



Expanding the View:

New programs broaden community engagement

Look across the Newfound Watershed from the top of Mt. Cardigan or Bald Knob, and you see not only the broad expanse of Newfound Lake, but also hills and mountains, streams and rivers, farms and towns – places used for a variety of purposes by people with diverse interests and perspectives.

When people value the opportunities provided by our natural resources and recognize how their experiences would be diminished without them, conservation becomes implicit. For NLRA, this means providing people with a direct connection to aspects of Newfound that we're trying to protect – helping them see themselves in this space – and then involving them in our efforts. NLRA programs offer ways to connect with the watershed, no matter where you're coming from, and help you see the watershed in a new light.

Experience the Watershed in a New Way

Throughout the summer NLRA staff and volunteers guided community members in learning new skills and expanding their understanding of what it means to conserve Newfound. Whether birding or

learning to navigate by compass, program participants tried something new, took a chance, and experienced the outdoors in a different way. Guided hikes led by volunteers from the Newfound Land Conservation Partnership showcased the variety of Newfound's conserved land, from family farms to state parks.

See NLRA in a New Setting

Collaborating with partner organizations helps us reach a wider audience and broaden the range of activities we can do. Our links with local communities grow stronger when we share more than a love of the lake. Getting kids into canoes to

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The Newfound Watershed is home to diverse landscapes and ecosystems worth exploring and protecting. Photo: Nigel Croxon

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Ed McNierney became NLRA President in August

I'm very fortunate to have the opportunity to follow Rob Moore's outstanding tenure as president and work with our talented staff and board. This issue of The Monitor can show only a few highlights of our staff's amazing work this summer, illustrating just some of the many ways they're achieving the NLRA's mission. One of those highlights is our stewardship of Grey Rocks and the next stage of this remarkable property's history. Many of us only know this site as the former Newfound Marina, long after its life as a summer camp. The NLRA has

transformed the property since its cleanup and donation in 2011 and we're now making plans to further enhance it to support our mission and programs. Everything we do at Grey Rocks is an illustration of the NLRA's goals and values, and every step we take there is made thoughtfully. I'm also especially excited to see the diversity of program activities underway to help everyone appreciate the value and opportunities Newfound Lake offers. Everyone who visits or lives in the watershed experiences

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

What an exciting summer for NLRA! With more tools, resources, and expertise than ever before, NLRA is advancing essential conservation work at a new pace. This boost is evident in our core conservation efforts, community programming, and strengthened presence throughout the watershed. Perhaps you've explored with us at a Nature Station program, or joined the fight against invasive species as a Weed Watcher. Maybe you've learned more about Newfound and its ecosystem through our email newsletter or on a hike with a volun-

teer from the Newfound Land Conservation Partnership.

With increased engagement – from our volunteers, our partners, and the greater Newfound community – we can invest deeper in the critical work that protects Newfound Lake and its watershed. NLRA is growing to meet the conservation needs of Newfound, and a building at Grey Rocks

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Rebecca Hanson has led NLRA as Executive Director since 2019.



The Newfound Lake Region Association's mission is to protect Newfound Lake and its watershed. The Association – through education, programs, and collaboration – promotes conservation and preservation of the region's natural, social, and economic resources.

Officers – *President:* Ed McNierney; *Treasurer:* Jim Fitts; *Secretary:* Val Scarborough

Trustees – Jen Berry, Kathy Bird, Joe Boyer, Bill Brady, Parker Griffin, Andrea LaMoreaux, Bob Martens, Steve McMahon, Rob Moore, Rob Pinsonneault, Carole Tremonti, Martha Twombly, Greg Wagner, Ken Weidman

Staff – *Executive Director:* Rebecca Hanson; *Conservation and Program Manager:* Paul Pellissier; *Development and Communications Manager:* Audrey West; *Education and Outreach Manager:* Mirka Zapletal; *Relationship Strategy Coordinator:* Mario Capozzoli

Cover Banner Image: Carole Binder; *Back Page Image:* Henry Yip; *Design & Layout:* Carolyn Isaak

Newfound Lake Region Association

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AROUND THE LAKE

Cultivating Volunteers, Rooting Out Invasives

NLRA has worked for over 30 years to prevent invasive aquatic plants in Newfound Lake. Infestations of aquatic invasive species can severely impact ecosystem health, limit recreational opportunities, lower property values, and cost taxpayers millions of dollars to manage without any guarantee against resurgence. As nearby waterbodies deal with the ecological and economic consequences that come with infestation, Newfound Lake remains free from these aquatic invaders thanks in large part to a growing group of dedicated volunteer Weed Watchers and Lake Hosts.

