

The Shore Owners' Association of Lake Placid

"Enhancing and Protecting the Ecology and Beauty of Lake Placid"





The Shore Owners' Association

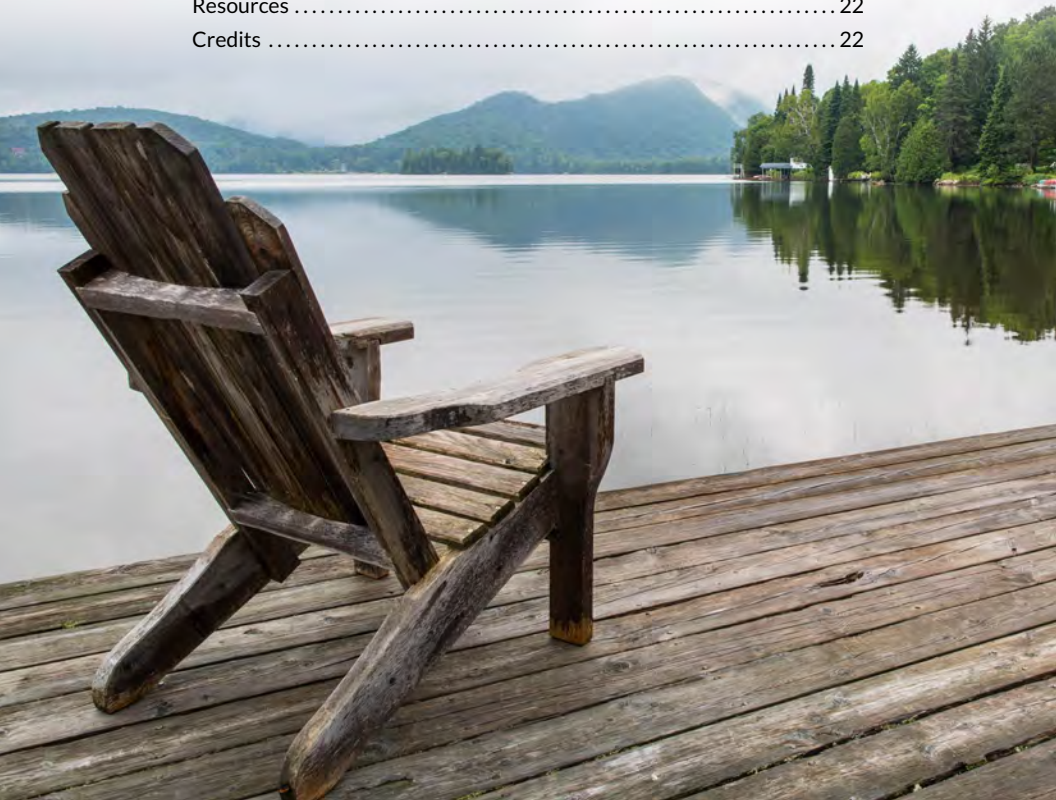
The first edition of this booklet was published in 1898 as a source of information for current and prospective members of The Shore Owners' Association. It has been updated many times, most recently in 2023.

Lake Placid, New York

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Contents

A Word from the President	1
About the Shore Owners' Association	3
Origins of the Shore Owners' Association	5
Lake Water Quality.....	
Invasive Species	6
Septic Systems	7
Tap Water Testing	7
Lake Water Testing.....	8
Lake Management Plan	9
Charitable Funds	10
Guests and Visitors.....	11
Boating Navigation Regulations	12
Fire Protection and Camp Identification.....	14
Navigation Marking System.....	14
Building Permits.....	17
Membership in the SOA.....	18
Officers and Trustees	21
Resources	22
Credits	22



A Word from the President

We are all so fortunate to live, at least seasonally, along the shores of Lake Placid. Our families and friends have enjoyed swimming in the cool, clear waters, boating on them, listening to the cry of the loons and enjoying shared time with family and friends – in many cases for generations.

