as fortunate. The world is changing and though we do not see

changes as drastic as glaciers or permafrost melting or widespread wildfires or changing ocean fisheries, subtle changes are occurring as we witness lower water levels, increased plant growth and unusual weather events. The New Hampshire Lakes Association reported this year that New Hampshire's lakes are in trouble, relating to algae blooms that are polluting their waters. Maine lakes in Waterville, Augusta, China and northern Aroostook are having similar issues.

Our message is that we must be vigilant to minimize our impact so future generations can enjoy what we have responsibly preserved. We do this by offering member benefits and information on erosion control, shoreland buffering, diverting water run-off, free site evaluations through LakeSmart and links on our website to DEP and other best practices for reducing our impact on our precious lakes. Keep your membership active, recruit a neighbor to join, participate in our events, volunteer and remember that lakes don't degrade overnight because of a single catastrophic event but rather by a thousand mini events over time. Be vigilant and thank you for all you do.

As always your comments and feedback are important and you can let us know what you think by emailing info@islandfallslakesassociation.com.

Sincerely,
Bob Guerette, *President*

OUR MISSION

The Island Falls Lakes Association is a not-for-profit organization established to protect the ecosystems of Mattawamkeag and Pleasant Lakes as well as their watershed by promoting an appreciation of natural resources and responsible preservation, conservation, stewardship, development and public policy.



SAVE THE DATE!

August 2

Canoe/Kayak Races

TBD

Mattawamkeag Lake Paddle

August 8 (tentative)

Annual Meeting + Dinner

More information coming soon!

www.islandfallslakesassociation.com

Looking Ahead

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE RESEARCH PROJECT

The University just released the report of the algae growth study conducted on Pleasant Lake in 2023. The full report is on our website: www.islandfallslakesassociation.com and a summary will be included in our Summer Newsletter.

WE'RE ALL EARS!

As we strive to bring more benefits and value to your membership we feel we should be guided in part by your interests. Here are a few questions to ponder.

- We've successfully transitioned the Annual Meeting to a mid-week meeting at the Slice. We also hear the Lobster/Steak Dinner is missed! We'd like to hear if there is a strong preference for one or the other.
- We propose to organize a 'lake clean-up' day on each lake early this summer. Pontoon boat support would make this much easier as we cruise the shorelines for trash and retrievable items in the water close to shore. Good idea or not? Who can help with this project?
- We are promoting the development of 'shoreland buffers' as a means of mitigating run-off into the lake. Many have already responded favorably to us making shoreland plants available. Another tool would be to distribute wild flower seed packets for planting along the shoreline. Is that of interest?

Please let us know at info@islandfallslakesassociation.com. Your input is valuable.

TOWN NEWS

Courtesy of Jutta Beyer, Town Manager and Island Falls Selectboard

BOAT LANDINGS

Last summer's low water level in Pleasant Pond provided the Town an opportunity to begin installation of the 15-foot boat landing planks. The wider planks are an improvement, but the sediment prevented the complete installation into the deeper water. During extreme low water conditions, large trailers may slip off the end. Installing the remaining planks will require removal of the several feet of sediment that have accumulated over the years. This will require an environmental assessment, engineering study, and additional permitting before further construction.

The boat landing at Mattawamkeag Lake faces similar problems. Dredging options are being considered, however without significant funding the cost is prohibitive.

MONITORING

The Town did not add a line item to the budget for a shelter/kiosk at the boat launches. However, we can assist with identifying and pursuing grant opportunities for this purpose.

PLEASANT POND TRAIL SYSTEM:

The Outdoor Sports Institute (OSI) was awarded a total of \$474,000 from the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC), Maine Mountain Bike Fund and Maine Trails Program to begin work on the Pleasant Pond Area trail system. Permitting needs to take place and there is the possibility that some of the construction could begin this spring on the initial hiking/biking trail that will extend from the new Pond Road to the lake shore. The preliminary trail route is marked with ribbon and many of our residents took advantage of the OSI tour this past summer. There are maps/plans displayed at Municipal Building for the different project phases. OSI will provide a further review of the project at the Town Office on February 9th at 5:30 pm - please come.

ISLAND BRIDGE COMMUNITY PARK:

The Town was awarded \$2,808,000 from the NRBC Timber for Transit grant for the Island Bridge Community Park and is currently working to obtain the \$702,000 (25%) matching funds required for the project to begin construction.

