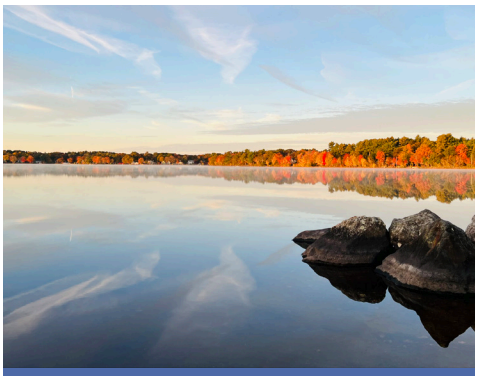
SPRING 2024

love our lake

A message from Sharon's Lake Massapoag Advisory Committee



Top 10 Things You Can Do to Protect the Lake

1. Don't fertilize your lawn, or limit to once a year in the fall.
   - Cancel spring and summer lawn applications (ask to omit from annual contract).
   - Don't use fertilizer with phosphorous.
   - Avoid herbicides and pesticides.
2. Pump your septic system every other year and repair if needed.
3. Pick up after your pet and put the waste in the trash.
4. Use a car wash. No phosphoric acid, phosphates, or TSP in boat or outdoor cleaning products.
5. Don't feed ducks or geese.
6. Don't put chemicals, oil, or medicine down the drain.
7. Make sure your boat doesn't leak oil.
8. Stop the spread of invasive plants by checking your boat before launching.
9. Redirect downspouts into green areas or install rain barrels.
10. Keep leaf litter and grass clippings away from pavement and maintain a natural shoreline.

Community Preservation Committee Approves Grant For Lake Massapoag Alum Treatment

The Lake Massapoag Advisory Committee (LMAC) thanks the Town's Community Preservation Committee (CPC) for a unanimous vote to approve $525,000 for a treatment aimed at helping reduce algae blooms by deactivating "legacy phosphorus" accumulated in bottom sediment over many decades.

This "high-dose" alum treatment is a safe and effective method with a long track record of success in Massachusetts and across the U.S. It would take place in March 2025, when it will be most effective.

In the summer, temperatures at the bottom of the Lake rise and oxygen levels fall. This causes phosphorous that has accumulated in the Lake's sediments over decades to be released back into the water. This release of this "internal" or "legacy" phosphorous stimulates algal blooms that limit our enjoyment of the Lake and harm wildlife.

Testing last fall found high levels of iron-bound phosphorus in our deep sediment—not surprising given the Lake's history as a bog iron mine for Revolutionary War cannons. Iron-bound phosphorous makes our Lake especially vulnerable to summer phosphorous releases.

The proposed treatment will add alum to the sediments, which will bind the historic phosphorus and prevent it from being released.

The treatment is a key first step in returning the Lake to a healthy state, but we must also work to prevent ongoing sources of phosphorous from entering the Lake from human activities if we hope to keep it healthy in the long term.

We are developing a ***Watershed-Based Plan for a Resilient Lake Massapoag 2025-2050*** to guide efforts to reduce polluted stormwater runoff from roads and parking lots that currently add new phosphorous to the Lake.

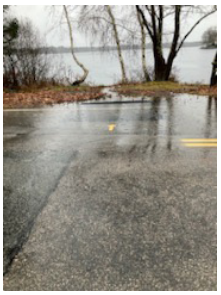
Help us stop phosphorous! Limit fertilizer, maintain your septic system, manage pet and yard waste, and report flooding and runoff into the Lake to the DPW and Conservation Department via "Report A Concern" at townofsharon.net.

Join the "Love our Lake" campaign!

Show your commitment to protecting Lake Massapoag! Free yard signs are available on a first come, first served basis. To reserve your yard sign and learn more about the Lake campaign, visit: **lakemassapoag.net**

Storms Hurt the Lake

The winter months of December and January saw four tropical rainstorms of 2-4 inches each inundate the town, causing heavy runoff, beach and shoreline erosion, street flooding, and high water conducive to septic seepage. This is the "new normal." Please report to DPW via "Report a Concern."



Lake Ave./Beach St. 12/11/23

Memorial Beach 1/13/24

What's in a Watershed-Based Plan?

1. Identifies causes/sources of pollutants: total phosphorus and *E. coli*
2. Estimates reduction in pollutant levels needed to achieve water quality goals
3. Proposes best management practices (BMPs) to reduce pollutants
4. Identifies technical and financial assistance required for plan implementation
5. Highlights information/education needed for public engagement, action, and support
6. Develops a schedule for implementing management measures
7. Describes interim measurable milestones
8. Sets criteria to measure if loading reductions are being achieved
9. Lays out a plan for monitoring to evaluate effectiveness over time

Source: *MassDEP, Nine-Element Watershed-Based Plans Information. LMAC is working with consultants TRC and NepRWA, town departments, and many stakeholders to develop this plan. Email us to get involved!*

South Cove Fanwort before Diver-Assisted Suction Harvesting (DASH), 8/7/22

Invasive Weed Control

LMAC is working to control invasive weeds such as fanwort and milfoil in coves and the lagoon, as well as weeds in the Memorial Beach swim area. They grow back after removal, so we are investigating new technologies. It is complicated by the presence of some state-listed endangered species that raise regulatory hurdles and costs.

Fix Your Septic System! Low Interest Loan Program

Sharon homeowners in need of septic system repair, replacement, or upgrade are invited to apply to the Town's septic loan betterment program.

Through the program, homeowners can borrow funds at a 3.5% interest rate for 20 years.

The loans are offered through an agreement between the Town of Sharon, the MassDEP and the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust's Community Septic Management Program.

Get details at **sharonwater.com**

Questions about your septic system? Contact Kevin Davis, Sharon Health Agent for Engineering, 781-784-1525 x2317

Take Action Online!

Visit **lakemassapoag.net** to keep up to date on the project and latest water sampling data, learn ways to protect our Lake, discover lawn care alternatives, and find out how you can help!

For additional information, watch our latest presentation, *Dive into Lake Massapoag*, on Sharon TV. We are also available to come speak with any size group that wants to learn more!

About the LMAC

The Lake Massapoag Advisory Committee (LMAC) was created by the Town of Sharon, MA in 1969 and updated at 2022 Town Meeting to expand its membership and scope, with additional resources to address the challenges facing Lake Massapoag.

Its seven members are appointed by the Conservation Commission, Select Board, Planning Board, and Recreation Advisory Committee. The public is welcome to attend the meetings.

For more info, email **lakecom@townofsharon.org**

Thanks to: Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, Town of Sharon Board of Health, Community Preservation Committee, Conservation Commission, Department of Public Works, Planning Board, Recreation Advisory Committee, Select Board, Water Management Advisory Committee, and our many partners and stakeholders.