



# Indian River Lakes CONSERVANCY

Protect • Learn • Enjoy • Forever

"Protecting the lakes is something we take seriously because its not just about us, it's about our children, our neighbors, the wildlife, and our shared future."

- Margie Hillback





# Our shared land and future

## From the desk of the Board Chair

As a native of the Indian River Lakes Region, specifically Theresa, I have vivid childhood memories filled with a love of the outdoors. I was raised on a 90-acre hobby farm on the Oxbow Road. My dad is an avid hunter and fisherman, and if you wanted to spend time with him, you were outdoors with him.

We always enjoyed a huge garden, and still do. Summer months were filled with harvesting and canning. We lived within ten miles of Moon Lake and Payne Lake. It was easy to enjoy the lakes for all seasons of recreational activities. This way of life is as natural as breathing and one of the reasons we made the North Country our forever home.



Black Lake Smallmouth Bass Fishing

Having said that, not everyone has been able to enjoy the same opportunities in the past or even now. When asked why I'm passionate about the Indian River Lakes Conservancy, the answer comes easy.

The reality that IRLC cares for over 2,500 acres, maintains over 20 miles of public trails, and provides a beautiful trailside learning center that serves as the hub for over 20 educational programs for kids, teens and adults each year- these programs are available at no cost and accessible to everyone, including those who might not otherwise be able to participate, is what drives me to serve.

We couldn't hold these programs if we didn't have nature preserves with access to trees and wildlife that places like



A view at Grand Lake Reserve

Redwood Hill Preserve, Grand Lake Reserve, and Baker Woods Preserve offer.

Ongoing care for the land and the water quality of the 18 lakes located in the Indian River Lakes Watershed is our goal. But equally important is providing access to these unique resources. People that spend time here are deeply affected by this special place and that has a ripple effect on the future of our land, water, and quality of life.

In this newsletter alone, you'll read about how support is transforming lives and changing the trajectory of this place.

But, we need your help, now more than ever. You can be an agent for change too. If you show up to one of our programs, attend a fundraiser, become a donor or volunteer, gift land or stock, or even remember the Indian River Lakes Conservancy in your legacy planning; you are passing your own story on to those that come after us, hopefully to a North Country that is as special as it is today, with spaces that are Forever Wild, because we had the courage to make a difference.

Please, remember the Indian River Lakes Conservancy in your year-end giving plans. Happy trails & best wishes for a healthy, peaceful & prosperous Holiday Season and New Year!

*Lynn Brown*  
IRLC Board Chair

## 4 Steps we can take to keep our lakes clear:

**1. Flush Responsibly.** Failing septics remain a critical issue on the Indian River Lakes. Use an at-home dye tab to test your septic tank.

**2. Use "softscaping."** Plants, unlike rocks and concrete, filter water pollutants from the entire watershed before it can reach the river and lakes.

**3. Plant native species.** Native plants are best adapted to climate and soil conditions in our local environment. The deep roots reduce erosion and allow rainwater to soak in deeply slowing run-off.

**4. Eliminate lawn fertilizer.** Lawn fertilizers make plants grow in your yard, AND in your water. To keep weeds at bay, keep fertilizers off your yard and out of the water.





## Red Lake Shoreline

Saving a special place for all to enjoy

Marilyn Neulieb and her husband Robert shared their passion for the outdoors and for photography and, over the years, they spent many hours enjoying the views and wildlife, especially loons, on their property along Red Lake.

When Marilyn's husband passed three years ago, she knew she wanted to protect the beauty of their pristine lakeside land on Red Lake, and not just in photographs.