This booklet was first published in 1898 by a small group of shore owners who banded together for one purpose – to preserve the health, safety and purity of the Lake. So much has changed over these many years. What has not changed is the natural beauty, pristine waters, and the commitment of our members to preserve the Lake. The tireless work, dedication, and personal and financial contributions of SOA members could not be more important today. Our preservation efforts must not only continue, but increase significantly during this era of development, increased boat traffic and climate change. We must also devote ourselves to boating safety on the water and fire safety for our shoreline properties.

Twenty years ago, SOA President Georgia Jones, said it so well: *“Cherish Placid Lake and hold it dear. It is rare and wonderful and fragile”*.

This fragile asset is in our hands. Its future depends on the actions we take now. With your help, we will continue to protect Lake Placid for generations to come. Thank you for joining us in these efforts.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Scott Donnelly
SOA President, 2023



About

The Shore Owners' Association of Lake Placid welcomes all owners of lakefront properties to join the Association and become active in its mission to protect the Lake and shorefront.

The Association was founded in 1893 for the purpose of preserving the quality of the Lake shores and water, while keeping the Lake safe for transportation and pleasure. The history of the Association is long, and filled with examples of its commitment to the preservation of the lake. The organization was instrumental in saving surrounding forests and watershed from logging; took a leading role in fire protection along the lakeshore; and maintains a consistent water level for all who use the Lake. The mission is to preserve the ecology and scenic beauty of the Lake by:

- Maintaining the level of the Lake through continued ownership and maintenance of the outlet dam.
- Maintaining water quality by controlling invasive species; testing Lake water and tap water; assisting homeowners with septic system pumping and safety; and disseminating information on the use of fertilizers.
- Promoting navigational and water safety by building awareness of boating regulations and by monitoring navigational lights and marker buoys.
- Promoting fire safety by identifying all residential properties on the Lake for emergency purposes.

The SOA works closely with state and local government agencies and community organizations committed to the protection and conservation of the Lake and surrounding land.



Origins

Placid Lake was first identified on a map in 1840. The term 'Placid Lake' is still used today when it is necessary to differentiate the Lake from the Village of Lake Placid. Permanent residences along the shores of the Lake can be traced back to 1870. Hunters, hikers and fisherman were drawn to the rugged beauty and pristine waters of the Lake. As more visitors discovered the area, hotels and family camps began to dot the shoreline. At the same time, ironmaking enterprises located downstream found that the waters flowing from the Lake were essential to their mining businesses. In 1846, the Peru Steel Ore Company in Clintonville, New York built a dam at the outlet of the Lake to supply water for its iron works business. The company regularly released water from the Lake to generate power for its operations downstream, causing the water level to fluctuate by as much as three to five feet.

Visitors and homeowners along the shore felt the consequences of these fluctuations. When the water level was high, logs and debris floated in the Lake. As the water level was lowered, it became difficult to access the Lake from docks and boat slips. In 1892, property owners along the shore formed an organization to purchase the land owned and controlled by Peru Steel Ore Company. Four acres of land around the dam were sold to the property owners by the steel company the following year. The negotiations were handled by Colonel Abraham Mills, owner of what is now the Whiteface Club and Resort. Shortly after, he represented the group in the purchase of the 'false outlet' on the east shore of the peninsula. In 1893, the Shore Owners' Association of Lake Placid ("SOA") was incorporated, with Colonel Mills serving as its first President. The newly established organization rebuilt the dam to conform to an agreed upon lake water level.

The SOA replaced the wooden structure with a masonry dam in 1901 at a cost of approximately \$1000. It served for nearly a century when, in 1995, the SOA authorized a rehabilitation of the structure and rebuilt the bridge across Outlet Brook. The bridge was dedicated to Harry W. Voegelé, a Trustee Emeritus and long-time Chairman of the Docks and Dam Committee. The maintenance of the dam and the bridge continues to be a primary responsibility of the SOA.

