

Members of the Hogan Whitney Pond Association (HWP) are strongly in favor of LD 164 to provide funding to improve and maintain the quality of lake waters in the State.

Hogan and Whitney Ponds are situated in the western foothills of Oxford, Maine. The two ponds of nearly 345 acres, separated by a small narrow ridge (an “esker”) of gravel and sediment with an outflow into the Little Androscoggin River, provide a diverse environment for macrophytes, fish, amphibians, and waterfowl. While both ponds appear to be almost identical, these two ponds are distinctly unique and require a range of strategies to keep them healthy.

Our HWP has benefited from Maine DEP funding for the following water quality activities:

Watershed Improvements:

In 2017 the HWP, in collaboration with DEP, conducted a watershed survey of the combined ponds and identified 95 non-point source pollution sites. The resulting report became the basis for a successful, two-year (2019 and 2020) DEP-funded, \$94,000 grant to remediate some of the more challenging municipal and private property owner sites. This work was done in collaboration with DEP, the local Soil and Water Conservation District, the Town of Oxford, and residents in the watershed. That project helped reduce soil sediment entering the two ponds by an estimated 131 tons per year. We also provided education, technical assistance and grants to follow best management practices for homeowners. This January we have just begun a second, two year round of DEP funding for \$133,000 to extend our education and best management practices to keep our two fragile ponds from further degradation.

Milfoil Mitigation:

For the past 10+ years, members of the HWP have been battling the milfoil invasive species infestation in Hogan Pond and the inflow/outflow channels. Luckily, Whitney Pond has not been affected so far. We have received annual grants from the DEP (upwards of \$10,000) that the association matches with our own funding and in-kind labor. Over the years, we have hired certified milfoil divers who used a Diver Assisted Suction Harvester (DASH) boat for extracting and bagging the milfoil plants, used our owned trained divers for similar activities, and placed benthic mats on highly infested areas to kill off the milfoil. Many tons of milfoil have been removed from the pond and channels. The association has made great strides in reducing the amount of milfoil but there is still much more work to do. We must continue to remove milfoil each year to prevent it from spreading and overtaking Hogan Pond and the channels.

Please pass LD 164 so HWP can continue to do our good work in improving and maintaining the water quality of our valuable ponds and surrounding watershed.

Regards,

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