



Indian River Lakes

CONSERVANCY

Protect • Learn • Enjoy

Newsletter

Summer 2014

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Elliott Hillback, IRLC President

A Place To Love

The Indian River Lakes Conservancy's annual Celebration of The Lakes was held a few weeks ago. We had many more sponsors and many more attendees than ever before. It was a fun night that raised a record amount of support for our programs and activities focused on protecting and caring for the Indian River Lakes area that we all love. We thank everyone who helped make the night a great success!

I took the opportunity that evening to tell the attendees a personal story about why my wife Margie and I are actively and passionately involved in the IRLC. We are the third generation owners of our cottage on Butterfield Lake, which was purchased in 1914. Margie spent many childhood summers here. My first visit was in 1968, a few years after we got married, and we returned for steadily increasing periods every year until we bought the property in 1977. In the audience at the Celebration were two of our three children and their spouses (our fourth generation), who spent all their youthful summers here learning how to respect and enjoy nature and its wonders. They learned to quietly listen to the loons or to watch swallows acrobatically dancing over the lake in pursuit of unseen bugs. They fell in love with moonrises over the lake, late night thunderstorms that light up the sky and catching a three inch fish with a three inch worm. They also learned resilience, self-confidence, teamwork, and many other life skills while in the woods and on the lakes. Back at our cottage that night six of our seven grandchildren were holding two teenage baby sitters hostage. Our grandchildren are in the early stages of discovering the world around them and

it is wondrous and exciting to have the Indian River Lakes play a unique part of that process. Margie and I feel that our 16 years as part of the IRLC, since its inception, has been on behalf of that fifth generation and the sixth and seventh generations yet to come. We are working to protect this place we love so that it will still be "A Place to Love" many generations from now. When our family celebrates 200 years here we want them to still be able to watch a beautiful moonrise over the lake in awe, or listen to the loons and wonder what they are saying, or catch a three inch fish with a three inch worm and squeal with delight. I am sure that everyone at our Celebration, and each of you, has a personal story about your love for this place, about what it means for you and your family, and about how it has impacted your life and theirs. We would love to hear your personal story and also learn about your goals for the Indian River Lakes region. We would like to work together with you to achieve our common goals to protect this area so future generations have the same opportunities to enjoy, learn and grow. Please send your stories and suggestions, ideas and dreams to: april@indianriverlakes.org.



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President's letter (cont.)

A Critical Moment

The Indian River Lakes area is at a very critical moment. The water quality in many of our streams, rivers and lakes is steadily deteriorating. We are not alone – there are similar issues in many other parts of New York and the rest of the country. We have already seen some of the negative outcomes such as increased aquatic weed growth and more frequent toxic blue green algae blooms. Those recent events make it clear that there is a very real possibility that the fishing, duck hunting, swimming, kayaking and other water related activities we love could become significantly limited or disappear over time. The impact on our area would be devastating.

Now is the critical moment for us to act, before significant and irreversible damage is done. The IRLC is building a broad based coalition with the Indian River Lakes Water Quality Initiative as its working name. It is made up of groups such as lake associations; local, county and state governments and agencies; experts such as engineers and scientists; plus interested individuals. Our mission is to increase understanding of these issues and then plan and implement effective corrective actions in the Indian River Lakes area. Both the learning/planning process and the education/implementation stage will require a wide range of skills, experience and leadership. We are looking for volunteers from throughout the area to help as part of this broad based, large scale effort to deal with an issue that affects us all. This really is a critical moment and it is time to act. Please contact April at 315-482-4757 or april@indianriverlakes.org to get involved.

An Important Crossroads

We love this area for its unique beauty, amazing ecological diversity and wide range of outdoor recreational opportunities. But, until recently, many of us were not very knowledgeable about the much more significant and unique role that the Indian River

Lakes area plays in the ecosystem of Eastern North America. Our area is an important crossroads where a major North-South flyway for migrating birds crosses a significant East-West wildlife corridor between the Adirondacks and Algonquin Provincial Park in Ontario. (see map). What we do here in the Indian River Lakes region is likely to have a significant and far reaching impact on the environmental health of a markedly larger area than where we focus our day to day attention. We have begun collaborating with the Algonquin to Adirondacks Collaborative (A2A), a Canada based regionally focused organization, to identify and facilitate opportunities to work on and impact larger regional issues. To increase our ability to collaborate more broadly, Mark Scarlett, IRLC Past-President and current Vice-President, has joined the A2A Board. Learn more about A2A by visiting: <http://www.a2alink.org>

