

THE FRIENDS OF LAKE WARNER AND THE MILL RIVER



NEWSLETTER

1907 View of Lake Warner and the Village

FALL / WINTER 2017

Notes from the Chairman

Friends,

As another year draws to a close, we might pause to reflect on a good year for Lake Warner and its inhabitants. Foremost, as you will read elsewhere in the newsletter, restoration of the dam is virtually complete. Final approval from the State Office of Dam Safety is expected very soon. The transfer of the dam, the water rights, and the "peninsula" acreage from Kestrel to the Friends should happen before year's end.

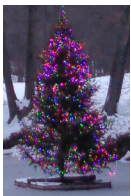
In recent weeks a few FoLW-driven initiatives hint at next year's expanded activities. The Hitchcock Center in Amherst and FoLW have started laying out a youth program for understanding healthy ponds and lakes. A collaboration between the Hampden Hampshire Conservation District has started with the Friends underwriting and participating in a composting workshop for small farms. FoLW Director Jason Johnson worked with a Amherst Regional High School Senior on the student's environmental field work for his Senior Project.

All funding of the \$24,500.00 grant we were awarded from the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts has been received and will be in use conserving the lake and supporting related programming. A new weed-control water craft has been developed by a FoLW Board member and has been tested successfully on the lake. The Water Chestnut abatement program continues to show success and other lake and pond folks have expressed interest in our work.

I cannot think of a better time to spread the word about the dam, the lake and the Friends. Please keep your eye out for announcements and mailing over the next few weeks.

With Thanks, David Moskin

Christmas Tree Lighting



One November weekend, in the traditional Holiday spirit, Joe Boisvert, along with his family, friends and neighbors, hoisted a tree onto a floating wooden platform on North Hadley Pond, ran an extension cord from his house to power a string of lights and began what has now become an annual community tradition.

The annual lighting of the Christmas Tree on Lake Warner will take place on November 26th. Please join us on the Mt. Warner Bridge for this fun local celebration. The lighting is at 5pm, and the gathering begins at 4pm.

Documentary on Lake Warner

Hadley Media is helping produce a short documentary on Lake Warner. The film will involve history, ecology, biology, wildlife, interaction with humans and how we can work together to restore a healthy river, lake and environment. Documentaries weave together historical photographs with oral histories to tell their stories and North Hadley certainly has its share of both. If you have photographs or stories you feel should be included please contact David Moskin at 413-627-6672.

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Please attend a FoLW meeting. The first Tuesday of each month at the North Hadley Congregational Church: 7:00 p.m.
You'll be glad you did!



Please make donations to:

The Friends of Lake Warner
P.O. Box 11 Hadley, MA 01035

Or go to our website:

<http://friendsoflakewarner.org/donate/>

Water Chestnut Removal Quantities Up From 2016

This year volunteers hand pulled over over 2,500 lbs of invasive water chestnut (*Trapa natans*) from Lake Warner. This amount was up from last year's load of 800 pounds. The increase is largely thought to be because of the timing of the pulls and the relative size of the plants. Last year we were able to get out earlier and more often and consequently had a reduced quantity. Had these plants been able to mature fully the entire weight would have likely been well over 2,500 pounds! We expect to have several public pulling events next year and hope that you will join us for a day out on the pond to continue to battle this invasive plant.

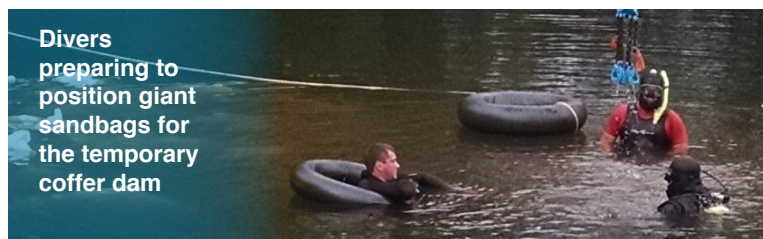


Dam Repair Completed!

The long awaited repair and restoration of the Lake Warner dam is now complete. New walls have been formed on the sides of the structure, cracks in the faces have been repaired and the 70 year old wooden slide gate for flow management, long stuck closed, has been replaced with a modern stainless steel gate. Following final inspection and certification by the Massachusetts Office of Dam Safety, ownership of the dam, water rights and a 5.7 acre conservation property at the north end of the lake will be transferred from the Kestrel Trust to the Friends of Lake Warner and the Mill River.



An extended reach excavator removing the old gate and deteriorated concrete walls



Divers preparing to position giant sandbags for the temporary coffer dam

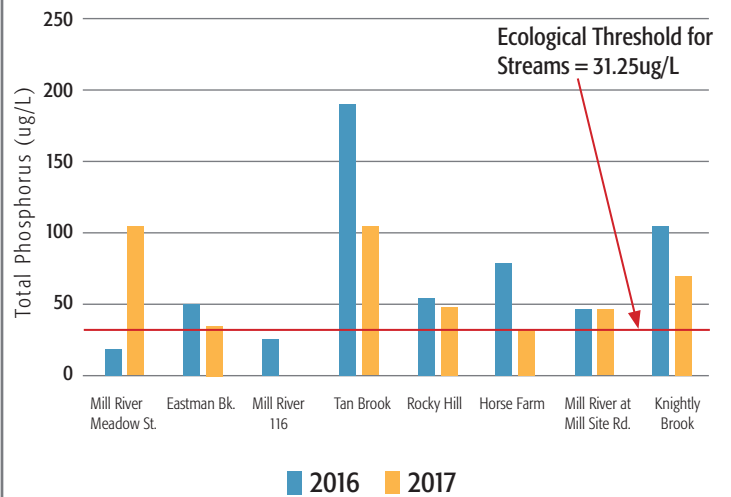


The completed dam and restored western bank

Monitoring Results from 2017 Show Improvement, but Tributaries Still too High

The Friends have continued to monitor nutrient and bacteria levels in the lake and tributaries that feed Lake Warner. While the results from this year are lower than those measured in 2016 the levels still exceed thresholds set by the State of Massachusetts and the US Environmental Protection Agency to preserve ecological health and to protect public health and safety. Phosphorus is the nutrient of primary concern. A graph showing total phosphorus can be seen below comparing 2016 to 2017 results. E. coli bacteria levels were measured to assess potential health concerns for recreational use. E. coli levels at the boat ramp were well below the primary contact threshold, but measurements at some areas of the upper lake, Mill River and tributaries remained above the recommended threshold level. A graph of the results from 2016/2017 from the lake and the various tributaries is shown below.

Total Phosphorus in Mill River Watershed Tributaries 2016/2017



Mill River Watershed E. coli Bacteria 2016-2017

