

LAKE IROQUOIS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REPORT 2019

The year has brought a lot of work for the Lake Iroquois Association Board of Directors and much fun on the lake for the users. As we head into yet another winter solstice, our minds become forgetful of yet another year that has passed in a short blink of our eyes, mostly the amazing weather that we have all enjoyed over the spring, summer and fall seasons, and the fun surrounding our most precious recreation resource in Chittenden County, Lake Iroquois. As we venture down on the winter shores of the Lake, most afternoons can be spent watching community members coming from the surrounding towns to the lake to play. This time of year, skaters, skiers, ice fishing, snowmobiles, and at times dozens of hockey players are enjoying the lake. On occasion we even enjoy the dirt bikes racing on a figure eight track. Most everyone out on the lake during the weekend braves the cold and enjoys the snow and ice. Living on the lake, many enjoyable moments even during the off season. If you haven't spent time on the lake in winter or joining the dozens of walkers on our network of trails maintained by the LIRD, you certainly are missing out, even in the dead of the winter. Tons of fun is enjoyed by many! So even as you read this Annual report during the winter months, fun can be found on the lake.

Speaking of tons of fun, your Lake Iroquois Association Board of Directors has spent the past several months planning next year's spring and summer projects. We have spent dozens of hours working collaboratively to build a new community outreach & educational program through a redesign of our association's website which will launch in the early part of the new year. A number of our board volunteers spent much time this fall working as a group called "The Lake Iroquois Milfoil Action Committee" investigating the possible use of an herbicide, called ProcellaCOR. This product has been approved by the EPA, and VT Health Department. It was used successfully this past summer by several Vermont lakes for controlling Eurasian Watermilfoil (EWM). We see this as a possible part of an integrated lake management plan to reduce and control the infestation of invasive EWM in Lake Iroquois. As many recognize, we are becoming a "Lake in Crisis". One in which our lake's ecosystem is dramatically threatened due to the severity of this invasive weed problem. We continue to work tirelessly to determine every possibility that exists to mitigate the spread of EWM and to reverse the damage it is causing to the lake. Currently our board is working on a five year integrated management plan for the lake that will identify and determine the best management practices necessary to mitigate the spread of this problem and try to bring the health of the lake forward instead of letting this lake die. This multi-faceted approach includes using Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting (DASH), hand pulling where possible and appropriate, the use of bottom barriers in high traffic areas, and the continued management of our state recognized Greeter/Boat Wash Station Program at the public boating access. All of these efforts are supported by obtaining various state and federal grant funds, membership dues, private donations, and support from the surrounding communities. We are committed to not sit back and allow this most amazing natural resource in our community fail.

During this past month, as an annual event each year, I have just had the pleasure of meeting one on one with each community Town Manager and Selectboard as we review our program's efforts for the year. Over this past decade, our board of directors has worked closely with our surrounding municipalities. The board members before us have worked for years with these boards and state agencies to gain the recognition and respect that we have today. I feel very fortunate to be one of many volunteers that carry on the torch of such an amazing group. Let's face it, without these endless efforts, who knows what the health of the lake would be today. As I said so many times in front of the Selectboards, we have an amazing resource with our lake and the recreation lands surrounding it. It is enjoyed by thousands of users each. Let's make certain that generations to come can continue to enjoy the beauty and pleasure of this resource that the Beebe family decades ago provide to our communities. We are the lucky ones, and we should be thankful and gracious for the opportunity to carry a healthy lake forward for many more decades. Working as hard as your volunteers do today is a small part of that accomplishment!

Chris Conant
President