



# **Newsletter**

# May 2023

## President's Message

In my November message I noted that 2022 was a busy and productive year for SLA. So far 2023 is starting out to be equally busy! Over the winter the Board and committee members have been hard at work. Here's what they've been up to:

Hopefully you have recently received your annual membership renewal letter and see that you can now renew your membership and make donations online. This option was overwhelmingly supported in our member survey. It is optional and the traditional process of renewing by mailing a check can still be utilized. I would like to recognize and thank Andy Barter who has agreed to assume the role of membership administrator, Chuck Nichols who is our website administrator, and Jean McKenny our Treasurer. All three have played critical roles in the online payment implementation.

The petition filed with the State by Responsible Wakes for Vermont Lakes requesting that wake boats be regulated has been acted on by the State and draft rules released. Beth Torpey and Candy Moot were appointed by the SLA Board to represent SLA on an informal group of NEK lakes where the petition's recommendations would allow wake boats to be operated. That group played a critical role working with the State to express our concerns and make recommendations. The result is a "home lake rule" that is included in the draft rule. If enacted, a wake boat may only operate on one lake during a season. Hopefully, this will prevent the spread of invasive species in

the ballast water of those boats if they trailer from an infested lake to a lake with no invasives.

Thanks to all the SLA members who responded to our request to make your voices heard in the public hearing process for the proposed wake boat regulation. We anticipate the regulations to be effective for the summer boating season. SLA will work with all wake boat owners on the lake to be sure they are aware of the regulations and where on the lake wake boats are allowed and can be operated safely.

We also are continuing to participate in the efforts at the legislature to increase state funding for the greeter program and to eliminate the outdated septic restriction in A1 watersheds. The final outcome of these efforts won't be known until the legislature adjourns.

Finally, the 4th and final year of our smelt restoration project is now complete. Thanks to Bill Bilowus and his team of volunteers for their work to return a healthy population of smelt back to Seymour.

All of the above work is important; however, we can't forget our primary mission to protect and preserve the water quality of the lake. This newsletter describes some great work happening in that regard. The Lay Monitoring program continues to provide critical data to measure our water quality and identify trends, both positive and negative. The Lake Wise program is our primary tool for re-

#### By Rhonda Shippee

ducing runoff into the lake. While we appreciate seeing more Lake Wise awards, our true goal is to have 100% participation by shoreland owners in the assessment process. Lake Wise assessments offer suggestions for ways to improve your property. While getting the award is excellent, any improvements made as a result of assessment recommendations are better than none! Please mark your calendar to attend the Water Quality Workshop on July 7th to learn more about participating in the Lake Wise program. Details will be shared in an upcoming e-mail blast.

The purchase and planned conservation of the Farrow Farm on Valley Road by the State and completion of the Lake Watershed Action Plan which you will read about in the following pages are also exciting developments that will help eliminate runoff into the lake.

Finally, as the summer season approaches. I'd like to remind all boaters to be mindful of the rules regarding operation of motorized boats and jet skis. Our greeters will have brochures with the rules available at the boat launch. Please take one and review it carefully. You can also see the rules on the SLA website at https seymourlake.org/boating/ Following these rules benefits everyone. Please also remember to stay away from loons anywhere on the lake and to stay far away from their nesting platform (this includes kayaks, canoes, and paddleboards!). Let's hope for some baby loons this year!□



This Newsletter is a semiannual publication of the Seymour Lake Association, a 501 (c) (3) tax exempt organization dedicated to the protection and preservation of Seymour Lake and the surrounding locality for the benefit of lake users, property owners, and residents of Morgan, Vermont.



