



The Amston Laker

It is a time of transition for the Amston Lake District, with some changes ahead that we'd like to share with you.

After more than 15 (!!) years of dedicated service to the Amston Lake District, Board President Frank Hoisl will be stepping down from the board of directors effective June 30, 2025. Frank's vision and tireless commitment to the District, as well as his love and passion for the lake, has left an indelible mark on our community. His natural ability to build relationships both within and outside of the District, along with stints as president and vice president of the board; head of security; chair of the Lake Health, Lebanon Roads, Dam, and Weeds Committees; member of the Finance Committee; water quality tester; and founding father of the Beach Pass Checkers program are just a few of Frank's many contributions to the District. He's done just about all of the jobs in the District at one time or another.

Frank's decision to step away comes as he embarks on a new chapter in his life (see what grandchildren will do?) and although we will miss Frank and his leadership, we are thrilled for all that lies ahead for him.

To our residents, thank you as always for your continued support of the board of directors. Together, we will honor Frank's legacy by continuing to preserve and protect our lake and the natural spaces around it that make our community so special.

A big thank you to all volunteers who keep things running around here! We can always use more volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact an ALD Board member, using the "contact us" feature on the ALD website www.amstonlake.org. If you're interested in volunteering for social events here at the lake, check out the ALA website, amstonlakeassociation.com.

Thanks to Our Newsletter Contributors

Jeff Arpin
Liz Bowen
Donna Ciarfella
Joyce Clark
Frank Hoisl

Sherri-Ann Martin
John Matra
Les Parlin
Karen Patterson
Jean Waleszczyk

Invasive Aquatic Plants at Amston Lake

By Jeff Arpin and Les Parlin, Amston Lake Health Committee

In 2022 Amston Lake had its first sighting of Eurasian watermilfoil around the sunken island area. Eurasian watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) is an invasive, submerged aquatic plant with feather-like leaves, forming dense mats that can negatively impact aquatic ecosystems and recreational activities. We initiated a rapid response plan, contacted various experts to guide us in proper treatment, and used Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting (DASH) in June to remove the small number of plants. A 12 X 20' benthic mat was subsequently installed in the area where the plants were removed. Later that year, additional invasive plants were discovered around the same area and a DEEP treatment permit was initiated and granted. In October 2022 a one-acre area was treated by professional specialists with ProcellaCOR, an herbicide used to control aquatic plants and weeds, in the hopes of eliminating the additional plants found.

In 2023 no sightings occurred until late in the season, when eight areas were found to have a small amount of Eurasian watermilfoil. These sightings gave us grave concern because many different areas of the lake were identified as having an invasive plant. We used our recently developed Invasive Species Rapid Response Plan to guide us through the required actions, notifications, and treatment options. The eight invasive plant locations around the lake were covered by treating six areas in October 2023.

The Amston Lake Health Committee (ALHC) worked with our Limnologist, GZA Environmental, as well as the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES), to develop presentation materials and educate the District via presentations in 2023 and 2024. Additionally, the ALHC developed educational literature such as posters for the beaches, ROWs, and boat launch, along with small information cards that can be kept in residents' watercraft for help in identification. We plan to continue this education this summer, by hosting GZA's 2024 lake health report presentation, as well as another informative CAES presentation.

Thankfully, in 2024 there were no invasive plant sightings. Many District residents attended the CAES invasive species workshop in May 2024, giving us more eyes on the lake. Following the workshop, there were many plant sightings reported and investigated, but luckily no invasive plants were identified. The ALHC appreciates the work of those that keep looking because the sooner we see any invasives, the sooner we can react and minimize detrimental effects on the lake.



The ALHC highly recommends that you keep your watercraft at Amston Lake. Watercraft used in any other body of water needs to be thoroughly cleaned and allowed to dry for five days before reentering Amston Lake. Eurasian watermilfoil and Hydrilla are found in many rivers, lakes, and ponds and are extremely easy to transfer into another body of water. Treating invasive aquatic plants is very costly. They can degrade lake health, restrict recreational use, and can severely decrease property values, which is why maintaining vigilance is so important for all of us!

