

**YEAR THREE (APRIL 2020–MARCH 2021)
LEAD TACKLE BUYBACK PROGRAM
FINAL REPORT**



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June 2021

YEAR THREE (APRIL 2020–MARCH 2021) LEAD TACKLE BUYBACK PROGRAM FINAL REPORT

The Loon Preservation Committee (LPC), in collaboration with the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department (NHF&G), conducted a Lead Tackle Buyback (LTB) pilot program (Pilot) from June until Labor Day in 2018. The primary objective of the program was to determine whether a financial incentive could result in lead fishing tackle being removed from circulation in order to substantively reduce loon deaths resulting from ingested lead fishing tackle. Encouraged by the success of the Pilot, and with the generous support of individual donors, the Howell Conservation Fund, and the Alex C. Walker Foundation, LPC and NHF&G continued and expanded their joint lead tackle reduction efforts in 2019 and 2020. This report outlines the strategies implemented from April 2020 through March 2021, documents the results of that program, and outlines the strategic plan for the Year Four (April 2021 through March 2022) Lead Tackle Buyback Program.

BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

Lead poisoning from ingested lead fishing tackle is the leading known cause of adult loon mortality in New Hampshire, accounting for 41% of all documented adult loon deaths between 1989 and 2020 (Figure 1). The loss of these loons has had a large negative impact on our state’s small loon population. It has slowed the recovery of the species in New Hampshire and, combined with other increasing challenges, may even jeopardize the future viability of New Hampshire’s threatened loon population.

LPC’s successful legislative efforts over many years culminated in legislation passed in 2013 to restrict the sale and freshwater use of lead fishing sinkers and jigs of one ounce or less—the size range known to be the greatest cause of loon mortality in New Hampshire. This law went into effect on June 1, 2016. With the law virtually eliminating the supply of lead tackle entering New Hampshire commerce, the next step towards reducing lead-related loon mortalities is to remove this lead fishing tackle, now illegal for fishing use, from tackle boxes around the state.

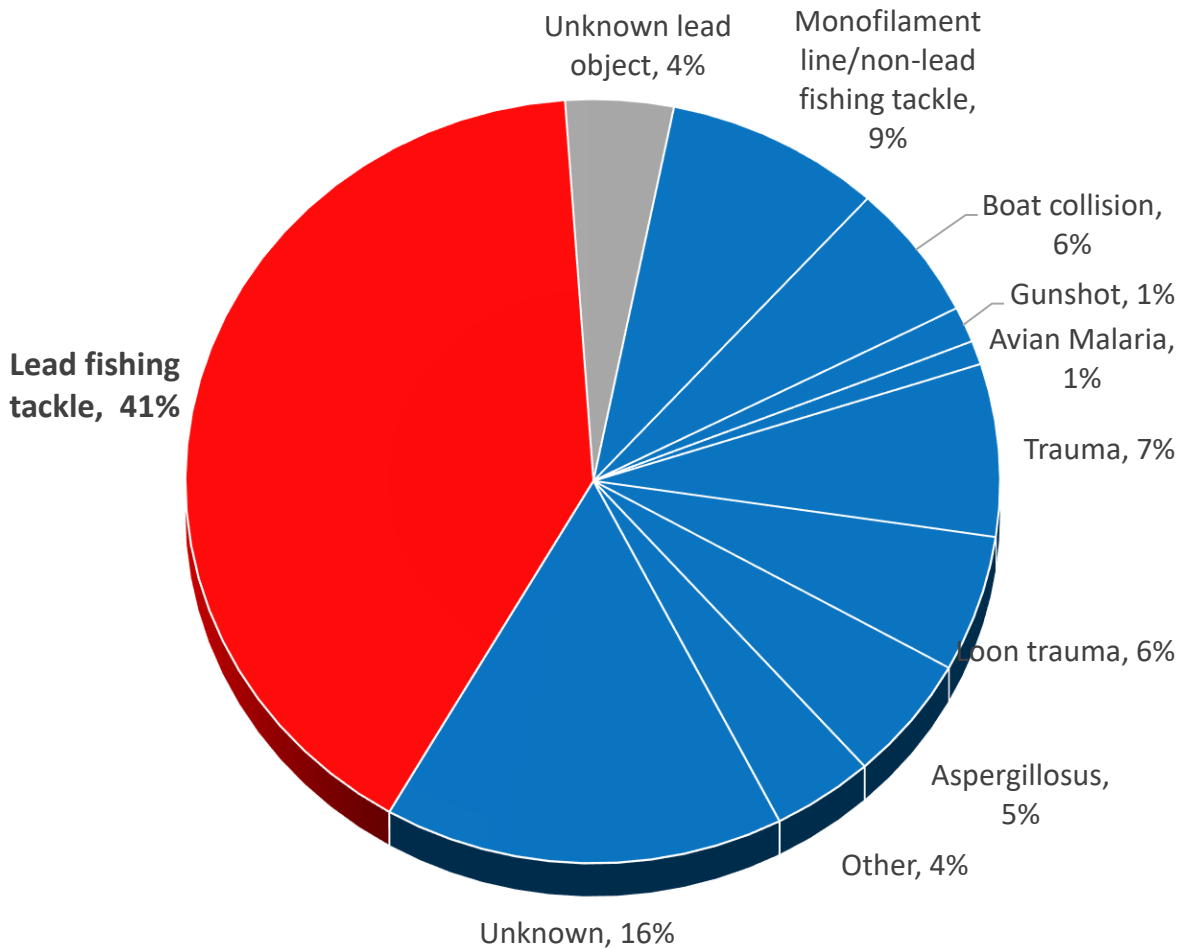


Figure 1: Causes of documented New Hampshire adult loon mortalities, 1989-2020

In the 2018 Pilot, anglers were able to exchange one ounce or more of lead fishing tackle for a \$10 store voucher at two participating retail shops. These vouchers could be used to purchase loon-safe fishing tackle or other fishing supplies. To be eligible for exchange, individual pieces of lead fishing tackle were required to fall within the weight range of one ounce or less and therefore restricted for use and sale by New Hampshire state law. Provided that at least one ounce of illegal tackle was exchanged, additional tackle outside of this size range was also accepted.