#### **Seymour Lake Association**

PO Box 36, Morgan, Vermont 05853 Website: www.seymourlake.org

#### Officers

President Rhonda Shippee vtslapresident@gmail.com
Vice President Bonnie McWain

Treasurer Jean McKenny Secretary Linda Buzzell

**Directors (Term Ends)** 

Tim Buzzell '23 Bruce Barter '24 Sean Selby '25 Tom Adams '23 Charles Woods '24 Erik Lessing '25 Bill Bilowus '23 Bruce Remick '24 Denis Fortin '25

#### **Committee Members**

Activities.....<u>Bonnie McWain</u>

Audit ......<u>Marie Tule</u>

Boating.....<u>Tim Buzzell, Bonnie McWain</u>

Dam/Lake Level.....Tim Buzzell, Ron Kolar, Chuck Nichols, Erik Lessing, Candy Moot

Fishing ......Charles "Woody" Woods, Bill Bilowus, Ron Frascoia

Loons ......Charles "Woody" Woods, Denis Fortin, Nancy Bowen, Eli Antonova

Maps .....Chuck Nichols

Membership ......Tom Adams. Tim Buzzell, Gerry Cahill, Erik Lessing, Ann Torpey, Chris Blais, Bonnie McWain, Brenda

Wierschke, Andy Barter

Milfoil ......Rhonda Shippee, Beth Torpey, David Wieselmann

Newsletter ...... Denis Fortin, Erik Lessing, Bruce Barter, Candy Moot

Nominating ......<u>Tim Buzzell</u>, Bonnie McWain, Sean Selby

Torpey, Ron Kolar, Erik Lessing, Rhonda Shippee, Trish Clark, Andy Barter, Tracey

Becken, Tom Emery, David Wieselmann

Volunteer Invasive Patrollers (VIP): David Wieselmann: Ray Bolduc, Lee McLendon, Candy Moot, Janet Selby, Cindy Smith, Kit

Walker, Betsy Walkerman, Gerry Cahill, Erik Lessing, Andy Barter, Cooper Barter,

Kenni Jenness Friere, Sylvia Geiger

Wendy Franklin, Denis Fortin

Seymour Lake Reclassification: Peggy Barter, Sean Selby, Larry Labor, Tom Adams, Bill Kilpatrick

Note: Name <u>under-lined</u> is Committee Chair. Others are Committee Members.

Greeters at the Boat Launch: Bud Bergh, Kim Germain, Steve Sheltry, Dean White, Corrie Desilets

#### Town of Morgan www.townofmorgan.com

Selectmen: Eric Pope—Chair Larry Labor Bruce Remick

Town Clerk Treasurer—TammyLee Morin

Asst. Town Clerk-Amanda Wright

North Country School Directors: Danielle Blake-chair,

Sean Selby, Tammy Lacourse

Zoning Officer—Beth Torpey, 802-895-3013 Fire Warden—Bob Cain, 802-895-2727

# Recognition

The newsletter is paid in part with support from VT Department of Environmental Conservation funds.  $\Box$ 

# **Shoreland protection Permitting**

For questions regarding Shoreland Protection Permitting, the contact person is Laura Woods who can be reached -at. <a href="mailto:laura.woods@vermont.gov">laura.woods@vermont.gov</a> 802-490-6100.

Note that the Town of Morgan now requires a shoreland permit (if needed) prior to issuing a zoning permit. □

The Farrow Farm By Denis Fortin

This interview was conducted with:

Patrick Hurley, Project Manager of the Memphremagog Watershed Association and Owner, WindenWater, LLC ecological consulting firm

In August 2022, after several years of coordination, the Farrow Farm located on Valley Road near the border with Holland was acquired by the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department for development as a public access area. Spearheaded by District 5 Fisheries Biologist Peter Emerson, the purchase was made possible through funding support from the VT Agency of Agriculture Farms and Markets, the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission, the Nature Conservancy, and local non-profit partners. The property was placed under permanent conservation protection and will be managed for public fishing, hunting, trapping, and wildlife viewing. Having been an operational dairy farm for decades, there are several portions of the property that require restoration and enhancement to improve water quality and fish and wildlife habitat before conservation stewardship can begin.

