

Community Gatherings & Events

Each year, we host several events where we come together as a community.

Summer Kick-Off Party: Held in June, this event is a great way to meet up with old friends and make some new ones, and at the same time get information about our many programs. All members of the community (of all ages) are welcome to join us for this celebration, with lunch provided by the MLA.

Annual Meeting: Our yearly members' gathering provides updates from our committees, discussion of new projects, and a chance to socialize. It's a century-old MLA tradition we keep adapting to the needs of our growing membership community.

Boat Parade: This festive event celebrates July 4th. We encourage boat decorating and award prizes. Whether you're in a boat or waving from shore, the parade is an Independence Day highlight.

Clean Up Weekend: In mid-August, members of the community come together to remove accumulated trash from shorelines and the water.



Photo credit: Leslie Ekstrand



photo credit: Martha Jane Rich

Who We Are

Mascoma Lake Association (MLA) is a community of people who love this lake and work together to support the mission of environmental protection, responsible recreation, and public education.

Founded in 1923 by cottage owners, the MLA today is a non-profit organization open to all who care about the lake. We fund our programs with annual dues and donations, but we run them with the dedicated work of volunteers. From water quality monitoring and invasive weed control to our popular summer boat parade and social gatherings, our success depends on the people who volunteer their time and talents to Mascoma Lake.

Active programs organized by our Board of Directors:

- Milfoil Abatement & Education
- Lake Hosts
- Clean Up Weekend
- Shoreline Invasive Plants
- Water Quality
- Wildlife Protection
- Social Media / Website
- Annual Newsletter
- Historical Research & Archive
- Community & Social Engagement
- Lake-friendly Advocacy

For property owners who want to protect our watershed, we recommend LakeSmart, a free, voluntary guide to best practices in lake-friendly living available at nhlakes.org.

This brochure provides highlights of many key activities, but we invite a closer look at all we do. To learn more, visit our website at mascomalakeassociation.org or email us at mla@mascomalakeassociation.org.



photo credit: Martha Jane Rich

Help us preserve this priceless resource. Go to mascomalakeassociation.org and become a member today!

Your Participation is Welcome!

Membership is open to all who care about the lake as a priceless resource. You do not need to live on the lake to be a member. Even if you visit the lake from time to time and simply want to stay informed about the ongoing work of the MLA, you are welcome. Whether you have time to work on one of our committees or can simply help out with the annual dues payment, your participation will be appreciated.

How to Join:

- Use the QR code provided below to register through our website and pay the annual dues. You will be added to our mailing list.
- Email membership.mla@gmail.com with any questions or assistance needed.



www.mascomalakeassociation.org



...to protect Lake Mascoma and its environment, to promote the responsible and sustainable enjoyment of the Lake by all its users, and to educate the public on issues related to these objectives.

Photo credit: Mike Legere

MLA ACTIVITIES

Wildlife Protection

Loons arrive as the lake ice is going out; their distinctive haunting calls are a harbinger of spring. Loon survival is threatened by human recreational activities, boat strikes, lead poisoning, fishing line entanglements, and environmental contaminants such as PFAs. Chicks have only a 40% survival rate, so we work hard to help them thrive on Mascoma Lake. We locate and protect their nesting sites, monitor their health, participate in the annual statewide loon census, and educate the public.

How you can help

- maintain a non-threatening distance of 150 ft from nesting sites
- minimize wakes near nests
- eliminate lead-based fishing tackle
- pick up loose fishing line
- visit mascomalakeassociation.org to learn more



photo credit: Mary Murray

www.mascomalakeassociation.org

Water Quality Control

The MLA water quality team, in partnership with the statewide Volunteer Lake Assessment Program (VLAP), monitors the lake monthly in summer. They check for water clarity, turbidity, oxygen level and temperature at multiple depths and take samples to be tested for total phosphorus, pH, E. coli, plankton analysis and other indicators of water quality. These data are crucial in identifying harmful changes in water purity. In recent years, the indicators have been increasingly positive. Mascoma is now rated as an oligotrophic lake, the highest category for lake health.

At the same time, like many other lakes, Mascoma has seen a rise in cyanobacteria blooms. These are visible concentrations of potentially harmful algae, in clouds or streaks, usually greenish in color. If you see a bloom, stay out of the water and keep children and pets away; exposure to high concentrations can cause illness. Report concerns by emailing mla@mascomalakeassociation.org or contact the Department of Environmental Services at des.nh.gov. MLA volunteers assist town health officers in posting signs at public access points and otherwise notifying the public when blooms have been reported.



Photo credit: Martha Jane Rich



photo credit: Robin Legere

Invasive Plant Control

Aquatic

MLA took early action when Eurasian watermilfoil was detected in 1998, establishing a program to search for plants and train volunteer divers to harvest milfoil safely. Over the years, the annual harvest has decreased dramatically from over 5,000 plants to less than 150 plants. Continued vigilance is needed to keep this invasive weed controlled.

Since 2002, MLA has supported the NH LAKES Lake Host Program to aid in controlling the spread of invasive aquatic species. Lake Host workers, both paid and volunteer, are stationed at the two launch ramps to educate boaters about invasive species. They check boats entering and leaving the lake for milfoil and other invasive plants. They encourage boaters to “Clean, Drain, and Dry”—the best strategy to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species.

Shoreline

In partnership with the Mascoma Lakeside Park Committee and others, volunteers work to identify and safely remove a variety of invasive, non-native plants from the shore. Efforts have concentrated on Japanese knotweed infestations. The MLA offers property owners who are members of the MLA a limited service for lake-safe knotweed treatment, as well as education on the benefits of replacing invasive species with native plants.

Water Activities

Getting out on the water in the summer is one of the key attractions of Mascoma Lake. All water activities are welcome and encouraged—with safety always the top priority.

The MLA encourages familiarity with NH State regulations and has provided a summary on the MLA website. A complete set of regulations can be found in the marine patrol section at nhsp.dos.nh.gov. While the MLA has no authority to monitor or enforce compliance, we strive to educate our community on matters of safety and environmental impacts.

A few key safety measures to note:

- A boating education certificate is required to operate any motorized vessel in excess of 25 horsepower.
- Swimmers traveling in open water can be difficult to see from a boat. We strongly encourage swimmers to use a towing buoy.
- Fishing should not take place from the center section of the bridge over the boat passage-way. When fishing along shorelines please ensure that tackle does not get caught on docks and rafts and left behind to entangle humans and waterfowl.
- The high waves from wake boats can be a potential hazard for smaller vessels as well as swimmers and can have a negative impact on loon nesting sites and shoreline erosion. We encourage a distance of at least 300 feet from shore and others in the water.
- SCUBA divers, including the MLA's milfoil harvest crews, are required to use the red diving flag. Boaters should be familiar with this signal and by law must stay 150 feet away from the flag.



photo credit: Sharyn Goddard