In its third season the LTB program continued to be a huge success. The 2018 Pilot resulted in the collection of 4,786 pieces of lead tackle, weighing a total of 29 pounds. The Year Two effort dramatically expanded the reach and visibility of the Program, resulting in the collection of 7,866 pieces of lead tackle (60 pounds total).

The Year Three campaign continued the momentum of this valuable program,

resulting in the collection of 10,476 pieces of lead tackle weighing 73 pounds in exchange for returned vouchers. This brings our three-year total to 25,345 pieces of lead tackle weighing 162 pounds. Had they remained in use, any of these pieces of lead tackle had the potential to kill a loon or other wildlife.

This large amount of tackle is only what we've recorded from our buyback at known locations. Our program's educational component also results in a large amount of uncounted tackle being turned in for recycling at disposal locations that we promote, such as municipal transfer stations and partner conservation organizations.

YEAR THREE (2020-21) LEAD TACKLE BUYBACK PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- The Loon Preservation Committee convinced the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to include lead tackle reduction efforts as an activity eligible for oil spill funds devoted to loon restoration. Without the success of our LTB and educational efforts, this accomplishment of regional significance would not have been possible.
- The LTB Program reached anglers who began fishing during the pandemic or returned to the sport after lengthy absences. Without the program, there could have been significant loon mortality as people unknowingly fished with long-unused lead tackle from “grandpa’s old tackle box.”
- The LTB Program tested new digital and print media strategies, continuing to find lower-cost ways of reaching our target audience of individuals most likely to still have and possibly use lead fishing tackle (e.g., out-of-state visitors, casual anglers, and holdouts).
- The LTB Program expanded to include the ice fishing season with an advertising campaign and an in-person presence despite Covid-19.
- The LTB Program continued to build goodwill among anglers and retailers by providing a value-added in the form of merchandise vouchers and store traffic.
- The LTB Program continued to test creative incentives that have kept our lead tackle returns up, suggesting we are finding successful ways to reach lead tackle holdouts.

PARTICIPATING RETAILERS

LPC and the New Hampshire Fish & Game Department have worked aggressively to bring new fishing tackle retailers into the Lead Tackle Buyback Program. Outreach included a letter from NHF&G to shops that were, based on NHF&G's knowledge, most likely to participate and have significant customer traffic. LPC's LTB Campaign Manager made follow up calls to these retailers and other shops not on the list to secure their participation.

Eight retailers (listed below, excluding the Loon Preservation Committee) participated in the Year Three LTB Program. We were unable to participate in the New Hampshire Outdoor Expo or Discover Wild New Hampshire Day because the Covid-19 pandemic made in-person tabling impractical and much less likely to be effective. The latter event was cancelled altogether.

Year Three Participating Retailers

The Tackle Shack 54 NH Route 25, Unit C Meredith, NH 03253 (603) 279-3152 Website	Rocky's Ace Hardware 257 Newport Rd. New London, NH 03257 (603) 526-2800 Website
LL Cote 7 Main Street Errol, NH 03579 (603) 482-7777 Website	Newfound Sales & Trading Post 381 Lake Street, #6 Bristol, NH 03222 (603) 744-8658
Ossipee's Bait and Tackle 306 Pine River Road Effingham, NH 03882 (603) 539-3695 Website	Pawtuckaway Trading Post 15 Freetown Road, Suite 3 Raymond, NH 03077 603-244-2463 Website
Squam Boat Livery, Inc. 853 US Route 3 Holderness, NH 03245 603-968-7721 Website	The Tackle Shack 894 Route 103 Newbury, NH 03255 (603)763-5508 Website

We continue to have a goal of adding retailers, and we expect to add at least two more in Year Four of the LTB Program by leveraging the positive experiences of current participants. Our initial goal of 12 retail locations has been a challenge, due to the limited number of local fishing tackle retailers remaining in the state. Large retailers and online sales have taken customers away from small local retailers. We recognized this in designing the Program, as new customer traffic and advertising are incentives for small shop participation. These small shops are more valuable to the program because they also serve as social hubs for anglers in a way that large chain stores do not.

Onboarding Next Steps: Our LTB Coordinator has engaged several out-of-state retailers and manufacturers potentially interested in joining the program. These include lead-free tackle manufacturers and a maker of compact fishing rods. Whereas these locations cannot be visited physically for lead tackle trade-in, he is developing a mechanism to efficiently communicate trade-ins at New Hampshire locations (such as LPC or NH Lakes Association) to the out-of-state sellers, who would then offer a credit equal to the trade-in vouchers. This effort was put on hold in 2020 because retailers were focused on basic survival during Covid-19, and it was not the time to ask them to take on additional burdens.

RETAILER EXPERIENCES – BUILDING GOODWILL

Dale Sandy, The Tackle Shack:

Dale Sandy was one of two participating shops for the LTB Pilot in 2018 and has been an enthusiastic participant in the seasons since. Dale has said his experience with the program has been entirely positive and customer enthusiasm has encouraged him to increase his entire shop's focus on sustainable products in addition to lead-free tackle (e.g., moving away from plastic baits to biodegradable options). Dale has appreciated that LTB keeps its program minimally burdensome for shop owners and is sensitive to the fact that small business owners have plenty of other demands (e.g., we don't require shop owners to weigh tackle for voucher transactions – LTB trusts their experience and has had an average transaction weight far in excess of what is required to obtain a voucher).