RIVER WALK TRAIL:

The University of Maine engineering students did an outstanding job on their class project that showed the potential design of the parking area, pit toilet location, and trail entrance. New signage for the River Walk Trail was erected this summer. A tremendous amount of credit and appreciation goes to the Noyes family for their work in developing this community trail along the river. As the snow deepens, it is an excellent, easy, and enjoyable one-mile loop for snow shoeing this winter.

JAIL:

Construction of phase 1 of the Town Jail renovation was completed this summer with installation of the ADA accessibility ramp and new deck, doors, and windows. The next phase will focus on renovating the vault and entrance to the basement jail cells, installing heat pumps, and an ADA compliant restroom (septic system was previously completed). We anticipate the jail will be a tourist attraction and a location to exhibit the many photos depicting our town's history.

2025 ANNUAL MEETING

The business meeting & annual dinner of the Island Falls Lakes Association was held August 6, 2025 and hosted by the Slice Restaurant.

A Treasurers Report was given by outgoing Treasurer Gary McCue for the period July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 as follows:

Income	\$ 5,866.26
Expenses	\$ 7,470.16
Ending Balance	\$15,680.40

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- Minutes of the 2024 Annual Meeting were approved.
 - The water quality report indicated no noticeable changes in water clarity and dissolved oxygen.
 - A legislative update to laws affecting septic systems and floating camps was given.
 - A service award was presented to Gary McCue for his contributions as Treasurer.
 - A written member survey was conducted.
 - Angie Wotten of the South Aroostook Soil and Water Conservation District spoke about Lakesmart.
 - Members approved a \$5 increase in family membership fees to \$25/yr.

Officers and Trustees were approved as follows:

President: Robert Guerette (2027)
Vice President: Marcia Pankratz (2027)
Secretary: Candace Dudman (2028)
Treasurer: Lisa Willigar (2028)

Sherry Pettyjohn (2027)
 Mary Ardizzone (2028)
 Suzanne Burgos (2028)
 Jen Coglianry (2026)
 Donna Davidge (2026)
 Esther Harte (2026)

The board currently has two vacancies.

No other business was conducted at this meeting.

THANK YOU

Volunteers, Friends & Supporters...you are all vital to our success.

The Canoe/Kayak races would be difficult to put on if we could not use the waterfront at Birchpoint. The leadership of Race Coordinator Tom Burgos over the years has made each race event a success. When safety monitors were needed at race buoy—Here comes Gary McCue, Rebecca Tingley and several others. Where would the hotdogs that paddlers and friends enjoy come from if it were not for Elaine Small from the school district and her volunteers who have been supporting this event since the beginning? *Thank you!*

Want to sell raffle tickets or be visible for advance ticket sales? Jerry's Foodstore has always supported those activities and let us set up a table by the front door. Need food or supplies for an association function? Jerry will order it in advance and often sell it at a discount. *Thank you!*

At food events when a large grill was needed Tony Bowers, Jim Lord and Jerry Violette let us borrow their equipment and provided delivery and pick-up services. *Thank you!*

Need old firehose or conveyor belt stock for building our driveway water diverters? Tom York and local fire departments to the rescue. *Thank you!*

Trying to raise funds for prize money at a fishing derby? Jerry's Food Store, Mac's Trading Post, SW Collins, Patrick Hunt, PA, Horton's Building Supply, Ellis Family Market, First Choice Real Estate, GR Porter & Sons, Richardson's Hardware, York's of Houlton, Pro Seeds, Katahdin Cedar Log Homes and the Slice Restaurant to the rescue. *Thank you!*

When we did a lake perimeter invasive species survey and needed dock support and pontoon boat support? A long list of volunteers stepped up. Marcia Pankratz, Gary McCue, Dick Elliot and Darrel Hartin on Mattawamkeag. *Thank you!*

For any not mentioned here and to every single Trustee who has donated time and talent a hearty **THANK YOU!**



REAL IMPACT: RAIN DIVERTER & GRANT PROGRAM



Are you losing gravel and seeing new erosion in your driveway every time it rains? Are you noticing increased sediment on the bottom of the lake in front of your camp? If so, consider a driveway diverter. The IFLA will provide a driveway diverter free-of-charge. You may also receive a \$500 grant to help pay for installation.

Runoff is the primary cause of high phosphorus levels which in turn leads to algae growth. So, save your driveway and promote our lakes health and consider a driveway diverter!

