



LAKE MUSCONETCONG REGIONAL PLANNING BOARD

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Lake Musconetcong Regional Planning Board

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

77 Main Street Stanhope, NJ 07874

(973) 527-3200

www.lakemusconetcong.com

**ANNUAL REPORT
2024**

<u>Members</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>
Earl Riley, Chairman	Byram	12-31-25
Robert Hathaway, Jr., Vice-Chairman	Netcong	12-31-24
Joseph Keenan, Secretary/ Treasurer	Netcong	12-31-26
Shawn Potillo	Roxbury	12-31-26
Lester Wright	Roxbury	12-31-24
Steven Rattner	Morris County	12-31-24
Rudy Shlesinger	Stanhope	12-31-24
Rosemarie Maio	Stanhope	12-31-26
Judith McGrath	Stanhope	12-31-26
Vacant	Sussex County	12-31-24
Jacob Hamilton	State of New Jersey	Indefinite
Vacant (1 Seat)	State of New Jersey	Indefinite

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Canal Society	- Ms. McGrath
Site Plan Review/Stream Encroachment	- Mr. Wright
Musconetcong Watershed Association	- Mr. Rattner
Audit Committee	- Mr. Shlesinger and Mr. Potillo
Lake Awareness	- Ms. Maio
Lake Management	- Mr. Hathaway
Operating Budget Committee	- Mr. Keenan
CD Investment Committee	- Mr. Keenan

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 17, 2024. 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.

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

Standing Committees

Canal Society

Ms. McGrath served as the chair of committee and kept the Board informed on matters of the Canal Society.

Site Plan Review/Stream Encroachment:

Mr. Wright served as the Board member to oversee all site plan/stream encroachment applications. The Board received several site plan notices and variance notices, and after review it was determined that they did not affect the lake. Mr. Wright continued his monitoring of the water near the FJZ Properties LLC property on Allen Street in Netcong.

Musconetcong Watershed Association

Mr. Rattner served as the Board's representative to the Musconetcong Watershed Association ("MWA"). Mr. Rattner kept the Board informed on matters of the MWA. The MWA is creating a Water Vision Plan, which will be the first in the State.

Lake Management Program

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

The equipment was placed in the lake and removed from the lake with assistance from the Netcong Department of Public Works.

The Board solicited proposals for herbicide treatment in the lake. The Board received a proposal from Solitude Lake Management, Lake Management Sciences and Ready Scout. After a review of the proposals, the Board awarded the contract to Lake Management Sciences. The lake was surveyed and a treatment map was created. Most of the area that was treated was east of the island, but there was also a part of DiRenzo Park and a small area on the west side of the island. All the parks were treated and the entire bay in Stanhope Park and Roxbury Park were treated. There was a limited

treatment in Arbolino Park because it was not necessary to do a large treatment in that area this year. The lake is in good condition with clear water and there was no re-growth in the target areas.

In addition to the herbicide treatment, the Board continued weed harvesting areas of the lake and water chestnut was treated in some sections of the Stanhope shoreline and in Byram Bay. The Netcong DPW provided backhoe services for the lake management program.

There was a one-foot draw down of the lake that was scheduled for October 23, 2024 to December 15, 2024. The draw down affords the lake front property owners, municipalities and volunteer organizations to remove debris from the exposed shoreline. Due to the early formation of ice across the waterbody the refilling of the lake began on December 2, 2024.

Arrangements were made with Morris County MUA for disposal of the weeds removed from the lake and an agreement was entered into between the Board and Crazy Cans for transportation of the weeds.

In 2024 the Board again received no financial support from the State. The Board has one appointment of a State representative; however, there is still one vacancy of a State appointed representative on the Board.

The Board received \$2,400 from the Borough of Netcong for administering the goose egg addling program again this year, which enables goose control across the entire waterbody. They found 5 goose nests and addled 23 goose eggs. They found 3 swan nests with 15 swan eggs.

In 2022, the Board was informed they were awarded a Water Quality Restoration Grant in the amount of \$572,000 for the purchase of specific equipment. The Board signed the grant agreement mid-July 2023 for the purchase of a new weed harvester, trailer, shore conveyor and backhoe. The grant is a three-year program. In 2023 the Board contracted with Aquarius Systems to build the new weed harvester. The build time for the new harvester was between six and eight months. The new weed harvester was delivered to the Board on the evening of September 3, 2024. The Board hired a crane operator to transfer the equipment from the tractor trailer and to place the new weed harvester into the lake. At the end of 2024, the Board still has \$130,000 of the grant which is earmarked for the purchase of a backhoe, which will be purchased for the 2025 season.