Alan "A.J." Nute, AJ's Bait and Tackle:

A.J. was strongly opposed to the lead tackle ban passed in 2013, but came on board as one of LTB's two participating shops in the Pilot. It has been incredibly

encouraging to see how positive engagement can help create strong conservation allies in a relatively short period of time. During our legislative efforts, we were asked why we didn't just buy everyone's lead tackle. Our response was that doing so—until lead tackle could no longer be sold—would be like bailing out a leaking boat without plugging the hole. After the sale ban was enacted, Loon Preservation Committee kept its promise to work collaboratively and creatively with lead tackle retailers to help ensure the success of this effort to decrease loon mortality from ingested lead by creating the LTB Program.

Today, A.J. has gone from opposing the 2013 legislation to lending his strong support to the LTB program. AJ has even gone the extra mile, bringing LPC and a news crew out on Meredith Bay for a boat tour to see a loon pair up close while relaying his enthusiasm for the LTB Program. During LTB Year Three, A.J. sold his store to Dale Sandy to focus on manufacturing fishing tackle, including a large assortment of non-lead fishing jigs! LTB will be working to develop new partnership efforts with A.J. in Year Four of the Program.

https://www.ajs bait and tackle.com/ajs_products

Dale Cote, Sr., Pawtuckaway Trading Post:

Dale moved his shop during 2020 and has said he is grateful for the advertising and incentives that LTB offered to drive customers to his shop. Dale believes that the program resulted in a significant amount of additional traffic for his shop.

Paraphrasing Dale, people saw LTB ads in the monthly sporting newspaper (“the Hawkeye”) and came to his shop specifically so they could trade in their lead. They then received their \$10 voucher and in many cases spent several hundred dollars in his store. In short, what Dale describes is exactly the way the LTB program is designed to work—building goodwill with sportsmen who can be our partners on numerous conservation issues, and using retailers' positive experiences with the program to draw in new participating locations.

PUBLICITY

PAID MEDIA

The Loon Preservation Committee has created a unique brand, website (<https://www.loonsafe.org>), and social media accounts for the LTB Program, called “LoonSafe.” The LoonSafe website is the target of all LTB Program digital advertising, and a link to the website is included in all press releases, posters, and other printed materials. We use unique links, along with incentives such as raffles, for each medium to test and compare their effectiveness.

The LTB Program ran online ads again this summer during peak fishing season, from mid-June through mid-August. From January through December, LTB also ran print ads in newspapers with coverage areas including our partner retailers and in the statewide Hawkeye Sporting News. Website analytics give us measurements of the website traffic this advertising generates, which has been successful by all industry metrics.

Funding for this component of the LTB program allowed us to test the effectiveness of another medium of online advertising in 2020: pre-roll. Pre-roll ads are 15-second video ads that air ahead of online news stories and cannot be skipped. Although these ads are more expensive than display ads, they are also significantly more effective in driving traffic to the loonsafe.org website. Pre-roll ads generated twice as many new users for the LoonSafe site as display ads – even though we ran four times as many display ads.

In the 2021-22 LTB season, we would like to bring back radio ads (a better investment if NH tourism returns to normal post-pandemic) and use only pre-roll ads online. Our objectives are to further improve the effectiveness and value of our paid advertising while testing radio with a buy on several stations to assess effectiveness based on geography and audience.

DIGITAL DISPLAY ADS
WMUR-TV WEBSITE (WMUR.COM)



PROTECT LOONS FROM LEAD POISONING
Trade in your lead sinkers & jigs. **GET \$10 FOR NEW FISHING GEAR.***
Terms and conditions apply. Free local disposal sites also available.* **LEARN MORE

PROTECT NH'S LOONS FROM LEAD POISONING
AND GET \$10 FOR NEW FISHING GEAR*
Trade in your lead (Pb) sinkers & jigs at participating retailers.



LEARN MORE AT LOONSAFE.ORG
**Terms and conditions apply. Free local disposal options also available.*

WMUR-TV WEBSITE: The digital display (rectangle) ads above ran from mid-June through mid-August on the WMUR-TV (channel 9) website (wmur.com). These ads were shown nearly 2,000,000 times (1M per month) and were clickable and trackable ads, so that LPC could measure how many individuals visited the LoonSafe website after seeing them.

DIGITAL PRE-ROLL ADS
WMUR-TV WEBSITE (WMUR.COM)

YOU CAN HELP PROTECT NH'S LOONS



LEARN MORE AT LOONSAFE.ORG

Our pre-roll ad can be viewed on loonsafe.org and at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6G9-mR7tDg>

Finding Value: We produced our pre-roll ad in-house using video taken by one of LPC’s volunteers and audio from a radio ad we paid to produce in the prior season. We also have “recycled” the ad on our website and on social media. Our program stretches its advertising dollars to reach the broadest audience possible, paying for more airtime versus production costs.

YEAR-TO-YEAR DIGITAL AD PERFORMANCE

Online Advertising – WMUR-TV (wmur.com)

June 10 – Aug. 16, 2020

	Display Ad (Rectangle)	Pre-roll (non-skippable 15-sec video w/ news)	Total
Total Impressions	1,875,000	498,000	2,373,000
Impressions per month	625,000	166,000	791,000
CPM (cost per 1,000 impressions)	\$8	\$35	
Cost	\$15,000	\$17,430	\$32,430
New site users acquired via campaign	724	1,505	2,229
Cost per new user*	\$20.71	\$11.58	\$14

