



## Sunset Lake Boating Guide

Visit [www.slahampstead.org](http://www.slahampstead.org) for more information

Date revised: April 29, 2026

### Launch Information

There is no public boat launch on Sunset Lake. Launching is available at the Hampstead Town Beach for those with waterfront property, right of way, or deeded access to the lake and is controlled by a locked gate. An access code can be obtained by application from the Hampstead Town Administrator. Launching is not allowed while the beach is open with a lifeguard on duty and is only allowed between 6:00-9:00 a.m. and 6:00-9:00 p.m.

Foot traffic to launch non-motorized vessels via the beach (i.e. canoes, kayaks, paddleboards) is permitted as long as it is done at the extreme edge (side) of the beach and no swimmers or sunbathers are disturbed. Parking at the beach requires a beach permit sticker which can be obtained at the Hampstead Town Hall.

### NH BOATING RULES

Know the NH boating rules and regulations for the safety of everyone on the lake. The NH Marine Patrol regularly patrols Sunset Lake and assigns fines appropriately. Everyone 16 years of age and older who operates a motorboat over 25 horsepower on New Hampshire waters must have a boating education certificate.

#### Highlighted Rules and Regulations:

- Any person convicted of operating a boat under the influence shall lose their right to operate a boat for one year and be fined. Their right to operate a motor vehicle will be revoked for not less than 90 days. Any person convicted of operating a motor vehicle while under the influence shall also lose their right to operate a boat for one year from the date of conviction.
- Each person being towed by a vessel must wear a US Coast Guard approved personal flotation device (PFD).
- Waterskiing/water sports are NOT permitted between sunset & sunrise.

Visit [www.nhlakes.org/recreation-safety](http://www.nhlakes.org/recreation-safety) for more details

Also see the **Community Friendly Boating** page of this document

### SUNSET LAKE RULES

**Counterclockwise Direction of Travel Regulation:** All powered motorboats traveling in excess of headway speed (>5 miles per hour) must travel counterclockwise around Sunset Lake, while keeping a minimum of 150 feet from other boats, swimmers, rafts, docks and shore. Violators may be fined. This regulation excludes boats used in emergency situations where line of travel is required and appropriate.

**Skicraft and Personal Watercraft (PWCs):** Skicraft (1 and 2 seat "Jetskis") were banned from Sunset Lake in 1989. Violators will be escorted off and fined. Personal watercraft (3+ seat machines) may only be operated between sunrise and sunset. PWCs must follow the regulations set forth in NH Rules and Regulations for motor boats including NOT operating above headway speed within 150 feet of another PWC, vessel, platform, person, or object.

### CLEAN, DRAIN, & DRY

We must protect Sunset Lake from invasive plant and animal species. Not only is it important for the continued health of the lake, but as of January 1, 2017, it is the law that all watercraft, including non-motorized and paddle vessels, must be cleaned, drained, and dried between use in NH lakes.

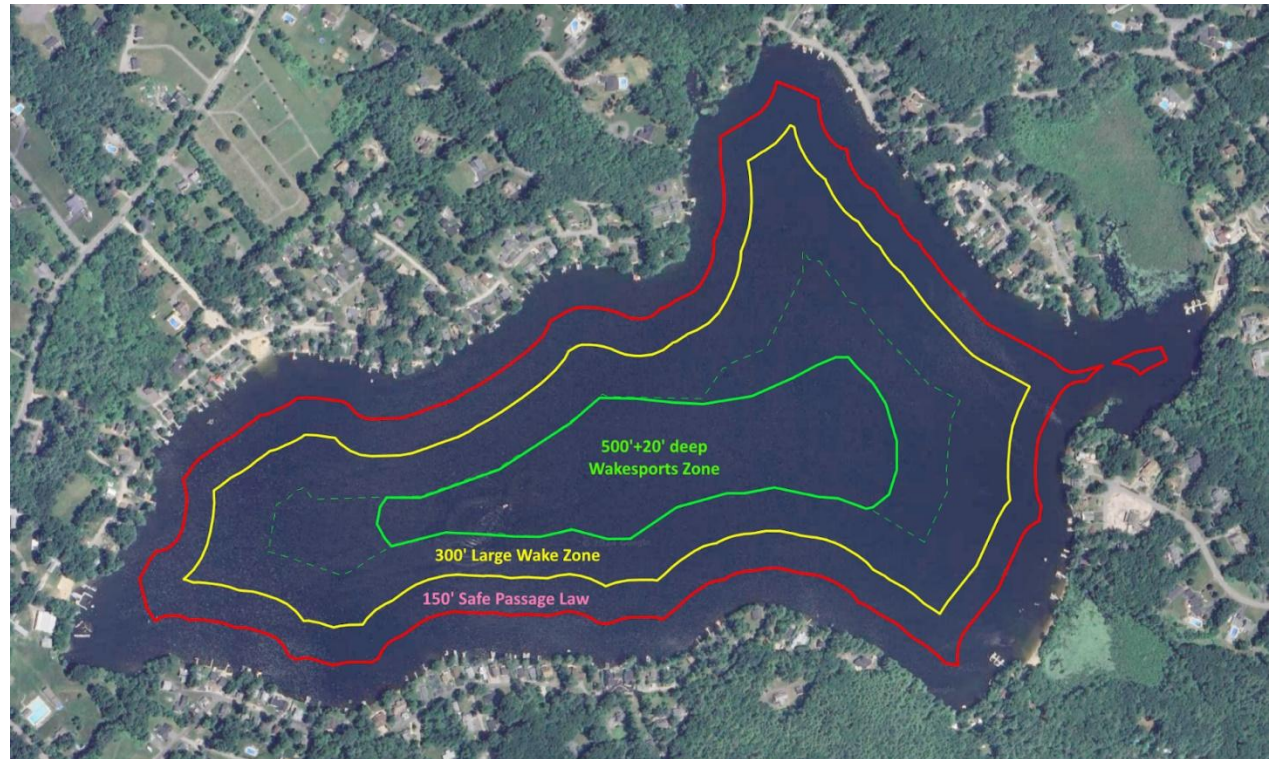
This is especially important for us since all of the local water bodies around Sunset Lake have invasive species which could easily be transferred to Sunset Lake, even by kayak, canoe, or paddleboard.

