



TPPA Newsletter



Volume 6, Issue 1

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President's Message



Steve Baker

This year marks my tenth year as a Milton resident and Three Ponds waterfront property owner and the ninth year for TPPA. Much has changed in those years for my family and likely most of yours, as well. Certainly, age affects many things around us. One noteworthy change for the area (see photo) is the old bridge (1930's) connecting Maine and NH at the end of Northeast Pond, partially removed two years ago, is now completely gone, including the four support pilings. A public meeting was held this summer to discuss replacing the bridge but fiscal issues from all stakeholders (2 towns and 2 states) appear to be the real stumbling block. I see no short term resolution.

This summer TPPA continued inspections of all watercraft entering the Three Ponds (for invasive plants) at both the Milton town beach (funded by TPPA) and at Everett's Cove Marina (funded by a grant from Maine - Lakes Environmental Association). I'm happy to report that after nearly 1,000 boat inspections we discovered no invasive species entering the water via boats. We are also happy to report that all but a few of the boat owners were eager to comply with the brief inspection and fully understand why we were doing them.

Over the summer we met with NH State Rep., John Mullen twice to discuss milfoil issues on nearby Spaulding Pond. The problem was first discovered in 2008 at a few small private boat-entry points and over the past five years the affected areas has grown to over 200 acres. One reason for the continued growth is that the pond is geographically split between Maine and NH and the two states disagree fundamentally on



how milfoil should be removed. Maine does not allow chemical treatment and that is the methodology favored by DES in NH. This "treatment stalemate" has meant that nothing has been done by either state to deal with the milfoil in Spaulding Pond. As you know, much of Three ponds waters are split between NH See **MESSAGE** on page 2

Milton Pride

by Wendy Beckwith



TPPA participated in the first Milton Pride Day held at the elemen-

tary school on Saturday, September 14, 2013. Pride Day was organized by the PTA to draw attention to and celebrate the many organizations, churches, businesses, town departments, and community initiatives that enrich life in Milton. Canopied tables filled with information, products, and food circled the parking lot in front of the school; and children's activities were set up behind the building. Members Wayne Sylves-

ter, Bob Garnett, Bob Myrick, Jill and Jordan Guptill, and Wendy Beckwith took turns at the TPPA table and talked with interested neighbors about our organization's mission and initiatives. It was a great opportunity to support the school, present TPPA to the larger Milton community, build membership and talk about water quality. I also enjoyed visiting other tables and learning more about the good work being done around town.

A View From Shore

By Bob Myrick



I was assigned this topic at our last TPPA meeting because, I was told, they felt it a subject of which I was most familiar. I am not sure how I should take that but, as a topic of import, of that I am sure. You could title this article 'Watch Your Step', 'A Real Honking Load', or maybe 'Duck, Duck, Goose'. Putting it as delicately as possible, it's about Doo Doo, Dung, Scat, Feces, Ordure, etc. You get the scent. Goose Paddies, in particular, is the concern which may be less rank than some but none the less repulsive. The migrating water fowl are making our water foul through pollution, and costs are mounting as fast as their green deposits. Fortunately, the winter will bring a flushing reprieve, however, brief.

Understand, this is not an isolated situation but a chronic pile with long term ramifications that have already taken its toll on our lakes, lawns, our town, the recreation department, and the use of our public spaces. Milton Three Ponds is on the migration fly-way to both warmer and cooler reaches. These flocks seem to have found our lakes to be an ideal stop and, for some, it's become a summer lawn potty. This makes for a crappy situation especially at the town beach, boat launch, and ball field. It gives new meaning to chasing a foul ball. Their polluting of our beach wa-

ters resulted in multiple closings this summer for high E. coli readings which caused direct reductions in revenue used for running programs throughout the year. Consider the constant clean up along with a loss of confidence of our water quality



creating a dampener for our summer population and desirability of the town as a whole. When geese pass through, it's what passes through them, that's passed down to us and it taint pretty. So, at our last TPPA meeting, we agreed to try to assist where we can with the realization that there is no single solution. From what little is published about the issue, without establishing a broad plan, it will be like mucking out a barn with a spoon.

