

2023 Fall/Winter



The MONITOR

The Newsletter of the Newfound Lake Region Association

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Stormwater Threats and Solutions

Summer Camps and the Environment

OUR MISSION

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.

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Between stormwater pollution brought by heavy rains, threats from invasive species, and growing demand for community programs, 2023 put NLRA to the test. Our programs weathered the storms literally and figuratively, and we finished the season with some great successes. And the work continues. New threats demand increased conservation efforts to ensure Newfound Lake remains clean, clear, and invasive-free.

The long-term support of this community has positioned NLRA to take the next big step—a crucial step—to creating a more resilient Newfound. We're doing this by expanding our capacity and building a new Conservation Center at Grey Rocks.

Grey Rocks is at the heart of our education work and a valued community resource. The addition of the Conservation Center will create the physical space we need to expand water quality monitoring, increase community participation in conservation, and expedite our reaction time to conservation threats on the lake and throughout the watershed.

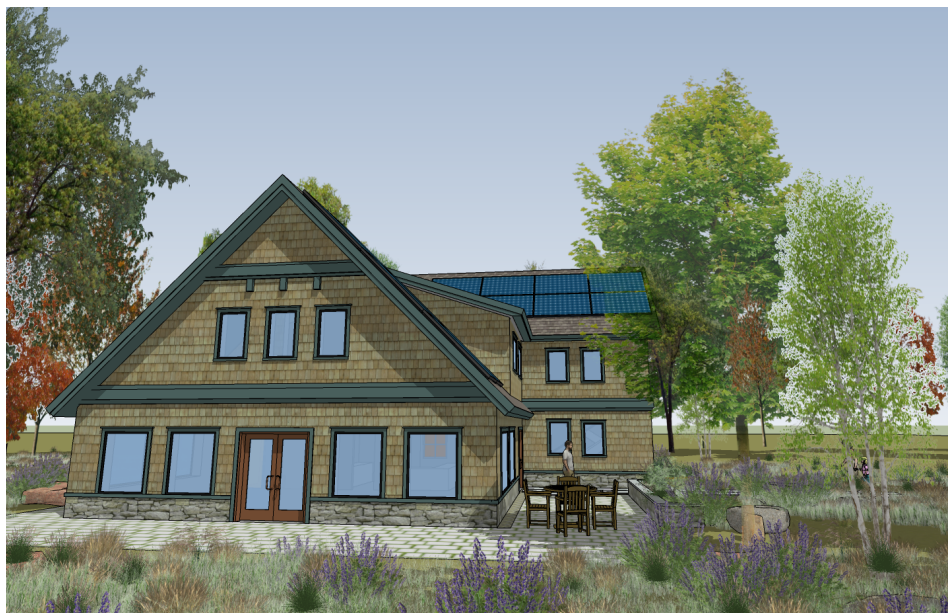
A center for conservation has been the ultimate vision for Grey Rocks since it was first conserved in 2011, and after a strategic design process, we are ready with building plans that showcase sustainable development.

Just as your support has gotten us to where we are today, our vision for the future depends on you! We're in the early phase of securing financial support, with plans to invite broad community participation in 2024. To get involved, share your thoughts, or ask questions, please get in touch.

Rebecca Hanson

Executive Director

Rebecca@NewfoundLake.org



The Grey Rocks Conservation Center supports the Newfound community and all of NLRA's work. Plans prioritize sustainable building practices and promote ecological health.

Close Call: NLRA Lake Host Stops Aquatic Invasive

Lakes across the state and around the world are fighting to keep invasive aquatic plants at bay. Invasive aquatic plants choke out native plants essential for wildlife and a healthy watershed, lower water quality and property values, impact swimming and boating, and can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to manage. Eradication is usually impossible.

Invasive aquatic plants “hitchhike” between waterbodies on boats, trailers, and other recreational gear. A small fragment of an invasive plant caught on a trailer or stuck to a boat hull can start an infestation in the next lake you visit. To date, 91 waterbodies in New Hampshire are battling at least one, if not multiple, invasive aquatic plants.

NLRA keeps invasive aquatic plants out of Newfound through two key programs:

NH LAKES Lake Host Program

Lake Hosts, a state-wide program of NH LAKES, implemented by local lake associations like NLRA, prevent invasive plants from entering Newfound through courtesy boat and trailer inspections at public boat launches. Since our Lake Host partnership with NH LAKES began in 2002, Newfound’s Lake Hosts have checked more than 51,000 boats and made 22 “saves.”

