

Co-Chair's Letter

The IRLC will celebrate its 20th birthday in 2018!! Thank you for 20 years of your ideas and opinions, your involvement and encouragement, your volunteer time and your financial support. The love we all share for the beautiful Indian River Lakes area has been the driving factor that helped us reach this point together. Thank you all for your support.

In our first 19 1/2 years, with your help, we have had significant and expanding successes in land and water conservation and stewardship. Together we have been able to provide increased opportunities for the public to enjoy nature's beauty through our steadily growing trail network. Our well received educational activities and programs in the Trailside Classroom, on our trails and in the winter at the Depauville Library have had large and engaged audiences. We are planning next year's educational program now. We expect to have a loon expert from Cornell, a local geologist/archeologist, a fisheries expert and many others on our 2018 program. Please let us know if you have topics/speakers that you would like to see on our schedule or if you have a class/program that you personally would like to teach.



Our continued growth is creating a number of opportunities for us to initiate or expand activities/programs in order to protect the natural world of the Indian River Watershed. We are also creating increased

opportunities for everyone who lives in or visits the area to learn about and enjoy its unique biological diversity, its amazing natural beauty and its critical environmental importance. To enable us to continue to expand our activities we realized early in 2017 that it was time make a series of major evolutionary changes to the IRLC's structure and staffing. These changes will strengthen the IRLC and prepare us for even more successes in our next 20 years.

We recently brought on board James "Wylie" Huffman as our full-time Executive Director (Acting) who will be the day to day leader of the IRLC. He will report

directly to the co-chairs of board. In that position he will develop and manage all IRLC programs and activities, and also supervise our new Administrative and Communications Coordinator, Rebecca Rumptz, and our growing cadre of incredible volunteers. Wylie, an avid fisherman and outdoorsman, recently retired as a Lt. Colonel after a 22 year leadership career in the US Army. (Please see mini bios of Wylie and Rebecca on page 5). Our board and staff is jointly beginning the process, with outside expert help, of conducting a major review of all our current programs and activities in order to update our strategic plan. A critical part of this effort will be obtaining feedback and ideas from a large and diverse number of you, our members and supporters.

At this exciting moment the two of us would like to ask each of you to consider making a special year-end financial gift to the IRLC. Your financial support and the contributions of so many others



like you who love this place have made these first 19+ years possible. Going into our next 20 years our river, lakes, and the land around them face challenges and opportunities like never before. Your generosity has never been more important in helping to meet those challenges and seize those opportunities in "This Place We Love," our Indian River Lakes Region.

We are excited by our upcoming birthday and energized by these significant initiatives. The new staff and board members plus related organizational and operational changes will dramatically strengthen our organization and expand the Indian River Lakes Conservancy's capabilities and resources while increasing our ability to carry out Our Mission:

PROTECT • LEARN • ENJOY • FOREVER.

Thank you for all you do, your support is invaluable!

- Elliott Hillback and Mark Scarlett
IRLC Co-Chairs

About the IRLC

Formed in 1998 to conserve critical lands in the Indian River Watershed 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.



IRLC Board of Directors

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What are the Indian River Lakes?

by Mark Scarlett

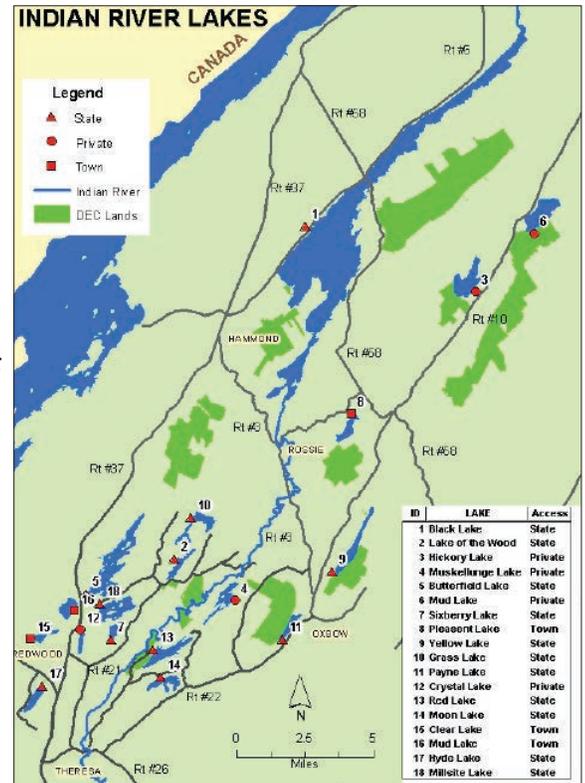
We are often asked that question, and the easy answer is the one that New York State and the DEC have been promoting for thirty years or more as a boating and fishing destination. As the DEC web site notes, "The Indian River Lakes system, located on the St. Lawrence River plain in Jefferson and St. Lawrence Counties, consists of 18 natural lakes [that] provide a unique opportunity to fish for a variety of species in a relatively small geographic area." Indeed, the Indian River Lakes Conservancy was so happy with that definition that it promoted those lakes by using the DEC map on their very first IRLC t-shirts (image on right).