This year's gallant effort by Karen Brown and her staff to mitigate the situation have been futile at best. Loud noises, dogs, and periodic chases around the grounds have not dissuaded these feathered fertilizing pests. Being chased off at the opening of the beach would be followed by a return in mass before sundown. I would suggest it might help to better understand these creatures' needs, habits, and patterns before formulating a plan. Geese seem to thrive on lush green lawns that are within easy access to water. Another tidbit is

their reluctance to approach high grass areas or land in close quarter green spaces which may inhibit aerial access. They seem to require the landing and takeoff space of a world war two B52. Can we use these facts to our advantage? To be sure, I am not so deluded as to believe in the complete elimination of these goose guano gangs, however, we may be able to make it less welcoming.

During the coming winter months, we will be looking to plan out a counter offensive and we will be open to any practical ideas which do not include pistols, poisons, chamber pots or crackpot ploys. As always, we welcome your input and be sure to honk your support as you fly by.

Remove the welcome mat!

NH LAKES recommends that all property owners along the edges of lakes, ponds, rivers and streams, make their property unattractive to geese by simply not having a lawn that extends to the shoreline. **The best and easiest thing to do is plant a vegetated buffer, at least three feet high, comprised of native shrubs and bushes along your entire shoreline.** Not only will you discourage the geese from visiting, you will make your property more attractive while reducing the amount of polluted water that runs off of your property and into the lake!

MESSAGE from page 1

and Maine so we are concerned that we could be stuck with a similar delay in treatment should we discover milfoil in the future. This fall, Rep. Mullen worked to arrange a meeting between NH and Maine water quality officials to discuss the Spaulding problem. One meeting was held and more are in the works.

TPPA will put together a fast-response plan for milfoil control in 2014. Although we do not have a problem now, we know it's better to be ready with a plan in place, than react after-the-fact. One of the first steps in that plan will be the addition of a *paid* weed watcher in 2014. We have a good group of volunteer weed watchers

and inspect boats at our two official launch sites. But, we still feel strongly that our biggest milfoil threat comes from a "dirty boat" being inadvertently launched from a waterfront property. Our plan is to pay a knowledgeable weed watcher to do a shoreline survey of **all potential boat launch sites on all three ponds** throughout the summer. We envision the paid TPPA weed watcher using a small (quiet) personal watercraft or jet-ski to look for any suspicious weed and photograph or collect samples when needed. Call it weed insurance, if you like, but catching/eradicating milfoil early is so much easier and significantly less expensive than scrambling to stop an out-of-control weed left to grow undetected. A single chemical

treatment cost nearby Sunrise Lake in Middleton ~\$15,000 this year, according to Rep. Mullen.

Please remind your neighbors that they have a vested interest in helping with weed watching and especially with unknowingly allowing a weed carrying boat to enter over their property. If you are currently a TPPA weed watcher, THANK-YOU so much for taking the time to do this vitally important task! You are protecting not only your waterfront, but all of our property values, as well. Reminder, we still have a few NH-DES provided weed watcher binders available and can get more easily – so let us know if you need one.

Water Quality

By Norm Turgeon

Folks often ask us: Is the water quality at the Milton Three Ponds good or bad? Is it safe for swimming? Is the quality improving or declining? Questions about water quality have been with us for many years. It was to answer some of these questions that in 1991 a group of "Friends of Three Ponds" began water quality monitoring with analysis done by the UNH CFB (Center for Freshwater Biology). Let me digress and talk about this program before dealing with the questions.

Lakes are typically classified into one of three states, namely.

- Oligotrophic (Pristine)
- Eutrophic (Impaired - with lots of algae, aquatic plants, and bottom muck)
- Mesotrophic (Somewhere between pristine and impaired)

From 1991 to 2002 the Milton Three Pond water quality data always exhibited conditions characteristic of lakes in the Mesotrophic state, i.e., neither pristine nor impaired. But between 2002 and 2005, chlorophyll *a* concentrations in all three ponds increased at an alarming rate. In addition, other measurements showed a steady decline in water transparency during these same four years. Many of us were very concerned that the data between 2002 and 2005 suggested we might be quickly approaching the Eutrophic state. That concern is what gave rise to the founding of TPPA by Steve Baker in 2005.