Lake Water Quality

For more than a century, the SOA has been a primary advocate for the protection and preservation of the quality of the Lake water. As the recreational use of the Lake increases, so too does the threat to its pristine waters.

Invasive Species

Lake Placid faces the serious challenge of invasive species, non-native plants and animals that can crowd out native species. Once they establish themselves in a lake, it is extremely difficult to remove them. . Communities that fail to take persistent action to prevent and control invasive species suffer dire consequences:

- Water becomes unsuitable for drinking, swimming and boating
- Native plant diversity declines
- Fish and invertebrate populations decline
- Mosquito populations increase

These consequences have the combined effect of destroying the natural habitat of a lake and adversely impacting the vibrancy of the community. The SOA works with state and local governmental agencies and conservation organizations to prevent and control the invasion through two programs: the engagement of qualified divers to search for and remove invasive species; and the Stewardship Program administered by the Adirondack Watershed Institute of Paul Smith's College (AWI), to inspect boats entering the lake.

Control: Variable-leaf Watermilfoil (VLM) was first detected in Paradox Bay in 2009 with relatively small amounts harvested each year. By 2018, however, more than 1,000 pounds were harvested. In 2019, more than 1,600 pounds were harvested by divers commissioned by the SOA. In response, the SOA increased the hand-harvesting to three weeks a year. This increased effort has reduced the amount of VLM harvested annually by over 95% with only 49 pounds being harvested in 2022.

Prevention: The Stewardship Program employs more than 100 stewards who monitor boat launches and decontamination stations across the Adirondacks. The purpose is twofold: to educate the public about the spread of invasive species; and to remove invasive species from boats entering the lake. Stewards inspect boats at the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) launch; and at the Village launch on Victor Herbert Road. The SOA has partnered with the Stewardship Program since 2002.

The numbers reported by AWI highlight the continued importance of the program. During the past five years, the Stewards inspected over 25,000 boats coming from over 125 different waterways to launch into Lake Placid. Over 450

of those boats failed inspection and 33 had an invasive species which was found and removed from the boat. The invasive species found consisted of VLM, Eurasian watermilfoil, water chestnut, curly-leaf pondweed and zebra mussels. VLM, Eurasian milfoil and zebra mussels have been found and removed in each of the past five years.

The Decontamination Station or Boat Wash is located next to the DEC launch and is available for everyone bringing any kind of boat into Placid Lake, free of charge.

The Steward Program is aimed at preventing the introduction of invasive species into Lake Placid. To date, it has been successful in keeping out invasive species other than variable leaf milfoil which is currently found in Paradox Bay (one stem was found outside Paradox Bay in 2019). To control and reduce the level of variable leaf watermilfoil in Paradox Bay and to prevent its migration to other parts of Lake Placid, the SOA hired Invasive Solutions Dive Company LLC to harvest the milfoil each summer. Because of a sharp increase in milfoil in Paradox Bay in 2018, the harvesting operations were increased from one week to two weeks. In 2020, harvesting increased to three weeks in an effort to get ahead of the curve.

Septic Systems

It is recommended that septic systems be pumped out when the tank is 1/3 full, and are inspected annually by a licensed septic company, inspector, or plumber to make sure they are connected and working properly. Leach fields should have plenty of sunlight and be clean of leaves, fallen branches, and other debris.

To better protect the lake from exposure to excess nutrients and pollutants, the Town of North Elba passed the “Lake Placid Lake Septic System Inspection Law”. The law requires that all septic systems proximate to the lake be inspected every three years for year-round residences; every five years for seasonal properties; if there is reasonable cause to believe that a septic system is not functioning properly; and when the property upon which the septic system is located is conveyed to a new owner.

Failed systems cause sewage to seep into the lake. Sewage entering the lake is problematic for two reasons. The first is the obvious one in that it is our drinking water. The second reason is that it carries with it phosphorus, the primary nutrient that triggers algae blooms. A single failed septic system can cause a localized algae bloom on the lake. The collective contribution of many septic systems not performing properly can lead to lake wide declines in water clarity and quality. In the most extreme cases, harmful algae blooms (HABs) can form, posing threats to drinking water and recreation through the presence of dangerous toxins.