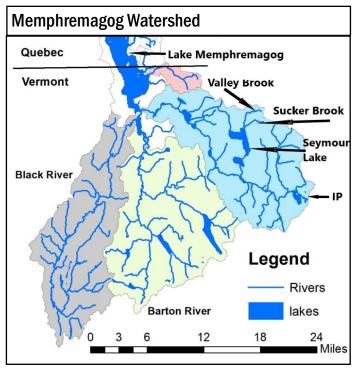
Patrick Hurley, who is a hydrologist and Project Manager for the Memphremagog Watershed Association (MWA), will steer and design a restoration plan for 163 of the 165 acres purchased by the State. Patrick is designing a "Process based restoration plan" for the property. Process-based restoration is an approach that focuses on restoring the hydrological and geomorphological processes that contribute to a stream's natural form and functions. For the Farrow Farm, this approach involves field surveys, geospatial mapping, computer aided design, and hydraulic modelling to understand current conditions and design a plan that will handle future environmental stresses such as the effects of more precipitation draining to Seymour Lake. He is working to build resilience to climate forecasts that predict Vermont will receive an additional 9" a year of rain, a 25% increase in our annual precipitation. Patrick is modeling 5,10, 25, 50,100 and 200-year storms to determine how best to design and implement stream and floodplain restoration actions to reduce erosion. improve habitat, and promote healthy, functioning floodplains.

One of the goals is to re-establish favorable areas for fish such as smelt, rainbow, brown, and brook trout, by improving spawning habitat and reintroducing large wood to the stream. Large wood, often thought of as the 'bones' or 'skeleton' of a stream, will be added to the stream channel, banks, and floodplain to trap sediment, create fish habitat, enhance wetlands, and promote connection between the stream and its floodplain. Some of the existing tree slash and woody materials from recent sugarbush thinning operations will be placed along the floodplain and in the riverbed to create more natural habitat and promote sediment retention. Up to seven culverts which prevent fish from traveling up and down the stream will be removed entirely or repositioned in a way that maintains access for VAST snowmobile trails.

Valley and Sucker Brooks are important for smelt spawning, and along with the Pherrins River, are considered the

headwaters of the Clyde River. These are some of the highest elevation tributaries to the Clyde River in the Memphremagog watershed. If all goes to plan, the barns and buildings will be removed in summer 2023 along with all the associated tubing for the maple sugarbush. Some of the inert material like concrete and untreated wood will be buried on-site and capped with clean fill all of which will be removed from the floodplain as part of the restoration actions. Four smaller tributaries on the property will be restored to their natural flow paths to be accessible to fish. These tributaries were relocated or channelized over the course of 100+ years of the property being used as farmland. By spring of 2024, Patrick is hoping to start planting tree saplings. Planting trees along the stream corridor will help to hold the riverbanks in place and increase the floodplain's ability to help absorb excess runoff.

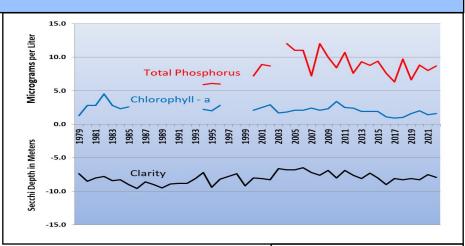
The project partners will be planting 300-400 saplings per acre along the length of property's stream frontage which may include up to 8 acres of floodplain. There will also be 50' riparian buffers along each of the brooks and tributaries. The tree species to be planted will most likely include willows, alder, tamarack, fir, spruce, and potentially cedar. However, cedar may not be used at first because of the deer's fondness for eating the fresh green saplings. Once the floodplain is established and mature, Patrick hopes the beavers will return to take over the work. Beavers are industrious creatures and are called "ecosystem engineers" because they alone create an immense quantity of excellent habitat for fish. Beavers are excellent at creating wetlands, storing sediment, reducing erosion, and increasing flood resilience. Many of the water quality issues we face today in the Memphremagog watershed, indeed around the country, are due to historic removal of beavers and an absence of their industrious tendencies to manage and maintain healthy streams and ecosystems. Continued on page 4



# Lay Monitoring Report on Seymour Lake Water Quality

This graph was created by Erik Lessing using the data collected by Tom Emery over the years. Both are dedicated stewards for Seymour Lake and we are grateful for their work. This information is important to our enjoyment of the lake and property values in Morgan.

"Importantly, the graph shows whether phosphorus, chlorophyll and clarity are getting better, remaining stable or declining."