2013 marked the 23rd year of our water quality monitoring. The 2013 Water Quality Monitoring Report will not be available from the UNH CFB until next spring, but data from charts in the 2012 report are shown here as Figures 1 and 2. These show average median values of chlorophyll *a* concentrations and Secchi Disk data (a measure of water transparency) for every year between 1991 and 2012 at each of the Three Ponds. Both chlorophyll *a* and Secchi Disk data are standard measures of water quality.

As you can see from Figure 1, chlorophyll *a* concentrations dropped in 2006, but then nearly doubled at Townhouse Pond in 2007. During a public meeting hosted by TPPA in April 2008, Milton resident Dr. Jim Haney of UNH's Zoology Department told a packed room in Nute High School

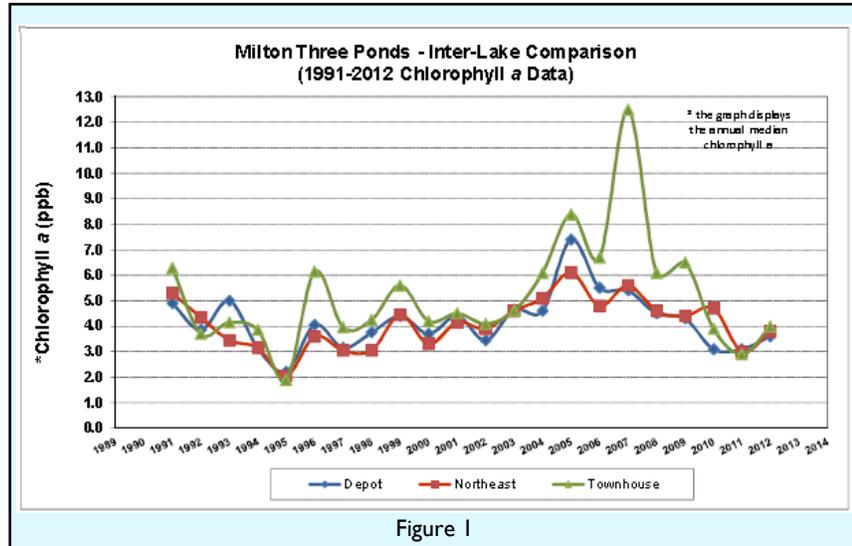


Figure 1

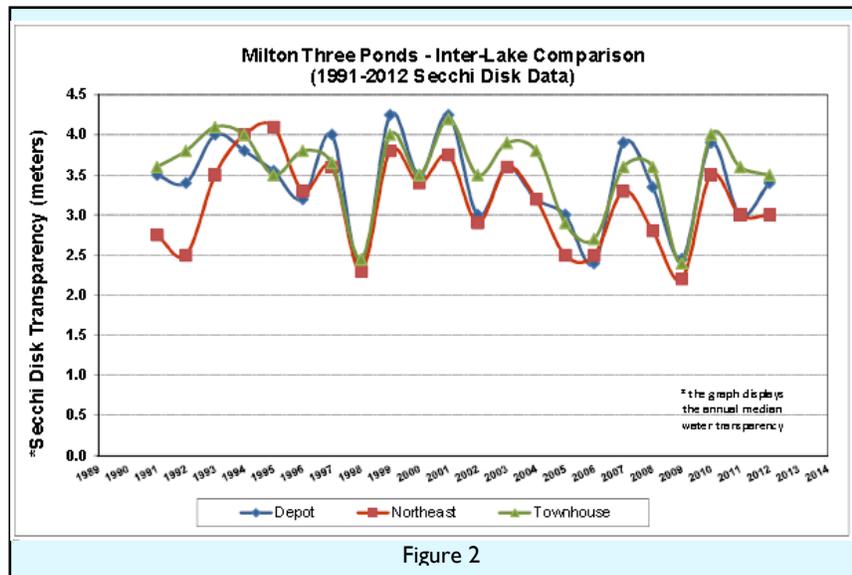


Figure 2

“We’ve got a problem. The levels for Townhouse Pond are off the charts.” He was referring to the increase in chlorophyll *a* concentrations which he said were reaching into the "Eutrophic range," and signaling a problem with increased toxic cyanobacteria, more familiarly known as blue-green algae. Upon hearing the word toxic a lot of people got very quiet. Those who know Jim Haney also know he is not an alarmist; he doesn't say things for shock value.