The eighteen lakes attributed by the DEC to the Indian River Lakes "system" are: Black Lake, Lake of the Woods, Hickory Lake, Muskellunge Lake, Butterfield Lake, Mud Lake (Town of Alexandria), Sixberry Lake, Pleasant Lake, Yellow Lake, Grass Lake, Payne Lake, Crystal Lake, Red Lake, Moon Lake, Clear Lake, Mud Lake (Town of DePyster), Hyde Lake, and Millsite Lake.

On the other hand, anyone who drives down County Route 25 north of the hamlet of Oxbow during spring flood can't miss the torrent of water pouring from Payne Lake into the picturesque Oswegatchie River on the other side of the road. How, then, could Payne be an Indian River lake if it drains into the Oswegatchie River?

Thing is, as many of us who live among these lakes have known, there are several local lakes that are not technically within the Indian River Watershed. Beside Payne, Moon and Yellow Lakes are also in the Oswegatchie watershed, and Hyde Lake is in the Perch Lake watershed.

The Indian River Lakes Conservancy has from the beginning included these lakes as sister lakes, if you will, not only because the DEC has included them, but because they are also geographic, environmental, and political kin. They share not only proximity, but also ecological kinship and municipal jurisdictions.



Indeed, ecologically, only Black Lake has the distinction of having the Indian River flow through it, although the short outlet between Red Lake and the river does make that lake susceptible to the ebbs and flows of river levels. The ecologies of the rest of the lakes are more distinctly defined by their own, relatively limited surrounding watersheds, typically draining through meandering creeks and wetlands before reaching the river.

So, we readily acknowledge that a list of the Indian River Lakes without these kin is entirely appropriate where environmental assessments require a strict delineation of the watershed. In fact, such a delineation of the Indian River watershed will also include Narrow Lake, Indian Lake, and Mud Lake, all within the boundary of Fort Drum, and Lake Bonaparte in the Town of Diana. Still, for as long as Payne, Moon, Yellow, and Hyde have been adopted siblings of the Indian River Lakes, IRLC is glad to call them kin. However they may be counted, we will continue to work with the stakeholders of these lakes to help them conserve and protect the places they love as though they are our own.

Looking Ahead Strategic Plan



The IRLC’s rapid recent growth curve and our realigned organizational structure will create many new opportunities for the IRLC. The world around us is also undergoing a great number of changes. As a result we felt this was the perfect time to start planning for our next decade! We recently applied for, and received a NYSCPP Strategic Planning Grant which will enable us to hire a highly experienced consultant to guide our project. She has a strong background in developing strategic plans for watershed based land trusts. Wylie Huffman, our acting Executive Director, will guide our internal team including the Board of Directors and others through an estimated six month process assisted by our consultant. This process will develop a strategic plan and an implementation program that will propel the conservancy well into the future.

The planning timeframe will extend through the summer season to allow us to incorporate ideas and suggestions from both our local and summer season residents. We would appreciate your input on what we should be doing more of (or less of), as well as things you feel have the highest priority. Please feel free to email, call, or stop by our office and provide input regarding the directions you would like to see the IRLC take. We will also be hosting a number of planning forums during the summer months in which we encourage your participation and input to help us chart the course for your IRLC for the next 10 years. Any and all suggestions are welcome!