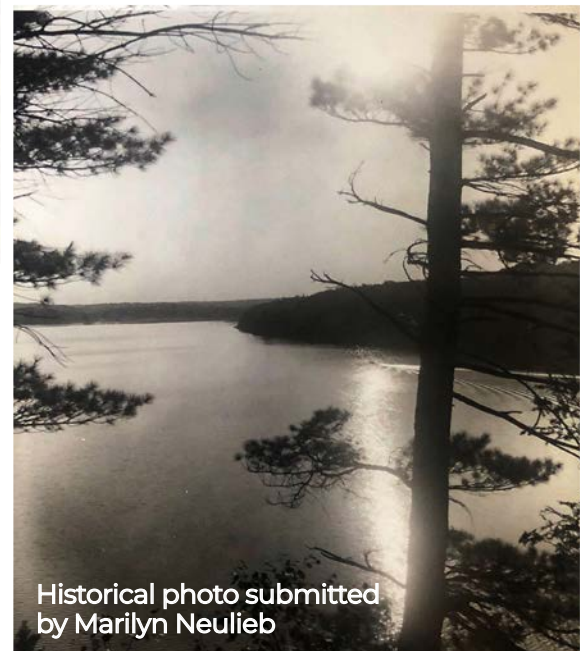
"I don't want the photographs to be all that's left. That thought is just heartbreaking. I want others to be able to experience the magic here that we did," Marilyn said.

Marilyn and Robert "took the leap" of what will now, unbeknownst to them at

the time, become a new conservation area...and purchased the property in 1979. Marilyn noted, "It was a leap most young couples who like their creature comforts, would not take." They bought 300 acres of wilderness without public utilities, water, or amenities and raised their family undisturbed and off-grid.

When Robert passed, Marilyn knew that she had to honor her husband's legacy and love for the lakes. As the raw grief began to subside, she began to envision a bold way to honor his legacy. She reached out to see if it would be possible to collaborate with the IRLC on preserving their land forever.

Thanks to Robert's legacy and Marilyn's commitment, together, we will be working



Historical photo submitted by Marilyn Neulieb

to make this a new public neighborhood conservation area.

Creating a public preserve at Red Lake would mean eliminating the threat of development in favor of saving a "forever" spot where future lake lovers can canoe to, enjoy a shore lunch, or take a walk in the woods like Marilyn and Robert did for 40 years.

If you're interested in helping to make this project a reality, please donate at [indianriverlakes.org](http://indianriverlakes.org). You can contribute gifts of stock, contributions from your IRA, or give a gift through the mail or our online donation form.





A loon carries a loon chick on her back



A gentle giant at Grand Lake Reserve

# Protecting Wildlife Forever

## Taking a step towards permanance at Grand Lake Reserve

When we think about the future of conserved land, we think of biodiverse landscapes, places where the water is clean and animals and plants can flourish.

Trees are the anchors for healthy ecosystems. Gentle giants create wildlife habitat, store carbon, and play unique roles in nutrient cycles.

But trees, even on nature preserves, are not always safe because their wood is valuable for timber and other human uses.

It is a common misperception that old-growth logging on preserved lands is a thing of the past in the United States.

Forging this new partnership with the Northeast Wilderness

Trust will ensure that the forest at Grand Lake Reserve will be safeguarded against disturbance.

The new Forever Wild designation boosts protection of Grand Lake Reserve, providing that its trees will be part of an "old growth forest of tomorrow" and a safe haven for the critters that live here... *forever.*

## Do you want to help with trails?

### Become a stewardship volunteer

Trail Stewards are an important part of keeping IRLC's nature preserves safe and accessible to the public.

The job of trails stewards

involves marking trail pathways, making sure signage is in good repair, cutting back encroaching vegetation, and sawing hazardous limbs and fallen trees along trailways.

Stewards monitor the property lines of IRLC lands to assure no buildings are being put up, and that there is no trash dumping or woodcutting.

If venturing out on nature preserves excites you, please get in touch with Erin at (315) 482-4757.



