

2025 Annual Meeting Minutes

Ryan Ruel – President

Welcome

Ryan thanked everyone for coming. He mentioned that he is “relatively” new to the Lake. He moved here in 2017. He thanked all the members, who are the most important in helping us do our work, and the volunteers in the Watershed survey, weed watch, and water monitoring. The Watershed Survey is an important part in identifying projects throughout the year.

Guest Speaker: James Shimansky – Program Coordinator, Acton Wakefield Watersheds Alliance (AWWA)

- Watershed Survey (conducted Spring 2025)

James provided a brief background on AWWA, their Youth Conservation Corp, and their programs in schools. This is AWWA’s 20th year. AWWA also works with the Acton and Wakefield middle school science programs. This year they worked with over 200 kids to teach about invasive species, the watershed, and well water testing. AWWA worked with 7th graders in Acton and raised trout fry in the classroom before releasing them in streams.

- In the past 5 years, AWWA has done 982 projects – six on Province Lake. AWWA has made 182 site visits to survey properties in the area and answer property owner questions. This is the first step before moving forward on a project. AWWA hires the YCC to do the project. Out of 182 projects, 21 were on Province Lake. AWWA has implemented 55 Best Management Practices (BMP) such as vegetative buffers reducing 21.1 lbs. of phosphorus per year. That is a very good number. Most projects are 3 – 5 lbs. of phosphorus. In the boat launch area, they added crushed rock, a water bar, and mulch.

- April 2025 Watershed Survey Report

The survey was done on April 26. AWWA is in the midst of compiling results. The data points have all been put on a map. (The AWWA presentation and map are on the web site/attached to the minutes?) The sites were calculated by impact and listed by priority. They have identified 83 sites: 29 high priority sites; 51, medium priority, and 3, low priority. Priority does not necessarily mean hard or expensive. Province Lake has 2 – 3 large issues, but not too many compared to other watershed surveys. The data is still in the early stages of organization. However, AWWA has identified 30 super high priority projects they want to target first. Projects will be sorted by water quality, impact, cost, technical requirements, projects homeowners can do themselves, projects that require a landscaper or AWWA expertise, and projects requiring engineering, which means extensive work and would cost a little more money. AWWA will also have a list of the

sediment analysis, based on the dimensions given by the survey. Most of the sediment is below 10, which could be handled by homeowners and AWWA.

The numbers along 153 were higher than expected and Jon and James from AWWA will re-walk that section before the final report. James presented the last 3 years of data. Province Lake's phosphorus levels are up from last year, but down from previous years. The Watershed Survey will identify areas, and we may be able to make a big dent. NH has changed their color-coding data system so the charts look different. But there hasn't been much change in the data overall.

- The Province Lake 2024 Water Quality Report can be found on the AWWA website and the PLA website.

- Kids are welcome to work for AWWA at \$15 an hour. It's hard, manual labor. Much of the work is done by hand. James started by working for YCC. You get to live at the lake for the summer. James began his career as a member of YCC. AWWA is always looking for volunteers and donations from PLA members.

Q&A

When will homeowners learn about their property?

In the next month or so AWWA will work with the PLA to get information out. Hopefully sometime in the fall the PLA will get the information to homeowners.

How have the cyanobacteria blooms been this year?

The lake is pretty good this year. There's been only one bloom watch. The lake is clearer than in past years. Typically, with less rain there is less erosion. This year we've had less rain than in past years.

How is phosphorus being measured?

We are using the Region 5 model. An area of erosion is measured: the width, depth, and length; how often the erosion is happening (rain, etc.); and type of soil (this area has mostly loam and sandy loam). Calculations of the soil and area size give a phosphorus number, which is reported in yearly amounts, for example 4 lbs. of phosphorus a year.

- Upcoming Septic Survey

The Septic Survey will be the next PLA project. There are two options. The PLA can use an email form or AWWA will provide the form and the PLA will do the mailing. AWWA recommends both to get the best results and to try and make it as user friendly as possible. The survey collects data, i.e., size, age, how many people are using it, what type, where is it located, how close the well, etc. The survey tries to understand what shape the system is in to determine

the need for replacement and/or need for inspection. The survey is voluntary, nothing legal comes out of it. Homeowners can learn if their septic system is at risk of failing. Healthy septic systems are good for the lake. There is a new law in NH that homeowners need an inspection within 90 days of buying a property. If the system fails, the homeowner needs to have it replaced. After erosion, septic is the number two contributor to phosphorus.