Through its Annual Pump-out Program, the SOA organizes and pays for a barge to reach lake access only camps, making it easy for members to maintain their septic systems at a greatly reduced price. Please refer to the SOA website for further information, or contact the SOA administration by phone or email.

Tap Water Testing

Lake Placid is one of the purest lakes on earth. Only 2.5% of the water on earth is fresh water, and of that only 1% is suitable for drinking. Lake Placid is included in that 1%, classified as AA-Special, the highest rating for water quality. It is a rare and beautiful resource that must be protected.

For generations, many shore owners have been drinking unfiltered water directly from the Lake. Other shore owners choose to install filtration systems to ensure high quality drinking water. For those who do, the minimum recommendation is a particulate filter with a .5-micron cartridge, followed by an ultraviolet filtration system.

Volunteers from the SOA perform tap water tests to help lakefront property owners to detect coliform and E. coli bacteria. State standards stipulate zero tolerance for both. When a positive test does occur, it is usually due to waterfowl or wildlife waste that has flowed near a water intake when a sample is drawn. Leaching from faulty septic systems can cause a positive test, so it is critical that shore owners diligently inspect their system for leaks and make necessary repairs.

Lake Water Testing

Placid Lake is the source of municipal drinking water for the Town of North Elba. The Village of Lake Placid operates a pumping station and water treatment plant adjacent to the State boat launch.

Many SOA members draw their drinking water directly from the Lake. Needless to say, the SOA has a long history of concern about water quality. As far back as 1911, the SOA retained professionals to provide guidelines for the protection of the Lake water from domestic wastewater generated around the Lake shore. The recommendations were adopted by the SOA and later became the responsibility of the Consolidated Board of Health of the Village of Lake Placid and the Town of North Elba to assure that these recommendations continue to be strictly practiced.

The Lake Placid Water Pollution Control Commission was formed in the early 1970s consisting of shore owners and Lake Placid Village trustees. This Commission secured the services of Cornell University to study the water quality. Samples of lake water are studied regularly and those findings – with respect to

pH and alkalinity, plant nutrients, transparency and plankton population - are published in the Citizens Statewide Lake Assessment Program report available on our website.

The Village Water and Sewer Department tests the Lake water annually to ensure the absence of waterborne disease. They attest to the unique suitability of the Lake as a source of potable water. But because of the increasing population of the Lake shore and the corresponding strain from private septic systems, there is an increased risk of giardia. It is therefore advisable to treat all lake water used for consumption.

Lake Management Plan

The SOA completed an extensive Lake Management Plan for Placid Lake in 2022. Dr. Brendan Wiltse, Visiting Professor at the Paul Smith's Adirondack Water Institute, led the effort. Brendan is a Certified Lake Manager through the North American Lake Management Society. He holds a Ph.D in Limnology – the study of biological, chemical and physical features of lakes.

The plan is a compilation of information about Placid Lake and its watershed, including geology, soils, wetlands, water quality, and invasive species. Input from stakeholders, local and state laws, and other regulatory considerations generated management goals, objectives, and actions.

The Lake Management Plan is an essential tool for evaluating and prioritizing threats to the health of Placid Lake for the long-term protection of the Lake. It assists the SOA and other stakeholders in understanding the resource we are trying to protect and in making informed decisions regarding lake management.

Charitable Funds and Foundations

History

The SOA has a long history of raising funds to protect the shoreline and waters of Lake Placid. In the early 1990s a group of SOA members created a foundation to protect the water, shoreline, and scenic environment of Placid Lake. That original fund has evolved and grown to ensure that the changing needs required to protect the lake are adequately met.