We added testing for cyanobacteria to our water quality monitoring program.

We don't really understand what caused the high chlorophyll *a* levels at Townhouse in 2007, but these levels fell in subsequent years (see Figure 1). Also, our 2010 Water Quality Monitoring Report stated: "Cyanobacteria and cyanobacteria toxins were present in **relatively low quantities** with only minor differences among the ponds. Microcystin concentrations were well below limits recommended by the World Health Organization for drinking water."

See **QUALITY** on page 4

Land Conservation and Water Quality

By Keith Fletcher, MMRG Director of Land Conservation

We who inhabit the NH Lakes Region are lucky to live, work and play in a region where clean water is everywhere.

It is easy to forget that in much of the United States clean water is not so readily available. As our region develops and starts to look more like the rest of the country, we could lose this amazing water quality that we now enjoy. Alarming, a recent nationwide study by the U.S. Forest Service, which examined thousands of watersheds across the nation, identified the

Piscataqua/Salmon Falls Watershed as the most likely to suffer a decline in water quality due to conversion from forestry

Editor's Note: We are fortunate to have MMRG in our region. They are a major contributor to our mission of protecting water quality.

to other uses such as development.

The best way to preserve water quality is to keep the forested portions of the watershed in their natural state, conserved as nature preserves or working forest. Natural land cover -- such as forest --

filters water, keeps sediments out of streams, and shades and cools water, preventing thermal shock to fish and other stream life. Natural lands absorb water, recharging our groundwater and wells with clean water. At the same time, natural lands reduce or prevent flooding by slowing and absorbing flood waters.

The mission of Moose Mountains Regional Greenways (MMRG) is to increase the amount of permanently protected working forest and natural lands in our area.

MMRG and TPPA

By Steve Panish, Director and former Chair of MMRG

The Three Ponds Protective Association (TPPA) is doing a terrific job raising awareness and being proactive on issues directly affecting water quality of the Milton Three Ponds and Milton's public drinking water supply. However, no matter how good a job TPPA does to directly protect the ponds and shoreline, water quality in the ponds is and will always be limited by the quality of the source water. Currently, those upstream waters originate in a largely undeveloped landscape. Accordingly the water is very clean, having been well purified by traveling through the natural filter of the ground to the intact wetlands that characterize the headwaters. That purity of the headwaters can and will be diminished, however, unless we act soon to protect the undeveloped supporting landscape. This is where Moose Mountains Regional Greenways (MMRG) becomes relevant to TPPA.

MMRG's mission is to help landowners in our region conserve their land – usu-

ally by placing it under conservation easement, a binding legal document that eliminates, in perpetuity, any right to develop the property. Undeveloped, intact forested landscapes produce clean water whereas developed landscapes and their impervious surfaces produce the nutrient loading and contaminated runoff that pollute waterways. To our south, the decline in water quality due to development has already been substantial and is now difficult to reverse. Development, although slowed by the recession, continues to spread towards our region. Thus, land conservation should be of highest priority for protecting our water resources.

Whereas all land in the Salmon Falls watershed eventually drains into the Salmon Falls River (or the Three Ponds), the most important watershed areas to protect are the riparian areas, wetlands and streams that feed the river. Lands containing such features have the highest priority for protection by MMRG. Over

the past thirteen years, MMRG has helped conserve over 4,000 acres in its service region – most of it directly relevant to Three Ponds water quality. MMRG's signature land protection success is the 2300-acre Moose Mountains Reservation, one of the most significant headwaters of the Salmon Falls River. We also helped initiate a conservation project of 400 acres with ½ mile of frontage on the Salmon Falls River in Milton, the former Jappe property.