Online Advertising –

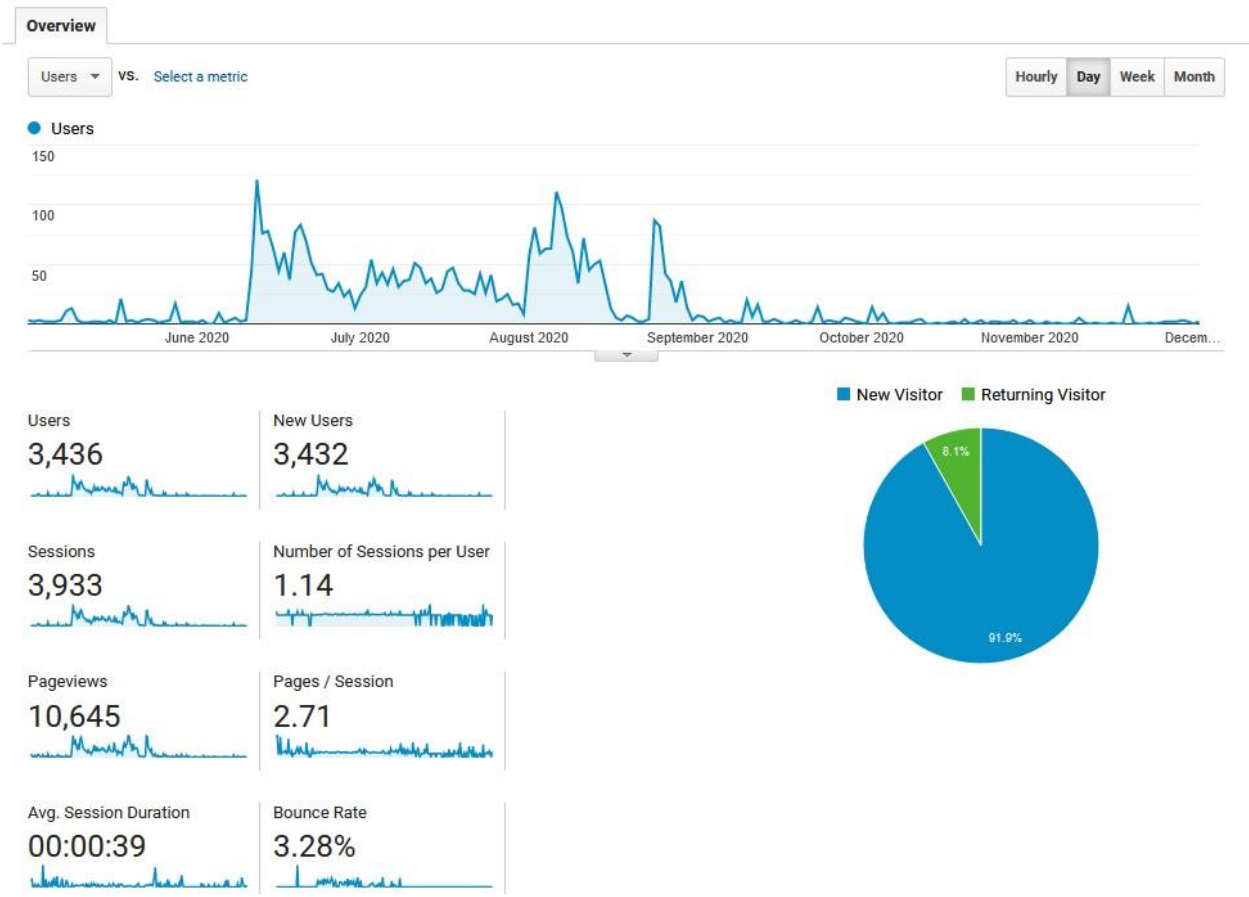
WMUR-TV (wmur.com) and Union Leader Newspaper (unionleader.com)

July 1 – Aug. 31, 2019 (For Comparison)

	WMUR Display Ads	Union Leader Display Ads	Total
Total Impressions	1,875,000	1,100,000	2,373,000
Impressions per month	937,500	550,000	791,000
CPM (cost per 1,000 impressions)	\$8	\$11	
Cost	\$15,000	\$14,000**	\$29,000
New site users acquired via campaign	727	933	1660
Cost per new user*	\$20.63	\$15.00	\$17.46

*See “Challenges to Measuring Digital Ad Performance,” below.

Digital Ad Performance Metrics



Click Through Rate (CTR): CTR is the ratio of clicks on your link to impressions your link makes. Our ads outperformed the industry average, which is 0.05%. SMART INSIGHTS, Average display advertising clickthrough rates, *available at* <https://www.smartinsights.com/internet-advertising/internet-advertising-analytics/display-advertising-clickthrough-rates/>.

2020 LTB Digital Ad Click Through Rates (CTRs)

WMUR Display: 0.04% CTR (728 users acquired from 1,875,000 ad impressions).

WMUR Pre-Roll: .30% (1505 users acquired from 498,000 pre-roll ad plays)

Note: while average CTRs are low throughout the industry, display ads raise brand/issue awareness even when not generating site visits.

Geographic Reach: Visitors to New Hampshire from neighboring states with less protective laws regarding lead tackle were a target of the campaign’s digital and radio ads since they were likely less aware of NH’s nation-leading restrictions and therefore more likely to use banned lead tackle.

2019		
State	No. of Users (total 2,526)	Percent of All Users
New Hampshire	1319	51.16%
Massachusetts	375	14.55%
New York	111	4.31%
Maine	77	2.99%
Vermont	51	1.98%
Rhode Island	33	1.28%
Connecticut	30	1.16%

2020		
State	No. of Users (total 2,526)	Percent of All Users
New Hampshire	2589	76.55%
Massachusetts	190	5.61%
Virginia	145	4.28%
Maine	66	1.95%
Wisconsin	48	1.42%
Minnesota	44	1.30%
Vermont	40	1.18%

User Acquisition – Year-to-Year:

Source	No. of Users - 2019	No. of Users - 2020	% of All Users - 2019	% of All Users - 2020
Digital Display Ads	728	728	63.91%	21.19%
Digital Pre-Roll Ads	0	1505	0	43.80%
Direct	435	530	16.76%	15.42%
Referral*	301	66	11.59%	1.92%
Social Media Sharing	144	427	5.55%	12.43%
Organic Search	52	180	2.00%	5.24%
Paid Search	5	0	0.19%	0%
Total	2575	3436	100%	100%

*E.g., link in news story, on another site, etc.