Today

Keep Placid Pure is the SOA's tax-deductible 501(c)(3) fund managed by the Adirondack Foundation to protect the water and shoreline of Placid Lake. It is used exclusively for projects that maintain the Lake's water quality and clarity; prevent invasive species spread; promote responsible use; and build a sustainable future for this irreplaceable resource. This Fund supports water quality programs that include the Lake Steward Program; invasive species harvesting program (divers); Jeff Volmrich Lake Protection Program, and others. Your donations to this fund will help preserve the legacy of the Lake for generations.

The SOA also maintains two endowment funds that grow over time and are available to meet unanticipated expenditures ~ Act for Lake Placid Protection fund and the SOA of Lake Placid fund also known as the 'dam fund'. This fund was established by Harry Voegel, SOA Trustee Emeritus and long-time chairman of the Docks Committee. Act for Placid Lake Protection received a significant number of gifts in support of the Jeffrey Volmrich Education Program. Donations to this program should now be directed to Keep Placid Pure.

Guests and Visitors

When you welcome extended family, friends or paying guests to your camp, please share information on how they can promote safety and serenity while enjoying the Lake and shoreline:

- Lake Placid is a source of our drinking water. Please help to keep it clean.
- Resist the temptation to feed the ducks. Feeding the waterfowl is harmful to them and to humans.
- Sound travels easily over water. As a courtesy to your neighbors and in accordance with Town regulation, please keep music and noise at low decibels at night.
- Children under twelve years of age must wear a personal flotation device while on motorized and non-powered craft.
- Boaters are responsible for the wake coming from their boats and the resulting damage it may cause. The best way to know if you are moving at a 'no wake' speed is to look behind your boat.
- Please be courteous and slow down for non-powered boats and smaller boats.
- When operating any watercraft, be watchful for swimmers. They are often difficult to see.
- The night sky is filled with clusters of stars and constellations. Your enjoyment of starry nights will be enhanced by dimming outdoor lights and using timers.

Boating Safety Law

New York State Law requires that all operators of motorized boats take a one-time eight-hour safety course and carry a New York boater card. The phase-in-by-age law requires a new age group pass the test each year. The law requires that all boat operators born after January 1, 1993, must pass the test in 2020. All operators of motorized boats, regardless of age, must have boating safety certification by January 1, 2025.

Boating and Navigation Regulations

Boating

Boating has long been an integral part of life on the lake. Most of the land surrounding Placid Lake has no road access, and many properties can be reached only by water. Watercraft is not only indispensable, it is the best way to experience the beauty of the lake. While recreational use has changed over the years, basic rules for the safe enjoyment of the lake remain the same:

- Be thoughtful about your wake. The best way to know if you are moving at a 'no wake' speed is to look behind your boat. A constant speed with "bow up" is never good.
- Slow down for smaller boats and non-powered watercraft.
- Keep a respectful distance of at least 100 feet from docks and boathouses.
- Be sure that your boat has the required lighting if you are on the lake between sunset and sunrise. Unlit boats at night have been the cause of tragic, preventable accidents.
- When your skier, tuber, or boarder falls, stop your boat, then turn slowly to pick them up. Quick turns create big wakes. Slalom driving for whipping tubes is unsafe.
- Early morning glassy water is ideal for skiing. Tubers and surfers should respectfully avoid skiers before 10 am.
- Skiing, tubing, and wake boarding are prohibited in Sunset Strait (first strait) at all times.
- Surf/tube/ski in loops around the lake to avoid repetitive passes in front of one location.

With respect and common sense, recreation on the lake will be enjoyed by all.



Navigation Regulations for Lake Placid

Navigation Rules adopted by the SOA governed navigation of the Lake from 1910 through 1923. In 1924, at the request of the Association, the State Legislature passed a law covering navigation on the Lake. In 1941, the State Legislature passed a State Navigation Law which repealed all local laws governing navigation in the State. That law, while more stringent in some respects, neglected certain restrictions which were found from experience to be necessary for safety on the Lake. To address this concern, the SOA requested that the Board of Supervisors of Essex County establish the Lake Placid Vessel Regulation Zone, which was agreed to on August 10, 1942 and amended most recently in 1989. The Town of North Elba annually appoints a constable with the authority to enforce the navigation rules and the New York State Navigation Law.