Weed Watchers

Weed Watchers are volunteers trained to identify invasive aquatic plants. They monitor shallow areas where invasive plants would be likely to grow throughout the summer, culminating in the annual “Weed Stampede,” a survey of 100% of the lake’s aquatic plant habitat.

Both programs were put to the test this summer. While performing a complimentary inspection in August, Lake Host Ethan Dupre found a suspicious plant fragment clinging to the trailer of an incoming boat. According to the owner, the last lake they had come from was Newfound.

If the plant fragment was indeed an invasive species, this opened up the possibility that Newfound Lake had an active infestation. The plant fragment was sent to NH Department of Environmental Services (NH DES), where it was confirmed with genetic testing to be the invasive Eurasian milfoil.



Lake Host Ethan Dupre stopped invasive Eurasian milfoil from entering Newfound Lake during a courtesy boat inspection at the Wellington State Park boat launch this summer.

With confirmation from NH DES, NLRA sounded the alarm. Staff and volunteer Weed Watchers scoured the lake bed surrounding the boat launch in search of infestations of Eurasian milfoil that might have taken root. Thankfully, none were found and NLRA can confidently state that Newfound Lake remains free from invasive aquatic plants.

While Newfound Lake has escaped infestation for another year, other lakes around the state are not so lucky. Two more waterbodies were infested this year by invasives, and an invasive animal brand new to New Hampshire, the spiny water flea, was found in Lake Winnepesaukee in September.

The growing threat, and this year’s close call at Newfound, highlights the importance of the preventative work of Lake Hosts and the vigilance of Weed Watchers.



Eurasian milfoil is one of 12 invasive plants and animals found in New Hampshire lakes. Lake Hosts and Weed Watchers are trained to identify aquatic invasives and keep them out of Newfound Lake.

Newfound Needs You!

It takes a community to keep invasives out of Newfound Lake.

1. Always clean, drain, and dry your boat and recreational gear, including fishing line and tackle.
2. Volunteer as a Lake Host or Weed Watcher! Learn more at NewfoundLake.org/volunteer.
3. Are you part of a shorefront homeowner association? Contact us to sign up for aquatic plant ID training with your neighbors!

For more information email Conservation Program Manager Paul Pellissier: Paul@NewfoundLake.org or visit NewfoundLake.org/invasives.

A Season of Storms: Stopping Stormwater Pollution

This summer was the wettest on record for New Hampshire; more than 21 inches of rain fell in June, July, and August. Across the state, heavy downpours left millions of dollars of damage to infrastructure. Around the watershed we experienced washed out roads and flooded homes. And all that rain also hurts Newfound Lake: stormwater runoff is the biggest threat to our healthy, clear water.

What is stormwater, and why are we worried about it?

In a field or forest, rainwater and snowmelt soak into the ground. But in areas with lots of roads, roofs, and lawns, the water doesn't have a chance to soak in. Instead, it collects as runoff and finds its way into ditches and culverts that lead to Newfound Lake. Along the way, it picks up contaminants that pollute freshwater and spur the growth of harmful algae and bacteria. During intense periods of rain or melt, the water can overwhelm our systems, damaging property and infrastructure. Washouts do more than create a headache for property owners and road managers—the sediment that washes out of roads and into the lake is Newfound's biggest pollution problem.



Slowing stormwater so that it can filter through the ground stops it from polluting waterways.

Here's how you can help slow the flow:

1. Direct your downspouts and roof runoff into drywells, rain barrels, or rain gardens.
2. Maintain a buffer of vegetation along shorelines and surface drainages.
3. Set your mower blade no lower than 3". Longer grass means healthy roots that hold more water and require less fertilizer.



As it travels it picks up:

- fertilizers
- detergents
- sediment
- chemicals
- pet waste
- trash
- motor oil

Pollutants that make it into our waterways lower water quality, impacting water clarity and aquatic ecosystems and increasing the risk of toxic cyanobacteria blooms.

SOLVING STORMWATER IN YOUR BACKYARD



Stormwater management starts at home. The average house in the Newfound Watershed produces over 38,000 gallons of concentrated stormwater a year. When not managed properly this water erodes soils, damages infrastructure, and pollutes Newfound Lake.