Amston Lake Ordinance Updates

Over the winter, the ALD Board of Directors set to work on updating the Ordinances of the Amston Lake District, which hadn't had a full overhaul in almost 12 years. Our goals were to create a more cohesive, consistent document using plain language, and to remove duplication and make it easier to find information. Content was reorganized and reworded, and there are a few substantive content changes:

- Clarified and added some items to the "definitions" section.
- Defined personal watercraft (PWC) and expanded the prohibition against jet skis to include all PWCs.
- Clarified that remote control watercraft are subject to the same restrictions as other boats (e.g., 5 mph speed limit).
- Clarified that all boats launched from a trailer must be launched at the boat ramp at Main Beach. This allows for a proper inspection to prevent invasive weeds from entering the lake.
- Clarified that lake passes are not interchangeable (i.e., boat stickers are needed to store watercraft on ALD property or use in ALD waters; beach passes are needed to access beaches and ROWs; and auto hang tags are needed to park on ALD property).
- Prohibited leaving boat trailers on ALD property unattended. Once a boat is launched, the boat trailer must be moved, to allow parking space for others.
- Consolidated and clarified enforcement steps for ordinance violations.
- Included speed limits on ALD roads (25 mph, except on Lebanon private roads, which have a speed limit of 15 mph).



Resident/owner feedback was solicited and incorporated before the ordinances were finalized. An updated version of the ordinances will be published on the amstonlake.org website prior to July 1, 2025. All owners and residents are encouraged to read the updated ordinances and share them with their tenants and guests.

2025 Boat Sticker Requirement

This year, we have new striped boat stickers for all boats launched from a trailer. This is in response to a July 2024 ordinance change which clarifies that residents/owners may only receive boat stickers for boats that they actually own. This is one part of our efforts to reduce the chance of introducing invasive plant species into the lake. To obtain the special striped boat sticker, part of the lake pass registration process requires applicants to show a title or current registration in their name for the boat being registered.

If you haven't yet registered for your lake passes, boat stickers, or auto hang tags, visit the amstonlake.org website, or use the unique link that was emailed to you, which will prefill last year's information. New green tags must be displayed by July 1, 2025, when the old blue ones expire. Contact Karen Patterson at pattersonk113@gmail.com with any questions. Remaining lake pass distribution dates at the ALA clubhouse at 16 Wood Acres Rd are listed here:

Remaining lake pass distribution dates	Sat, May 24 11am – 2pm
	Sat, June 14 11am – 1pm
	Sun, June 29 11am – 1pm

ALD Committees

There are a number of ALD committees hard at work all year 'round. Below is a brief description of what they do. Please consider joining one of these committees – we're always looking for more volunteers!!

The **Beaches & Rows Committee** maintains the beaches and rights of way for residents' use. They coordinate maintenance, organize spring and fall cleanups, and install/replace boat racks, benches, bike racks, and other amenities.

The **Lake Health Committee** developed the Amston Lake Management Procedures and Planning Guide and works with experts to understand the impacts of lake nutrients, aquatic plants, fish populations, and water chemical balance on overall lake health. They recommend actions to the Board of Directors to maintain optimal lake health, and provide educational opportunities for residents to learn about lake health topics, such as invasive weeds, water clarity, and watershed impacts on the lake. Visit their web page where much more information can be found.

The **Lake Usage Committee** reviews areas where plants are interfering with lake usage, and researches and recommends actions to optimize lake usage while minimizing negative impact on lake health or aquatic animal life.

The **Lebanon Roads Committee** coordinates the maintenance and repair of the private ALD Lebanon roads, recommends capital improvements, and manages the separate Lebanon Roads budget.

The **Long-Term Financial Planning Committee** assesses long-term financial needs of the District, and makes recommendations to the Board of Directors for investing, fund balances, and establishment of new funds.

Our volunteers are the heart of our community and we can always use more help! If you are interested in getting involved in any of these committees or have questions, please reach out to anyone on the **Board of Directors**.

Stay Engaged and Informed

If you haven't been receiving periodic email blasts from the board, you could be missing out! You might assume that since the tax collector has your email address, or you submitted your email when you signed up for lake passes, that you're on "the list." But these are all separate databases – and the email blast list is an entirely separate list. The ALD email blasts are sent out a few times a month (less in the winter – the clerk needs a break!), and are filled with useful, timely information and reminders. It's the only method the board has to communicate quickly with a large number of people. To sign up, visit amstonlake.org and click the link in the upper right corner.



Amston Lake Association (ALA)

Bringing Our Community Together

John Matra, *President, Amston Lake Association*

Dear Amston Lake Neighbors,

As we move into another season at Amston Lake, I want to take this time to highlight the role of the Amston Lake Association (ALA) and the benefits of being a member. Our organization is dedicated to fostering a vibrant social community and organizing events that bring neighbors together.

