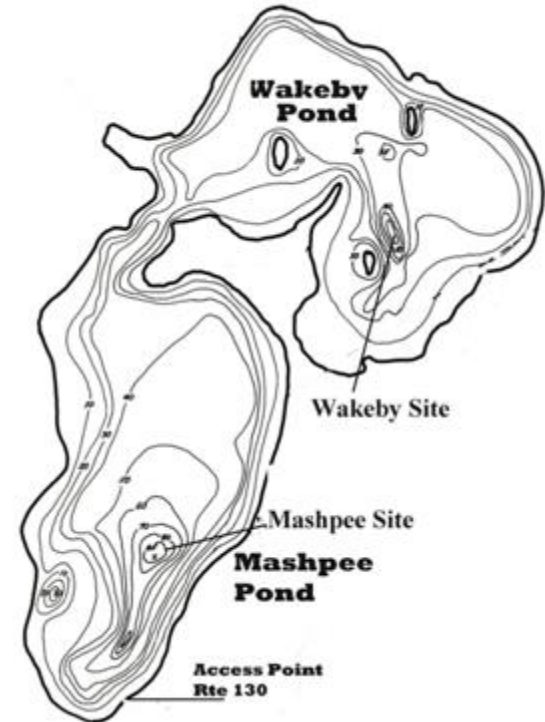


**Mashpee Wakeby Lakes  
Management Committee  
Mashpee Town Hall  
16 Great Neck Road  
Mashpee, MA 02649**

**MASHPEE & WAKEBY LAKES  
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
NEWSLETTER**



**VOLUME 23, NUMBER 2.FALL 2023**

This newsletter appears in the spring and fall and can be found on the Town web site [www.mashpee.ma.gov](http://www.mashpee.ma.gov) under Boards and Committees: Mashpee & Wakeby Lakes Management.

The activist is not the man who says the river is dirty.  
The activist is the man who cleans up the river.  
Ross Perot

## Cyanobacteria

Cyanobacteria was first noted in the Sturgis Lane area of Mashpee Lake on June 14, 2023. By the 16<sup>th</sup>, both lakes looked like pea soup, with high toxin levels. Tests were conducted weekly and visibility checks daily. The bloom was last noted on the 20<sup>th</sup> in the cove area in the Narrows. The Mashpee Wakeby Pond Alliance was quick to put out their warning signs to notify that people and pets should stay out of the water. Ashley Fisher of Natural Resources noted that the town web site contained notices on the first page as well as the board of Heath page and Natural resources page. She advised signing up for “Urgent Alerts”.

Cyanobacteria was first detected in Wakeby Lake on September 20, 2020, and in both lakes in June of 2021. In 2022, an advisory against pets and swimming was posted June 26<sup>th</sup> through July 2<sup>nd</sup> when toxin levels dropped enough to make it safe to use the lake.

APCC Cyanobacteria monitoring and Mashpee DNR Cayno-cell counts have concluded for 2023 and will resume in May of 2024.

## Possible Open Space Acquisition

CPC has formed a subcommittee to begin negotiations with several landowners for 17.2 acres of land in the Pickerel Cove area. These parcels could be developed and the hope is to preserve it as open land and prevent further degradation of Mashpee Wakeby Lake. Appraisals are pending as is the possibility of a trail system for recreational use.

## MASHPEE & WAKEBY LAKES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

### MISSION STATEMENT

The Mashpee & Wakeby Lake Management Committee is comprised of five members from the Mashpee community. They are representative of groups within the Town of Mashpee who have a vested interest in maintaining the beauty, safety and health of the Lake for the residents’ use and enjoyment. The Committee acts as a conduit for the public’s interests and concerns about the Lake. It serves as liaison to the Town’s governing agencies, recommending necessary actions to be taken. The Committee meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month, at 7:00 PM at Mashpee Town Hall. The presence of Mashpee residents at these meetings is encouraged. We urge your participation in the activities of this Committee, to assist in our ongoing efforts to preserve the beauty and safety of the Lake. For more information, contact any of the Committee members listed below.

