

## **LAKE IROQUOIS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2018**

The Lake Iroquois Association has had an extremely busy and eventful year and we are looking forward to yet another busy year in 2019. Here are some of the projects LIA worked on during the 2018 season:

- We continued the greeter program and boat wash station at the fishing access. With the support of a grant from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation and the support of LIA members and the surrounding towns, we were able to add Friday afternoon hours to the program and hire a supervisor who was tremendously helpful managing the program. Thanks also to the work of several members of the LIA Board and our fiscal partner the Town of Williston, this program has continued to be successful and is a model for other programs in the state.
- For four weeks this summer we were able to bring in the Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting team as part of our integrated approach to controlling the invasive Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) in the lake. This effort was made possible by a grant from the Lake Champlain Basin Program, contributions, and membership dues.
- Once again, this year, we placed benthic (bottom) barriers at the fishing access in order to keep that particular channel free of invasive EWM. We purchased additional barriers which we plan to add to the Lake Iroquois Recreation District (LIRD) beach area to help expand the swimming area and help mitigate the impact of the EWM. These barriers could also be used to cover a small infestation if a new invasive species is found in the lake.
- New this summer we partnered with the University of Vermont Spatial Analysis Lab to conduct an aerial plant survey in September. They flew a fixed wing drone over the lake to collect imagery. This data will be used to observe the aquatic plant community and quantify the EWM infestation, particularly in the littoral zone close to shore. Future image collection will allow for objective year to year comparisons. This survey was funded by a grant from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation.
- The stream restoration and road rehabilitation project to remediate the tributary parallel to Pine Shore Drive was completed this year. This tributary contributes significant amounts of phosphorous to the lake. More sampling data is needed in future years but water quality data from the 2018 season already shows reduced levels of phosphorus entering the lake.
- We are happy to report the awarding of a conceptual design grant to address the erosion and, sedimentation contribution issues of Beebe Lane and the tributary at the north end of the lake. This is a Block Grant from The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission and will be a cooperative effort among multiple organizations including LIA, LIRD, Town of Williston, Town of Hinesburg, and the residents of Beebe Lane. This project will include a management plan implemented by the LIRD. Based on years of sampling data, this tributary demonstrates the highest average source of phosphorus contributing to the lake in addition to other environmental impacts from sedimentation. The project goal is to perform a complete review and restructuring of this road over the next few years as funds become available.
- We continued the LaRosa Partnership grant-funded tributary water quality sampling project in 2018. This effort continues to be a critical data source informing the organization where rehabilitation and restoration efforts should be focused.
- We also continued supporting Lay Monitoring, Vermont Invasive Patrollers, and blue-green algae monitoring on Lake Iroquois.

- In July, LIA held its annual meeting and sponsored its second annual 'Garden Tour' showcasing several Lakewise Award Winning properties and the Pine Shore remediation project site.
- Throughout the year we made a number of public presentations in the area regarding our work and the EWM infestation, including meeting with town select boards and conservation commissions, as well as attending statewide meetings and training sessions. In addition, we co-presented with the Lewis Creek Association at their spring Water Matters event held in the Hinesburg Town Hall. The presentation highlighted the LaRosa Partnership Program tributary water quality monitoring project.
- We continue to provide information and outreach via our newsletter, *The Lake Iroquois Monitor*, our website, [www.lakeiroquois.org](http://www.lakeiroquois.org), and our Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/lakeiroquois](http://www.facebook.com/lakeiroquois).
- Finally, we continue to study and research additional methods to reduce runoff and nutrient loading in the lake and to control the EWM problem.

As widely reported by multiple media outlets, our application for a permit to use the aquatic herbicide Sonar to control EWM in the lake was formally denied by the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation in October. We are disappointed that after several years of careful study and research, development of a five-year lake management plan, the support of many, many stakeholders around the lake, and nearly a two year wait for a response to our application, denial was the final outcome.

In spite of this setback, we are continuing our commitment to protecting the health of the lake not only by preventing additional invasive species and pollutants from entering the lake, but also continuing to find ways to reduce and control the invasive EWM currently present in the lake. If EWM is ignored and allowed to spread to the fullest extent possible in the lake, it will continue to choke out native species, reduce the ability of native fish and other aquatic species to spawn and thrive, and reduce, if not eliminate, the ability of humans to enjoy the lake. An ecosystem is not healthy when overrun by an invasive species. We firmly believe as stewards of this precious resource, each of us have a responsibility to do everything we can to contribute to the health and well-being of Lake Iroquois. The Lake Iroquois Association will continue to work tirelessly to find effective tools to help reduce the spread of this invasive species.