SEWALL HOUSE, ISLAND FALLS

By Donna Davidge, Trustee



William Wingate Sewall was the first white settler born in Island Falls in 1845, the year the town was settled. In 1865 he built a home for his parents in the center of town, ostensibly because they had nursed him through a sickly childhood, including losing his sight temporarily to diphtheria. From the age of three the local Native Americans taught him about the things of nature. As a young adult he became both a logger and nature guide. The house he built for his parents, and lived in with his mother after his father's death, became a hub for anyone traveling through Island Falls to stay in as an informal inn, including a young Harvard student named Theodore Roosevelt who came for three consecutive fall expeditions 1878-1880. Roosevelt also had a history of childhood illness, particularly asthma. Young Theodore was healed with his treks through the woods and to the end of Lake Mattawamkeag where he went to read his Bible (currently the State site Bible Point). On his last visit he spent time camping on the lake.

In 1970 Sewall House was entered into the National Historic Registry. Having spent my summers in Lake Mattawamkeag since infancy not far from my great grandfather's Hook Point Resort, I had often heard of the friendship of TR and my great grandfather William Sewall. The story is retold in Andrew Vietze's acclaimed book "Becoming Teddy Roosevelt" by

Downeast Books. When the house was to be sold I stepped up in 1997 and purchased it on a wing and a prayer, hoping to preserve its legacy, with little more than a vision and mission. Sewall House was recently voted #1 in the country by the Zoe Report, was chosen top ten in US and Canada by Conde Nast Traveler in 2024 and continues to attract curious guests willing to make the trek to northern Maine. Some return. Three have even purchased homes in town and become full time residents. The website is the main way people find us. Though my great grandfather passed in 1930 at the age of 85, the modern version prevails. Sewall House opened its doors in 1997 as a yoga and wellness retreat, with the same service of providing the great outdoors, rest and food (and healing) just as my great grandfather did for a young future President (minus the yoga!). My wish would be for some organization to continue the work I have started though that plan is only in research phase, yet to be seen.

For more information visit

www.sewallhouse.com/about/

Editors Note: Donna operates the Sewall House from May through October and resides in New Your City in the off season. She is a Trustee of the Island Falls Lakes Association and is involved in numerous local collaborations to enhance eco-tourism to the Katahdin region.



LAKESMART: PREVENTING RUN-OFF FROM LAKE SHORE PROPERTIES

By Sherry Pettijohn, Trustee

LakeSmart is a voluntary program overseen by Maine Lakes (formerly The Maine Lakes Society and COLA, the Congress of Lakes Associations) of which IFLA is a member. Several IFLA members are trained to evaluate our lakefront properties. Evaluations are free to property owners and there are no fines.

Evaluations covers five categories on a property:

1. **All structures and an appropriate septic systems** (pumped out every 2-5 years or a schedule appropriate to your situation)
2. **Roads, driveway, and parking areas**
3. **Lawn, recreation areas and footpaths**
4. **Shorefront and/or beach area, including docks and water access**
5. **Undeveloped land areas.**

Maine Lakes reports that 285 evaluations were conducted on 70 Lakes, Ponds, and Rivers in Maine, 109 awards were given and 30 of those were on re-evaluations or followups on properties that had installed recommended BMP's (Best Management Practices). 1570 volunteer hours of service were recorded. The evaluators are looking to see if there are any locations where precipitation could wash over the ground and then enter the lake carrying dirt, gravel, chemicals, etc. The goal of the program is to prevent run-off on our properties that can carry pollutants into the lake water. The biggest threat to our lake waters is phosphorus, a nutrient that contributes to increased algae growth, including metaphyton (those cotton candy puffs in warm shallow water) and the slimy green stuff on our shoreline rocks. Phosphorus sticks to soil particles that are carried into the lake waters by runoff from our properties. We all need to do our part to stop erosion and prevent that runoff. If there is a lawn on the property we ask that phosphorus free fertilizers be used.

Angela Wotton from Southern Aroostook Soil and Water Conservation District came to our annual meeting at The Slice restaurant in August and presented information about LakeSmart and its evaluations. She encouraged lakeside property owners to volunteer, with great success! Angie then accompanied your IFLA LakeSmart team of Nancy Doherty and Sherry Pettyjohn conducting five property evaluations. We would like to thank Tim Hathaway, Suzanne Spruce, Candace Dudman, Lisa Willigar, John Brannen, and Simon and Tracy Godbout for inviting us to visit. They all received commendations for their participation. Thank you all!

