

August 13, 2020

Board of Directors,

A summary of the Water Quality Committee activities is presented below.

Cyanobacteria Bloom

Visual confirmation using a photograph by a resident was made of the bloom on Friday, July 17. A testing result that establishes the level of contamination has not yet been received. But, as Kim Tower says, "if you can see it, stay out of it." Geri has sent pictures of the bloom to Hilary Snook of the regional EPA and he has confirmed that it is microcystis which is toxic. It is readily visible as a fine yellow-green particulate matter just below the surface. It is essentially everywhere in Great Herring Pond but is not present in Little Herring Pond nor Carters River. Geri has arranged for Hilary Snook to give a live Zoom presentation with Wildlands Trust on August 20 at 7 PM.

We have raised over \$10,000 for HPWA's share of the Water Quality Plan in just over 3 weeks. Over \$4800 of these funds was raised by placing a "DONATE" button on my Facebook posts!

E. coli Sampling

I am pleased to report that from the July 22 sampling, we have either 5 colonies/100 ml or <5 colonies/100 ml E. coli. Generally, greater than 80 or 100 (depending on who you ask) are cause for concern. This is a good result. Why did we take samples if no one should be swimming? E. coli is a good indicator of septic problems; if a spike is noted in one of the 11 locations, further investigation should be done.

While we (Don, Geri, Jerry, Chris, Tom O'Brien, Morgan) were out, we took a Secchi reading. It had decreased from 2.5 m in June to 1.5 m in July. There were a lot of suspended solids (cyanobacteria) that caused the reduction in clarity. We also took a dissolved oxygen sampling at the deep hole. There was some DO decrease at all depths but there was measurable oxygen even at 13 m, a normal occurrence for the summer season.

Tour of Little Herring Pond

Jim Smith took me around Little Herring Pond, showing me the dormant cranberry bog north of Little Herring Pond on Plymouth land and along the roadways to get a sense of drainage patterns in the area. The bog was wet (it had rained hard the night before) and we took samples at the LHP spring and at the bog to be tested for both nitrate and total phosphorus. We are hoping to establish how much phosphorus may be making its way into our watershed from this cranberry bog. Jim also told me that there are "dozens of springs and seeps" in and around Little Herring Pond. Hopefully, their presence will speed the cleansing of Great Herring Pond.

Elbow Pond

I delivered 20 stamped envelopes containing our membership brochure and a letter for Tom Oertel to distribute to new residents of Elbow Pond.