Prevention and early detection form the keystone to managing invasive species. This year NLRA launched new initiatives, expanding the impact of our Lake Host and Weed Watcher programs to address the building pressure Newfound faces from the threat of invasive species.

Most new infestations are the result of recreational boaters unknowingly transporting fragments of invasive plant material from infested waterbodies. These fragments can quickly take root, grow rapidly, and out-compete native species – quickly leading to an infestation in a matter of weeks. Lake Hosts work to prevent these introductions by checking incoming boats, trailers, and recreational gear at Newfound's public boat launches and educating boaters on the importance of cleaning, draining, and drying their boats. NLRA has supported Lake Hosting on Newfound since the state-wide program began in 2001.

To keep pace with increasing boat usage on Newfound, NLRA more than doubled the size of Newfound's Lake Host program this year. By adding more Lake Hosts to our team and increasing their presence at



During the inaugural Weed Stampede, 24 volunteers paddled 78.5 miles, logged 82.5 survey hours, and surveyed over 62% of Newfound's near shore area with no invasive aquatic plants found!

the ramps, we ensured coverage at Wellington State Park and Grey Rocks Conservation Area during the times of highest use.

While Lake Hosts focus on prevention and education, volunteer Weed Watchers form an early detection network by scouting Newfound's shorelines for invasive aquatic plants. This enables us to respond rapidly and manage invasive plants at the local level before they spread to other parts of the lake. Having a robust Weed Watcher program guards against future infestations by training volunteers in aquatic plant identification and basic survey techniques while raising lake-wide community awareness. Weed Watching on Newfound Lake

reaches back to 1989, however, in recent years the work of ensuring that Newfound's 22 miles of shoreline remain invasive free has fallen to just a handful of steadfast volunteers.

This summer NLRA ramped up efforts to recruit a new cohort of Weed Watchers. We held monthly trainings with state experts, developed an online toolkit of weed watching resources (NewfoundLake.org/invasives/weed-watcher-toolkit), invested in new equipment, and organized the Weed Stampede, the first lake-wide volunteer-based aquatic plant survey. The response from the community was resounding, and the results pronounced. Over the course

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Dare to Explore: *Traversing the Gender Gap in Outdoor Recreation*

By Jenna Detar, AmeriCorps Watershed Steward

Growing up, I have always been drawn to nature. Whether it was searching for bugs while helping my parents in the garden, watching the bats fly overhead during Georgia’s warm summer nights, or clearing out built-up debris in the neighborhood creek to restore natural flow, I was grateful for the ample opportunities I was given at a young age that taught me there was always something new to learn and experience the second I stepped out the door. As I got older, I was fortunate enough to find a strong group of women who were eager to support and challenge each other to get outside, get uncomfortable, and try new things; however, I noticed wherever we

went and whatever our endeavor, as women recreationists we were in the minority. The gender disparity in outdoor recreation participation appears to begin at a young age. A 2012 study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association of Pediatrics determined that preschool girls were almost 20% less likely to be taken outside to play than boys of the same age. As children age into adulthood, this gap widens. According to the 2018 Outdoor Recreation Report by the Outdoor Foundation, by the age of 66 only 20% of women enjoy outdoor recreation compared to 40% of men in the same age group. What can be done to close the gap?

As an NLRA Watershed Steward, I’m given the opportunity to design monthly programs that educate and connect the community to the Newfound Watershed. I came up with the idea of the Guided Explorations, “Women on the Water” and “Women in the Wilderness,” one afternoon while watching a group of women struggling to prepare for a canoe launch at Grey Rocks Conservation Area. I clearly saw that only one of the women had experience preparing for a paddle trip, while the others were new to the experience and completely at a loss. Watching these women brought back memories of my beginning days dabbling in the vast world of outdoor recreation and how intimidating it can be. I knew that this was my moment to take a step closer to bridging the gap and lead more women to the joys of outdoor recreation.