- Water clarity and chlorophyll levels have been stable over the years 1979 2022.
- Phosphorus levels doubled during the early 2000s, reaching a high of 12.9 units.
- Phosphorus is the nutrient that supports plant and algae growth in the lake.
- Phosphorus gets into the lake from the watershed, lake shores and to a lesser extent from tributaries and dirt roads.
- Phosphorus reached a high of 12.9 units per liter in the early 2000's, but has reduced and stabilized over the last ten years.
- Lake stewards throughout Morgan and especially land owners on the lake shores learned that natural forest vegetation best stops phosphorus from running off the land into the lake.
- Morgan took action to better manage its dirt roads to reduce phosphorus runoff.
- Many lake shore owners took action to restore the lake shore with mostly native plants with a good mix of trees, shrubs and perennials.
- Phosphorus levels in the lake have decreased and stabilized at levels that do not support algae blooms because most lake shore owners are stepping up to better protect the lake from phosphorus pollution□

For more information about the Lay Monitoring program go to https://dec.vermont.gov/ watershed

By Peggy Barter

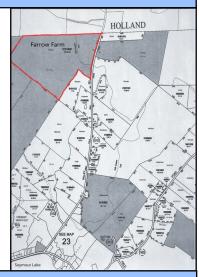
# The Farrow Farm (continued from page 3)

atrick explained one of the primary goals of the project is to enhance and protect the fishery and water quality of Valley Brook and downstream Sucker Brook and Seymour Lake. Their objective is to reduce sediment and phosphorus loading from agricultural and land development activities by removing cows and restoring degraded streams and wetlands. Preliminary estimates suggest this project may reduce phosphorus loading to Seymour Lake by up to 40 lbs per year and reduce sediment Into the lake.

Five years down the road, Patrick is hoping

for the "rewilding" of the property to be well underway and for the property to be a favorite of the public for fishing, hunting, trapping and wildlife viewing.

This is one of many projects the Memphre-magog Watershed Association is leading or assisting in our watershed as they work with local, state, regional and federal partners to improve the water quality, restore habitat and enhance flood resilience in the Northeast Kingdom



Help Wanted By Beth Torpey

ooking for help at the Fishing Access to inspect boats and educate the public about Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS). Morning, afternoon and weekend shifts are available from Memorial Day weekend until the end of October, paying \$14 - \$15/hour. Training will be provided. Great job for a student, teacher or retired person. Prerequisite, must love Seymour Lake! Contact Beth Torpey at <a href="mailto:bethyl1@gmail.com">bethyl1@gmail.com</a> (802) 323-3235 or (802) 895-3013.

#### **Save The Dates**

- June 2 FOVLAP Seminar:
- Echo Color Challenge 5K walk/run 10am July 2
- July 2 Boat Parade/(rain date July 3)
- July 7 Water Quality Workshop
- July 15 Holland Day

- July 22 SLA Annual Meeting 9am Morgan Community House
- July 29 SLA Annual Social @Camp Winape
- August 5 Circle of Friends Annual Luncheon and Craft Sale
- Sept 7 **FOVLAP** Annual Meeting

# Watershed Action Plan for Seymour/Echo Lakes

LA was pleased to learn last fall that the State has approved funding for Lake Watershed Action Plan (LWAP) for the Seymour/Echo Lake watershed. LWAPs assess the condition of shoreland, tributaries and hydrologically connected roads within a watershed to identify the greatest threats to the lake ecosystem. The plan will prioritize potential projects within the watershed and complete plans for three high priority

projects. Projects that are identified within LWAP are much more competitive for funding from the State clean water funding. Both Seymour Lake Association and the Echo Lake Protective Association supported the State selecting this plan for funding. An RFP was issued in December and the Orleans County Natural **Resources Conservation District** (OCNRCD) has been selected as the contractor. SLA and Echo Lake Protective

## By Rhonda Shippee

Association will work with OCNRCD as needed. The first stage of the plan begins with the shoreland assessments in summer/fall of 2023, followed by the roadway assessments in the spring of 2024 and finally the stream assessments in the summer of 2024.