The IRLC is also leading an effort to facilitate and increase collaboration between a group of six conservation organizations in the North Country and a wide array of scientific and environmental experts from eight to ten academic institutions in the area. We

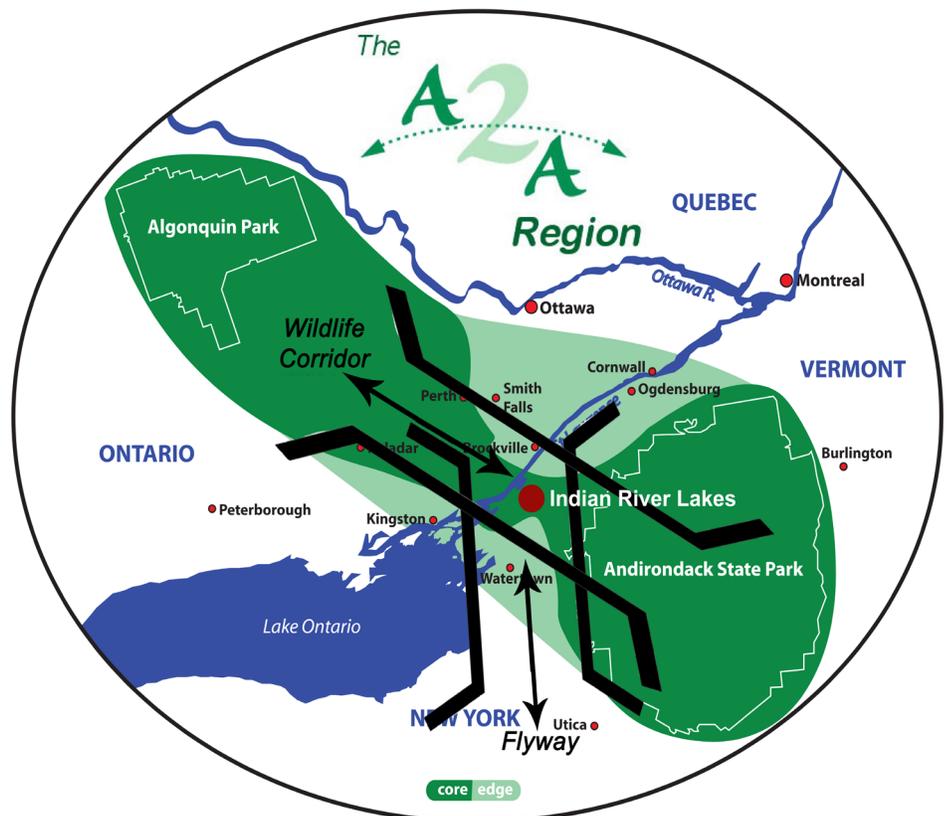
expect to have more information on this initiative in our next newsletter.

Program Updates

Interesting new educational and youth programs are in the planning stages. If you have some expertise or an interest in these areas please contact April in the office and she will get you connected with the project leader. This will be a fun and very rewarding project.

We are Here for the Environment and for You

We are your Conservancy. Let us know what you think, tell us how we are doing, and give us some suggestions about areas where we should do more. Let us know how you think you could help support the IRLC. Even though we now have a staff person, we are still primarily a volunteer based organization. Our future success will continue to depend upon the ideas and energy of you: our neighbors, our supporters, our volunteers. Please volunteer today! *Thank You.*



IRLC Hires First Staff Member



Thanks to your support, IRLC is growing by leaps and bounds. As a result, we have hired our first full-time staff member. April Frederick joined the IRLC family in June. April has a bachelor of science in Natural Resources Management and has been working in conservation for more than twenty years. She comes to IRLC with experience in environmental education and public outreach; developing and managing volunteer programs; and land management. April will be working closely with the Education/Outreach team to expand our programs and activities and to develop more opportunities for volunteers to get involved. If you have ideas for new programs or are interested in volunteering, please contact her. Along with the Administration/Finance team, she will be working to implement standard procedures and improve communications. She and her husband, Roger, are excited about exploring their new North Country home. Most weekends they can be found either in the woods or on the water, hiking, canoeing, kayaking, or wetting a fly line. April is in the IRLC office Tuesday – Saturday from 9:00am – 5:00pm. Feel free to stop by and introduce yourself!