IFLA needs volunteers to be trained to become LakeSmart evaluators in the future. Workshops are provided by the LakeSmart team at Maine Lakes free of charge each summer at various locations throughout the state.

You can also visit the Maine Lakes website for more information and check out the videos which expertly explain why we should all care so much about our lakes www.lakes.me/lakesmart-training-videos There is also a wealth of information on the Maine Lakes website via www.lakes.me



Sherry Pettyjohn, was recognized by the Lakes Society of Maine/Lake Stewards of Maine for 20 years of volunteer service. Sherry is a Trustee of the IFLA and is a certified water quality monitor. She is also a trained plant identification specialist and leads our local Lakesmart program.



FUN FACTS ABOUT CHIPMUNKS

By Mary Ardizzone, Trustee

- Their lifespans are 2 to 3 years in the wild
- Chipmunks need about 15 hours of sleep per day and sleep for long periods of time in winter but do NOT hibernate
- Groups of Chipmunks are called a "scurry" but they are primarily solitary animals
- Their burrows can be 3 feet deep and 30 feet long and include separate chambers for nesting, sleeping and food storage
- Chipmunk litter size is between 2 and 8 babies who stay in their burrows for about 6 weeks
- Babies are born blind, pink, hairless and the size of a jellybean
- "Chippies" are the smallest member of the squirrel family and there are 25 different species of Chipmunks ranging from Canada to Mexico
- Their diet includes bird eggs, mushrooms, plants, bulbs, seeds and nuts and can store around 165 acorns per day in their burrows, which is usually more than they need to survive the winter
- Chipmunk predators include hawks, owls, snakes, raccoons, mink, fox and domestic cats



IFLA HOSTS PLANT EXPERTS

By Sue Burgos, Trustee

The IFLA hosted plant experts in August. The team of 25 volunteers were led by Brett Willard who is the Aquatic Invasive Species Program Director for Lake Stewards of Maine (LSM).

The LSM is a non-profit organization committed to the collection of information pertaining to lake water quality and has been training volunteers for more than 50 years. These volunteers monitor a wide range of indicators for water quality, watershed health, and invasive plants and animals. IFLA volunteers currently monitor water quality on both Mattawamkeag and Pleasant Lakes and recently began monitoring for the invasive Zebra Mussel. Thanks to training provided by LSM we are able to perform this important monitoring.

The LSM Invasive Plant Patrol (IPP) completed surveys of Pleasant Lake, Upper Mattawamkeag Lake, and a portion of Lower Mattawamkeag during their week long visit in August. They also completed surveys on Timony, Spaulding, and the boat launch area of Drews Lake. These surveys were part of the Lake Stewards Northern Maine Initiative.

Several IFLA board members met monthly throughout the winter on Zoom with LSM personnel and volunteers to plan the event. IFLA helped with lodging the volunteers who either stayed at the Birch Point Campground or in private homes. We provided pontoon boat support to the volunteers who surveyed plants from kayaks and canoes. Local knowledge about our lakes was also crucial. We also hosted a barbecue which included a presentation about aquatic invasives. LSM program director Brett Willard was available for questions following the presentation.

The survey kicked off with a "Plant Paddle." The event was an opportunity for interested people to paddle together with expert volunteers and learn the basics of plant collection and identification. The group headed

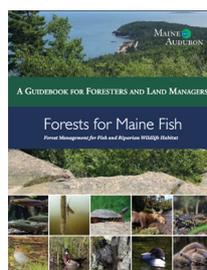
out from Birch Point in kayaks collecting plants along the way and once back on dry ground practiced plant identification. After the Plant Paddle the volunteers went to work immediately and completed the survey of Pleasant Lake in one day. On the following 3 days they completed work on Mattawamkeag.

Volunteers play a critical role in this effort. The goal of the LSM staff and volunteers is to train local residents in plant identification and to spark their interest in starting routine plant patrols on their home lakes. During the surveys of both Pleasant and Mattawamkeag several interested lake residents accompanied the volunteer experts learning the basics of plant collection and identification.

Fortunately there were no aquatic invasives found in the week long survey; however once an invader is well established eradication is extremely difficult, costly, if not impossible. Their impact has widespread destructive consequences. The lakes in our region have alkaline water and many invasive species such as Eurasian milfoil thrive in high alkaline water. Prevention is the key. To help, everyone should obey the state **Clean, Drain, Dry** laws:

- **Clean** plant debris, mud, and algae from the boat and fishing gear.
- **Drain** any water from live well, bilge, and engine away from the water body.
- **Dry** any gear that comes in contact with water.

