



## THREE PONDS PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION

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### TPPA Membership Meeting Minutes

**Date:** 08/16/12    **Time:** 6:30pm    **Place:** Nute HS

### AGENDA

President Steve Baker opened the meeting and talked briefly about one important focus of the organization – the prevention of milfoil, an invasive plant species that spreads quickly.

- Spaulding Pond in Milton has a growing milfoil infestation because NH and ME can't agree on remediation. What started out as just a few spots has now grown to 22 acres.
- Boat inspections at Three Ponds have been in place since 2005 – at Everett's Marina and at the Town Beach. Funding for boat inspections has dropped off so this year the beach gatekeepers are being paid 50 cents a boat out of TPPA Funds to inspect boats as they arrive.

Steve Baker introduced the first of the evening's speakers:

Amy Smagula, NH DES, Limnologist/Exotic Species Program Coordinator.

She is the invasive species expert with DES. Unless otherwise noted, the following are Amy's comments and responses to questions/comments from the audience, as best as the scribe was able to capture. **For a copy of her PowerPoint presentation:**

- There are 950 lakes and ponds in New Hampshire. 78 of the lakes and ponds are infested with variable milfoil; two more were added this year on lakes where there is no weed watching program
- Great East found 2 stems at boat launch; able to be removed by hand
- Spaulding Pond – borders two states with different remediation philosophies. The significant difference is that New Hampshire will use herbicides if the growth is widespread, but Maine will not use herbicides. Spaulding Pond has spread to the point where only herbicides will have an impact.
- We have to watch for 14 different invasive species in NH waters; see: [http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/publications/wd/documents/frightful\\_fo urteen.pdf](http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/publications/wd/documents/frightful_fo urteen.pdf)
- Lake Host Program
  - first line of defense;
- Weed Watching Program is also very critical because early detection = easier remediation
  - Amy identified 14 plants that are highest risk – had pamphlets available of “most wanted” and she also distributed new binders

- Any suspicious samples can be sent to Amy for ID or email with photo for quicker ID; see contact info below
- Weed watching tips:
  - Polarized sunglasses help to cut glare
  - Cover as much area as possible
  - Use floats to identify location (section of foam noodle with rope and weight)
- Remediation methods:
  - Handpulling, bottom mats, herbicides, selective harvesting for some species, biological control –
  - Still looking for a variable milfoil predator
- Briefly reviewed plant characteristics (see PPT and also weed watcher packets)
  - Submergent plants tend to be the invasive species
  - Good floating leaf plants: yellow water lily, white water lily, floating heart,
  - Good emergent plants at shoreline: arrowhead, cattail, bur-reed, rushes, spike rush, bull rush, pickerelweed, buttonbush, leatherleaf;
  - Good underwater plants: bladderwort, water marigold (both look like milfoil); waterweed looks like hydrilla except hydrilla has tiny teeth; needs to be looked at with microscope; tape grass; pond weeds, bass weed,
  - Good algae – green ok; blue green cyanobacteria – not good; toxic if ingested
- Invasive Plants (the bad guys): they will create a monoculture which kills indigenous species
  - variable milfoil, eurasian milfoil, fanwort (can look like water marigold), hydrilla, (very problematic because it can be spread by water fowl – some hydrilla is nearby in Maine waters which makes 3 Ponds vulnerable)
  - brazilian elodea; water chestnut (spread by ducks and geese can get easily stuck on carpeted boat bunks; curly leaf pond weed (like a lasagna noodle); water Naiad
  - Look at shoreline – purple loosestrife; common reed near large roads and getting into lakes
  - Phragmites – common and exotic; Cornell.edu has a good site that compares
- From audience –why is it so hard to get Maine to attack milfoil?
  - Border state issues: ME does not use herbicides regularly;
  - ME spending all resources on hydrilla which can still be managed rather than on milfoil – they've decided to let it go
  - ME requires permit as does Fed that holds up process even if just NH water is treated
  - Amy has been in discussion with her ME counterpart for 5 years to come up with a plan for shared waters; nothing yet in place
- In NH Balch Lake has been treated with herbicide – 22 acres

Steve introduced the evening's second presenter: Tiffany Grade – The Loon Preservation Committee. Unless otherwise noted, the following are Tiffany's comments and responses to questions/comments from the audience, as best as the scribe was able to capture.

- This year's loon count for the Three Ponds: On Salmon Falls River: one nesting pair produced one chick; Townhouse Pond: one nesting pair produced two chicks; on Northeast Pond; one pair did not nest
- 350 lakes are covered by LPC
- Loon characteristics
  - Warm water fishers prefer 4-8" long fish or even up to 16 -17" fish;
  - Webbed feet far back on body; more like penguins and albatross than ducks; help with dive; propel with large feet; they have dense bones = less buoyancy; small wings tight to body
  - Lay 2 eggs; if lost prior to hatching they'll lay one; if chick is hatched and lost they will not lay another; 28 day incubation;
  - For first two weeks will ride on parent's back
  - At 12 weeks completely independent; chicks head out around November; adults leave in October; stay along NE coast;
  - Spend 3 years on the ocean;
  - Live 25-30 years; low reproductive rate per pair; means it is really important to keep adults alive;
  - Do not mate for life; will return to water where they are hatched but move on if they can't establish a territory
- Threats
  - Human disturbance
  - Boat and jet ski collisions
  - When feeding loons are disturbed they may not be able to bring up enough food for both chicks; the weaker one may die
  - Humans need to maintain 150 feet separation from loons particularly when with chicks
  - Lead fishing tackle – caught up with the fish the loon ingests; less common from bottom; 50% of deaths found to be from lead sinkers; loons will die within 2 – 4 weeks
- Legislation
  - In 2005 NH law allowed jig size of minimum 1"; this size is legal but still lethal; Recently, presented legislation to increase minimum length to 2"; was unsuccessful
- Loons at top of aquatic system; indicators of bio health; indicator species
- Dead loon by Milton railroad bridge; they will pick up, even if decomposed, for analysis

- Each bird is banded with 4 bands
- Since 1975 NH loon population has tripled; slow climb; still listed as a threatened species in NH

Contacts:

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Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Beckwith  
Secretary, TPPA