Portrait of an Underwriter - Bernie Sturr

Bernie Sturr's love affair with the Indian River Lakes began when he was a child staying at his parents' cottage on Hyde Lake. In 1991 he met his wife, Kathy, on that very same lake. After spending some years elsewhere he returned to the area and settled in Clayton, where he recently began an independent real estate sales and management company, Motivated Realty. Despite his busy schedule developing his new business, Bernie says "every chance we get, my wife and I take our canoe for a paddle on one of the Indian River Lakes."

When the IRLC recently received a donation of property, a cottage on the shore of Millsite Lake, Bernie was approached to list the property. IRLC asked him if he would consider donating a portion of his commission and he responded: "This is what I want to do: The day we close on the property I will write the IRLC a check for my full commission." In the end, Bernie was able to sell the property exclusively and donate the full real estate commission, becoming a Major Underwriter for this year's Celebration of the Lakes at the Coyote Moon Vineyard.

Bernie shared, "Even though we live in the (St. Lawrence) River community of Clayton, we would rather take our canoe and go to the Lakes. It's our dream to own a cottage on a lake someday. So we want to support the IRLC to keep the lakes the way they are."

Bernie's passion for the Lakes and his willingness to help the IRLC preserve the natural beauty of the area for present and future generations is not unique. Each individual who has a special relationship with this ecologically rich region wants to see it remain as uniquely beautiful and diverse as it is today. There are many ways to help. Please contact the IRLC office or any member of the IRLC Board of Directors to learn more.



Don't miss out! If you want to make sure that you get notifications and reminders about our programs and activities, make sure that you are on our email list. If you haven't been receiving hike reminders and program announcements, please send us your email address: indianriverlakes@gmail.com. Please place Email in the subject line.

Summer 2014 Events and Programs



Motivated Realty - *Underwriter*
Sponsors

Bernier, Carr & Associates

Coyote Moon Vineyards

Cross Island Farms

LaFave, White & McGivern, L.S.P.C.

River Rat Cheese

Brown, Dierdorf & Renzi

Celebration of the Lakes

Music and laughter filled the air as a record crowd of IRLC supporters gathered for the annual Celebration of the Lakes at Coyote Moon Vineyard on August 2. Guests enjoyed delicious food prepared by Two Friends on a River catering and danced the evening away to the sounds of Second Chance. A great time was had by all in support of IRLC's efforts to conserve the incredible Indian River Lakes region!

Sponsors

C-Way Golf Club

Clipper Inn

Creekside Custom Metal

Dan's Repair Service

Edgewood Resort

Mercer Contracting

North Country Storage Barns

River Wellness Center



2014 Annual Meeting

We had perfect summer weather for a hike along the lush green trail route at Boyd Pond. Members stopped at one of the proposed overlook sites to take in the view and learn more about this exciting project.



Summer Paddling

Paddlers explored new waters this summer as IRLC sponsored trips to picturesque Moon Lake and the scenic Indian River.



Wilson's Snipe

by Gerry Smith

As a cub scout I was convinced that snipe were mythical creatures whose only purpose was an excuse for troop leaders to torture their charges with “snipe hunts”. While my childhood suspicions remain that these exercises had very little to do with the bird and a great deal to do with initiation of military training in young boys, snipe do exist. Although many species occur in the Old World, the Wilson's Snipe is our only North American species. Under the wavering determinate decisions of the American Ornithologists Union, this species has undergone more name changes than the average scam artist. Generally alternating between Wilson's and Common Snipe, this bird is now one of several North American birds named after famed nineteenth century pioneer ornithologist Alexander Wilson.

The Wilson's Snipe is widely distributed across the continent. It breeds from central New England through the Great Lakes Region northwest to Alaska, wherever suitable habitat may be found. They winter from the southern edge of the breeding range down through Central America. In our area, they are a widely distributed but spotty breeder in suitable habitat. In the core winter months, snipe are very rare in our region. As a migrant, they usually occur in wetland areas as singles or small flocks with occasional flocks of up to fifty being noted. Along with the American Woodcock this species is one of the few North American shorebirds that may be legally hunted in the United States and Canada. Hunting pressure plays a role in the distribution of this species in fall. Hunting is based on rules of the Migratory Bird Act of 1916, and perhaps should be revisited a century later.