Shovel-Ready Projects (Route 153 Beach Erosion Prevention): Jon Samuelson, Vice – President, Program Coordinator

- Back in May of last year, we applied for a grant from the NH DES Cyanobacteria mitigation fund. This application was to install approximately 600 feet of vegetative buffer along the guardrail on Rt 153. This buffer would be about 10 feet wide and 600 feet long. There would be approximately 240 native plants planted and approximately 72 yards of erosion control mulch installed to help hold the soil and keep moisture in. The project will be completed by the end of the summer of 2026. We finally received NH Governor and Council approval in May of this year. Since then, we have established a steering committee to lead the effort. Our most recent meeting was yesterday, and we are now targeting installation of approximately 300 feet of the project in the next couple of weeks. We are still finalizing the date and then we will send out a request for volunteers to help. This is a bit aggressive, but our partner, AWWA, has graciously offered their YCC crew to work a day for us. We will also be supplementing with as many volunteers as we can find. The day will most likely be a Monday to Thursday.

- The original grant request was edited to add funds to hire an environmental engineering firm to develop designs and plans to address up to 5 tributaries to the lake. During major rain events, some of the tributaries dump loads of nutrients into the lake, so we are going to see if we can help mitigate that. These engineering designs will be contractor ready with material list etc. The Request For Qualifications (RFQ) is targeted to go out this coming week. Per NH law, for projects using NH DES funds, engineering contractors need to be selected based on qualifications and not on price. We will start with the most qualified, if we can't agree on a price within our budget, we move to the next one etc. Once plans are developed we will then need to get more funding to actually install the designs.

- During a heavy rainstorm where we had 5 inches of rain in an hour, plumes of silt went out into the lake 200 yards from the Golf Course culvert. Culvert and inflow areas will be key for problem mitigation.

Q&A

About the Maine beach, I remember someone was going to contact the town vs. the state about that area. I wonder how that is going?

It's going OK. The state has given up on that section of road. The town evidently owns it now. We have agreement from the town to install vegetation along there too, but we are not time constricted to do that because we don't have grants as we have in NH. We are addressing the NH side this year and probably next year, but will add ME in the future. We want the plantings to stop erosion. A big problem is the people who park there. In response to the question of guardrails the ME Dept of Transportation say they don't want them. We are going to try and get vegetation in that area to help.

So a guardrail will never happen basically?

No, the DOT calls it a FDO, a fixed deadly object.

Do you have dates on the NH planting?

We should have something in the next few days. The kids do an amazing amount of work.

Volunteer Opportunities: Marcia Fletcher – Director

Thank you to everyone who helped out with the Watershed Survey. It was easy to volunteer using the online google form or by email. That is the process we are going to continue to use for volunteers. I do have a sheet here today so people are welcome to see me after the meeting. The PLA needs volunteers for many of our behind-the-scenes projects. You don't need to be a board member to volunteer.

At this time, we are particularly looking for volunteers to help with:

- erosion plantings this summer and in 2026.
- social media/communication; Ryan has been doing our social media communication.
- a graphic artist for a new design for merchandise
- help to expand membership
- lake hosts to fill in
- water testing
- weed watch; fortunately, we haven't experienced an evasive species yet
- fundraising for erosion projects; there may also be an opportunity to help on someone else's property and on educating the public
- educating the public about the PLA in the community, such as at local town fairs
- beach cleanups; we do this twice a year. After the 4th of July this year. The work is done in about an hour and covers the shoreline from Bonneyman Rd to the Golf Course. This year there was a lot of trash and fire work debris.

Q&A

Larry Moody, board member, asked “Do we have people here from the campgrounds who would like to outreach to these populations? You don’t have to be a board or association member. If you are interested, please feel free to contact me.”