See **MMRG** on page 5

QUALITY from page 3

What is clear from these charts is that changes in measured data between 2002 and 2005 were not indicative of a long term negative trend in water quality, but rather short term variations in the data. Typically, lakes age over a long period of time (thousands of years). So while 22 years might seem like a long time, it is but a short period in the life of a New Hampshire Lake.

So, given what we know, how should we answer the questions about Three Ponds water quality? I answer as follows:

"Twenty three years of water quality monitoring data continue to show that our Ponds are neither pristine nor impaired; and while there have been positive and negative variations in this data from year to year, it is difficult to detect a long term trend in either direction. NH DES tests for safe swimming at the Town Beach annually before the beach is allowed to open. These tests are repeat-

ed periodically throughout the summer. Occasionally the beach is closed due to high bacteria levels, and then usually reopened after a few days. 2013 saw more such closings than usual perhaps due to a large infestation of Canada Geese. I believe it is as safe to swim in Three Ponds now as it was 23 years ago when our water quality monitoring began. My family and friends swim in the Ponds now, and have done so safely for the last 20 years."

Got erosion? We can help!

by Wayne Sylvester



Water is very predictable - it always runs downhill. Surface erosion is a serious threat to the water quality of our Three Ponds. This nonpoint erosion accelerates the aging process of our lakes. Although lakes undergo a natural aging process (eutrophication), the introduction of phosphorus (from fertilizers, manure, sewage, gasoline, and detergents) causes increase phosphorus concentrations in the watershed. A lake may receive up to ten times as much phosphorus from developed land as it does from natural land. Phosphorus is carried into lakes by rainwater. Lakes that appear relatively clear in spring can develop a blue-green algae in summer fueled by phosphorus. Water quality can be further impaired when bacteria consume dead algae and use up dissolved oxygen suffocating fish and other aquatic life. As most of you know, surveys were conducted between 2009-2011 of Three Ponds watershed. As a result of these

surveys, 158 nonpoint erosion sites were identified that have the potential to directly impact the water quality of our ponds. Of these, 106 (67.1%) are residential properties. This is good news. Most "fixes" can be accomplished with low impact remediation.

TPPA can offer assistance in two ways. **First**, TPPA can provide technical assistance and advice on how to ameliorate erosion problems. Some of these recommendations include dripline trenches (a 1000 square foot roof can produce 600 gallons of runoff for every one inch of rainfall), infiltration steps, waterbars, rain gardens, and the planting of natural buffers along the shoreline. **Second**, TPPA is once again offering an Erosion Grant Program to help watershed property owners defray the cost of accomplishing soil erosion remediation projects on their property. TPPA will award grants up to \$250 not to exceed 50% of the cost of the project. For example, TPPA would reimburse



\$135 for the purchase of plants and mulch for a rain garden which totals \$270. Grant proposals for 2014 will be accepted through July 1, 2014. Go to www.threeponds.org to download our 2014 Request for Proposal and Grant Application Form. Grant proposals will be considered for any of the 158 properties identified by our three surveys as well as any watershed property owner with a significant erosional problem. If you have any questions, please call Wayne Sylvester at (603) 652-3493 or email at wsl7.sylvester@aol.com. Together, we can help reduce the "P" in our waters!

Here are 10 steps we all can take to reduce the phosphorous loading on Three Ponds.

1. Encourage shoreside vegetation
2. Use phosphorous free fertilizer
3. Use phosphate free detergent
4. Do not rake leaf litter and grass clippings into the Ponds
5. Limit impervious surfaces
6. Divert runoff to vegetated areas
7. Don't feed ducks and geese
8. Maintain septic systems
9. Take care when using and storing pesticides, toxic substances and fuels
10. Stabilize access areas and beaches, particularly if the sand disappears with time

MMRG from page 4

MMRG was instrumental in three land protection projects adding up to nearly 300 acres on the Union Meadows and



Branch River in Wakefield, providing more protection to the source water of the Three Ponds. Several conserved prop-

erties on Tenerife Mountain also drain directly to the Three Ponds.