Depending on the arrival of sustained warm weather and the associated snow melt, the first Wilson's Snipe arrives in the latter third of March. The main migration through our region occurs during the first three

weeks of April. While they may be observed as migrants at melt water pools and in wetlands, snipe are often first detected at breeding sites. In courtship display, males make a loud “winnowing” sound that may carry for a mile or more. This sound is made by the bird's wing feathers as it flies high, circling over the breeding territory. In function it serves the same purpose as a songbird's tune, proclaiming ownership of territory to other males and seeking to attract females. Since males may arrive as much as two weeks before females and displays continue well into the breeding season, they are the best way of detecting this otherwise secretive bird's presence.

By early May most pairs have formed and breeding has begun. The female chooses a ground based nest site as she is guarded by the male. Usually two to four large eggs make up a clutch. As with most species, such as shorebirds, where young are well developed when they hatch and can move about in a few hours (precocial), eggs are a significant portion of the female's body mass. If all goes well and the nest is not found by a predator, the chicks will hatch in about three weeks and can move about in a few hours. Although all the incubation and nestling rearing is done by the female, the male soon takes half the brood under his care. Splitting the young between the two parents in separate areas within the territory prevents the entire brood being lost in a single catastrophic incident. After about six weeks of parental care the young are flying and fledge from the adults.

Habitat at all times of year is somewhere in or near water. Almost any water from streamsides and deep swamps to very wet fields that remain uncultivated will do. These habitats provide access to its primary food source as soft soils may be probed with its long bill. Foods such as insects and their larvae, small mollusks and even



small fish may be readily obtained. Thus the primary rule of natural survival, that a well fed organism has a better chance of surviving threats than one weakened by insufficient food, applies. Larger wetlands become increasingly attractive in late-summer and fall as smaller ones may lack water. By September concentrations at favored wetlands may reach dozens or more, but even then this secretive bird may be very hard to find. After the opening of the hunting season it is likely they become more wary. I have personally known few snipe hunters in my half century afield and this pursuit does not seem very frequent locally. Nationwide statistics from the US Fish and Wildlife Service suggest a dramatic decline in the take of this species in the last quarter century. This decline probably reflects a lack of hunter interest rather than any population decline.

Probably the greatest threat to the species comes from continued destruction of their wetland habitat. The loss of wetlands in the Americas since European settlement is staggering and still continues in many areas. In our region, the fill and conversion of small unregulated wetlands remains a concern for this and many other species of birds and amphibians. Wetland creation and restoration through programs of the state and federal governments is important to offset some of the past and current losses.

Continued on page 7

IRLC Awards Scholarship

by Richard Sauer

The IRLC Scholarship Committee has awarded a scholarship to a deserving student from Jefferson County. Such scholarships have been funded by IRLC since 2002 for students graduating from local high schools and Jefferson Community College. Students are selected from these schools based on academic achievement and their intention to further their education in the environmental sciences. It is IRLC's hope that this will influence more and more young scholars to become active stewards of our environment.

Each school recommends a worthy student to the IRLC Scholarship Committee which then makes the final recommendation to the IRLC Board of Directors. The Board appropriates

the funds and presents a letter of commitment to the recommended students who may use the funds to offset the cost of tuition, books and other education related expenses.

Wyatt Catlin from the Alexandria Central School was this year's successful high school candidate. He is pictured with Dr. Richard A. Sauer, Team Leader of the IRLC Scholarship Committee, who presented the award in the amount of \$450.00 at the graduation ceremony. Wyatt will commence his studies at Paul Smith's College where he will major in Forest Technology. Wyatt, who hails from Plessis, stated he would eventually like to become an Environmental Conservation Officer.



Wyatt Catlin receives scholarship from IRLC board member and Education Team leader, Richard Sauer.

