



LAKE MUSCONETCONG REGIONAL PLANNING BOARD

ANNUAL REPORT 2016

Lake Musconetcong Regional Planning Board

*Byram, Netcong, Roxbury, Stanhope,
Morris and Sussex Counties, the State of New Jersey*

PO Box 308, Stanhope, NJ 07874

(973) 527-3200

www.lakemusconetcong.com

**ANNUAL REPORT
2016**

<u>Members</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>
Earl Riley, Chairman	Byram	12-31-17
Robert Hathaway, Jr., Vice-Chairman	Netcong	12-31-16
Joseph Keenan, Secretary/ Treasurer	Netcong	12-31-18
Frances D’Auria (filled un-expired term)	Roxbury	12-31-18
Lester Wright (filled un-expired term)	Roxbury	12-31-16
Steven Rattner	Morris County	12-31-16
John Rogalo	Stanhope	12-31-16
Rosemarie Maio	Stanhope	12-31-18
Thomas Bruno	Stanhope	12-31-18
George Graham, Freeholder	Sussex County	12-31-16
Daniel Bello	State of New Jersey	Indefinite

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Canal Society	- Mr. Graham
Site Plan Review/Stream Encroachment	- Mr. Rogalo
Musconetcong Watershed Association	- Chairman Riley
Audit Committee	- Mr. Bruno
Lake Awareness	- Ms. Maio & Ms. D’Auria
Lake Management	- Mr. Hathaway and Mr. Bruno
Operating Budget Committee	- Mr. Keenan & Mr. Graham

Members of the Board represent Byram, Netcong, Stanhope, Roxbury, the Counties of Morris and Sussex and the State of New Jersey and are appointed by their representative governing body. The number of representatives and the amount of annual membership fees are based on shoreline.

The terms of the Board Members vary according to the ordinances (4-year terms) of each municipality. Resolutions by the County Freeholders include a one-year term and the State appointments are indefinite.

LAKE MUSCONETCONG REGIONAL PLANNING BOARD

The Lake Musconetcong Regional Planning Board was established on January 10, 1990 as an advisory board whose purpose is to recommend to the municipalities of Byram, Netcong, Roxbury and Stanhope and the Counties of Sussex and Morris and the State of New Jersey, methods by which the many problems evident in the Lake Musconetcong Watershed area may be solved.

Vision Statement

The vision of the Lake Musconetcong Regional Planning Board is the complete restoration of the lake for recreation and other uses and to act as its guardian so that future generations may enjoy the use of the lake.

Mission Statement

The Lake Musconetcong Regional Planning Board's mission is to work with the general public, local, state and federal governments in restoring, preserving, protecting and enhancing the environmental conditions of Lake Musconetcong and its surrounding watershed to ensure high environmental quality, increased recreational potential, public awareness and economic vitality. Through educational awareness, the Lake Musconetcong Regional Planning Board hopes to preserve the historic, economic and recreational values, and community pride once enjoyed by the residents of the municipalities it serves, as well as by the general public.

Meeting Schedule and Appointments

The reorganization meeting was held on January 21, 2016. Officers were elected at the reorganization meeting, as shown on the first page of this report.

Regular meetings were held on the third Wednesday of each month throughout the year.

The regular meeting place is designated as the Netcong Municipal Building. All meetings are scheduled to begin at 7:00 p.m.

Appointment of Personnel & Consultants - Appointments were made by resolution at the reorganization meeting. Ellen Horak was re-appointed as an independent contractor to perform clerical duties deemed necessary by the Board. Clifford R. Lundin, Esq. serves as legal counsel and the firm Nisivoccia & Company was named as auditor for the year on an "as needed" basis.

Web-Site - The Board's web-site is www.lakemusconetcong.com

Standing Committees

Canal Society – Mr. Graham, as the Board's representative, attended the meetings of the Canal Society and kept the Board informed on their activities. Waterloo Canal Day was held on June 25th and was greatly attended. Canal Heritage Days were held on July 23, August 6 and 20, September 17 and 24 and October 8 and 22.

Site Plan Review/Stream Encroachment: - John Rogalo served as the Board member to oversee all site plan/stream encroachment applications. The Board received several site plan notices and after review it was determined none of the applications received would negatively impact the lake. The Board received notification of an application for permit under freshwater wetlands protection act for rehabilitation of the Lake Musconetcong Dam. The Board was concerned that they were not provided with a copy of the plans for the dam rehabilitation. There was also a concern by the Board that, as an advisory entity for the lake, they are not notified about activities on the lake such as permits for pesticide use. The Board requested the State provide them with a copy of all permit applications prior to their issuance.