Sub-Committee Updates:

Membership: Jon Samuelson – Vice President, Membership Coordinator

- As VP I also take over as membership chair. Many thanks to Ryan and his computer skills. The spread sheet he set up is awesome! I can sort the data in many ways, and all he did to set up the streaming for today. It’s great having him on the board.
- For the year ended 2024, we had a total of 160 members . . . nine less than 2023. Of the 160, 8 were new members to the organization. From these memberships, we received \$13,356 of donations. Of the 160 members, 70% gave more than just the basic membership and 40% gave \$100 or more or, as we refer to them, as Hero’s.
- As of yesterday, for this year, we have a total of 147 members. Of these, 7 are new members. We have received \$11,600 in donations from these 147 members. Of the 147, 70% gave more than the basic membership and 38% gave \$100 or more as Hero’s. In addition, we added approximately 7 more memberships today. We are close to last year, but still a little bit short. I’ll be sending out reminders soon. In our database we have 400 – 500 names. A lot of people don’t join.

Lake Host Program: Leeann Cammet – Program Coordinator (presented by Ryan Ruel)

Leeann is at the lake now. Things are going well so far this year. We’ve had a good number of inspections so far this year. We had one person step down, and we have hired a replacement. We have four lake hosts.

Loon Observation and Monitoring: Donna Luce – Program Coordinator and “Loon Ranger” (presented by Thom Townsend. Thom summarized Donna’s report. The full report is attached and on the web site)

LOON REPORT 2025

Donna Luce is our loon program coordinator and does the coordination with the Loon Center in Wolfeboro. This year is similar to other years with the male arriving and the female a few days later. We put the raft out a little earlier than past years. Within a few days loons began visiting it.

On May 15 we put up the loon sanctuary signs and put them over on the island. Two years ago, loons nested on the island and not on the raft. Loons started more frequently at the raft by the end of May. Once the loons nested on the raft we removed the signs from the island. In 28 days we had loon chicks hatched. Surprisingly a pair of loons nested on the island. So within a few days we had 4 loon chicks. Loons have two chicks, which hatch a day apart. Frequently the second egg does not hatch. Within a few days one of the chicks from the raft disappeared. We don't know what happened, but suspect an eagle strike. They largely hang out on the lakeshore region of the lake. The two that hatched on the island went well and are still growing.

During our loon survey, which is a state-wide event, was held last Saturday. We had six people on two pontoon boats cruising around the lake from 8 – 9 am. We were able to observe 6 adults, two sets of parents and another pair of adults toward the boat ramp. For the first time we reported 6 adults and 3 checks. Yesterday Donna saw 7 loons fly into the lake briefly. It is not unusual for this time of year for loons who do not have chicks to be island or lake hopping. The loons are expected to stay here from mid to late October and then they will leave. Frequently, one adult leaves first and then the second adult, and then the “kids” leave. We do not know if any are the same adults from previous years. In 2017 we banded adults by the Loon Center. We are encouraging them to come over again but with the budget cuts that is uncertain. If it happens we will let people know by social media so they won't be concerned if they see them. The full report is attached.

Water Control Device: Tucker Vye – Flow-Control Device Monitor (Dam)

- Tucker provided a brief history of the dam: Province Lake is a natural lake. In early 1990, a culvert replacement under Bailey Rd--the outlet of the lake--was placed extremely too low. The Lake was reduced by 10-15% approx. People didn't have any waterfront property. In 1994, the PLA built a dam with state approval. The dam is divided into two sections; it's 22ft wide and 2 ½ ft deep. We add two 4 x 6 boards on each side of the section. It's trying to maintain 479-480 ft. level above sea level, which the state recognizes as the lake's level. The lake level is about perfect now.

- The dam can't handle weather extremes. We had very high-water levels this late winter and early spring. The lake is up to mother nature's whim. The dam can't help with drought. The dam is monitored and lake levels are monitored. Eventually the PLA will put levels online. Prior to Tucker, Mark Hempton was the dam master. Mark kept the data in excel so we have a few years of data in an excel spreadsheet. We have lots of years in paper version that we eventually will get electronically available. We have a shared drive with data for PLA members, and the PLA will keep updating it.

Q&A

Are there any beaver issues?

We do have a person who checks the South River. Ryan added that he checks it a few times a year. He reached out to Ryan several weeks ago with an update.

Does the dam interfere with the flushing of the lake to keep it cleaner?

It probably does. Since it's a natural lake, we don't draw the lake down like other lakes do. We don't have that capability. It can only go down another two feet.

Are there plans to dredge the South River?