Golden Winged Warblers on Grand Lake Reserve



IRLC has dedicated a 15 acre parcel on the Grand Lake Reserve to serve as a demonstration site for Golden Winged Warbler habitat management. Staff representing partner organizations, the Thousand Islands Land Trust, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, NY State Audubon Society, and biology professor Tom Langen and students from Clarkson University, gathered at the site earlier this summer to assess the work that will be needed as part of a multi-year management plan now being developed by Audubon staff.

This project is supported with funding from the NY State Conservation Partnership Program (NYSCPP) and New York's Environmental Protection Fund. The NYSCPP is administered by the Land Trust Alliance, in coordination with the state DEC.

IRLC Seeks Funding for Boyd Pond Trails

IRLC is anxiously awaiting a decision this fall on a major NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation grant opportunity to help with funding for the trails and boat launch at Boyd Pond. If funded, these will be the only wheelchair accessible woodland trails in the entire New York State region west of the Adirondacks and north of Watertown. Given accessibility design requirements, the project will be an expensive one, with a final cost estimate of over \$290,000, and will require a major fundraising effort for construction to begin with next year's building season.



The goal of the Indian River Lakes Conservancy is to preserve the natural character of the area, with a focus on protecting clean water, fish and wildlife, and the scenic vistas along the shores of the lakes and the Indian River and to educate ourselves and the community about the natural habitat in which we live.

Robert P. Hedden: Painting The Indian River Lakes

Plein Air Painters Thousand Islands Region (PAPTIR) was founded in 2009 to foster painting outdoors in the region, a practice that was spreading rapidly across the U.S. In July 2010, some PAPTIR painters attended a canoe/kayak trip on Grass Lake, which started a love affair with the Indian River Lakes

A good painting site requires three P's: Point of View, Parking and Potty. The nearest gas station or restaurant meets the third P requirement at many sites. Some PAPTIR painters arrived early for an IRLC / TILT paddle on Millsite Lake in July 2011 where the DEC boat launch afforded not only beautiful views of the lake, but also met the third P requirement.



Across the Lake by Lori McCall

Cindy and Phil Gentile hosted an event at Grass Lake in 2013. Generally, painters arrive for an event in the morning with a packed lunch, and then assemble to eat and socialize before they return to painting and depart on their own schedule. However, Phil likes to cook and entertain and they showed us a great time! Most times when we are hosted, PAPTIR participants bring a dish and beverage to share and the hosts party with us. Several painters set up right



Grass Lake Shoreline by Jan Byington

on the Gentile's dock to paint. The results illustrate different artistic interpretations of the same scene. Jan Byington's painting, *Grass Lake Shoreline*, takes a broad point of view while Lori McCall chose to zoom in on a portion of the shoreline in *Across the Lake*. I often coax Jan Byington into bringing along her two-person kayak. A kayak offers the opportunity to get around the lake to seek more points of view or to take photo references to be used for later studio paintings.

Approximately one third of the 60 artists on the PAPTIR email distribution list have attended a paintout event at one time or another. Typically, a paintout is attended by five to seven artists. PAPTIR painters have participated in a number of Indian River Lakes region paintouts. The Morristown Public Library Plein Air Fest was held at Black Lake in 2013 and PAPTIR painters have also painted along the beautiful Indian River in Theresa and Philadelphia. We are looking forward to the development of the Boyd Pond trails (and the planned privy) as this site might also offer some painting views of Lake of the Woods. The booklet *Exploring the Redwood Lakes*, contains some enticing photos of Butterfield Lake, Crystal Lake and Sixberry Lake, with notations that the all important restroom is available at each of them. Painting these scenic vistas and unique landscapes should nurture our love affair with the Indian River Lakes for many years to come.



Millsite Lake by: Robert Hedden

Wilson's Snipe (cont.)

Preservation and management of wetlands by land trusts working with communities is also critical to the local survival of many species.

The Wilson's Snipe in Ed Robertson's back wetlands in early October is not thinking about such matters. It is chowing down, putting on fat reserves for the flight south. One chilly night following a cold front passage from Canada it will spiral upward, not to display, but to ride the north winds perhaps to Virginia or Florida or even northern Columbia. If it is a fortunate survivor it will return in April and by early May serenade the Robertson Family with its wing based song. Even in these uncertain times of climate change and other disruptions, Wilson's Snipe will hopefully be circling above the farm in the times of Ed and Denise's great great grandchildren.