The Board authorized the sale of surplus property, being the old weed harvester, trailer and conveyor. The sale of the surplus property was conducted through GovDeals pursuant to State Contract A-70967/T2581. The Board received no bids on the auction of the surplus equipment through GovDeals.com. The Board reached an agreement with Aquarius Systems, who purchased the old equipment for \$72,500.

The Board again utilized volunteers for this year's weed harvesting program. This year 14.5 loads were removed with the harvester totaling 243,600 pounds of wet weeds. There were an estimated 222 hours of volunteer time, including 58 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 \$75,669.00 in management of the lake. Approximately \$6,200 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 2024 herbicide treatment and harvesting effort.

Lake Awareness

Fishing Contest

The Board conducted the fishing contest on Sunday, June 9th. In the past, the Board held the fishing contest the morning of Stanhope Day, but in 2024, Stanhope Borough did not have a Stanhope Day. Approximately 14 children participated in the junior fishing contest. The bad weather on the date of the fishing contest contributed to the lack of attendance. Trophies were awarded to the winners and prizes were given to all participants. Ramsey's again donated prizes for the event.

Annual Budget

The annual budget 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	03.525%
Netcong	18.675%
Roxbury	20.1 %
Stanhope	32.7 %
Morris County	12.5 %
Sussex County	12.5 %

The total Budget vs. Actual for 2024 follows:

Lake Musconetcong Regional Planning Board Annual Budget FY 2024			VS:	Actual
Member	Adjusted Shoreline %	Anticipated		Actual
Morris County	12.500%	\$ 6,259.38		\$ 6,259.38
Sussex County	12.500%	\$ 6,259.38		\$ 6,259.38
Byram Township	3.525%	\$ 1,765.14		\$ 1,765.14
Netcong Borough	18.675%	\$ 9,351.51		\$ 9,351.51
Netcong Parks Herbicide		\$ 800.00		\$ 800.00
Roxbury Township	20.100%	\$ 10,065.08		\$ 10,065.08
Roxbury Parks Herbicide		\$ 750.00		\$ 750.00
Stanhope Borough	32.700%	\$ 16,374.53		\$ 16,374.53
Stanhope Parks Herbicide		\$ 750.00		\$ 750.00
Shared County and Municipal Contribution		\$ 50,075.00		\$ 50,075.02
Misc Revenue (Egg Addling)		\$ 2,400.00		\$ 2,400.00
Plus three municipal parks herbicide		\$ 2,300.00		\$ 2,300.00
LMRPB Anticipated Income		\$ 54,775.00		\$ 54,775.02
Operating Budget		Anticipated	VS:	Actual
Clerical		\$ 6,600.00		\$ 6,600.00
Education		\$ 250.00		\$ 276.62
Office Expense		\$ 75.00		\$ 21.31
Insurance(Directors & Officers)		\$ 900.00		\$ 942.00
Legal		\$ 2,000.00		\$ 1,395.00
Legal notices		\$ 150.00		\$ 112.46
Postage		\$ 50.00		\$ -
Website		\$ 350.00		\$ -
Miscellaneous		\$ 100.00		\$ 167.69
		\$ 10,475.00		\$ 9,515.08
Lake Management				
Fuel		\$ 1,500.00		\$ 10.00
Weed Transport/Disposal		\$ 6,000.00		\$ 1,400.00
Equipment Maintenance		\$ 5,000.00		\$ 4,785.00
General Liability Ins		\$ 1,200.00		\$ 1,200.00
Inland Marine Ins		\$ 2,000.00		\$ 2,217.00
Commercial Property Ins		\$ 400.00		\$ 400.00
Volunteer Ins		\$ 200.00		\$ 200.00
Umbrella Coverage		\$ 700.00		\$ 740.00
Weed Control		\$ 22,600.00		\$ 64,717.31
Lake Management		\$ 39,600.00		\$ 75,669.31
Plus Operating		\$ 10,475.00		\$ 9,515.08
Expenses shared by municipalities and counties		\$ 50,075.00		\$ 85,184.39
Misc Revenue applied to Weed Control		\$ 2,400.00		\$ 2,400.00
Plus three municipal Parks Herbicide treatment		\$ 2,300.00		\$ 2,300.00
Total LMRPB Expenses		\$ 54,775.00		\$ 89,884.39
2022 Clean Waters Grant		Income		Expense
NJDEP Two Payments of 150k		\$ 300,000.00		
Paid to Aquarius Systems				\$ 287,500.00
Sale of old equipment		\$ 72,500.00		
Transportation Cost for new Harvester				\$ 22,500.00
Crane Cost for new Harvester				\$ 3,050.00
		\$ 372,500.00		\$ 313,050.00

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 2024 the Board logged 221.75 volunteer hours, totaling an in-kind value of \$7,500 (\$33.82 per hour (2024 New Jersey In-kind Value Rate)). Since the year 1995, the total volunteer hours logged to date are 36,308 hours.