In July I ran the program “Women on the Water” and led participants on a guided kayak paddle along the Newfound Water Trail. This Guided Exploration was geared towards getting women out onto the water in a comfortable, judgment-free zone. We practiced safe boating techniques to use when exploring the waterways of New Hampshire, and I gave a lesson on invasive aquatic species and the impacts they have on the Lakes Region. “Women on the Water” was followed in August with “Women in the Wilderness,” where I led hikers up the West Ridge Trail at Cardigan Mountain State Park. During the hike, participants gained a deeper understanding of the importance of land and water conservation,



Participants of “Women on the Water” joined Watershed Steward Jenna Detar for a guided paddle on the Newfound Water Trail, learning about boating safety and the harmful effects of invasive aquatic vegetation.



“Women in the Wilderness” participants braved inclement weather and hiked the West Ridge Trail up Mt. Cardigan while learning about sustainable conservation and recreational practices.



how to ethically utilize and preserve natural resources, and how to minimize human impact in the Newfound Watershed in order to keep these areas wild. The women of Newfound are blazing new trails towards the future! Bringing to-

gether passionate groups of women to learn from each other’s experiences and build confidence, even while battling inclement weather and the doubt of personal ability, brought a renewed sense of power and freedom to the air. Watching the uncertainty of

the unknown become a passion to explore has not only provided these women with the knowledge to help close the gender gap for future generations, but has left me with the inspiration to continue to face my fears, try new things, and get outside.

President’s Message,
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it in their own way, and it’s important for us to all understand and share those experiences with each other. That mutual understanding will strengthen all our efforts to preserve and enhance our watershed for many future generations.

Edward McNierney

Edward McNierney
NLRA President

From the Executive Director,
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is the next step. A conservation center will inspire engagement and stewardship, connect residents and visitors to the natural resources we work to protect, and house the scientific and working space we need to ensure Newfound’s protection for generations to come. We’re working on conceptual plans for a conservation center now, and I

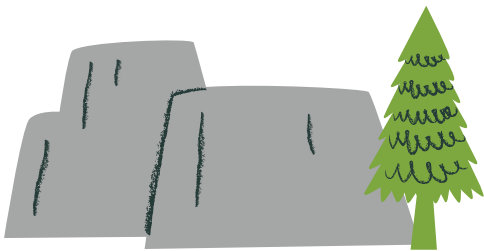
invite you to get in touch to see how you can be a part of our bright future.

Rebecca Hanson

Rebecca Hanson
NLRA Executive Director

The Evolution of Grey Rocks

Reflecting on the Past, Shaping the Future



Early History

From Abenaki bands to visitors to Camp Grey Rocks in the 1920s-30s, Grey Rocks' location where the Cockermouth River meets Newfound Lake has provided important habitat for wildlife and humans for thousands of years.



Present Day

Today visitors to Grey Rocks can scout for wildlife on trails on land and in the water, join NLRA programs and events, and enjoy the peace that comes from being in nature as NLRA continues to restore the landscape and steward its use.



Mid-Century Marina

The legacy of Newfound Lake Marina, which operated beginning in the mid-1950s, included barren ground, building remains, and hard-packed shorelines. In 2011 the property was permanently conserved and donated to NLRA.

Conservation and Restoration

Returning the area to a more natural state began with surveys to understand the surrounding habitat. Restoration work involved improving the soil; planting hundreds of trees, shrubs, and perennials; managing for stormwater; and letting nature start to fill in the gaps.



Building for the Future

We're designing a conservation headquarters to serve the growing needs of the watershed, the community, and NLRA: a hub for innovative watershed science, a community gathering place for collaboration, an educational center for schools and visitors to increase access to and understanding of our natural resources, and an example of sustainable development.

Please join us on this journey!

We're working on conceptual plans now. Get involved by emailing Executive Director Rebecca Hanson: Rebecca@NewfoundLake.org.

SCIENCE · CONSERVATION · COMMUNITY · EDUCATION · SUSTAINABILITY



Community Partnerships Build Bridges

This summer NLRA's AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards and the Hebron Conservation Commission worked together in the Hebron Town Forest to improve access to publicly-owned frontage along Spectacle Pond. Watershed Stewards and NLRA staff spent over 80 hours working with community volunteers to upgrade an existing but little-used trail on the pond's northeast shore. Once completed, hikers will find 1.3 miles of improved trail winding through mature oak and pine forests, including a newly constructed stream crossing and quarter-mile section that reaches the water's edge.



NLRA Watershed Stewards worked with the Hebron Conservation Commission to improve and add trails in the Hebron Town Forest.