The state won't allow this because it's a natural wetland. However, our beaver monitor says the South River is flowing well. The exchange rate for the lake is about once a year.

The dam is only in about five months a year. The boards were put in late this year, on June 26. It's not an exact science.

Weed Watch Program: Jim Aiken – Director, Program Coordinator

- My name is Jim Aiken, and I am the current Weed Watch Coordinator at Province Lake. I took over for Tucker Vye, who was in this role for several years. Thanks Tucker. We have 16 weed watchers for 2025. We have the lake sectioned off into 15 different portions. We ask our teams to do monthly inspections during June through September.
- Our lake is thought to be invasive free at this time, but we need to be always vigilant.
- This spring Amy Smagula at NH DES did a refresher training specific to Province Lake. A video of this training can be found on YouTube “ Province Lake (Effingham) Weed Watcher Refresher.” I encourage everyone here to check it out. We should all have some idea of what the bad actors look like, and the more trained eyes out there the better.
- I am new to weed watching this year, and I always was curious as to what to actually do if we saw something of concern. At provincelake.org we have a PDF entitled Weed Watcher Methods, and on page 5 are the options for reporting suspicious things to NH DES.

Water Quality Monitoring: Katie Jones – Program Coordinator

- Water quality monitoring works with UNH to take monthly surveys that contribute to the annual report that James referenced earlier. We take samples at the deepest part of the lake and at the five tributaries. There are five data collections throughout the summer. AWWA uses the water quality data. You can get our monitoring data on various sites such as the PLA and AWWA back to 2014.

We are looking for boat driver volunteers, particularly in the spring. We also do cyanobacteria monitoring and work with the DES website.

Q&A

Do you have any information on the buoy?

Jon Samuelson commented:

In the fall, DES put a buoy in the lake to continuously monitor the water. Within about a week after a wind event, the buoy moved closer to the shore on 153. The buoy was moved back, but after the ice, the measurement devices on the bottom broke free and then the buoy broke free. They took the buoy back, but they have not found the measuring devices. They are going to try and get back out here to find them, but the DES is so busy now they are not sure what the status is. Nothing is happening now. We don't have any data from it.

Association Business Items

- Nomination/Election of Directors: Jon Samuelson – Vice President, Nominating Committee Chair

Every year we have some positions become open that need to be voted on. We have officer positions come up in different years so there is continuity on the board. We have a nominating committee. The bios' of people who are being voted on are sent out earlier so members have a chance to learn about the people to be voted on at the annual meeting. Per the by-laws members are voted on at the annual meeting.

We have six members whose terms are expiring next year so we will not be voting on them this year: Ryan, Jon, Thom, Debbie, Jim, and Carl.

Six members are returning that we need to vote on today: Mindy, Dennis, Larry, and Marica. We have two people who would like to join the board, Stacey Ruel and Mary Saraceno.

All were approved by the Board and at the meeting they were all approved by the members. Jon invited nominations from the floor, and there were none forthcoming. Jon thanked Peter Dinger for his service over the years who is stepping down.

Q& A How many members are on the board?

The bylaws require a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 14. We had 11 at the start of this year, and will have 12 after our meeting today.

Approval of 2024 Annual Meeting Minutes: Debbie Cunha – Secretary

A motion was made and all agreed to approve the 2024 annual meeting minutes.

Financial Report: Thom Townsend – Treasurer

2024 PLA Annual Treasurer's Report to the Membership

Meeting date: July 26, 2025

My name is Thom Townsend, and I have been your Treasurer for 13 years. My summer residence is on Remick Road on Province Lake.

Financially, 2024 was much like the past 2 or 3 years.

We began 2024 with a balance of \$19,584 in checking and \$30,000 invested in a CD, for a combined balance of \$49,584

During the year we had an income of \$24,910.

The major components were Members' Dues & Contributions: \$12.8K, contributions from the towns of Wakefield and Effingham of \$7.4K (to offset much of our Lake Host payroll expenses), and Corporate contributions of \$2.4K.

Our expenses during 2024 totaled \$22,602.

Included were our Lake Host Inspection payroll expense of \$9.5K (of which \$7.4 is subsidized by the towns), Partnership contributions (primarily AWWA, LPC, UNH Lay Lakes, and NH Lakes) of \$3.8K, Insurance premiums of \$2.5K, beaver population control expense of \$3.0K, and Water Quality Testing of \$2.1K.