IRLC to host Indian River Watershed Conference

The IRLC is planning an Indian River Watershed Conference to be held on **Friday June 8, 2018** at our Redwood Hill Preserve Trailside Classroom. We invited several experts including Dr. Bill Harman, Research Chair and Director of SUNY Oneonta’s Lake Management Program; Scott Kishbaugh, a DEC Hazardous Algae Bloom expert; as well as representatives from the Jefferson, St. Lawrence, and Lewis County Soil and Water Conservation Districts. NYSFOLA will also be represented, and Rick Lopez will give a presentation based on his success obtaining a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) grant on Mud Lake. Topics pertaining to the Indian River Lakes will include invasive species threats, harmful algae blooms, shoreline management and the state of the fishery. We are looking at providing simultaneous presentations in different venues to allow attendees to pick and choose their particular program of interest.

Please let us know if there are topics that we can add (or delete) so we can pique your curiosity and meet your expectations! Thank you!



Coliform Testing in Redwood

IRLC is working with the Butterfield and Mud Lake Associations and the Town of Alexandria to determine the cause of high coliform bacteria counts at the outflow of Mud Lake in Redwood. This fall, the town's contracted engineering firm and Water Treatment Facility members were extremely cooperative in conducting analysis and dye testing throughout the Redwood sewer lines. No drop in water pressure was indicated and no dye was observed in the inflows to Butterfield Lake, which indicates that the sewer lines are not directly contributing to increased coliform counts. All interested parties are currently analyzing laboratory test results on the water’s bacterial levels, and the IRLC will organize a meeting



in early December to determine the course of action needed to investigate other potential sources of coliform entering the lake water. Once the source of the bacteria entering the lake is identified, we will facilitate the effort to develop and implement a plan to mitigate the coliform contamination. Dave Andrews, the SUNY Oneonta Lake Management graduate student currently developing Butterfield Lake’s management plan, will continue to monitor and record coliform levels throughout the winter in support of his study. IRLC remains committed to working with the Town of Alexandria, local lake associations, NYS Department of Environmental

Conservation and Department of Health, and water quality experts to identify and understand the contributing factors to high coliform levels and associated health effects in order to implement a sustainable solution to improving Butterfield Lake water quality.

****Notice****
Gate at Redwood Hill
The IRLC will be placing a locking gate across the entrance to the Redwood Hill Preserve parking area as a result of unauthorized access and activities during the hours of darkness. Staff members will open the gate on weekdays during office hours. The gate will be closed during weekends and holidays. When the gate is down we encourage trail users to park in the IRLC office parking lot and follow the newly installed signs/ trail markers to the trailhead behind the north end of our building.
Thank you!

The Benefit of a Naturalized Shoreline at Black Lake

©GLQA, Inc., October, 2017 R. C. Henderson

Today large areas of Black Lake's 69 miles of shoreline are becoming developed. As a shallow lake, water chemistry changes and sediment loads from storms and erosion of soils have a big impact on the viability of the lake as a healthy fishery and recreational resource.

One factor increasing sedimentation in the lake, has been recent shoreline development. Landowners are denuding shorelines to obtain clear, panoramic views and easy access to dock or swim area.



Problem: Stripping away the natural vegetation barrier adds sediment to the water with every rain and even wind. Bare shorelines remove privacy and result in bare soil and rock that's not only ugly from the water and opposite shore, but also may take decades to hundreds of years to return to a natural state, if it ever does!

A 2013 DEC survey of lakefront property owners listed ten benefits of a natural shoreline: 1. Increase Property Value; 2. Reduce Soil Erosion; 3. Protect Water Quality (reducing sediment); 4. Enhance Wildlife Habitat; 5. Reduce noise from roads, neighbors, boats, jetskis; 6. Provide Privacy; 7. Screen

unsightly Views; 8. Enhance Scenic Views; 9. Keep Geese Off your lawn; 10. Absorb Phosphorus, Nitrates, Pesticides, Detergents and other chemicals thereby reducing incidence of Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs).



DEC's CSLAP 2016 Report to Black Lake, recommended that we actively Promote Shoreline Naturalization! If your shoreline has a native buffer zone of vegetation (trees, shrubs, weeds), leave it. Groom a path through to the water. If you already have grass to water's edge, consider transplanting native plants to a 6-8' wide zone. Or let them grow up from seeds (no mow). Black Lake Association can help—call or write us for more information.