Hebron Conservation Commission proposed the project in April with initial design work and site visits taking place throughout May. In mid-July the project began in earnest when Spectacle Pond residents helped boat in 1400 pounds of bridge supplies. Watershed Stewards Jenna Detar and Anthony Jaster spent several hot summer days working with volunteers in the shade of the forest canopy applying newly acquired trail-building skills towards improving the existing "White Trail," roughing in the new lake-access trail, and building a 22-foot-long bridge.

Each year NLRA partners with organizations working in the Newfound Watershed on a small number of impactful projects to broaden the experience of our Watershed Stewards. These partner projects provide an opportunity for Watershed Stewards to engage with local organizations in important work that complements the mission of the NLRA.

INVASIVES, Continued from page 3

of a single season we trained 26 people in aquatic plant identification and more than doubled the number of active Weed Watcher volunteers. The Weed Stampede was a success by all counts thanks to the enthusiasm of new and returning Weed Watchers, support from the Lakes Region Conservation Corps, and access provided by property owners around the lake. Thanks to the Weed Stampede and our dedicated Weed Watchers, this summer we have surveyed nearly 80% of the lake's near-shore area with no invasives reported!

While we have taken large strides with our invasive species programming this season, keeping Newfound free from invasive aquatic plants is truly a community-wide effort. Responsible boaters, anglers, and shorefront owners all have a part to play. Cleaning, draining, and drying your boat after each use and checking your trailer and recreational equipment for plant fragments before heading to the launch is still the best way to minimize the risk of spreading these aquatic invaders. Learn more about our conservation programs and find out how you can help protect Newfound Lake by visiting NewfoundLake.org.

When people value the opportunities provided by our natural resources and recognize how their experiences would be diminished without them, conservation becomes implicit.



Lake Hosts

Lake Hosts engage boaters at Newfound's public boat launches, performing courtesy boat inspections and educating recreators about preventing the spread of invasive aquatic species. The Lake Host program is a partnership between NH LAKES and local lake associations to support Lake Hosts at local boat launches.



Weed Watchers

Weed Watchers conduct monthly surveys for invasive aquatic plants from June to September raising awareness and boosting our ability to manage future outbreaks. Newfound Weed Watchers are part of a statewide program with support from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services.
Dave Redman Photography

NEWFOUND AQUATIC INVASIVE MANAGEMENT



91 INFESTED WATERBODIES
IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

While Newfound remains free of invasive aquatic plants, 11 river systems and 80 lakes and ponds in New Hampshire are battling invasive species.



22 MILES OF SHORELINE

Newfound Lake has over 1,000 acres of susceptible habitat for invasive aquatic plants along 22 miles of shoreline.

4,155 BOATS INSPECTED

from Memorial Day to Labor Day by Lake Hosts at Wellington State Park and Grey Rocks Conservation Area.



WEED WATCHERS

Newfound Weed Watchers invested over 93 hours surveying nearly 80% of Newfound's near-shore area in 2022.

80%

10%

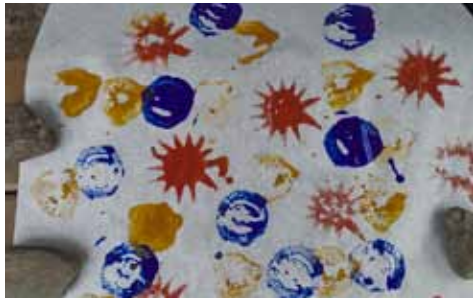
WHAT'S THE RISK?

10% of boaters surveyed in 2022 are coming to Newfound Lake from waterbodies with known invasive species populations.

YOU
CAN
HELP!

Keeping invasives out of Newfound is a community-wide effort. Cleaning, draining and drying your boat after each use is the most effective way to prevent the spread of aquatic invasives.

AROUND THE LAKE



In June visitors to Nature Station learned how different pollinators are looking for different types of flowers and made pollen-grain stamp art to take home.



Participants in July's orienteering event used the Hebron Town Forest as a backdrop for navigating without GPS.



New volunteer opportunities like the "Munch Bunch" give everyone a chance to engage with science and conservation.



NLRA offers opportunities to experience the watershed in every season.

EXPANDING THE VIEW, Continued from page 1

learn how to paddle, bringing reading outside with storytime and StoryWalk® events, providing a forum for accessible science through the Red Barn Speaker Series – all of these activities give people a new way to connect with the outdoors and, by extension, a new reason to care about what happens within the watershed.