About the IRLC

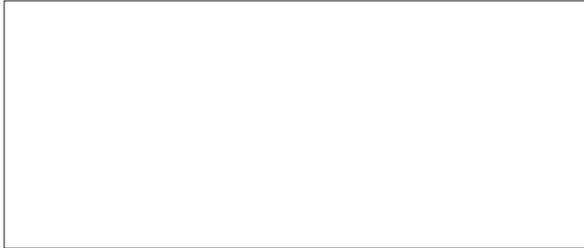
Formed in 1998 to conserve critical lands in the Indian River Lakes area of Northern New York, the IRLC is a non-profit land trust with 501(c) (3) tax exempt status operating in a manner consistent with the published standards of the Land Trust Alliance, a national organization

Have you renewed your membership?

There's still time to renew your IRLC membership for 2014. Your support makes it all possible!

Indian River Lakes Conservancy
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or CURRENT RESIDENT

Baker Island Dock Dedication



This dock is dedicated in memory of
SAM RIZZO
who so loved the woods and waters of
GRASS LAKE

A newly installed dock on the Mark A.F. Baker Island Preserve was dedicated in memory of Sam Rizzo this spring. The Rizzo family generously donated funds in their uncle's memory to help build an extension to the dock. Lake residents can now tie up easily to hike the island trail.

Join us for a Fall Hike
Oct 18 1:00 pm
Join us for a naturalist led hike to witness the wonders of nature as the plants and creatures of the woodlands prepare for winter.
Call for more information (315) 482-4757



Join the conversation on Facebook
Type "Indian River Lakes Conservancy" in the

Facebook search box, or follow the link on our website.

www.IndianRiverLakes.org
IndianRiverLakes@gmail.com

Waterfront Septic Systems Must Overcome "Severe" Challenges

No place has meant more to many of us for relaxation, beauty, fresh air, exercise, and fun than "the lake". What a joy it is unwinding and recharging with friends and family in such a beautiful and natural place.

The water is what makes the magic; the view from the cottage, refreshing swims, boating, fishing and the sparkling reflections of a glorious sunny afternoon. It is all about the WATER.

Now, the WATER, the key ingredient of "the lake," is in trouble. Too many nutrients, phosphorous and nitrates, are being fed into the lakes and the primary source is septic systems. We have increasing weed growth problems and hazardous algae blooms being fed by runoff rich in nutrients.

It is said "the solution to pollution is dilution," and there is some truth in that. Unfortunately, it seems we have reached the point where the capacity of our WATERS to dilute is being overwhelmed by the volume of the nutrients that pollute.

The slope, depth to bedrock and fast draining characteristics of the two "buildable" soil types (MuE-Millsite-Rock outcrop and QeB-Quetico) that are dominant around the shores of all the Indian River Lakes make them unsuitable for properly functioning "normal" septic systems.

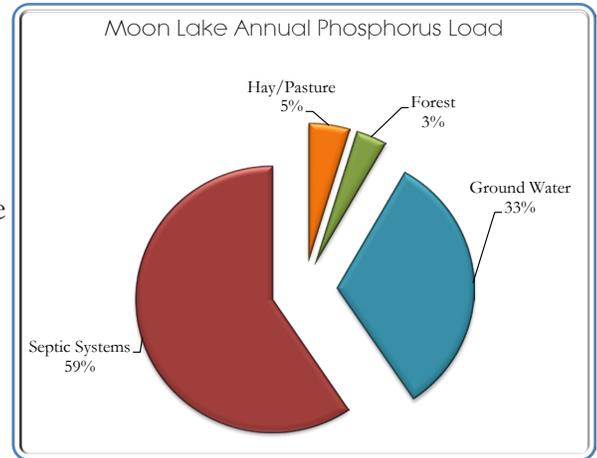
The "Soil Survey of Jefferson County, New York" includes a detailed description of both of our primary soil types (MuE on page 92 and QeB on page 104). The unsuitability of our soils for sanitary facilities is shown in Table 12 on page 288. Both of our soil types are classified as having "severe limitations that affect septic system absorption (leach) fields".

"Severe Limitations" as defined in the survey means "soil properties or site features are so unfavorable, or so difficult to overcome that special design, significant increases in construction costs and possibly increased maintenance are required".