Additionally, Clean and dry decoys when moving them from one body of water to another, and never dump water, plants, or fish from a hobby aquarium into a body of water. Plant only native plant species on your lake properties.



Interested in riparian habitat, what it is, why it's important to conserve it?

Visit www.simplebooklet.com/forestsformainefish

GUEST COLUMNS

HOW I JUSTIFY NOT CATCHING FISH

By Gabriella Rericha

Have you ever spent an afternoon fishing on Mattawamkeag, wondering why the bass doesn't want your delicious lure? Or have you proudly declared that you will in fact see a moose on this trip, only to come up with nil? It's deflating. I write this to share something you might not be aware of. There is a very distinguished member of American history who experienced the same thing at Mattawamkeag.

If Teddy Roosevelt were still alive, you two could probably share a pint at The Slice and trade stories of the fighting fish you almost hooked, or in his case, the



descending duck he almost shot. In the book, *Becoming Teddy Roosevelt: How a Maine Guide Inspired America's 26th President*, it reads, "TR and Emlen ventured out to spend a few hours at the confluence of the river and the lake, squatting behind bushes in hopes of surprising more ducks, but to no avail. Roosevelt did shoot a night hawk and even a bat, but that was all. On Saturday he saw a duck but missed on a long shot."

So this summer when you're staring into Mattawamkeag's gentle waters, wondering where all the fish are, know that you're in good company.

A BIT OF HISTORY... LOOKING BACK AND FORWARDS

By Phillip Powers

Walter Powers, the first Powers to set foot on these shores, sailed from Bristol, England, to Boston in 1653. He was 14. Two centuries later the Powers family had moved to Maine. In 1896 Llewellyn Powers, then Governor, bought the northern half of Township 4 Range 3 which includes approximately 10,000 acres of timberland, two thirds of Pleasant Pond, four fifths or so of Skitacook and all of Mud.

The property has remained in the family of course, and it is our intention and desire that the property remain in the family forever, which is a long time. We have set up trusts to help achieve this goal.

The property is unique primarily because of the exceptional purity, cleanliness and clarity of Pleasant. We as a family have been actively engaged in maintaining this extraordinary resource for everyone by limiting development lakeside on our property and by supporting efforts to limit driveway runoff and sewer pollution. Because it is primarily spring fed the volume of water in Pleasant turns over once every nine to 10 years. That means whatever we put in the lake stays in the lake for a long time.

Some time in the 1970s my father, Joe Edwards Sr. and Stewart White, among others, decided to bring together camp owners and other stakeholders with the goal of making sure water quality on Pleasant and Mattawamkeag remains pristine. Hence the formation of the Island Falls Lakes Association. Over the years, IFLA members have devoted countless hours to outreach,

water quality monitoring and active measures to improve water quality on both Pleasant and Mattawamkeag.

Campsite ownership on Pleasant has changed over the years. When I first became actively involved some 45 years ago most of the camps were seasonal and many had been built before there was much concern about pollution and runoff. We have many more year-round residents these days which potentially adds stress to water quality. However, many of the older camps have been replaced with camps which comply with updated code requirements and most of the older camps which remain have updated septic systems and other improvements designed to limit runoff. It is safe to say that every camp owner on Pleasant is very invested in maintaining our exceptional water quality.

The result of responsible and careful stewardship is that the water quality today is as good if not better than it was in the 1970s. We cannot take it for granted though. We are all partners in the effort to maintain this unique jewel. This means each of us individually and all of us collectively must make sure that specific efforts continue including plans to limit runoff from driveways, ensure new development is carefully planned to be net neutral and timely replacement and upkeep of septic systems.

The Powers family is dedicated to this goal, and we are very grateful to have so many neighbors who share it and our extraordinary natural gift. Please become actively involved in the IFLA and the many initiatives designed to protect our shared assets.