CHALLENGES TO MEASURING DIGITAL AD PERFORMANCE

The metrics used to measure digital ad performance are unable to accurately capture awareness created among viewers who do not immediately click through to LTB's LoonSafe website but retain enough information about the lead threat to loons or buyback program to educate friends to visit the website later (when it would be tracked as a direct visit) or return lead tackle to retailers, transfer stations, or other locations.

Based on the substantial amount of tackle being turned in, and a doubling of our online user acquisition from social media sharing and organic search, we believe the return on investment for LTB advertising – in education and in awareness of the program – is far higher than what we see measured as website visits.

EARNED MEDIA

Lead Tackle Buyback was not as successful in securing earned (e.g. unpaid) media in 2020 due to the news cycle being dominated by the Covid-19 pandemic and the presidential election. Most loon press went to stories covering a bald eagle killed by a loon when the cause of death was established earlier this year. The news—generated by Maine's Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife—could have been a golden opportunity to highlight how rare such a death is compared to poisoning from lead tackle, but unfortunately there was no such pivot by officials in our neighboring state.

In contrast, LPC has worked to synergize all its messaging to incorporate mention of the Lead Tackle Buyback Program. As a result, when issuing press releases such as those calling for safe boating and keeping distance from nesting loons, LPC has been able to also gain attention for the LTB program and maximize the value of our media relationships. One example is the July 6 story on WMUR-TV, asking boaters to keep a safe distance from loons with chicks and highlighting the buyback program.

A list of 2020 loon stories in New England with links is attached as Appendix A.

Next Steps to Expand Message Delivery

- Building our “toolbox” for volunteers and staff that includes tips on social media sharing, posters that can be printed for display in their local communities, and program information that can be included in lake association newsletters, etc. This will be advertised to lake associations in LPC’s annual mailing and when LPC seasonal biologists make presentations.
- Expanded advertising of promotions/contests that encourage social media sharing.
- Development of expanded multimedia content – interviews with Conservation Officers, wildlife rehabilitators, retailers, anglers, etc. Overall increase of content on website to encourage longer and repeat visits.
- Refining use of consistent keywords and branding in LTB advertising to increase the presence of the Lead Tackle Buyback program and LPC in search results for “loon safe”, “Loon Preservation Committee”, “lead tackle”, “lead, buyback”, “loons”, “lead poisoning”, etc. This allows individuals to find information about the program even if they don’t remember the website address.
- Honing our digital media strategy and continued collection of online analytics for maximum return on investment.

YEAR THREE LEAD TACKLE BUYBACK RESULTS

TACKLE RECOVERY

In Year Three of the Lead Tackle Buyback program, 140 transactions resulted in the collection of 10,476 pieces of lead tackle totaling 73 pounds. The overwhelming majority (97%) of tackle collected fell within the size range known to kill loons (one ounce or less). Figure 4 compares the average weight of lead sinkers and jigs collected during the Year Three program with the average weight of those recovered from loons that have died as a result of lead tackle ingestion. The average weight of sinkers collected during the program was slightly lower than that of sinkers recovered from dead loons, likely as a result of the large number of small split shot sinkers returned in the program. Despite their small size, any of these sinkers would almost certainly kill a loon if ingested. The jigs collected in the buyback weighed slightly more on average than those collected from dead loons. Since jigs ingested by loons typically lose their hook and are partially eroded by digestive processes, their weight at time of ingestion would even more closely mirror the weight of the jigs collected during the buyback program than suggested by the graph.

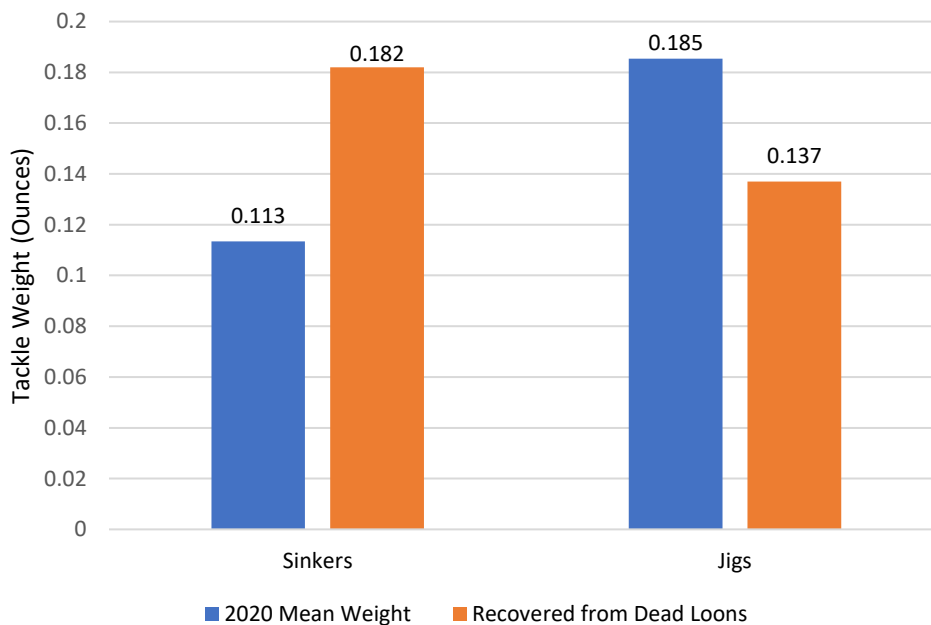


Figure 4: Average weight of lead sinkers and lead-headed jigs collected in 2020 Lead Tackle Buyback vs. average weight of lead sinkers and lead-headed jigs recovered from dead loons. This graph excludes any tackle collected in the LTB that weighed over 1 ounce (280 pieces, totaling 3% of the tackle collected).

Since its inception in 2018, the Lead Tackle Buyback program has removed a cumulative total of 25,345 individual pieces of lead fishing tackle weighing a total of

162 pounds from circulation in New Hampshire (Figure 5). Had they remained in use, any of these pieces of tackle had the potential to kill a loon or other wildlife.