The loss of natural vegetative lakeshore buffers, use of lawn and plant fertilizers and other factors do contribute, but the largest sources of the over-nutrient are inadequate or malfunctioning septic systems.

The NYS/DEC conducted a study of Moon Lake water quality entitled, "Total Maximum Daily Load of Phosphorous in Moon Lake- September 2007." This study determined that septic systems in the portion of the drainage area that is developed (4%), mainly with cottages, contributed 59% of the total annual phosphorous load.

Forested land, which comprised 83% of the drainage basin, contributed only 3% of the annual total phosphorous load.



Because we have soils with severe limiting factors that affect the performance of septic systems, it is going to take a special effort on the part of every resident to apply new technologies and to design and install new systems or upgrades to existing systems that will be effective around the Indian River Lakes. Regular system inspection and maintenance, such as pumping, will also be crucial for us to overcome our existing problems.

We all have a problem underground, lurking just outside our cottage or house somewhere. And, we all have the individual and combined responsibility to be vigilant and act aggressively to ensure that the "Magic of the Water" will continue for generations to come.

References

Jefferson County Soil Survey:

www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_MANUSCRIPTS/new_york/NY045/0/jefferson.pdf

Moon Lake Phosphorous load study:

http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/water_pdf/tmdlphosmoon.pdf

Septic System Dos and Don'ts

Do

- ...educate your family on proper use of the system.
- ...repair leaky faucets and toilets. One leaky faucet can waste as much as 700 gallons of water a year.
- ...use low-flow fixtures.
- ...spread out your laundry over several days to give the septic system more time to digest the water.
- ...run dishwashers and clothes washers only when full and use the cycle with the lowest number of rinses.
- ...use baking soda and white vinegar to clean toilets and other household items rather than harsh chemical cleaners.
- ...use boiling water or a mechanical drain snake to clear blocked drains. Drain cleaners contain dangerous chemicals that can destroy the septic system's beneficial bacteria.
- ...direct all wastewater from your home into the septic tank. This includes all sink, bath, shower, toilet, washing machine and dishwasher wastewaters. Any of these waters can contain disease-causing microorganisms or pollutants.
- ...install a manhole to simplify inspection and cleaning, if the tank is 3-4 ft. below ground level.
- ...allow only grass to grow on top of the tank and leaching field.
- ...ensure that there is a vegetated buffer (grass, trees and shrubs) between your leaching field and a lake or stream. Plants will suck up excess nutrients, help retain water, and prevent erosion.
- ...keep roof drains, surface water from driveways, basement sump pump drains, and other drainage systems away from the leaching field.
- ...check with the local regulatory agency before installing a water softener that discharges to the septic system.
- ...find your flow diversion valve and turn it once a year. This can add years to the life of your system.

Don't

- ...put a lot of water into the system all at once. A lot of water down the drain like when draining a bathtub can force harmful amounts of nutrients to flow from the tank and overwhelm the leach field.
- ...flush even small amounts of paint, solvent, thinners, disinfectants, pesticides, or oils down the drain or toilet. These chemicals can destroy the bacteria that break down solids in the septic tank and pollute groundwater.
- ...use large amounts of laundry soap, detergents, bleaches, toilet bowl cleaners and caustic drain cleaners. Choose environmentally friendly products (such as Method or Seventh Generation) or vinegar and baking soda whenever possible. If you must use chemical cleaners, read labels carefully to ensure only recommended amounts are applied.
- ...allow excess amounts of fat or grease to enter the system. It can congeal and cause obstructions.
- ...use garbage disposals. Compost instead.
- ...flush paper towels, tampons or sanitary napkins, condoms, plastic, or cat litter.
- ...use chemical compounds, enzymes or septic tank "cleaners." These can break down sludge, which can then flow into your leaching field, decreasing the life of the field.
- ...discharge salt brine solution from water softeners. Salt brine can build up in the groundwater and pollute wells and springs supplying drinking water.
- ...use matches or an open flame to inspect a septic tank. Gases produced by decomposing sewage can explode and cause serious injury.
- ...allow trucks or heavy equipment to drive or park over the tank or leaching field. Heavy equipment can crush the pipes and compact the soil so it can no longer filter and absorb sewage nutrients.
- ...plant trees or shrubs on or near the leaching field. Trees such as willows, poplar and sumac can clog up your tile bed and cause backup and surface seepage.