This year, NLRA developed new resources for homeowners, businesses, and neighborhood associations to manage stormwater on their property and deployed a three-person crew of AmeriCorps service members to implement important projects. We're solving a big problem... one backyard at a time!

Our small-scale stormwater resources include:

- On-site stormwater assessments that identify problem areas and highlight solutions.
- Custom stormwater site designs for DIYers and landscape professionals alike.
- LakeSmart certification through our partnership with NH LAKES for homeowners that achieve the highest standard of lake-friendly living.
- Project assistance for installing stormwater control measures.

Get in touch today to see how we can help you stop stormwater on your property and in your neighborhood. Email Conservation Program Manager Paul Pellissier: Paul@NewfoundLake.org or call (603) 744-8689.

For DIY examples, instructions, and more, check out our stormwater resource library: NewfoundLake.org/stormwater-resources.



Small-Scale Projects... Serious Impact!

In 2023 NLRA's small-scale stormwater program had some big accomplishments:

- 33** Homeowners and neighborhood associations completed stormwater assessments.
- 21** Stormwater control measures installed throughout the watershed.
- 4** Dump truck loads of stormwater-stopping stone and mulch – moved by hand!

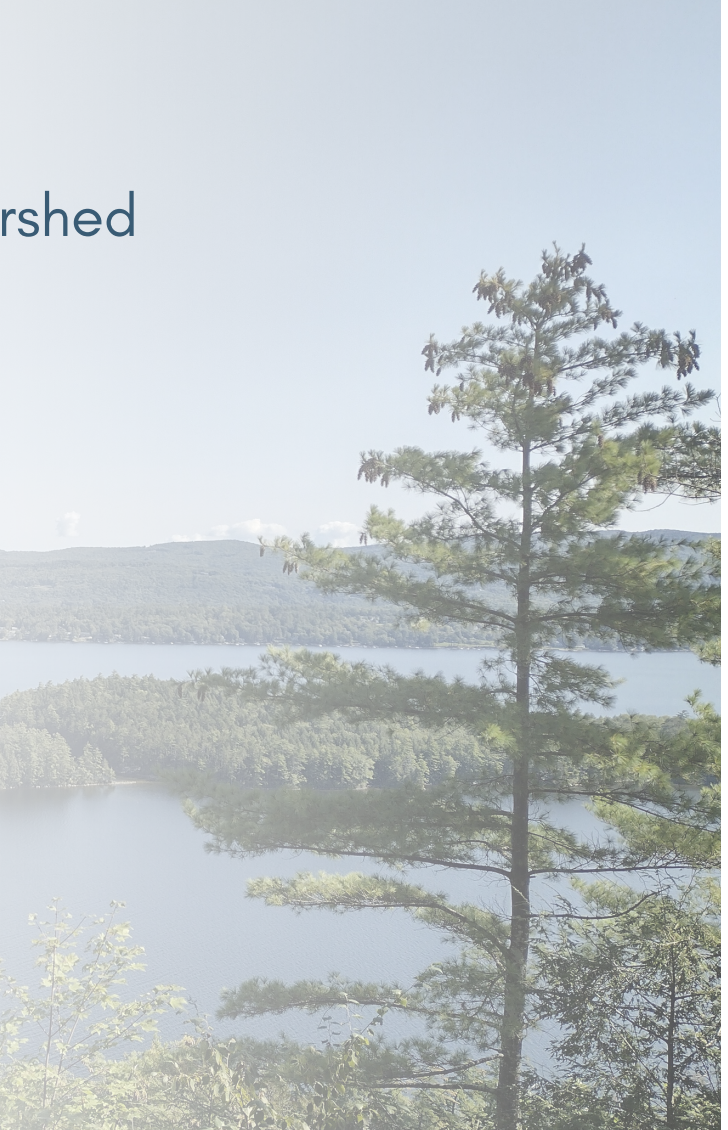


Fred and Kate Ruoff are homeowners that worked with NLRA this year to install drywells and infiltration trenches and gardens on their watershed property. These features will stop erosion and stormwater pollution.

Campers in the Community: Wicosuta Explores the Watershed

The clean water, lush ecosystems, and beautiful scenery of the Newfound Watershed create an ideal setting for kids to develop a life-long connection to nature, something valued by founders of children's summer camps. The Newfound area's camps, some founded over 100 years ago, are long-term fixtures in the community. Generations of children have learned to sail or canoe on Newfound Lake, explored Newfound's hiking trails and secret swimming holes, and learned more about themselves and the world around them through the lens of the Newfound experience. Coming to camp at Newfound is, for many, the first introduction to what becomes a life-long love of the area, with some campers returning to the lake for the rest of their lives.