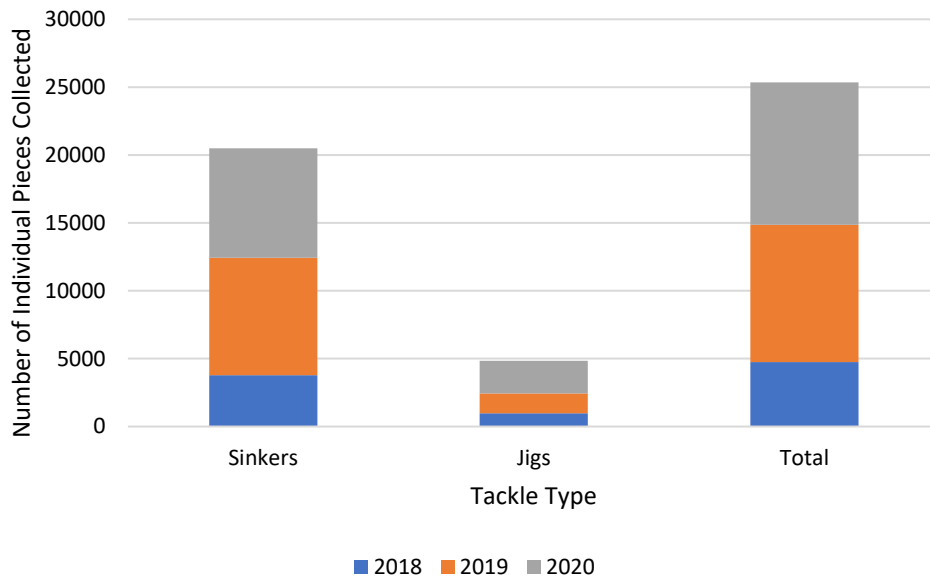


Figure 5: Number of pieces of lead tackle collected as a result of LPC’s LTB program since its inception, including those pieces turned in both with and without a voucher in return.

Table 1: Number of transactions by retailer.

AJ's Bait and Tackle	49
The Tackle Shack	28
Pawtuckaway Sales and Trading Post	11
Clarke's Hardware	13
LL Cote	17
LPC	5
Newfound Sales and Trading Post	5
Squam Boat Livery	12
Total	140

Table 2: Tackle collected in 2018, 2019, and 2020

	<u>2018 Pilot</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
# Transactions	124	206	140
Total Weight of Tackle Turned In (oz)	463.8	963.5	1172.10
Total # of Pieces of Tackle Turned In	4,786	7,866	10476
Average # Pieces of Tackle per Transaction	38.6	38.2	75
Average Weight Per Transaction (oz)	3.7	4.7	8.3

TESTING GAMIFICATION:

The continued increase in the average weight of tackle and average number of pieces of tackle collected per transaction—well above the minimum of 1 oz required to receive a voucher—suggests that our value exchange is adequate for most anglers. This year, LTB added a “collect to protect” contest that awarded prizes for the first and second largest trade-ins at each participating shop and a grand price award for the largest trade-in statewide. The jump we experienced in the average weight and number of pieces may be attributable to the contest providing an incentive for holdouts who—absent a bigger prize—would trade their lead in a little at a time for a voucher each season. The Covid-19 pandemic changed many consumer behaviors and caused a spike in fishing activity; therefore, a more “normal” year will help determine if other factors in addition to the contests were at play.

CHANGING BEHAVIORS:

In addition to these results, the outreach component of the LTB program has had less quantifiable but equally important impacts on fishing practices in New Hampshire. News coverage, advertisements, brochures, and presentations related to the LTB program have helped to educate the general public in New Hampshire about the dangerous impacts of lead fishing tackle on loons and other wildlife, resulting in a cultural shift towards low impact, environmentally responsible fishing practices. The impacts of our LTB program have begun to cross state boundaries, as organizations in both New York and Maine have announced and are debuting pilot buyback programs based on LPC’s successful model.

OBSERVED IMPACT OF LEAD LEGISLATION AND LEAD REDUCTION EFFORTS

Between 2016 and 2020, the average annual per capita rate of documented lead tackle mortality for the New Hampshire population declined by 29% from pre-2016 levels (Figure 6) and by 58% from peak levels (1996 to 2000). Loon mortality rates can be highly variable year-to-year, and as such, five years of data is not sufficient to establish a trend. Nevertheless, these initial findings are encouraging and indicate that together, the legislation and the Lead Tackle Buyback may already be substantively reducing loon deaths resulting from ingested lead fishing tackle.