The plan is anticipated to be completed by December 2024. Look for more information at SLA's annual meeting in July

By Tracey Becken

# The Lake Wise Program

othing does more to protect and improve the health and ecological integrity of Seymour Lake than a property owner's participation in the Lake Wise program. While the Aquatic Invasive Species program provides the critical first line of defense from invasive threats, a landowner's

participation in Lake Wise can improve both water quality and the long term health of the lake. Lake Wise is free, it is completely voluntary, there

are funds available from the State to support planning and installation of landscaping and mitigation projects, and Seymour Lake needs many more participants.

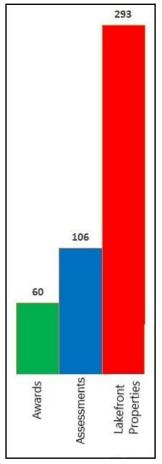
The Lake Wise program is an initiative under the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources that seeks to inform and help landowners with best management practices that are proven to effectively protect Vermont's lakes. The Agency created the program in response to learning from the National Lake Assessment Study that Vermont ranked lowest in the northeast ecoregion and in the nation for degraded shallow water habitat. Trained assessors evaluate a property on the following categories: shoreland, recreation area, driveway, septic and structure. The landowner is given a report that shows how the property rates on each and gives suggestions for improvements when needed. Owners may receive technical and financial assistance for fixing any issues that impact the health of the lake. Compliance is totally voluntary

and nothing is reported to anyone except the landowner. To be awarded a Lake Wise designation, the property has to pass all five categories.

Since the inception of the program in 2013, 60 out of 106 participating lakeshore properties on Seymour Lake have earned the Lake Wise award. While this has earned Seymour Lake one of only three Gold Awards in the State (Gold Awards are given to lakes with at least 15% of properties being Lake Wise certified), ideally all 293 properties would participate. We all want Seymour Lake to be as healthy as possible for the enjoyment of all. Please join in by contacting Tracey Becken at slalakewise@gmail.com to schedule an assessment. The process is fun, free, informative and you will be making a real contribution.□



Award winner Tom Adams



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## Thank you to the Following Seymour Lake Association Members for Your Support in 2022\*

Hamid & Karen Abada \*Tom & Cindy Adams

Adams Family

David & Rebecca Antes Sue & Frank Antonelli Dawn & Elwood Arnold \*Dave & Meredith Augustoni

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**Andrew Barter** 

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Corinne & Etienne Bilodeau

Bill & Molly Bilowus Wayne Bishop

\*Chris Blais

Kip & Kathleen Blindow

David Blittersdorf

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Sue Botros & Family

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Andrew & Chantelle Brackett

David & Joan Briggs Claudia Young Bringe

\*Ernest & Linda Broadwater

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\* John & Deborah Cowan Dick & Fran Curran

Rich & Barb Dauphin Bryan & Susan Davis Wendell & Pam Davis Bert & Katrina DeLaBruere

\*Rick & Mellissa D'elia

\*Michael Denning & Hazel Carby

Elizabeth Denning \*Linda Dennis

David & Sylvia Detscher Tony & Kathy DiBari llene Douglas

Ann & Ed Duckless

Skip & Jan Durfey Bob & Debbie Durgin

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Rich Eldred

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Steve & Claire Eyler Sleeper Family

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Mike Foley Edie Fontana

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Bill Heanue

\*Bob & Linda Henker

Tom & Patti Hill

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Bill & Jan Hogan Elaine Holden Mildred Holland

Jason & Bethany Howe Jill & Conrad Huffstutlar Bruce & Anita Humphrey

\*Helen Irwin

Connie & Richard Isabelle Frederick E. Jackson Bill & Heather Jacobs

Julie Jacobs

Philip & Ellen Jaeger

\*Douglas & Debra Jangraw

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Matt & Jackie Jewett James & Sharlyn Jordan

Brian Judd Scott A. Judd

Karl & Carol Kaessler Robert & Rebekah Karpp James & Julianne Kaufmann Mary & Rich Kecskemeti Timothy & Lynne Keefe Kerry & Laurice Keegan \*Jim & Charlotte Kenney Brian & Debi Kerr Nancy & Larry Kilinski

\* Bill & Margaret Kilpatrick Kilroe Family Lisa & Kevin Kincad

<sup>\*</sup> Indicates those SLA members who have received a Lakewise Award. As we transition, we may have mistakes on Lakewise awards or membership, please contact Tracey @ slalakewise@gmail.com