Review the **Clean, Drain, Dry, and Rinse** page of this document for complete details.

## Sunset Lake Community Friendly Boating

Sunset Lake is a relatively small lake and it can be a challenge to navigate when there are multiple boats enjoying the lake. Therefore, we hope that all boaters on Sunset Lake will join us in promoting the following community-friendly boating practices to protect the health and enjoyment of Sunset Lake for the entire lake community:

- Always follow the boating laws. The 2 primary laws relating to navigation are:
  - **Sunset Lake Counterclockwise Direction Law:** All motor boats and PWCs (personal water crafts) traveling in excess of headway speed must travel counterclockwise around Sunset Lake.
  - **150' Safe Passage Law:** Boats and PWCs should travel at *headway speed* (making almost no wake) *within 150' of any other object* (shore, docks, rafts, moorings, other boats, swimmers, etc.).
- When “putting around the lake” at headway speed, stay towards the outer perimeter of the lake. This helps to free up the rest of the lake for those traveling above headway speed for pleasure or water sports.
- When anchoring your boat or rafting with other boats, try to do so in the middle of the green “Wakesports Zone”. This also helps to free up the rest of the lake for pleasure and watersports without interference.
- When performing wake sports such as wakeboarding or wake surfing, the first preference is to use the green Wakesports Zone which is 500' from shore and 20' deep for which, according to studies, best supports lake health. If the green zone is used by anchored/rafting boats, try to stick to the yellow Large Wake Zone which is in deeper water and 300' setback which gives more room for wakes to dissipate before reaching shore.
- For any boat travelling at “transition speed” when your boat is making the largest wake (the speed between no wake and the boat planing/leveling out), stay in the yellow zone so your wake dissipates before reaching shore. See this blog post about boat speed vs. wake size: [www.slahampstead.org/blog/f/anatomy-of-a-wake](http://www.slahampstead.org/blog/f/anatomy-of-a-wake).



# YOU CAN HELP PULL THE PLUG ON THE SPREAD OF AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES

Invasive plants and animals can degrade the health of our lakes and make them dangerous to recreate in.

Invasive species are difficult and expensive to manage and almost impossible to get rid of.

Content thanks to:



## BEFORE leaving any launch area:



### CLEAN

Clean off all mud, plants, animals, and debris from your boat, trailer, and equipment. Clean off anchors and anchor lines, water intake grates on jet-powered craft, kayak, and canoe cockpits, storage compartments, and paddles, too! Dispose of all material away from the waterbody where it won't wash back into the water.

**Cleaning is the law in NH!**



### DRAIN

Drain motors, bilges, live wells, ballast tanks, storage compartments, and gear. Blow out water in jet-powered craft and tip paddlecraft and motors to let out water. OPEN/REMOVE all drain plugs and drain all compartments and gear away from the water where runoff won't flow back into the water.

**Draining & keeping all plugs out/open while trailering is the law!**



### DRY

Dry off anything that came in contact with the water to remove invasive species not easily seen. If launching your boat again within 5 days, thoroughly rinse with clean water away from waterbodies and towel dry—rinsing with high pressure, high temperature water is best.

## BETWEEN water bodies:



### RINSE

It is best to visit a car wash before launching into another waterbody. Rinsing can also be done at home, preferably on grass. Rinse boat hull and trailer with water. Flush motors, bilges, live wells, ballast tanks, and storage compartments with clean water per boat manufacturer instructions.

**Make sure dirty rinse water does not flow back into the lake!**