What We Do

The ALA plays a vital role in enhancing the social life of Amston Lake. Our efforts include:

- **Community Events:** We organize seasonal events, social gatherings, and volunteer opportunities to foster a strong sense of community.
- **Beach and Common Area Gatherings:** We coordinate fun and inclusive activities at our beaches and community clubhouse.
- **Social Programs and Clubs:** We facilitate various interest groups and recreational activities for all ages.
- **Communication and Connection:** We keep residents informed about social happenings through Facebook postings, the ALA website, and signboards.

Benefits of Membership

ALA membership is just \$30 annually **per household**—an incredible value for the many social events and community benefits it provides. Becoming a member of ALA not only helps support these initiatives but also provides direct benefits to you and your family, including:

- Access to exclusive Association-hosted social events
- Regular updates on community activities and opportunities to make new friends
- A shared commitment to building a warm and welcoming community
- Discounted participation fees at ALA-sponsored events

Get Involved!

You can become a member at one of the ALD boat pass distribution events or online at www.amstonlakeassociation.com. Your support and participation are essential to keeping Amston Lake a lively and connected community. Whether through volunteering, attending meetings, or simply joining in on events, every effort makes a difference.

Thank you for being a part of this incredible community. If you are not yet a member, I encourage you to join the Amston Lake Association today and help us continue our mission of bringing people together.

Stormwater Runoff Prevention Ideas

- Never dump anything down storm drains
- Vegetate bare spots in your yard
- Compost your yard waste
- Avoid toxic pesticides, follow labels, and learn how to naturally prevent pest problems
- Direct downspouts away from paved surfaces; consider a rain garden to capture runoff
- Take your car to the car wash rather than washing it in the driveway
- Check your car for leaks
- Use fertilizers sparingly
- Pick up after your pet

Native Plants For Your Garden

Are you considering building a rain garden or planting native plants that will require little care? Less lawn and more plants and trees in our yards help to filter water and lessen runoff of nutrients into the lake.

Some native plants that will look great and be easy to maintain include:



1. Hay Scented Fern – *Dennstaedia punctilobula*; likes part shade, average/moist soil, and is deer resistant. Grows 18 – 24" tall and 2 – 3' wide. The fronds turn yellow in the fall and it's great for naturalizing/replacing lawn. Perennial (will come back year after year).



2. White Goldenrod – *Solidago bicolor*; likes part shade, average/dry soil, and is deer resistant. Perennial. Grows 2 – 3' tall and 1 – 2' wide with cream-colored flowers in the late summer and fall. Great for woodland edges and rock gardens.



3. Wild Geranium – *Geranium maculatum*; likes part shade, average/moist soil and is deer resistant. Perennial. Grows 1 – 3' tall and 1 – 3' wide, with pink/mauve flowers that last from spring to end of summer. Great for woodland edges and sun-dappled open areas.



4. Blazing Star – *Liatris spicata*; likes full sun, average/dry soil and NOT resistant to deer. Perennial. Grows 2 – 4' tall and 2' wide. It has amazing red and purple flowers in the heat of summer. Tolerant of drought and intolerant of wet soils. These add texture to your yard.



5. New Jersey Tea – *Clethra alnifolia*; shrub that likes part shade, average/moist soil and is a great pollinator plant. Grows 3 – 10' tall and 4 – 6' wide with showy and very fragrant white flower clusters during the summer. Good for erosion control – you'll notice lots of this shrub along the edge of the lake already.



6. Partridgeberry/Mitchella Repens – likes part shade/shade, is evergreen, and produces red berries. Grows 2" tall and 12" wide. Great woodland garden ground cover.

As long as you plant after all danger of frost has passed (end of May), these natives should flourish in your yard, and help the lake at the same time. Happy planting!

Karen Patterson and Sherri-Ann Martin, Master Gardener

Pet Waste Tips

Picking up after your pet isn't just a courtesy for those walking behind you, it's also the healthy and environmentally sound thing to do. Pet waste can be a significant source of water pollution. When pet waste is not properly disposed of, it can be carried by rain or snow runoff directly into nearby waterbodies...you guessed it, our beautiful Amston Lake. Untreated animal fecal matter can become a source of harmful bacteria and nutrients in water, often resulting in high bacteria counts and algae blooms. Fortunately, there are things pet owners can do to help keep our lake clean:

PICK UP pet waste from your yard. It is not fertilizer.

CARRY disposable bags while walking your dog to pick up and properly dispose of the waste.

DISPOSE of pet waste in your trash by wrapping carefully, or flush the unbagged waste down the toilet.

DO NOT toss bagged pet waste on the side of the road, a storm drain, or in a porta-potty.