The regulation applies to all parts of the Lake that are within 1,000 feet of any shore or island. The so-called 'Vessel Regulation Zone' covers nearly the entire Lake with the exception of a small section on West Lake. The regulation limits the speed of boats on Lake Placid for the protection of boaters, swimmers, and the shoreline as follows:

- Paradox Bay: 5 miles-per-hour.
- Within 100 feet of the shore, a dock, pier, raft, float, or an anchored or moored vessel: 5 miles-per-hour.
- In fog, mist, thick weather, snow, or heavy rain: 10 miles-per-hour.
- Within 100 feet of any canoe, rowboat, or swimmer: 10 miles-per-hour.
- More than 100 feet, or less than 300 feet, from shore: 20 miles-per-hour.
- Sunset Strait (between Peninsula and Buck Island) during the day: 20 miles-per-hour; at night (from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset): 10 miles-per-hour.
- No boat may exceed 45 miles-per-hour.

The regulation prohibits jet skis and airplanes anywhere in the Vessel Regulation Zone.



Fire Protection

In 1900, the SOA provided for the installation of a fire pump on the steamer Doris. When the Doris was re-equipped with a gasoline engine, the Association provided its own fireboat, SOA I and later, SOA II. In 1966, the Town of North Elba and Village of Lake Placid assumed responsibility for fire protection on Lake Placid and the Association gifted the SOA II to the fire department. SOA II was subsequently retired in favor of the Hotspot, a 22-foot, diesel-powered, fiberglass former Coast Guard vessel with a 1000 gallon-per-minute pumping capacity.

Camp Identification

In 1990, to better coordinate and communicate with the fire department and rescue squad, and to ensure that the fire and rescue equipment remained in top condition, the SOA formed the Emergency Services Committee. The Committee devised a property identification system, and in 1993 the SOA distributed reflective number plates to be attached to every dock or boathouse on the lake. The number plates were updated and replaced in 2019. The numbers provide a coherent and comprehensive system to aid fire and rescue personnel in the event of an emergency. Please contact the SOA to confirm that your displayed property identification number is up to date.

Navigation Marking System

For many years the SOA maintained the navigation marking system on the lake. Hazards were first marked with SOA flags and oil lamps. The Village of Lake Placid provided navigation lights where powerlines existed, supplemented by battery-powered lights provided by the SOA at the northern end of the lake. In 1969, the New York State Conservation Department, now the Department of Environmental Conservation, assumed responsibility for the navigation buoy system. The SOA continues to monitor navigational lights and marker buoys for the safety of all who use the lake.





Building Permits

Building permits are required before an owner can make any change to a shoreline lot. Changes include the building or expansion of any structure including a home, garage, dock, or boathouse; creating roads, paths, or walkways; cutting timber; removing trees; and installing lighting. The shoreline and islands of Placid Lake are subject to regulations imposed by the Town of North Elba/ Village of Lake Placid Land Use Code, Adirondack Park Agency (APA), New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), and Army Corp of Engineers (ACE). No construction may commence until permits are obtained from those entities that have oversight authority. Penalties may include the removal of an improvement and civil fines for owners who proceed without these permits or proceed beyond the scope permitted by the codes.

The Town of North Elba/ Village of Lake Placid Planning and Zoning Code has regulations that are specific to properties surrounding Placid Lake. These properties are referred to in the Code as the Shoreland Overlay District, which includes all properties located fully or partially within 100 feet of the shoreline of Lake Placid. The specific standards for properties in the Shoreland Overlay District must be met prior to any permit approval for any land development. The regulations were enacted with input from the SOA to protect water quality, sustain wildlife habitats, prevent bank erosion, and maintain scenic views.

