



Questionnaire & Talking Points for YOUR Conversations with Candidates

Whether or not you're a New Hampshire voter, YOU can let candidates know restoring and preserving lakes is a top priority. Leading up to the 2022 elections, use the questions and talking points below to gauge candidates' interest and knowledge about the issues our lakes are facing. Get YOUR free "Vote Like Your Lakes Depend On It" sticker when you share what you've learned from candidates and order candidate handouts at nhlakes.org/vote.

Candidate Question: "Are clean and healthy lakes important to you? To New Hampshire?"

Your Talking Points:

- New Hampshire is home to nearly 1,000 lakes.
- During the summer of 2021, 4.4 million visitors brought \$2.1 billion into the state economy, largely to enjoy our lakes.
- Clean and healthy lakes provide thousands of New Hampshire residents with jobs and income.
- Our once pristine and healthy lakes are becoming polluted by runoff water and invasive species and are becoming increasingly fragile due to the changing climate.



Candidate Question: "What do you think could be done to stop cyanobacteria blooms from making our lakes toxic?"

Your Talking Points:

- Cyanobacteria is a naturally occurring bacteria that increases as nutrient pollution and water temperatures increases in our lakes.
- Cyanobacteria toxins make people, pets, and wildlife sick, and pollutes public drinking water supplies.
- Frequent toxic cyanobacteria blooms lower lakefront property values—one study suggests a 22% decrease.
- In 2021, the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services issued a record 32 public health advisories for toxic blooms, resulting in approximately 800 lost recreation days and economic losses for local businesses.
- As of August 18, DES has issued 27 cyanobacteria advisories during summer 2022 in our lakes.



Cyanobacteria alerts and advisories indicate lakes and ponds are not suitable for swimming and that people and pets should avoid contact with the water.

Candidate Question: “What do you think could be done to prevent polluted runoff water and groundwater from degrading our lakes?”

Your Talking Points:

- Runoff water increases with the removal of trees and shrubs and poorly planned construction.
- Rainstorms are becoming more intense, sending more polluted runoff and huge amounts of sediment into our lakes.
- Over application of road salt has caused 50 of our lakes to be polluted with chloride. Chloride is toxic to lake plants and animals and pollutes drinking water sources.
- The number of unpermitted, failing, or underperforming septic systems near our lakes is unknown but likely substantial.
- Even well designed and maintained systems do not significantly remove phosphorus and nitrogen.
- An approximately three-foot decrease in lake clarity can lead to a 1% to 6% decrease in lakefront property value.
- The State has minimal impact on enforcing existing laws protective of lake health due to inadequate budget and staffing.



Polluted runoff water entering our lakes from roads, lawns, and septic systems can cause toxic cyanobacteria blooms that make people, pets, and wildlife sick.

Candidate Question: “What do you think could be done to prevent and manage invasive species degrading our lakes?”

Your Talking Points:

- Invasive species—plants like milfoil and animals like the Asian clam—infest nearly 100 waterbodies in the state.
- Once established, infestations are nearly impossible to eradicate and extremely expensive to manage.
- Invasive species degrade the quality of our lakes and make recreation unpleasant, difficult, and dangerous.
- Invasive species infestations decrease shoreline property values by 10% to 20%.
- Since 2014, only \$9.50 from each boat registered in New Hampshire annually goes to preventing and managing invasive species in our lakes. An out of state boater decal program was launched in 2021 to generate revenue from visiting boaters.
- After the first year of treating a new infestation in our lakes, the State can only provide 25% to 50% of the funds required for ongoing management—local communities must pick up the cost creating a tremendous local financial burden.
- Currently 24 out of 91 waterbodies with infestations are not being managed.



Infestations of milfoil (top) and Asian clam (bottom) make recreation difficult and dangerous and can lower property values.