2025 WATER QUALITY TESTING RESULTS

By Mary Ardizzone, Trustee

PLEASANT LAKE

- 13 readings were conducted to depths of about 64 to 68ft
- Water clarity/transparency average depth was 11.5m or 38ft
- Minimum transparency depth was 10.1m or 33ft on July 17th
- Maximum transparency depth 14.4 m or 47ft on August 15th
- Average transparency for 2025 was 11.6m or 38ft
- Phosphorus results were 3 parts per million compared to 6 in 2022 and 2023 and 5 in 2024
- Dissolved Oxygen results were excellent in deep water for our cold water fish
- Pleasant Lake's highest surface temperature was recorded on August 17th at 75.7 degrees fahrenheit
- Lake depth decreased by about 2ft over the season

MATTAWAMKEAG LAKE (UPPER)

- 5 readings were conducted to depths of about 21 to 27ft
- Water clarity/transparency average depth was 3.9m or 12.8ft
- Minimum transparency depth was 3.5m or 11.5ft on August 31st
- Maximum transparency depth was 4.2m or 13.8ft on September 22nd
- Average transparency for 2025 was 4.13 m or 13.6ft
- Phosphorus results were 5 parts per million compared to 10 in 2022 and 11 in 2024
- Dissolved Oxygen results were below 5mg/L below a depth of 5 m early in the season but improved in late August even though water temps were higher
- Upper Mattawamkeag's highest surface temperature was 76.8 in mid-August
- Lake depth decreased by about 4ft over the season

MATTAWAMKEAG LAKE (LOWER)

- 5 readings were conducted to depths of about 43 to 45ft
- Water clarity/transparency average depth was 5 m or 16.4ft
- Minimum transparency depth was 4.1 m or 13.5ft on July 28th
- Maximum transparency depth was 5.65 m or 18.5ft on September 11th
- Average transparency depth for 2025 was 5.1 m or 16.8ft
- Phosphorus results were 8 parts per million compared to 10 in 2022 and 7 in 2024
- Dissolved Oxygen results continued to be below 5mg/L below 7 m early in the season but improved in late August and September
- Lower Mattawamkeag's highest surface temperature was 77.4 degrees in mid-August

Notes:

- A dissolved Oxygen reading of below 5mg/L is NOT healthy for cold water fish.
- Our results show consistency with 2024 despite the fact that last year was wet and 2025 was dry.
- We monitored for the presence of invasive Zebra Mussels in Pleasant Lake at 2 locations and found NONE. We will continue monitoring. Mattawamkeag is not an environment where Zebra Mussels would thrive.

SHORELAND BUFFERS

By Bob Guerette, President

“When it rains or snow melts, water runoff picks up various pollutants such as dripped or spilled petroleum products, soil, fertilizer, pesticides, and animal waste and carries them to the nearest ditch, storm drain or stream and then on to lakes, rivers and bays. Individually small amounts of pollutants may seem insignificant, but collectively they add up to the largest source of pollution to Maine’s waters.”¹

Shoreland buffers act as a sponge that drinks up water run-off from rains and snowmelt. These buffers trap sediments and help filter out pollutants like phosphorus and chemicals like pesticides and fertilizers before they reach the lake. Any reduction in water flow off a property and into the lake is an action that prevents plant growth (algal blooms) and sedimentation on the lake bottom and protects against water degradation.

There is so much at stake because water quality/clarity has been linked to increased property values² and restoration is so expensive and is never as effective as prevention.

WHAT IS A SHORELAND BUFFER?

The answer is as simple as native vegetation (often decorative in nature) including trees, shrubs and groundcover located between the water and your buildings. Ideally, a shoreland buffer would include:

Trees: Form the upper canopy to soften the impact of heavy rain.

Shrubs: Provide mid-level shelter and absorb several times more water than grass.

Herbaceous Plants: Slow surface runoff and provide food for pollinators.

Duff Layer: The accumulating layer of leaves and organic matter on the ground that enriches soil and further traps pollutants.

The Lake Book we provided to all members last year has a great section on building better buffers. A Lakesmart evaluation would also include ideas for mitigating run-off and creating buffers.

For a deep dive in to creating a shoreland buffer or enhancing your property you can also visit *The Buffer Handbook* at www.maine.gov/dep/land/watershed/buffhandbook.pdf

The IFLA will also be offering seeds and potentially seedlings of a selection of shoreline buffer species this summer.

1 www.maine.gov/dep/land/watershed/camp/index.html

2 Lake Economic Value (University of Maine/Mitchell Center)



GROUND COVERS: Bunchberry, Ferns (above), Lowbush Blueberry, Bearberry



SHRUBS: Highbush Blueberry, Redosier Dogwood (above), Common Winterberry, Buttonbush, Black, Chokeberry, Summersweet, Juniper



SMALL TREES: Shadbush (above), Striped Maple, Pussy Willow, Common Witch-Hazel, Northern Bayberry



CANOPY TREES: Northern Red Oak, Red Maple, Yellow Birch, Balsam Fir (above)