Membership in the SOA

How lucky are we -- those fortunate enough to be able to enjoy the awe-inspiring beauty of Lake Placid, its shoreline and vistas in three seasons... or four. We have a common bond in our commitment to preserve the beauty and unsurpassed water quality for ourselves, our families, and all those who visit, now and for generations to come. With this opportunity comes our responsibility to protect this very special place. We invite and strongly encourage all shore owners to support the organization by joining the SOA. We can't do it without you.

Member Benefits

The most significant benefit of membership is knowing that you are making a positive impact on the health of the lake. Additionally, if you so choose, you can embrace the opportunity to learn, network, and engage with fellow members.

- Receive seasonal newsletters with important updates on the state of the Lake and email alerts as necessary. Report missing/adrift items for lost & found email notices.
- Attend the annual breakfast meeting where members discuss the condition of the lake and water quality; hear from guest speakers invited to share information relevant to the lake community; and elect trustees to oversee lake management.
- Know that you are part of a community that shares the heartfelt desire to protect the unique beauty of the lake and shoreline.
- Receive a numbered listing and map of all camp property owners and camp names that is updated annually.



Membership in the SOA is open to all those who own property on Lake Placid. It is not a neighborhood home owners association but rather a 501(c)(4) organization whose purpose is to protect the ecology and beauty of Lake Placid and its shores. The SOA is dedicated to keeping the quality of the water one of the highest in New York State; to keeping the lake free of invasive species; and to keeping the waters safe for recreational enjoyment.

Your annual dues make it possible for the SOA to:

- Regulate the water level of Lake Placid by managing the Dam
- Conduct testing of shore owners' tap water
- Organize and subsidize periodic septic pump-outs for boat access only camps to ensure clean water through proper septic maintenance, as required by law in the Town of North Elba
- Provide a rapid response to the threat of invasive species facing Lake Placid since the first discovery of Variable Leaf Milfoil in Paradox Bay in 2009
- Conduct the Citizens Statewide Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP), a volunteer lake monitoring program run by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and the NYS Federation of Lake Associations, which collects and tracks markers of lake health
- Collaborate with the Lake Constable to educate residents and visitors about boating safety rules on our lake and to monitor compliance

Dues are paid annually by U.S. mail or online: lpsoa.org/pay-dues/





Officers & Trustees

All owners of lakefront properties are invited and encouraged to join the Association and to become active in the mission to protect and preserve Placid Lake and the shorefront. The organization is managed by a Board of Trustees elected by the full membership at the annual Board Meeting each July. All members are invited to attend.

Officers

Scott Donnelly, *President*

Kathy Trainor, *Vice President*

John McMillin, *Treasurer*

Lendy Barnard, *Secretary*

Fred Calder, *Honorary Trustee*

Georgia Jones, *Honorary Trustee*

Trustees

Nancy Begier

Jay Ireland

Ashley Kasperzak

William Kaufman

Cristina Lussi

Hilary McDonald

Peter Pence

Barbara Renninger

Cathy Sloan

Tom Walden

Jaideep Khanna

Julianne Bertagna

Resources

For more information please visit us online:

