



Dear Town of Smithfield and its citizens,

7 Lakes Alliance thanks the Town of Smithfield for its generous support for our collaborative work with many public and private partners to protect the waters that support our communities. Smithfield's crucial support helps prevent and remediate invasive plant infestations and helps stop soil erosion that pollutes lakes with phosphorus that fuels harmful algae blooms. Smithfield's support leverages other private and public funds and community support to ensure North Pond and its watershed continue to support a robust tax base, economy, local jobs and recreation. Highlights of 7 Lakes' work in 2023 include:

- Secured a new two-year, \$112,140 federal Clean Water Act Section 319 grant for erosion control projects on North Pond (2024-2025). Administered by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection and funded by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the award will be matched by \$114,350 from partners for a total of \$226,760 investment in watershed remediation projects.
- Provided jobs for 21 high school and college-aged youth in our community through 7 Lakes Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) who gained skills, learned lake stewardship, and supported programs to reduce erosion, such as the voluntary LakeSmart program for landowners.



Photo by Sharon Mann

- Worked in collaboration with Kennebec Soil and Water Conservation District, the Town of Smithfield, NPA, East Pond Association, Somerset County Soil and Water Conservation and other partners to develop a North Pond Watershed-based Management Plan, including to address algal blooms.



Photo by Jodie Mosher

- Served on the North Pond Watershed Plan Technical Advisory Committee and Steering Committee, contributing water quality science, erosion control expertise, extensive water quality monitoring and analysis in partnership with Colby College.

- Installed 132 erosion-control Best Management Practices (BMPs) in the Belgrade Lakes watershed; including 19 BMPs addressed erosion on North Pond; 11 upstream on East Pond. We also advanced work on larger road and driveway projects for 2024.
- Employed 37 high school and college students and community members as Courtesy Boat Inspectors (CBIs) who learned about lake values and invasive plants. 8 volunteers also assisted.
- Conducted 12,034 courtesy boat inspections at five public boat launches in the Belgrade Lakes to prevent the spread of invasive plants within the watershed.
- Increased CBI coverage hours on North Pond by 40 percent with 887 inspections, and on East Pond by 122 percent with 786 inspections. NPA, EPA, town, and private support made this possible.
- Removed 13 invasive plant fragments: one (1) – curly leaf pondweed (CLP from out-of-state) from entering Great Pond and prevented 12 (variable milfoil) from leaving Messalonskee Lake.
- Conducted 18 Adopt-A-Shoreline trainings at three sites, including Smithfield, teaching volunteers to identify and monitor for invasive plants. Surveys found no new infestations in 2023.
- 7 Lakes divers removed CLP from the Serpentine between East and North Ponds, reducing CLP there by 78 percent. 7 Lakes staff and volunteers also monitored and removed CLP from Leech Cove Brook, driven there by winds from the Serpentine. These efforts continue in 2024.



7 Lakes staff & NPA volunteers survey for curly-leaf North Pond



Surveying for curly-leaf on Serpentine



Serpentine curly-leaf diver

7 Lakes looks forward to continuing to work with Smithfield to ensure lake health for our communities.

Laura Rose Day

Laura Rose Day, Chief Conservation Officer, 7 Lakes Alliance



Photo by Jodie Mosher