Welcome Mary Corriveau to the IRLC Board of Directors!

Mary M. Corriveau was recently elected to the IRLC Board of Directors. She brings to the Conservancy her vast experience from various senior leadership roles in major public and not-for-profit organizations in the North Country. Her professional experience includes serving for 10 years as the City Manager of Watertown, NY. In a voluntary capacity, Mary served as a Board Member and Officer of the Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization, Operation Yellow Ribbon, and the Jefferson Community College



Foundation. She is the Corporate Membership Chair of the NNY Fort Drum Chapter Association of the United States Army.

Mary is also a member of the North Country Honors the Mountain Monument Enhancement

Committee, the Advisory Committee for the Jefferson Community College Center for Community Studies, and is the Chapter cofounder and coordinator of Guitars for Vets in Watertown. Mary is the recipient of the 2005 Athena Award and 2015 Shapiro Award.

Mary earned a B.S. in Accounting and Law from Clarkson University in 1983 and became a Credentialed City Manager (ICMA) in 2003.

Mary and her husband Jim own a cottage on Sixberry Lake where they spend much of each summer.

The mission 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.

Hail and Farewell to IRLC Staff

James "Wylie" Huffman

Executive Director (acting)

Wylie Huffman recently became the IRLC's Acting Executive Director. He joins the IRLC after his recent retirement from



serving 22 years in the U.S. Army. His final assignment was as the U.S. Army and Republic of Korea Army Commander's Executive Plans Chief, responsible for leading diverse multinational planning efforts to integrate and synchronize air and ground operations across the Korean peninsula. Wylie joins the IRLC with vast experience in building and leading teams of professional subject matter

experts that unify efforts, operations, and conceptual implementations to achieve a common vision. His background also includes several years of practical experience in strategic communications and community outreach. Wylie graduated from Wright State University in 1995 with a B.A. in Political Science and earned a M.S. in Adult and Continuing Education from Kansas State University in 2009.

Wylie's love of nature was nurtured as a child growing up on his family's 110 acre farm near Columbus, Ohio where he spent his weekends and summers catching amphibians and reptiles, and raising orphaned wild animals to include squirrels, raccoons, Canada geese, and crows. He developed a passion for flyfishing and appreciation for water quality at an early age by catching bass and panfish in the farm's ponds and spring-fed creek.

Wylie is excited and honored to be working in the beautiful north country

to help people protect and enjoy the Indian River Lakes watershed. While spending a total of six years stationed at Fort Drum at different times in his career, he fell in love with the area's abundance of natural resources and outdoor recreational opportunities and decided to "grow roots" here with his wife of 22 years and daughter (12) and son (10). These days, when not at the conservancy, Wylie can be found swinging flies with his family on the Salmon River during the fall and winter months and bass bugging the Indian River Lakes with his fly rod during the spring and summer.

Don't miss out! Subscribe to our email notifications by sending an email to indianriverlakes@gmail.com with "Join List" in the subject line.

Rebecca S. Rumptz

Communications & Administrative Coordinator

Rebecca Rumptz was hired as the administrative and communications coordinator in October. She recently moved to the area with her husband, who is stationed at Fort Drum, and 11-year-old daughter. In May, Rebecca graduated with a B.S. in journalism with an emphasis in strategic communication and a B.A. in international studies from the University of Kansas.

Rebecca hails from the "thumb" of Michigan and grew up enjoying the Great Lakes. Her fondest childhood memories include ice fishing, boating, and hiking. Rebecca is a U.S. Army veteran with overseas time in Germany, Iraq, Qatar and Afghanistan. Her experiences in the military founded her wanderlust. Following her time in the army, Rebecca worked for various government agencies before going to school.

In the summer of 2017, Rebecca completed a Department of State internship at U.S. Embassy Warsaw. While in Warsaw, Rebecca helped coordinate diplomatic events to establish and maintain relationships between the U.S. and Poland, including the U.S. president's visit in July 2017. She enjoys hiking, cooking and traveling, and is a devoted KU basketball fan.



Rebecca is looking forward to meeting and working with area residents. She is dedicated to ensuring open and engaging conversation about how the IRLC can continuously help all of us protect, learn, and enjoy this beautiful land forever.

Thank You & Good Luck, April!

