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**Sunapee Resident wins NH LAKES 2018 John F. Morten Award for Exemplary Lakes Stewardship**  
*Midge Eliassen receives the organization's most prestigious award*

Concord, N.H., August 10, 2018 – Midge Eliassen, resident of Sunapee and long-time steward of Lake Sunapee, was recently awarded the 2018 John F. Morten Award for Exemplary Lake Stewardship. On August 9, Tom O'Brien, President of NH LAKES, along with Board members from NH LAKES and representatives of the Lake Sunapee Protective Association (LSPA), gathered at the LSPA Learning Center in Sunapee Harbor to present NH LAKES' most prestigious annual award.

In September 2002, this award was created in honor of the late John F. Morten (1914-1989) in recognition of his lifelong work to protect New Hampshire's lakes and ponds. It was his vision and grassroots efforts that helped create the Lakes Region Federation, which merged with the New Hampshire Lakes Legislative Coalition, eventually becoming the New Hampshire Lakes Association, and now known as NH LAKES. It was John Morten who saw the value of a statewide umbrella organization to represent lake interests with both the legislature and state agencies. This award is given annually to an individual nominated by his/her peers who exemplifies the values, commitment, and hard work that John Morten brought to the cause of lake protection.

"As in the past, the role of volunteers in achieving our clean lakes mission is critical," says NH LAKES Board Chair, Stu Lord. "There are many deserving volunteers but Midge's commitment and achievements are extraordinary and longstanding, which is why she is so deserving of the 2018 award."

June Fichter, Executive Director of the Lake Sunapee Protective Association, describes Midge's lake stewardship service this way: "Midge has been working behind the scenes for years at Lake Sunapee and throughout the watershed, with both the Lake Sunapee Protective Association and the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire's Forests. She has also been our resident historian, photographer, and citizen scientist. And, she was the primary driver behind the placement of an instrumented buoy in the lake that collects data continuously—as a result of this work, we hosted a scientific meeting with more than 130 lake researchers from 30 countries at Lake Sunapee."

Tom O'Brien, NH LAKES President added, "Midge's dedication to Lake Sunapee, her work with the Lake Sunapee Protective Association, her commitment statewide to New Hampshire's forests, which protect all of our lakes, make her our very best choice for the 2018 Morten Award for Exemplary Lake Stewardship."

NH LAKES is the only statewide, member-supported nonprofit organization working to ensure that our lakes remain clean and healthy, now and in the future. The organization works with partners, promote clean water policies and responsible use, and inspires the public to care for our lakes. For more information, visit [www.nhlakes.org](http://www.nhlakes.org), email [info@nhlakes.org](mailto:info@nhlakes.org), or call 603.226.0299.

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Photo 1: Midge Eliassen (second from right), was awarded the 2018 John F. Morten Award for Exemplary Lake Stewardship by NH LAKES Board Member Shirley Green (left), LSPA Executive Director June Fichter (second from left), and NH LAKES President Tom O'Brien (right) on August 9.