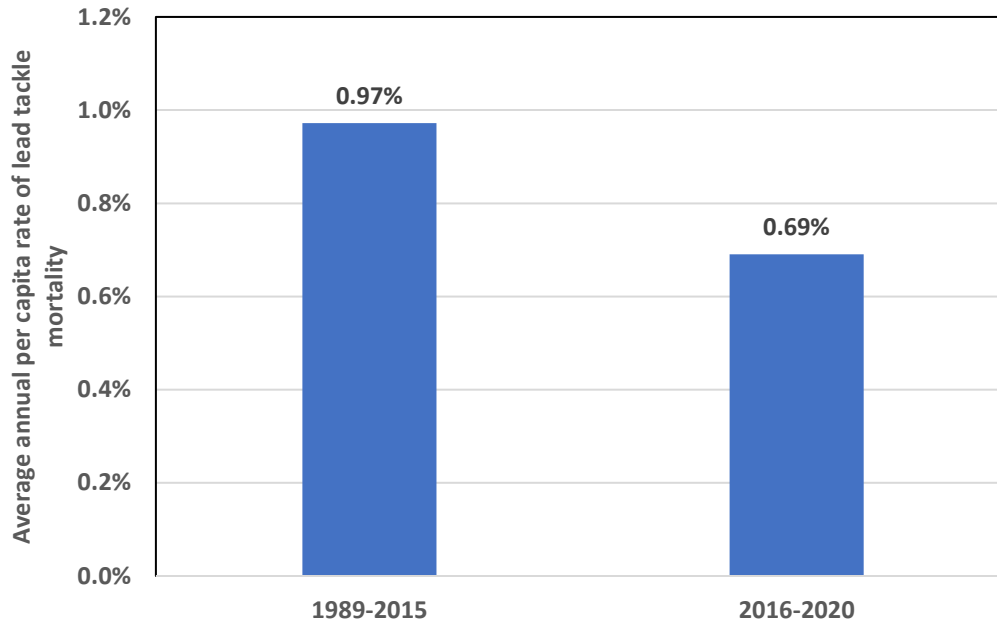


Figure 6: Annual per capita rate of lead tackle mortality in the New Hampshire common loon population prior to vs. after the implementation of the 2016 legislation.

While the average annual per capita rate of lead tackle mortality appears to be in decline, the rate remains high enough to significantly negatively affect New Hampshire’s loon population. Continuing to address the current use of lead fishing tackle is therefore integral to reducing loon mortality and continuing to recover our loon population.

Next Steps to Increase Amount of Tackle Collected

- Continued Placement of Lead Tackle Collection Bins at municipal transfer stations throughout the state to provide alternate methods of disposal for those made aware of the lead tackle issue through expanded publicity.
- Addition of lead tackle collection to Household Hazardous Waste Collection Days throughout the state.
- Another “Biggest Trade” contest. Top two trade-ins (total weight and total number of lead tackle items in our target range of one ounce or less) from among all participating shops wins a \$200 shopping spree.
- Broader outreach during the ice fishing season.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND THANKS

The Loon Preservation Committee wishes to sincerely thank its collaborators and funders who have made the Lead Tackle Buyback Program a tremendous success in educating the public and anglers about the dangers of ingested lead fishing tackle and removing lead tackle from use to benefit loons and other New Hampshire wildlife.

- Marjorie Buckley
- The New Hampshire Fish & Game Department – Mark Beauchesne, Advertising and Promotions Coordinator, and Kyle Glencross, Let's Go Fishing Coordinator
- Brett Howell
- The Howell Conservation Fund
- The Alex C. Walker Foundation
- Participating Lead Tackle Buyback Program Retailers
- Maria Colby, Wings of the Dawn Wildlife Rehabilitation Center and Bird Sanctuary

LEAD TACKLE BUYBACK YEAR FOUR (APRIL 2021- MARCH 2022) CAMPAIGN PLAN

GOALS

1. To improve educational outreach by establishing new points of contact in places most relevant to **anglers** such as local tackle shops and specialty publications.
2. To test the effectiveness of angler incentives (e.g., \$10 or \$20 vouchers and \$100 and \$50 prizes for largest and next-largest amounts of tackle returned at each shop) in motivating the switch from lead fishing tackle to non-lead alternatives.
3. To determine what value exchange is sufficient to secure retailers' enthusiastic participation (i.e., additional advertising, recognition as environmentally responsible businesses, increased customer traffic).
4. To gather basic data on preferences of anglers and others who respond to incentives and new disposal options. This will inform future initiatives.
5. To expand the reach of LPC's educational efforts among the general public by establishing new lead tackle collection sites that reduce the effort required for individuals to dispose of lead tackle.
6. To develop new, sustainable initiatives that are scalable within New Hampshire and replicable within neighboring states.

STRATEGY

LPC's Lead Tackle Buyback builds upon the organization's existing outreach with tactics that engage the angling community and increase opportunities for the general public to dispose of lead fishing tackle. The Year Four Lead Tackle Buyback Campaign ("Campaign") will expand as aggressively as is allowed by available resources.

The Campaign utilizes tactics that ensure sustainability and allow for smart growth. By utilizing partner retailers to collect tackle, help promote the Lead Tackle Buyback program, and deliver a fish lead free message, the program can achieve maximum reach with minimal staff costs. Other volunteers, such as Household Waste Collection Coordinators, can further expand the Campaign's reach with limited additional costs.

One-day collection events tend to be of limited or no success because they require extensive promotion by organizers and advance planning by participants with busy schedules. A year-round Lead Tackle Buyback Campaign overcomes these challenges by adding perpetual promotion via word-of-mouth and cost-effective paid advertising

along with convenience for participants. The Campaign will increase the number of available disposal sites for members of the general public, who may be more concerned with the safe disposal of old tackle than financial incentives.

CHALLENGES

1. **Continued Use of Toxic Lead (Pb) Fishing Tackle:** Although LPC's successful legislative efforts in 2013 resulted in a ban on the sale and freshwater use of lead fishing sinkers and jigs in New Hampshire, loon poisonings are continuing from lead tackle currently in use. Current use is indicated by the presence of associated tackle such as skirts and monofilament attached to lead sinkers and jigs recovered from deceased loons, and by timing of loon deaths (peak deaths from ingested lead tackle occur in July and August, coincident with peak lake use and fishing in New Hampshire).
2. **Message Delivery:** Despite multiple news reports of loon deaths from lead tackle every year, LPC's numerous educational presentations on lead, and LPC's growing social media presence, the reach of earned media (i.e., unpaid) is limited and unlikely to overcome the "Rule of Seven" challenge in marketing. The Rule states that an individual must hear your message at least seven times in an eighteen-month period before they are likely to take action in response to that message. LPC is competing in a crowded news cycle for earned media coverage, while targeting of paid media to ensure it reaches New Hampshire anglers is difficult and increases costs.
3. **Convenience:** Moving individuals to action requires multiple contacts. One-day tackle exchange events have received very limited attendance, which could be attributable to individuals' busy schedules and inability to prioritize tackle exchange. The Campaign must make tackle exchange and disposal convenient, offering multiple opportunities to anglers and the general public—accommodating their schedules rather than asking them to accommodate ours.
4. **Ensuring Sufficient Value Exchange for Shop Owners:** LPC's legislative efforts in 2013 were opposed by a number of anglers, and shop owners must balance joining LPC's current Campaign against the potential for alienating regular customers. Shop owner participation must be encouraged by:
 - a. Cultivating personal relationships and providing good "customer service" from LPC in administering the tackle buyback program;
 - b. Offering reasonable value exchange by ensuring each shop sees a benefit in increased publicity and customer traffic;
 - c. Coordinating efforts with NHF&G as a trusted partner.
5. **Moving Beyond the "Low-Hanging Fruit":** The Year Three Campaign