We would like to thank April Frederick, our first Staff member, for all the things she helped us accomplish in the three and a half years she was part of the IRLC. While she was involved in many projects, her impact on getting the IRLC accredited and the creation of most of our educational programs were particularly noteworthy. April and Roger returned to Florida to be nearer her elderly parents. We hope she enjoys her new role as a full time educator in a county owned park. Thanks again!



Treat Your Birds to Holiday Cookies

Printed with permission from BirdSleuth K-12, Cornell Lab of Ornithology

These feeders are festive and easy to make.

What you will need:

- 2 cups bird seed (any type)
- cookie cutters
- 1 packet unflavored gelatin
- 2 tablespoons cold water
- 1/3 cup boiling water
- string
- skewer
- non-stick cooking spray

Spray your cookie cutters with non-stick spray to make the cookies easier to pop out.



Empty 1 package of unflavored gelatin into a bowl with 2 tablespoons of cold water. Let this sit for 1 minute. Add 1/3 cup of boiling water to the gelatin, stirring for a few minutes or until the gelatin is dissolved. This is the binder that keeps seeds together.

Next add 2 cups of bird seed to the gelatin and mix thoroughly.

On a tray or sheet of wax paper, lay out your desired cookie cutters. Fill the cookie cutters with the mixture and press into shape firmly. Make a small hole in each cookie with the skewer for the string.

Place in the refrigerator for a few hours to allow the seed mixture to set. After setting warm to room temperature before removing the cakes from the pan. Carefully pop the cookies out of their molds and thread a string through the hole. Hang the ornaments from a tree, pole, or hook outside your windows and watch the birds devour them!

This activity and more can be found at:

<http://www.birdsleuth.org>

In case you missed it...

a look back at summer 2017

Summer Science Digest Highlights

This summer the IRLC, in partnership with the Depauville Free Library, kicked off its Summer Science Digest series. The presentations took place at Redwood Hill's Trailside Classroom. The summer speaker series began with Dr. Laurie Rush's presentation on the archeological importance of Jefferson County.

Other highlights from the IRLC's speaker program included a presentation from local animal rehabilitators, Sue Ryn Burns and Katherine Nelson. Sue and Katherine educated the audience about caring for injured wildlife and, more importantly, what not to do when trying to help injured animals.



"The Wondrous World of Dragonflies and Damselflies," presented by Meena Haribal, a chemical ecologist and author from Cornell University, provided an interesting introduction into the enchanting lives of these colorful creatures. Meena also discussed ways people can become interested in *Odonata* ("toothed ones") insects.

Susan Gwise, a tree specialist from the Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County, discussed the Big Tree Project, which seeks to protect and restore big trees. Susan taught IRLC guests how to recognize old growth and explained the importance of ancient trees. Susan reminds us to hug a tree at least once in our lifetime.

Family Fun Nature Outings & Annual Events



Throughout the summer, IRLC hosted a variety of family friendly and informative nature hikes, including different topics such as birds, blooms, and edibles.

The summer family outing finished with a fun family presentation on local reptiles and amphibians.



IRLC and TILT's annual Moonlight Paddle was delayed by storms, but the event was well worth the wait!



The annual Falling Leaves Hike took place at Baker Woods Preserve this year. Hikers were able to enjoy the beautiful autumn colors along the Indian River during this guided hike.



Planned 2018 events are listed on the back!
See you soon!

Volunteer Opportunities

at

Indian River Lakes

CONSERVANCY

Protect • Learn • Enjoy • Forever



Not your
ordinary
office view...

Land Steward

Possible Duties:

- Walking/snowshoeing the trails to ensure there are no obstructions such as fallen trees/limbs/washouts
- Cutting back vegetation
- Adding and replacing trail markers
- Posting appropriate signage to include parking, trail head maps, and welcome signs
- Restocking trail guides in respective trail kiosks
- Repainting Conservancy Boundary markings
- Build planking over wet areas
- Identify and remove invasive plant species
- Fill out and return trail report

What we provide:

all materials such as trail markers, signs, maps, tools, & safety equipment

Skills developed:

maintenance, land management, independent work ethic, map reading



Outreach

Possible Duties:

Community Outreach

- Place IRLC information such as brochures, event calendars, and trail maps in public areas
- Report weekly, through email, where information was placed

*Volunteer will have a town/city area of responsibility.