Musconetcong Watershed Association – Chairman Riley served as the Board's representative to the Musconetcong Watershed Association. Members of the "River Watch" continued to conduct quarterly monitoring of the flow of the river and oxygen content in the river. One of the testing sites was moved to Willow Street in Port Morris to allow readings to be taken prior to entering Lake Musconetcong. A new site they will be monitoring is in the West Brookwood section of Byram, which will allow readings to be taken at a location below the Musconetcong Sewerage Authority. This year the Hughesville Dam on the Musconetcong River was removed so it is now a wide-open river.

Lake Management Program

The lake management committee, consisting of Mr. Hathaway and Mr. Rogalo, oversees the weed harvesting operations and herbicide treatment, as well as other lake management issues. Through the efforts of Mr. Hathaway along with our volunteer operators, all necessary maintenance and repairs were done to the equipment.

The Board again entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Lake Hopatcong Commission, State of New Jersey and State Parks providing ownership of the small harvester to the Board on a temporary basis; the agreement is to be renewed annually.

The mild winter, with no ice, allowed the plants in the lake to grow throughout the winter months plus the sunlight reaching the bottom of the lake and warm temperatures added to the early growth of the plants. The Board aggressively harvested the weeds throughout the lake.

The Board contracted with Solitude Lake Management for biological treatment in certain areas of the lake. The 5- acre area by Musconetcong Park as well as three control sites (Byram Bay, Arbolino Cove and the pond area) were the chosen sites as this year's test areas. At each sampling, a representative from Solitude Lake Management utilized a Sludge Judge to measure the amount of loose organic matter on the lake bottom at the specific location. The Board also independently monitored the test sites with the Sludge Judge. The results of the probiotic treatment showed significant reduction of the loose organic matter on the lake bottom. The results also showed the lake is growing in depth in excess of one foot; and it is not limited to the test area; it is throughout the lake. There was less of a change in the controlled area; however, the water column is growing.

In addition to the biological treatment, the lake was treated with a sonar herbicide as well as harvesting operations in the waters. The Board concentrated on addressing the large coontail bloom in the lake by treating 50 acres with sonar. Other areas were treated for Eurasian milfoil and five acres in the back of Byram Bay was treated with 24D to address the heavy water chestnut in that area. The Board again did not harvest the private shorelines; however, they gave qualified operators the opportunity to operate the harvester on the weekends to harvest the shoreline.

The Board was advised by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection that weed disposal would no longer be allowed at the State's site. The Board contracted with Ag Choice for disposal of the weeds under a research pilot program. The Board sent over 6,000 cubic yards of compacted weeds to the Ag Choice at a cost of approximately \$6,100, which was not an anticipated cost when creating the 2016 budget. Byram Township provided trucking services of the weeds to Ag Choice, at no cost to the Board.

On July 16, 2016, Melyssa Garcia, Ambassador for Watershed Management Area I, working with the Board conducted a water chestnut hand pull event. Approximately 40 volunteers in canoes and kayaks hand harvested water chestnut in the lake. Canoes were supplied by Morris County Parks; kayaks were made available from NJ State Park Service. Approximately 10,000 pounds of water chestnut was removed from the lake.

At the request of the Board, the lake was drawn down 2 feet for the period November 1, 2016 through December 15, 2016. The drawdown provided an opportunity for a shoreline clean-up. Clean the Lake Day was held on November 20, 2016 and although a snowy day, 20 volunteers attended and assisted with the shoreline clean-up. As they have done in the past, Bell's Mansion served lunch to the volunteers.

Through the efforts of Mr. Hathaway and Pat Rector (grant writer) the Board submitted a 319(h)-grant application for the purchase of a "hydro rake" to be used in conjunction with the lake management program. The Board received support from the entire legislative districts as well as the surrounding municipalities and two counties. The grant agreement requires in-kind service from the four municipalities surrounding the lake which consists of cleaning all storm drains in their municipality that drain into the lake. The four municipalities agreed to their required in-kind services in support of

the Board's grant application. The Board received notification that they were awarded a \$365,000 grant for the purchase of the "hydro rake". Through the efforts of Valerie Steccato from Sussex County, a bid proposal was created and the Board advertised for public bidding for the purchase of an Alpha Boat Universal Water Management Boat with a Tilt Deck Trailer and a Shore Loading Conveyor or Equal. A bid opening was conducted on December 27, 2016 at which one bid was received. On December 28, 2016, the Board awarded a contract to Alpha Boats Unlimited d/b/a Barber Welding Inc. for the purchase of an Alpha Boat Universal Water Management Boat with a Tilt Deck Trailer and a Shore Loading Conveyor or Equal in the amount of \$355,580.00.