*"Place: it's where we're from; it's where we're going ... It asks for our attention and care. If we pay attention, place has much to teach us."*

- From Tom Vander Ark, Emily Liebtog, and Nate McLennen, authors of *The Power of Place: Authentic Learning Through Place-Based Education*

*"Learning about nature and science makes a big difference when you can see it physically and it's not just on paper."*

- Henry Brennan, 2022 WHIRL participant



## Project WHIRL

### Teens learn to love the lakes

Aldous Huxley said, "We can only love what we know, and we can never know completely what we do not love." Being considerate necessitates the act of considering. It involves exploring, asking questions, and connecting with the subject at hand. In this case, that subject is water, and in particular our Indian River Watershed.

Modern students face an uphill battle finding the time, places, and available mentors to teach them to consider the land and water around them.

Many of us on the lakes can remember what it meant to be "raised by a lake" and the people who loved the lake.

Consideration and conservation ethic were a way of life- a way of life worth passing on, and sharing with tomorrow's stewards. That is still true. Lake love is learned fishing on a shoreline, boating on a summer day, and learning about the animals and plants that share the lakes with us.

The good news is that your support will help tomorrow's stewards to overcome these barriers, and to have meaningful experiences on the lakes and in the outdoors.

Project WHIRL students are getting the chance to study the lakes, but more than that, they are learning to love the lakes because of people like you.

WHIRL students show Kids' Nature Camp Participants fresh-water insects







WHIRL students use an underwater scope on Grass Lake

## Thank you local businesses and sponsors

As we enter the season of giving thanks, we want to extend a special thank you to our local businesses for sharing our vision of protecting and stewarding our region's most precious places.

We are so thankful that you have shown such great generosity in making land conservation, water quality, and environmental education programs possible this year. Events like our annual water quality conference and Kids' Nature Camp absolutely hinge on your participation.

Thank you for taking a step towards preserving the area in and around the Indian River for your family and the all families as a place to enjoy for many years to come.

Your support is changing lives. It is protecting what's most important. It is shaping the Indian River Lakes Region of tomorrow one sponsorship at a time.



Northern New York  
Community Foundation

## New website & ways to give in the works!

You can leave a legacy  
that changes lives.

We are excited to present an updated website in the near future. It will have a fresh, new landing page to inspire you and give you new ways to connect. Your gift of any type makes a difference for the future of the Indian River Lakes.

### **Lake Guardians Monthly Giving**

When you give monthly, you make land preservation and water quality protection possible for the long-term.

### **Business Sponsorship**

As a local business, we know that you care about our local environment. Talk with us about how we can turn your vision into a reality for a healthy community.

### **Stocks & IRA**

A gift of stock is a great way to help reduce capital gains taxes, receive an income tax deduction, and support local land conservation.

### **Giving Tuesday**

A gift today protects our landscape tomorrow. Join the #givingtuesday movement on November 29th, 2022 and give on Facebook or at [indianriverlakes.org](http://indianriverlakes.org). Your donation will be doubled. Also, as part of Giving Tuesday this year, you will be able to sponsor a Kids' Nature Camp participant for 2023's event.

See more ways online at  
[indianriverlakes.org/join-us](http://indianriverlakes.org/join-us)





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Front Cover: Millsite Lake View

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IRLC Newsletter : Fall 2022

## Join us for an upcoming event...

"The Night Tree" Tree Lighting <i>Redwood Hill Preserve 4:30 pm</i>	December 23 <sup>rd</sup>
Nature Talk: Hemlock Wooley Adelgid <i>Depauville Library at 11:00 am</i>	January 21 <sup>st</sup>
Winter Carnival Hike <i>Redwood Hill Preserve at 1:00 pm</i>	February 4 <sup>th</sup>
Nature Talk: Bird Quest <i>Depauville Library at 11:00 am</i>	February 18 <sup>th</sup>
Nature Talk: Food Plot Gardening <i>Depauville Library at 11:00 am</i>	March 18 <sup>th</sup>

## Save the date...

Water Quality Conference	June 2 <sup>nd</sup>
Celebration of Lakes	August 6 <sup>th</sup>

For a full listing of events and event details, visit [indianriverlakes.org](http://indianriverlakes.org).



Sunset over Butterfield Lake