

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 3, 2024

MEDIA CONTACT: Susan Gallo, Maine Lakes, sgallo@lakes.me, (207)956-1965

Lidie Robbins, 30 Mile River Watershed Association, lidie@30mileriver.org, (207)
860-4043

Governor Mills has proclaimed July Lakes Appreciation Month in Maine

That's good news for the large nonprofit network of local lake associations, regional watershed organizations, and statewide organizations that are raising awareness, taking action, and supporting volunteer networks to benefit Maine's clean and healthy lakes.

YARMOUTH, ME — Governor Mills has officially proclaimed July to be [Lakes Appreciation Month](#) in the state of Maine. The proclamation recognizes the role of the Wabanaki in stewarding the incredible lake resources that are in the area now known as the State of Maine, as well as the immense value these lakes bring to us today, from recreational resources to drinking water sources to habitat for much of Maine's wildlife. The proclamation also recognizes the recent finding from a study at the University of Maine documenting the value of Maine's Great Ponds at over \$14.1 billion.

Lakes Appreciation Month gives Maine residents and visitors the opportunity to learn more about lake health and ways to be involved with lake protection efforts, such as invasive plant patrols, courtesy boat inspections, water quality monitoring, land conservation projects, loon outreach, and much more. A network of local lake associations, regional watershed organizations, and state-wide nonprofits work together to support volunteer efforts and lake protection programming. The public can see a sample of the different events, trainings and workshops offered during Lakes Appreciation Month by visiting www.lakes.me/lake-appreciation.

Lakes Appreciation Month is also a great opportunity to highlight the impactful work our state's lake nonprofits and their staff and volunteers do year round to protect our valuable lake resources.

"An incredible network of lake organizations around the state raises several million dollars each year for critical lake protection programming," said Susan Gallo, Executive Director of Maine Lakes, a statewide organization dedicated to supporting lake organizations and keeping Maine's lakes clean for future generations. This sum is in addition to funding from the state that goes towards programs like LakeSmart, Courtesy Boat Inspections, and other lake protection efforts.

Alison Cooney, Executive Director of Lake Stewards of Maine, said "State funding is essential in supporting lake-focused organizations in their efforts to preserve the clarity and health of Maine's lakes; however, the funding is not enough to support the capacity we all need to meet the growing demands and rising costs of lake protection work."

Lake organizations are united in their hope that Lakes Appreciation Month will raise awareness not just about the work being done, but the need for more and sustained funding to keep this work going in the future.

Anyone who agrees that Maine's lakes are an invaluable resource that deserves protection can celebrate Lakes Appreciation Month by visiting a favorite lake, getting involved with lake protection programming, and supporting local lake organizations. For a list of lake organizations and their contact information, visit www.lakes.me/map.

Note to Reporters: Reporters are invited to join any of the workshops and trainings listed at www.lakes.me/lake-appreciation. You will be able to talk to staff and volunteers doing critical lake protection work. Contacts are listed for each organization/event, or contact Susan Gallo, sgallo@lakes.me with any questions or if you need more information.

Maine Lakes is a statewide nonprofit that works to protect lake health and habitat by engaging community members in lake protection efforts. For more information visit www.lakes.me.

###