*The position allows flexibility – just distribute information when you see a proper location.

Event Outreach

- Attend and distribute information at events
- Answer general questions about IRLC

What we provide: outreach volunteers can pick up a distribution packet at the IRLC office. The packet will include trail maps, brochures, information sheets, and relevant event flyers

Skills developed: communication, organization, marketing, independent work ethic

Administration

Possible Duties:

- Filing
- Writing
- Editing
- Mailing data entry
- Advertising design
- Photography

Skills developed: business administration, writing, data entry, organization, teamwork, communication, journalism, marketing

Event Crew

Possible Duties:

Host/Hostess

- Greet guests
- Ensure sign-in
- Direct guests where to go
- Provide hand-outs

Set-up/Clean-Up Crew

- Tables and Chairs (set-up/tear down)
- Food and beverage set-up
- General clean up and waste removal

Technical Support

- Set up projector and computer

Event Outreach

- Distribute hard-copy flyers 2-3 weeks in advance

Skills developed: customer service, organization, event-planning, communications, teamwork, IT support



Our volunteer positions are perfect for:

- students
- corporate volunteers
- school clubs
- veterans groups
- boy and girl scouts
- nature enthusiasts
- church groups

Education

Possible Duties:

- Present educational or informative presentation, class, hike, outing, etc.
- Newsletter contributor

Educator volunteers can be a self-identified and passionate nature enthusiast or Ph.D. in a specific field of study. We welcome any ideas for events and articles.

What we provide: venue, event promotion, event set-up/tear-down, and technical support

Skills developed: writing, oral presentation, communication



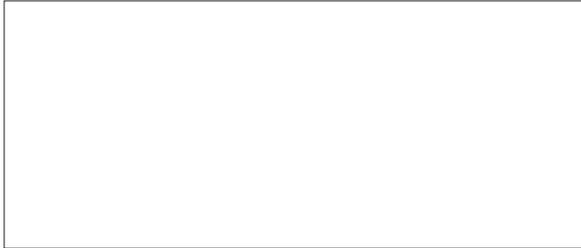
*You are not obligated to perform all tasks outlined in the position description.



Contact us about how
you would like to help!

Indian River Lakes Conservancy
P.O. Box 27
Redwood, New York 13679

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Permit #50



or CURRENT RESIDENT

Save the Dates - 2018

IRLC & the Depauville Free Library Present Nature Talks

This series of programs takes place at 12 noon at the Depauville Free Library on the last Saturday of the month

Jan 27 "Planting Your Grandmother's Garden - From Seed to Table"

Presented by Steve & Vici Diehl

Feb 24 Jefferson County's rare alvar natural community

Presented by Julie K. Covey, Ontario Bays Initiative's Executive Director

Mar 31 *In Memory of Bread* book reading

Presented by Paul Graham, St. Lawrence University, Assoc. Prof. of English

Apr 28 Citizen Science

Presented by Dr. M.Todd Walter, Director, NYS Water Resources Institute, Department of Biological & Environmental Engineering, Cornell University

Jan 20 Winter Wonderland Hike 1:00 p.m.

Explore Redwood Hill Preserve during our annual winter hike.

Jun 8 IRLC Water Conference at Redwood Hill Trailside Classroom

Topics pertaining to the Indian River Lakes include Invasive Species Threats, Harmful Algae Blooms, Shoreline Preservation and the State of the Fishery

*Do you have an event or topic you would like to see IRLC host during the 2018 Summer Series?
Let us know!*

Check our website regularly to see what events are added to our calendar! We can't wait to see you!

Please Don't Forget the Lakes this Holiday Season!

As we enter our 20th year and expand our organization's capabilities your contributions will help the IRLC accomplish our mission:

Protect

- Improving and protecting water quality within the Indian River watershed
- Continued management and protection of IRLC lands and flora and fauna that reside here

Learn

- Enhancing and expanding public education and exploring programs for all ages

Enjoy

- Expansion and maintenance of public access trails, including construction of an All Access Trail at Redwood Hill Preserve

Forever

- Your support ensures the Indian River Lakes region can be enjoyed by future generations.

Discover more on our social media.



www.IndianRiverLakes.org
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