At the behest of the PLA board, an additional \$10K was transferred from checking into CDs. The aforementioned \$30K CD was split into two CDs, which at the end of 2024 had balances of \$23,004 and \$17,936 (combined = \$40,940).

At the end of 2024 we had a balance of \$10,952 in checking, and \$40,940 in the CDs, for a combined balance of \$51,892.

Looking forward into 2025, our major income sources and expenditures are consistent with past years. Nearly 70% of our members contribute greater than our Association's nominal \$25 membership fee.

We are in good shape, and we are prepared to apply funding for any identified and approved remediation of threats to our lake.

Q&A

I walked around our area near the Remick Rd campground. I was curious if anyone has joined the PLA from the campground since I did that?

Jon replied that he wasn't aware of anyone.

Annual Financial Audit: Carl Davis (on behalf of Michell Schank, auditor)

As a non-profit, we are required by the state to do an audit. In the interest of time, Carl presented a summary as the full report will be online with the minutes. The summary was to the best of my knowledge all records are complete and recorded accurately with income and expenses with supporting receipts. I applaud the meticulous reporting of our treasurer and thank him for his time and effort as a volunteer.

Ryan: This concludes the business portion of our meeting. We have a second guest speaker to provide an update on the boat ramp improvement project.

Jim clarified that one of the PLA's biggest expenses is the lake host program, which uses the Towle Farm boat ramp.

Boat Ramp Improvement Project: Bill Kane – President, Towle Farm Community Corporation (TFCC) and Sandy Roach, TFCC board member

Bill presented a power point on the PLA lake host program at the Towle Farm boat ramp. There is erosion at the ramp as people load boats. The amount of erosion depends on the skills of the driver and the launch. The TFCC is raising money to repair the boat ramp. The ramp has been in use since 1957-8. TFCC has collected approximately \$8,853.95 This amount is a start as TFCC needs to follow DES requirements in construction. It's going to be expensive.

Sandy and her husband Tom went to the DES in Concord. They learned that since the ramp has been in use since 1957-8 they are probably grandfathered in. They needed to bring all the documentation of pitches going way back. They collected the documentation and they felt it would be a "go." Their next step is to get an engineer to move along in the process for permitting approval. They feel their original goal of \$10,000 will be enough to get them started.

Two possibilities for engineers are Dave Cribby, GW Brooks Engineering out of Effingham and Duncan Alore, Civil Engineering from Portsmouth. They investigated other ramps such as the state-of-the-art ramp on the Ossipee River that NH put in. Ellis Beach in Maine is a salt water application in Maine. Those planks are something we would like to do. It's simple and has maintained its structure for a long time.

They also looked at Lees Mills in Moultonborough at the north edge of Lake Winnepesaukee.. GW Brooks didn't do it but worked on part of it. We can't drain the lake so the simple solution won't work.

DES is strict and won't let us do "wet construction." Lee's Mills in Maine is our best option. The DES will allow you to work in the wet as long as it's not excavating in the wet. The TFCC will ask Tucker from the PLA to help lower in the lake as far as possible in the fall. We could put the ramp up to the water line and then the six by six landscape timbers would be secured and bolted together. A concrete plank, 12 x 14 feet, could be placed there, and then be pushed into the water. Everything depends on DES review and approval. Dave Cribby from GW Brooks said he may have some numbers for us by the end of August at the earliest. We have a couple of contractors once the design is made, and we may be able to do some of the work ourselves. We are having a fundraiser. We are having a penny sale and we've had a lot of donations.

Q&A

With the ramp, how will that affect the width because of all the boat congestion and moorings in that area?

Those are TFCC boats and moorings. It's a private dock on the right. The ramp itself would be 12 – 15 ft. We have to keep it exactly what it's been.

Comment: We don't need any more boats there.

What will you do if you don't get approval? Where will the funds go?

The PLA will get a nice donation. Again, there are a lot of unknowns. We don't know what it's going to cost? We try to maintain transparency. We make note of checks. Venmo does a good job of keeping track. Anybody is welcome to look at the books at any time.

Do the funds you have now allow you to get the plan?

Yes the funds we have now will allow the plan and the permitting. The engineers will give us two estimates.

Ryan thanked everyone for coming and the members of the board.