Website: www.lpsoa.org

Email: soalakeplacid@gmail.com

Boater Safety

www.adirondack.net/boating/rules-regulations/

Building Permits

www.northelba.org

Code Enforcement

518-523-9518

Shoreline Restrictions

Adirondack Park Agency

apa.ny.gov

Department of Environmental Conservation

dec.ny.gov

Town of North Elba/Village of Lake Placid Code

<http://www.northelba.org>

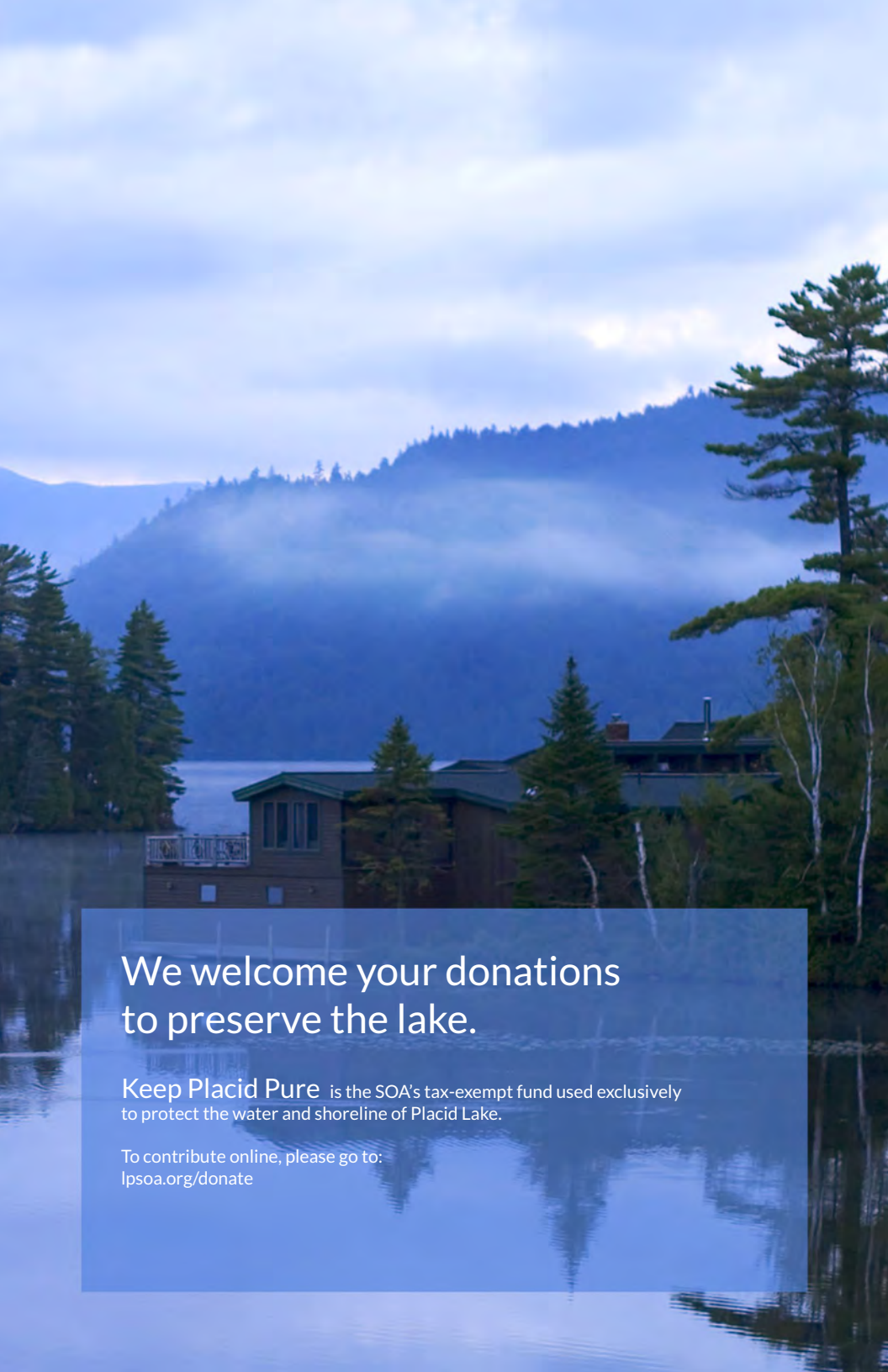
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Christopher H. Woodward...*p. 2*



We welcome your donations
to preserve the lake.

Keep Placid Pure is the SOA's tax-exempt fund used exclusively
to protect the water and shoreline of Placid Lake.

To contribute online, please go to:
lpsoa.org/donate



The Shore Owners' Association of Lake Placid

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