There are many obstacles to successful land conservation projects, primarily financial. For example, MMRG has been seeking funding for nearly four years to conserve a 100-acre farm adjacent to the Jappe property, containing extensive wetlands that are part of the headwaters of the Salmon Falls River. However, in this era of reduced government funding, we have been unable to raise the required funds to purchase the conservation easement and prevent that critical land from being sold to a developer.

MMRG is currently in the process of becoming a land trust. In the past, we have facilitated the process of placing land under conservation easement, but MMRG has not itself held –taken responsibility

for overseeing– the completed easements. As a land trust, we will steward our conservation easements in perpetuity. This stewardship responsibility is a serious one with significant costs and liabilities. The transition to becoming a land trust is also a difficult and expensive process, but when complete, we will be able to better serve the conservation-minded landowners in our region. We hope you will support us in this effort. To become a member of MMRG or for more information, please see our website, www.mmrg.info or call MMRG Executive Director Virginia Long at 603-473-2020. To learn about conservation options for your property, please call MMRG Director of Land Conservation Keith Fletcher at 603-817-8260.

An Appeal To Lebanon

from TPPA Board of Directors



Mirror-like Northeast Pond on a cloudy autumn day.

Did you know that about 90 % of the 1200 acres covered by our Three Ponds borders both Lebanon ME and Milton NH? The photo shows part of the Sewell Shores Rd, Fernald Shores, and Dolby Rd shoreline in Lebanon, as taken from the NH side.

When the Three Ponds Protective Association was founded in 2005, its mission was stated as: "To preserve and improve healthy water quality and sound land-use practices in and around the Milton/Lebanon Three Ponds, including watershed areas."

Although historically the Ponds were commonly known as Milton Three Ponds, TPPA founders used "Milton/Lebanon Three Ponds" in the mission statement, and only "Three Ponds" in the association name

due to the Ponds' boundaries, and the desire that the membership and leadership would include all who enjoy the Ponds. At that time the Board of directors included three residents of Lebanon, one of whom became an officer. Presently and unfortunately we no longer have Lebanon residents on the Board or in an office.

We would like that to change, and so, for those of you who are TPPA members from Lebanon, please consider nominating yourselves for membership to the TPPA Board. Or, if you don't want to become a Board member right away, start by coming

to some of our meetings. We're sure you will enjoy the camaraderie and the satisfaction that comes from knowing you are helping with lake stewardship.

Our meetings are usually held on the 4th Thursday of each month from April through October. We may meet even earlier this winter to talk about how we can help with the Canada goose problem. So, if that's in your skill set we could really use your help. If not, we could still use your help. For example, we would like someone to serve as liaison with the Lebanon Conservation Committee.

By the way, if you are from the NH side of Three Ponds, you are also invited to join us.

Whether you are from ME or NH, check our web site www.threeponds.org for meeting dates, and call Steve Baker (603-652-4669) or Norm Turgeon (603-652-7863) to let us know you will be joining us.

Annual Picnic



This summer we had our annual picnic meeting at the Milton Town Beach. We outsourced the food preparation, and enjoyed great pulled pork and barbecued chicken sandwiches. Approximately 30 of us attended. The 2012 officers were

reelected for the 2013 season. Since then Steve Baker gave up the treasurer job to Jill Guptill. The photo shows Wayne Sylvester addressing the group. It was disappointing not to see more of you there. Hopefully you'll be able to join us next year. We will publish the date on our website and in emails.

Fiscal Review 2013

By Jill Guptill

2013 was another year of modest growth for TPPA's fund balance. As an association founded on preserving our shorelines and water quality, our goal has never been about building a large fund balance. But, the threat of milfoil is a constant reminder that fighting off the dreaded invasive weed "should we catch it" is a very expensive proposition.

As such, we plan to have \$16,000 of our fund balance in a separate account (Invasive Species Fund) for use in the event we do need to eradicate milfoil or other invasive plants from the ponds.

We are holding approximately \$3,890 as annual operating funds for 2014.

Thank-you for your continued support, and please encourage your neighbors to join TPPA and/or volunteer to get more involved.

