Maranacook Lake 2025 Season Report
Jennifer Peasnall, October 2025

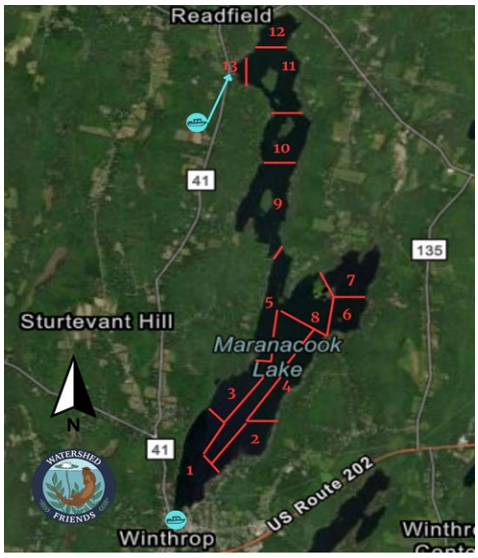
What a busy and successful season both Watershed Friends (WF) paid staff and Maranacook Lake Association (MLA) volunteers had! Watershed Friends again provided Courtesy Boat Inspections (CBI) at both the Norcross (Winthrop) public boat launch and the Route 41 (Readfield) public boat launch on Maranacook Lake. This year, a new volunteer CBI program was established to enhance coverage and provide inspections during high-traffic hours on Fridays. This volunteer program was headed up by MLA Secretary, Kim Bowie, with training, support, and plant identification provided by Watershed Friends. This year, the WF survey crew completed a full Level 3 survey of Maranacook Lake, which included all the littoral zone, the area of the lake where light can penetrate to the bottom to promote plant growth. These surveys are integral in helping to detect suspicious plants early so that management can be conducted swiftly thereafter, as needed.

Maranacook Lake is considered an uninfested waterbody, meaning there is **currently no known Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) infestation** in the lake. However, due to known infestations in waterbodies nearby, Maranacook is also considered highly vulnerable. Our work is multifaceted: preventing AIS from entering Maranacook Lake and educating boaters to self-inspect and Clean, Drain, Dry their vessels, trailers, and equipment, deploying surveyors to catch AIS infestations quickly, and having the capacity for control and removal of AIS when needed.

In 2025, a total of 1,982 inspections were performed at both Maranacook public boat launches. Roughly 23% of these inspections yielded plant fragments that were removed. None of these fragments were identified to be invasive. Additionally, over 135 hours of direct survey efforts from our trained team members found no suspicious plants growing in Maranacook, indicating that Maranacook Lake is still considered to be uninfested.

The cost of these programs is not free; in 2025, the total direct cost of the CBI program on Maranacook was $13,585.98, and the full lake plant survey was $4,547.05. With rising costs due to inflation and increases in the State of Maine's minimum wage, costs are likely to increase in 2026.

Both launches are incredibly popular for recreation, and our data indicates the highest number of inspections per hour in our watershed, showcasing the importance of CBI coverage and early detection plant survey efforts on Maranacook. The costs of these preventative measures are far less than control efforts after Aquatic Invasive Species are able to establish.



To learn more about Courtesy Boat Inspection and how you may be able to volunteer to help protect Maranacook Lake,
contact our Conservation Programs Manager, Caroline Balano-Stott (caroline@watershedfriends.com).

For more information on Aquatic Invasive Species or other lake protection efforts provided by the Friends, please visit our website at watershedfriends.com or contact the Director of Conservation, Jennifer Peasnall (jennifer@watershedfriends.com).