The Board again utilized volunteers for this year's weed harvesting program. This year 129 loads were removed with the large harvester totaling 2,167,200 pounds of wet weeds and 65 loads were removed with the small harvester, totaling 504,010 pounds of wet weeds. There was an estimated 671 hours of volunteer time, excluding hours for maintenance of the equipment. The Board recognized the tremendous amount of time and effort by these dedicated volunteers.

Weed Harvesting Budget: The Board spent approximately \$38,899.00 in management of the lake. Approximately \$17,435.00 was spent on operation of the harvester. The LMRPB utilized funds received from Byram, Netcong, Roxbury, and Stanhope which are apportioned according to percentage of shoreline as well as funding from both Sussex and Morris Counties.

See **Appendix A** for a breakdown of the total costs associated with the 2016 herbicide treatment and harvesting effort.

Lake Awareness

Lake Awareness Day

Lake Awareness Day was held in conjunction with Stanhope's Spring Festival which was held on June 12, 2016. The Board set up a table to promote awareness of the lake issues. The Board set up an educational display and distributed an informational brochure to the public containing information on the Board, including the annual activities and a brochure containing information on lake management.

The annual fishing contest was held the morning of June 12, 2016 with approximately 9 children participating. The Board attributed the low turnout of participants to a lack of advertising. Trophies were awarded to the winners. Bait and Boat donated fish that were placed in the lake during the fishing contest. The Morris County Sportsmen Federation donated \$200 for the purchase of prizes for the participants.

The Board set up a table at Netcong Day which was held on September 11, 2016 at which they again displayed informational brochures for the public.

Annual Budget

The annual membership for the governmental entities is based on a pro-rated percentage of shoreline by municipality which totals 75% of the requested budget. The remaining 25% of the budget is allocated equally to the two counties and is represented as follows:

<u>Percent of Shoreline</u>	
Byram	3.525%
Netcong	18.675%
Roxbury	20.1 %
Stanhope	32.7 %
Morris County	12.5 %
Sussex County	12.5 %

The total Budget vs. Actual for 2016 follows:

Lake Musconetcong Regional Planning Board Annual Budget vs. Actual FY 2016

<i>Member</i>	<i>Adjusted Shoreline</i>			<i>Anticipated</i>			<i>Actual</i>
	<i>%</i>		<i>\$</i>		<i>\$</i>		
Morris County	12.500%	\$		4,991.88	\$		4,883.00
Sussex County	12.500%	\$		4,991.88	\$		4,991.88
Byram	3.525%	\$		1,407.71	\$		1,407.71
Netcong	18.675%	\$		7,457.86	\$		7,457.86
Roxbury	20.100%	\$		8,026.94	\$		8,026.94
Stanhope	32.700%	\$		13,058.75	\$		13,058.75
	100.000%	\$		39,935.00	\$		39,826.14
Other Income	Bank Interest	\$		10.00	\$		150.63
	Sludge Reduction	\$		6,000.00	\$		-
LMRPB Income		\$		45,945.00	\$		39,976.77
Anticipated Expenses							
Operating Budget							
				<i>Anticipated</i>			<i>Actual</i>
Clerical		\$		6,000.00	\$		6,000.00
Education		\$		500.00	\$		453.15
Office Expense		\$		100.00	\$		69.73
Insurance(Officers)		\$		900.00	\$		900.00
Legal		\$		500.00			
Legal notices		\$		150.00	\$		110.68
Postage		\$		250.00	\$		219.00
Website		\$		200.00			
Miscellaneous		\$		150.00	\$		37.71
		\$		8,750.00	\$		7,790.27
Lake Management							
				<i>Anticipated</i>			<i>Actual</i>
Fuel		\$		1,000.00	\$		1,087.98
Weed							
Transport/Disposal		\$		900.00	\$		6,510.00
Equipment Maintenance		\$		4,000.00	\$		4,520.08
General Liability		\$		1,000.00	\$		1,031.88
Marine Ins.		\$		3,300.00	\$		3,300.00
Property Ins		\$		240.00	\$		240.00
Accident Ins		\$		200.00	\$		200.00
Umbrella Coverage		\$		545.00	\$		545.00
Weed Control		\$		11,000.00	\$		12,464.00
Sludge Reduction		\$		9,000.00	\$		9,000.00
		\$		31,185.00	\$		38,898.94
Total LMRB Expenses		\$		39,935.00	\$		46,689.21

Volunteer Hours and Contributions

The Lake Musconetcong Regional Planning Board is grateful for the many volunteer hours and in-kind contributions of materials and labor through individuals, organizations and participating governing bodies. During 2016 the Board logged 1226 volunteer hours, totaling an in-kind value of \$30,650 (\$25 per hour). Since the year 1995, the total volunteer hours logged to date are 25468 hours.