Debi McManus, Chairman  
Email: [Damdesign@aol.com](mailto:Damdesign@aol.com)

Paul Bibo, Vice Chairman,  
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Email: [barbnich@meganet.net](mailto:barbnich@meganet.net)

Allison Bernhardt  
Email: [allison.bernhardt@gmail.com](mailto:allison.bernhardt@gmail.com)

## Beach Sampling Program

Barnstable County tested Mashpee Pond at Attaquin Beach and Camp Farley sites weekly for E Coli and Coliform bacteria during the swim season from June 9<sup>th</sup> to August 30<sup>th</sup>. All samples were acceptable for swimming. Samples were also taken from the Birch St. Assoc, Beach and Lowell Holly, but results are not shown on the Barnstable County water testing site.

## Lake Level

During the summer, the lake level has remained stable at 55.2 to 55.3 feet above sea level despite precipitation higher than normal during the summer. Both readings in March were 55.5, the maximum level before we begin to see erosion damage around the shoreline. Usual March reading is 55.3. Levels are taken every two weeks by this committee at the fish cage where the Mashpee River heads downstream and reported to Drew McManus in Conservation. Conservation and the Dept of Marine Fisheries make any adjustments necessary to prevent erosion damage and keep conditions ideal for herring.

## Lowell Holly

Lowell Holly is a 135 acre reservation named for its donor, Abbott Lawrence Lowell, a former Harvard University President. Along with its 250 native holly trees, Lowell added rosebay and rhododendrons to the grounds. The reservation is on the peninsular between Mashpee and Wakeby lakes.

There has been a manager change, but he has not responded to our email for an update.

## Lakewood Drive Remediation 2023

The Town of Mashpee has been working to reduce or eliminate the street rain run-off into our lakes and ponds and estuaries. Lakewood Drive had no catch basins from the top of Maple to the bottom of Lakewood, where the lake access pathway for Homeowners Association exists. Over the years from heavy rainstorms, there has been washouts of the pathway dragging 800 feet of road run-off and gouging the pathway several feet deep, washing the contents into the lake. Several project remediations have been done hoping to solve this road run-off problem. The Town installed two sets of leaching catch basins going down Lakewood Dr. which has greatly reduced the sheer volume of water which has been running unabated down the length of the street. Additionally, the Town built up an asphalt berm near the lower catch basin to further reduce the road run-off. The Lakewood Homeowners' Association has contracted landscape firm to rebuild the pathway to create a more rain resistant access way to eliminate the washout problem that is not resolved with the new catch basins.

## Where have all the Herring gone?

I was fortunate to have had the opportunity over the past spring to be a member of the Mashpee Herring count team. The team consists of volunteers supported by the Mashpee Conservation Commission. Mashpee participates along with many Cape Towns under the direction of the Massachusetts Association to Preserve Cape Cod (APCC). The Mashpee volunteers count at Herring ladders located at John's Pond, Santuit Pond and Mashpee / Wakeby Pond. Each counter counts the number of Herring that cross the ladder in a 10-minute period. Counting periods begin on April 1<sup>st</sup> and end mid-June. Actual counts for the participating Cape Towns are reported directly to APCC's database by the counting volunteers and through some magical wizardry, tabulations are made to estimate the volume of Herring that swim from ocean to freshwater Ponds to spawn each Spring.

Some Herring spend their whole life living in the ocean while others live in the ocean in the winter and swim to fresh water in the spring to spawn and return to the ocean in the fall. It is believed that those herring that are born in fresh water will return to the same fresh water pond each year.

The act of counting can be very boring at times, (even counts of zero are reported). There were many instances during my counting periods, when families came to observe the Herring or fetch dinner, but left without a single sighting, (hence the title of this writing). However, when the conditions are right and one is lucky enough to be present, it can be extremely exciting. During one of my prior 10-minute counting periods, I counted over 300 herring crossings at the Mashpee / Wakeby ladder. For those of you who may have come to see the Herring this past season and left disappointed, do not despair, the Herring have come, probably just not when you were present.

## Harbormaster's Summer Report

Robert Tomaino | Harbormaster

This past summer on Mashpee-Wakeby proved to be one of the busiest summers this Department has ever seen. Patrols saw a large increase in vessel and jet-ski traffic throughout the duration of the summer months. Thankfully our patrolmen were extremely proactive in enforcement and education and we did not have any major accidents that resulted in any loss of life or property. This Department responded to numerous calls for service on the lake throughout the summer and assisted the boating public in many different aspects. I am thankful to all my staff but also to the residents and visitors to the lake for their support this past summer. As always, please call us if you need anything.

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