Building on Interests in the Watershed

Sometimes our programs focus on finding ways to combine watershed conservation with other subjects. At our monthly Nature Station program, families explore the ecology of Grey Rocks Conservation Area and combine what they learn with art, expressing their connection to nature through a physical medium. This year's Loon Cruises, special EcoTours in

partnership with the Loon Preservation Committee, framed our work in connection with the plight of the iconic loon.

Expanding Horizons

NLRA is increasing our presence and visibility at our Grey Rocks property in Hebron. In the future, Grey Rocks will serve as our base of operations. Until then, we still connect ourselves and our visitors with the space throughout the day and throughout the year. Whether through encouraging familiarity with the ecosystem with an iNaturalist species guide or a poster chart that dives into decades of water quality data, we can interact and educate even from a distance.

Going forward, we're building more community programs and a greater variety of offerings as we branch out and develop new ways to be in the watershed. Find us throughout the watershed providing



A hike up Little Sugarloaf led by Newfound Land Conservation Partnership volunteers gave participants a chance to learn about land conservation and appreciate amazing views.

AROUND THE LAKE

a window into the interconnectedness of habitats from the shoreline to the ridge-line, discussing trends in our long-term water quality monitoring, or taking learning outside with local students. Explore with us at our next program or by answering our call for volunteers to work with us on the lake, on your favorite trails, in pollinator gardens, and at activity tables. There's something to explore in every season! Join NLRA throughout the year as we encourage our community to experience Newfound year-round.



NLRA partnered with the Minot-Sleeper Library to bring Story Time to Grey Rocks.



Specialty cruises aboard our pontoon boat draw connections between watershed conservation and other areas of interest, like this year's "Loon Cruise" with the Loon Preservation Committee.

Creative Ways to Support NLRA

NLRA's conservation efforts are made possible by community support. Along with annual giving, NLRA offers many ways to make a unique impact on the work that protects the Watershed.



Memorial and Tribute Gifts

Celebrate a special occasion, honor someone you care about, or give in memory of a loved one by making a gift in honor or in memory.



Gift Memberships

A clean, conserved Newfound makes the best gift! Introduce your friends and family to the benefits of NLRA membership, with the option to include a Newfound EcoTour gift certificate.



Gifts of Stock

Support conservation with a gift of stock and take advantage of potential tax benefits, including eliminating capital gains tax.



Cryptocurrency

Using the platform Crypto for Charity, NLRA now accepts cryptocurrency donations. Put your coin to work for conservation and, like gifts of stock, see potential tax benefits.



Sponsor a Picnic Table

Picnic tables at Grey Rocks Conservation Area are available for sponsorship. Your sponsorship is recognized with a bronze plaque and text of your choosing, with funds benefiting our work to restore Grey Rocks and conserve the Newfound Watershed.

To learn more about the many ways you can support a clean and thriving watershed, visit NewfoundLake.org/membership. Questions? Email Audrey@NewfoundLake.org.



THE MONITOR

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NewfoundLake.org



Featured Events

Guided Hike: Goose Pond and Little Sugarloaf
November 3, 10 am–12:30 pm, at Sugarloaf
Ridge–Goose Pond Conservation Area –
Enjoy scenic views and the diversity of habitats
upstream of Newfound Lake.

The State of the Lake
February 21, 6:30 pm–7:30 pm, at the
Minot–Sleepers Library –
Join us as we present the latest water quality data
and answer your questions about lake health.

Newfound Nature Station
Monthly at Grey Rocks Conservation Area –
Explore the natural world and make a craft to
take home at this all-ages, drop-in program.

Register and see all upcoming events at:
NewfoundLake.org/events

WINTER IN THE WATERSHED

Conservation happens all year round!
Join us this winter for programs, events,
and hands-on volunteer opportunities.

Volunteer Opportunities

Snowshoe Crew
Help maintain winter access to trails at Grey Rocks
Conservation Area by packing down snow and re-
porting trail conditions.

Winter Water Quality Monitoring
A lot happens under the ice. Help us document the
important changes our freshwater ecosystems un-
dergo during the winter months.

Salt Watch
Road salt can pose a threat to fish and wildlife, as
well as human health. Help us monitor the effects
of road salt in the Newfound Watershed as a Salt
Watch monitor.

Learn more and see all volunteer opportunities at:
NewfoundLake.org/volunteer