

Catherine (Katie) Meikle
Smithfield
LD 164

Dear Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee,

My name is Katie Meikle. I'm a physician and practiced in Waterville from 1991 until I retired in 2013. My husband Don Schassberger and I have owned nearly 30 acres on North Pond in Smithfield since 1993 and have been full time residents of Smithfield since 2013. We are both members of the North Pond Association Board and are LakeSmart evaluators.

Sadly, North Pond is in serious trouble. Severe algae blooms the past 2 summers have prevented us and our summer guests from swimming in the lake. We love to kayak and paddle board, but one time the green mat was so thick that I couldn't see my paddle as it dipped in the water. These blooms not only hamper recreational activities, but also can create toxins harmful to fish and other wildlife. Sport fisherman flock to North Pond known for its bass fishing.

Our NPA membership dues and returnable bottle collection help to fund trained courtesy boat inspectors (CBI) who check boats and trailers at the public launch for invasive plants such as Eurasian Milfoil. Another invasive, Curly-leaf Pond Weed was discovered in the serpentine flowing from East Pond to North Pond in 2021. East Pond, North Pond, 7 Lakes and Maine DEP have partnered to clear this invasive plant by hiring specially trained divers to collect plant material and by organizing volunteer paddle surveys in which Don and I have participated.

As volunteer LakeSmart evaluators we strive to educate our fellow North Pond property owners in ways to minimize rainwater runoff which carries phosphates into the lake contributing to the blooms.

We are fortunate at NPA to partner with 7 Lakes, Colby College, the communities of Mercer, Rome, & Smithfield and others working to establish a comprehensive plan to stop these algae blooms, but mitigation is likely to be very expensive. Please support LD 164 An Act to Fund the Lake Restoration and Protection Fund.

Thank you,
Katie Meikle Vice President North Pond Association
Smithfield, Maine