TPPA FISCAL SUMMARY		
	Ending Fund Bal. 2012	\$16,031.68
2013 Income		
Member Donations	\$6,902.00	
Grant Receipts (Maine LEA)	\$1,500.00	
ING Interest	\$32.40	
	<u>Funds Added 2013</u>	\$8,434.40
2013 Expenses		
Boat Inspections	\$2,030.00	
Erosion Grants	\$500.00	
Dues & Contributions to other organizations	\$904.40	
Mailings (Newsletter, Renewal Letters, Flyer)	\$252.75	
Annual Picnic	\$695.40	
All Other Expenses	\$193.18	
	<u>Funds Expended 2013</u>	\$4,575.73
	<u>Change in Fund Balance 2012 - 2013</u>	\$3,858.67
	<u>Fund Balance as of December 5, 2013</u>	<u>\$19,890.35</u>

Membership Matters

Many Thanks to our Family Members for their Generous Contributions

Conservators

Curt and Anne Alboth	David and Joan Corwin	Joseph and Linda Hagan	Stephen, Jill and Chelsea Palmisano
Barry and Karen Barkow	Rick DuHaime	John and Pamela Hamilton	Edson and Jenny Sobey
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Sherman and Jacquelyn Douglass	Laurette Heon	Dolores Shevenell	

... and to our Business Members too

Platinum

Carl Siemon Family Trust	Everett's Cove Marina & IceCream	Mi-Te-Jo Campground	Rochester Truck Inc.
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Gold

American A, Recovery	Milton Hardware, LLC
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Thanks to our volunteer weed watchers: Linda Dame (Program Coordinator), Dan & Jane Audet, Steve & Robin Baker, Donald Balentine, Linda & Bud Beauchamp, Wendy Beckwith, Sue Belanger, Roland Bergeron, Emery Booska, Paul & Paula Bourque, Mik & Nancy Chisholm, Dick Cook, Dave & Jean Corwin, Rich Egan, Brittney Elliott, Bob Garnett, Mark & Jill Guptill, Joe & Linda Hagan, Carl Harriman, Sue & Ken Houle, Don Lenzi, Cindy Levigne-Lemieux, Ida & Mike McDonnell, Carol & Todd McLeod, Gail Myrick, Milton Olson, Jill Palmisano, Amy & Glen Riefenstahl, Bill Riefenstahl, Judy Weyand, Steve Young

and to our water quality monitor volunteers: Mike McDonnell (Program Coordinator), Dr. Jim Haney (Liaison with UNH CFB), Connie Chace, John & Dot Delude, Kent & Mariko Findell, Heidi & Mac Ford, Bob Garnett, Rich & Jean King, Ida McDonnell, Donna Morse, Milton Olson, Chuck & Judy Peterson



TPPA
P.O. Box 1242
Milton, NH 03851

Board of Directors

Steve Baker, President
 Mike McDonnell, Vice President
 Wendy Beckwith, Secretary
 Jill Guptil, Treasurer
 Linda Dame
 Emery Booska
 Wayne Sylvester
 Bob Myrick
 Norm Turgeon

Visit our Website
www.threeponds.org

Contact us
stevebaker@metrocast.net
 Or mail to
 TPPA
 P.O. Box 1242
 Milton, NH 03851

TPPA Meetings are on 4th
 Thursday of each month, May -
 Oct, 6:30 PM at Nute HS Commu-
 nity Room All Members are en-
 couraged to attend.

Three Ponds Protective Association
New and Renewal Membership Form

Name:

Permanent

Address
 City
 State
 Zip
 Phone
 E-Mail

Summer

Address
 City
 State
 Zip
 Phone
 E-Mail

Own Waterfront Property? Yes No

Family Membership*

- Supporter \$15
- Sponsor \$25
- Patron \$50
- Benefactor \$75
- Conservator \$100

* Individuals who cannot contribute one of these amounts may still become members. Whatever one can afford is sufficient. Members are encouraged to contribute by volunteering to work as an officer or action team member.

Business Membership

- Silver \$50
- Gold \$100
- Platinum \$200

Make checks payable to: TPPA
Mail Application and Payment to:
TPPA
P.O. Box 1242
Milton, NH 03851