Along with summer camps that bring kids from all over the world to Newfound, camp programs run by the Tapply-Thompson Community Center, Circle Program, and the Mayhew Program give kids nearer to Newfound the chance to explore their own backyard. NLRA coordinates with all kinds of camp programs to offer environmental experts and collaborative programs that inspire the next generation of environmental stewards. This year, NLRA worked with Camp Wicosuta to enrich the experience of their campers, fostering a stronger connection to Newfound and increasing environmental awareness.



Getting a Bird's Eye View

NLRA staff joined Wico campers on hikes around the watershed to highlight local plants and animals and the role they play in a healthy watershed, drawing connections between what happens upstream and the impacts to Newfound Lake. Hikes are a great way to see the watershed as a large and interconnected system. Campers identified birds by their song, used leaf shapes to identify trees, and learned how to hike safely and responsibly—all skills that help them navigate and appreciate the natural world. Each hike was rewarded with a view of Newfound Lake that showcased what they had accomplished during the hike and the special setting that Newfound provides; the letters sent home after hikes described striped maples, singing Ovenbirds, and sitting on rocks in the sunshine.

Coming to camp at Newfound is, for many, the first introduction to what becomes a life-long love of the area, with some campers returning to the lake for the rest of their lives.

Wicosuta campers hiked with NLRA staff to get a big-picture view of the Newfound watershed and learn about how healthy habitat upstream is critical to maintain a healthy lake.





Looking at Life Under Water

The pond on the grounds of Camp Wicosuta is the setting for many outdoor adventure activities, from checking out the local frog population to keeping an eye on ‘Bowser,’ the resident snapping turtle. But the pond is also full of much smaller animals: aquatic invertebrates. The number and diversity of aquatic invertebrates, from dragonfly larvae to snails, give clues to the health of the pond’s water quality and ecosystem.

NLRA introduced Wico campers to this world of “creepy crawlies” living in the vegetation and muck of the pond through invertebrate sampling. With nets, tubs, and ice cube trays, campers collected and inspected invertebrates. From learning how to identify mayfly larvae to watching the predatory alderfly larvae try to escape the holding tank, campers witnessed the complexity of life in the pond. And they even agreed these often-overlooked creatures are pretty cool! The combination of caddisfly larvae, dragonfly larvae, and other invertebrates also indicate that the pond has good water quality. Coming face-to-face with the tiny life calling the pond home helps campers understand the complexity and importance of the ecosystem they inhabit and how choices they make can affect it.

Expanding the experience of campers through programs on camp grounds and in the larger watershed fosters a long-term relationship with the outdoors that supports healthier communities and a deeper commitment to protecting the natural world. The future of Newfound depends on connecting kids with the watershed now, which is why NLRA works to make nature feel accessible and engaging for the entire community.

In addition to exploring Newfound with summer camps, NLRA works with teachers in and out of classrooms, visits community organizations, and hosts programs that are open to all. To bring a program to your school, summer camp, or other community group, email Education and Outreach Manager Dr. Mirka Zapletal: Mirka@NewfoundLake.org

NLRA led Wicosuta campers on a hunt for aquatic invertebrates to illustrate the complexity of aquatic ecosystems and jump start conversations about the importance of good water quality.





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Your Guide for Charitable Giving

Newfound Lake is worth protecting. This giving season, and any time of year, make the biggest impact by donating to the Newfound Lake Region Association from your assets:

Stocks or Appreciated Assets

Support local conservation by donating stocks, bonds, or other assets that have appreciated in value and take advantage of potential tax benefits. You can claim up to the full market value as a charitable deduction and may also eliminate capital gains tax.

Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs)

If you are 70½ years or older and have an Individual Retirement Account (IRA), you can make a QCD from your IRA directly to NLRA. This satisfies your annual Required Minimum Distribution and also excludes the amount donated from taxable income.

Grants from Donor-Advised Funds (DAFs)

DAFs allow you to make a charitable contribution, receive an immediate tax deduction, and then recommend grants from the fund over time. If you have a DAF, you can recommend a recurring grant to the Newfound Lake Region Association to protect Newfound Lake today and into the future.

Explore more ways to give at:
NewfoundLake.org