# Thank you to the following Seymour Lake Association Members for Your Support in 2022\*

\*Ron & Janet Kolar James Morris Eric & Megan Kolar Alan & Jenie Kolar Irene Murphy Keith & Teresa Kuenning Rick Neipp Allison & John Kulaga

Larry & Pauline Labor Ronald W. & Joanne M. Labrecque

Bryan & Robyn Lantz Julie M. Laplume Zea & Nicholas Larochelle

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Barbara Mason

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Mike & Tracey Rossi Steve & Stephanie Rowe Mark & Paula Rowse

Patricia Russell Dennis & Deb Rustay

Maurice & Luly Samuels

Stella Samuels

Les & Jennifer Samuels

Benjy Samuels Joan Sanborn

David & Patricia Sanders Ken & Mary Beth Sartorelli Louie & Tricia Scaglione Scott & Christina Schissel Dave & Priscilla Schulz

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David Wieselmann Nancy & Mark Wilder Vicky & Mike Williams Rodney M. Wood Scott & Alicia Woods Charles & Missy Woods Wendy Woodward Bill & Joanne Worth Gregg & Anne Worth Wayne & Judy Wyckoff Carl I. &Wilma A. Zettlemoyor

You can now renew your SLA Membership online @ https://seymourlake.org/membership-form

## **Seasonal Rental Information Coming To SLA Website**

The Board of Directors has voted to create a place on the SLA website for local seasonal rental information. Posting a property will only be available to SLA members. This is provided as a service to members and will not generate any income or fees to SLA. Only basic information on a property will be posted along with contact information for the member/owner. In addition to helping members find potential renters,

this will also help members (and anyone visiting the website) who might be looking for local accommodations. Availability of rentals on Seymour Lake is a frequent inquiry on our Facebook page. When this service is available, we will send an email blast with further details regarding posting a property

## Know this guy? Find out in the November Issue!

#### **The Boat Parade**

By Bonnie McWain

ALL AMERICAN BLOCKHEAD
POLYESTER BOY USDA GRADER
USDA APPROUED CERTIFIED COLORS
A REAL TWINKIE
1972
BEFORE

TENNETICAL SERVICES
FOR BLOCKHEAD
HOOKED ON SPROUTS
DOES IT IN COMPOST, USES RUBSER LIA
HAS LEFTIST TENDENCIES
ENTS GRANOLA- HAS CRITIERS
1982

RETER

he Annual Seymour Lake Boat Parade

We had a great day last year for the 2022 boat parade... not only for participating on the water, but for viewing from land! It was a picture-perfect July day with calm waters and sunny skies. There were 45 watercraft on the lake and a record number of 196 lake front properties cheering on the boats and celebrating our journey around the lake.

But now save the date for our next Boat Parade: Sunday July 2,2023 at 2:00pm Plan on joining in the fun, from lake or shore, in what has become a tradition here on Seymour Lake, the start of a great summer in Vermont, See you then!

# **Invasive Species Prevention**

**By Candy Moot** 

couple of Seymour Lake residents joined forces with Pat Souzzi, President of the Vermont Federation of Lakes and Ponds (FOVLAP) and professional lobbyist Virginia Renfrew lobbying the Vermont legislature to restore cuts and actually increase funding to AIS prevention, greeter program.

The group developed a fact-based presentation for the members of the House Committee on Environment and Energy (HEE) and the House Committee on Appropriations. Pat Souzzi delivered the presentation to HEE and ultimately the Committee recommended a \$500,000 appropriation and reinstating two staff positions that had been cut from the Lakes and Ponds Division of the Agency of Natural Resources.

This small group of SLA members and a resident from Echo Lake and one from Salem Lake also have concluded meeting with Senators from the Senate Committee on Appropriations. As this newsletter goes to press, the Conference Committee on Appropriations (three House Conferees and three Senate Conferees) has agreed to add the two positions and the \$500,000 noted above. Fingers crossed that this new appropriation makes it across the legislative finish line!



Seymour Lake Boat Parade 2022