

Big Pond Association Lake Management

A 501C3 Organization

The Big Pond Association will protect and preserve the ecology of Big Pond in Otis, Massachusetts including the well-being and environmental protection of the lake through testing, education, observation, and communication.

Testing – Big Pond Association has a water testing program in place every summer to detect any changes to water quality. We have used the testing that was performed in the 2005 Diagnostic Feasibility Study (available for review at Bigpondassociation.com) as a baseline for current readings. In 2022 we upgraded older testing equipment with a Hanna Instruments HI9829 meter. In addition to the readings that can be derived from our testing equipment an outside lab (MA DEP and CT DPH Certified) is given water samples to check for other water quality parameters. Testing is currently done for temperature, conductivity, dissolved oxygen percentage, dissolved oxygen parts per million, pH, ORP, Secchi transparency, turbidity, alkalinity, total phosphorus, dissolved phosphorus, nitrate nitrogen, nitrite nitrogen, ammonium nitrogen, total kjeldahl nitrogen, total nitrogen, and total dissolved solids.

Education - The BPA is one of the original members of the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation's (DCR) Weed Watcher program since its inception in 2002. Several times during the summer trained volunteers from the BPA check strategic areas of the lake for any non-native invasive plants. The BPA works hand in hand with the DCR with periodic educational seminars to train more and more Association members in weed identification techniques. Per Jim Straub of DCR, "Big Pond Association is one of the most engaged and energetic groups out there. Their lake is one of beauty and they protect it vehemently. It is one of my favorite groups to work with."

Whenever possible, a guest speaker is invited to the Big Pond Association Annual Meeting to speak on environmental matters of concern to the membership. Transcripts or slide presentations from the latest speaker(s) can be found on the BPA website.

During our annual canoe/kayak poker run, one of the stations is dedicated to informing participants of one of the non-native invasive plant species that are common to the northeastern United States.

Observation – Our most powerful tool for detection of invasive species is our weed watcher program, detailed above. This runs from the beginning of July through the fall.

If you see something, call someone. Members of the community are encouraged to observe their own lakefront and if they see a weed that does not look familiar to them, they know to get in touch with the lake management committee to come over and take a look.

Communication – A segment of the Annual Meeting is always dedicated to the current state of the lake and reminders of how invasive species are introduced to a lake and what actions can be taken to best protect Big Pond from the introduction of invasive species. Our bi-annual newsletter also includes reminders of how to best protect Big Pond's water quality as well as the potential introduction of invasive species.

Lake Management Fund

The Big Pond Association has well over \$100,000 in its lake management fund. Funds are derived from Annual Dues, contributions given by members above the minimal dues, various fund raisers during the course of the summer, and merchandise sales. 100% of all operating profits go directly into the lake management fund.