

Pleasant Pond / Cobbossee Stream Lake Association



Spring 2025 Newsletter

Dear Pleasant Pond and Cobbossee Stream neighbors,

Spring is in the air; soon, the snow will go and the ice will come out. Our anticipation of spring and summer on the water grows. But, as we alluded in our fall newsletter, a real danger to Pleasant Pond and Cobbossee Stream exists.

The website of Watershed Friends (formerly Friends of the Cobbossee Watershed) describes the **Harmful Impact of Milfoil** and other aquatic invasive plants: "Infestations can have severe consequences, including the formation of dense mats that hinder boating, fishing, and swimming. Additionally, it can degrade water quality and reduce the value of shoreline properties." Milfoil also potentially impacts fish populations by reducing their available food and spawning grounds, essentially disrupting the natural aquatic ecosystem.

A study conducted by the University of Maine corroborates that aquatic invasive plants such as Milfoil have **significant negative impacts on property values**, often causing a noticeable decrease in sale prices due to dense growth that hinders recreational activities and diminishes the aesthetic appeal of the lake, leading to reduced desirability for potential buyers.

GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS: The BAD NEWS is that Pleasant Pond and Cobbossee Stream have had Variable Leaf Milfoil (VLM) for over 20 years. The GOOD NEWS is that, while complete eradication is unlikely, VLM can be kept under control.

WHAT CAN BE DONE? Watershed Friends is taking the lead in the control of VLM. This involves three phases: **Prevention**, through Courtesy Boat Inspections on summer weekends at boat launches; **Detection**, through surveys of the shoreline by professionals and trained volunteers; and **Mitigation**, by removing the plants through diver harvesting. All of this is very costly, but it is the price we must pay for saving our lake and stream.

WHO WILL PAY FOR THIS? As stated in our fall PPCSLA newsletter, in the past, Watershed Friends raised funds from donations, grants, and municipalities across the watershed to pay for VLM monitoring and mitigation. Because our lake and stream contain the lion's share of VLM, others were paying for our water quality. Unfortunately for us, that free ride is now over, and going forward that cost burden will rest *in part* on us, the property owners. Fortunately, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection provides considerable funding to WF for this work. Also, the four towns that border the pond and stream (Litchfield, Richmond, West Gardiner, and Gardiner) have given generously to WF in the past, and we expect they will again. The remaining balance is our responsibility. **For 2025, that amounts to about \$11,000 to be raised from property owners.**

\$15,000

WHO WE ARE: Four years ago, an informal Pleasant Pond/Cobossee Stream Lake Association was formed to inform and educate property owners about water quality and water level concerns. We are not an official 501c3 organization with dues and officers. Instead, we have a volunteer steering committee, meet once a year, email periodic newsletters, and share a private Facebook group page. We are working with Watershed Friends to rally support among our members for their efforts to protect our pond and stream from invasive aquatic plants.



We don't want Pleasant Pond and Cobossee Stream to look like the nearby Maine lake pictured here, which is plagued by a milfoil infestation.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP:

1. Make your most generous donation to Watershed Friends. Please join your neighbors to chip in to pay for annual mitigation and monitoring by making a generous, tax-deductible donation to the Watershed Friends specifically earmarked for removal of milfoil from our pond and stream. Use the enclosed envelope to mail a gift to Watershed Friends (PO Box 206, E. Winthrop, ME 04343) with **"Pleasant Pond" or "PPCSLA" on the check memo line.** OR Donate online via the Watershed Friends website: watershedfriends.com. Be sure to **designate "Pleasant Pond" or "PPCSLA"** in the space provided for adding a Note or your contribution will not be applied to this work.

2. Provide housing for the three milfoil harvest divers during the four weeks (Sun. to Thurs.) they will be on our waters in July, August, and September 2025. Housing the dive team in a hotel costs approximately \$800 for each four-day session. If you could house the divers for one or more weeks this season, it would save a lot of money and would count as a very generous, tax-deductible, in-kind donation. (Housing requires two private rooms, full bath, access to a kitchen, and wifi.) Please contact Waterfront Friends directly with any questions or to volunteer: (207) 395-5239.

3. Stay informed and/or get involved by

- *Joining our lake association.* Send your email address to Jack Daniel (revjdaniel@gmail.com) to be added to our e-newsletter list and to attend annual summer meeting to hear from local experts and voice your concerns.
- *Joining our private Facebook group:* Pleasant Pond/Cobossee Stream Lake Association.

Together, we can keep our waters clean and clear! Please give generously, and as soon as possible, so we can plan this summer's work.

Your PPCSLA Steering Committee:

Jack Daniel, Mark Fish, and AJ Ballard from Richmond
Ed and Cheryl Avis and Pat Sirois, from Litchfield