Working Together

Working with other lakes to minimize invasive plants at Amston Lake

On October 8, 2024, Amston Lake Health Committee members met with concerned members of the Friends of Lake Williams (FLW). The president of the Lake Williams Beach Association (LWBA), Jon Vigurs, is also a member of the FLW. We established a joint effort to share common concerns such as water testing, lake management and invasive species treatment (past and present), and awareness of our community life on the two lakes. Although many differences exist between the two lake communities, Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) entering our lakes is a definite shared concern.

This joint effort enhanced the awareness of private vs. public access to our waterways within the close proximity of both communities. The success of the Amston Lake boat inspection program and the need for prevention of AIS entering Lake Williams at the town of Lebanon-owned public boat launch were strongly agreed upon. The Friends of Lake Williams and the LWBA have been working on plans to acquire a "Dry Weed Station" for the public boat launch in an effort to help prevent AIS from entering Lake Williams. They may also implement a program such as our Beach Pass Checkers at the public access on Route 207.

Joyce Clark, Amston Lake Health Committee

Amston Lake Word Search

Circle all the words related to Amston Lake that are hidden in the grid. Words can be found going across, down, and diagonally, forward or backward.

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F H S L P N M A T S S I S C L U B H O U S E
L I N I L H T A I D O U N A R A M A T A C A
O A S E S A A R I A N O N T A O B W O R B E
H T K H O D B A T N A E H K M I I T S D I O
C M T E I N B H Y P B A O A E A Y S K C U D
A B T R D N A A C M T E H O N N I F A N S S
E E H R E A G C N A H M A T I K I N I G H T
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I O I N O I M E O B Q A N I H R M N S N R D
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L A O R S E O T W O W E K A L N O T S M A H
O A M F T P H N E S T A O B N O O T N O P B
L L R D U C K P O N D O Y O K A Y A K H F M
  
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AMSTON LAKE

BASS

BEACH BALL

BEACH YOGA

BOAT RAMP

CANOE

CATAMARAN

CLUBHOUSE

DUCK POND

DUCKS

FISHING

KAYAK

LAKE DAY

LOLLIPOP BEACH

MAIN BEACH

MAIN DAM

MOVIE NIGHT

PADDLEBOARD

PONTOON BOAT

RIGHT OF WAY

ROWBOAT

SAIL

SAND

SUNKEN ISLAND

SUNNY

SWIMMING

TIKI NIGHT

TURTLES

Boat/trailer inspectors on call *(when available)*:

Dave Arnold	860-228-1944
Al Fichtel	860-338-4300
Jim Delisle	860-707-6512
Mark Caccio	860-213-3411
Marge Arnold	860-228-1944

Protect Our Lake From Invasive Species Boat and Trailer Inspections

Daily, 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Boat launching off trailers is strictly **prohibited** from private property. All boats launched from trailers must first be inspected at the Main Beach boat launch area to check for the presence of invasive weeds (see list of inspectors or visit www.amstonlake.org for more details).

Clean, Drain and Dry

...to prevent the spread of invasive plants from other bodies of water.

If owners or residents 'bring any boat from any other body of water, you must first either clean it thoroughly or dry out your boat, trailer, and fishing gear for a minimum of five days to prevent foreign species contamination by invasive weeds. This is known as the "Clean, Drain & Dry" protocol.

- **CLEAN** – Inspect your boat, trailer and equipment. Remove and discard all aquatic plants and animals, as well as any mud and debris you may have picked up in the water.
- **DRAIN** – Completely drain all the water from your boat, including bilge water and live wells.
- **DRY** – Dry anything that came into contact with the water (boats, trailer, trailering vehicle) for at least five days. If you are pressed for time, rinse boat, trailer, and equipment with hot water (high pressure if possible). A bleach solution can be used to clean live wells. Dispose of all rinse materials properly so they don't end up in our lake!

Boating with Safety in Mind!

Expect the unexpected and wear a life jacket – accidents can happen within seconds. Keep life jackets readily available and better yet, wear one while boating. Did you know it takes an experienced swimmer 10 minutes to put on a life jacket once in the water? Anyone 12 years and under must wear a life jacket while on a watercraft, regardless of swimming ability. If you CAPSIZE, stay with the vessel.

Water temperature can be significantly colder than air temperature – jumping or falling into water colder than 70 degrees can knock you unconscious or cause you to inhale water from involuntary gasping, hyperventilation, panic, and even vertigo.

Alcohol and/or marijuana usage while boating is a deadly combination – being under the influence of alcohol and/or marijuana while boating is illegal in Connecticut and is extremely dangerous. Alcohol and marijuana impair judgment, balance, vision, and coordination, which can lead to accidents.

Keep your distance – Watercraft must maintain a distance of 12 feet or more from swimmers.