introduced new contests to lure lead tackle “holdouts” to dispose of large amounts of lead rather than doing so piecemeal to get vouchers in multiple seasons. We may still need to adjust incentives and tactics to determine if the supply of available tackle for trade-in has been reduced overall or just among the most easily reached early targets.

TACTICS

Some of the Season Three Campaign’s tactics are continuing or were postponed due to the difficulty of executing them amid the Covid-19 pandemic. They have been incorporated into the Season Four Campaign and funds allocated to them in Season Three have been carried over to Season Four (e.g., onboarding new retailers, equipping NHF&G with lead test kits and “positive enforcement” resources).

APR. 2021–MAR. 2022: FULL-YEAR TACKLE BUYBACK PROGRAM DEVELOPING SUSTAINABILITY AND GREATER VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT

- Addition of new in-state retailers to move toward the goal of 12 participating local shops.
- Onboarding of online and out-of-state retailers who will offer their own incentives other than campaign-funded vouchers.
- Addition of lead tackle disposal at Household Hazardous Waste collection events serving multiple counties and roughly two dozen towns, including Nashua—the state’s second-largest city. The latter site is a key expansion of the Campaign’s reach into the southern part of the state.
- Establishment of additional collection sites at municipal transfer stations.
- Expansion of volunteer participation in promoting the Campaign with new and updated online and print materials.
 - Creation of an online “toolbox” for lake associations that want to organize a collection day.
 - Expanded digital content for social media and website to increase website visitor interest / time on site.
- Engagement of NH’s High School Bass Fishing teams by providing supplies and educational materials in coordination with NHF&G.
- Expansion of our winter season / ice fishing buyback campaign with a greater presence at New Hampshire’s largest winter fishing event—the Meredith Rotary Ice Fishing Derby—in February 2022.
- Expanded promotion of participating tackle shops and non-lead tackle availability via manufacturer/retailer spotlight features in our publications

and working to arrange discounts / coordinate promotions with these partners.

JUL–SEPT. 2021: RESEARCH AND ADDRESS GAPS IN EXISTING ENFORCEMENT OF STATE BAN ON SALE AND USE OF LEAD TACKLE WEIGHING ONE OUNCE OR LESS:

Sale Ban Enforcement:

- LPC’s Campaign Manager / legal counsel will contact online retailers to make sure they are in compliance with New Hampshire’s ban on the sale of lead fishing sinkers and jigs weighing less than one ounce. Instances of non-compliance, if any, will most likely be due to lack of awareness by online retailers when fulfilling orders for third-party sellers.
- Many online retailers have policies in place to discontinue business with vendors who attempt to sell illegal products, so if any instances are uncovered LPC will:
 - Inform retailers of specific vendor violations;
 - Ask retailers to include lead (Pb) fishing tackle within their banned products guidelines for vendors;
 - Contact the NH Attorney General regarding any violations by any online retailers that cannot be resolved through friendly inquiries with vendors; and,
 - Develop a fact sheet for LPC members and other interested parties detailing how they can help report violations by retailers to LPC.

Use Ban Enforcement:

- LPC will investigate the feasibility of low-cost testing options that it could provide to NHF&G, such as lead test swabs.
- NHF&G has continuously expressed a desire to enforce laws in a way that is not unnecessarily punitive, and LPC believes lead test kits could provide NHF&G conservation officers with an option to positively interact with anglers and educate them about the dangers of lead fishing tackle.
- LPC will explore the possibility of integrating NHF&G’s efforts to warn and educate anglers with the Lead Tackle Buyback Program, possibly by distributing a certain number of vouchers to conservation officers as a voluntary mechanism to get anglers to switch during encounters with NHF&G.

YEAR FOUR LEAD TACKLE BUYBACK PROGRAM BUDGET

The effectiveness of the Lead Tackle Buyback Program enabled LPC to convince Bouchard B-120 Oil Spill Trustees to revise their proposed restoration plan and add lead tackle buyback programs as an allowable use of B-120 restitution funds. The Year Four Lead Tackle Buyback budget, below, reflects an infusion of B-120 funds into the Lead Tackle Buyback Program. The inclusion of \$43,497 from unspent Year Three Lead Tackle Buyback Funds, largely resulting from unavoidable Covid 19-related reductions in the Year Three LTB program, leaves \$67,570 to fully fund the Year Four Lead Tackle Buyback effort and accomplish deliverables that saw their implementation delayed by the pandemic.

Item	B-120	Other	Total
Salaries & Associated Expenses:	\$13,071	\$4,002	\$17,073
Consultant & Professional Fees:		\$22,000	\$22,000
Travel:	\$1,100	\$1,220	\$2,320
Tackle Buyback (Vouchers)			
Vouchers (10-12 shops and events, e.g. Sporting Expo, Meredith Derby)	\$1,650	\$3,050	\$4,700
Publicity/Advertising			
Website Development and Hosting	\$1,320		\$1,320
Hawkeye Sporting News Ads (5)	\$4,400	\$7,320	\$11,720
Weekly Newspaper Ads	\$5,500		\$5,500
Radio Spots			
<i>Thirty 30-second drive-time ads on 98.5 FM Sports Hub or radio sponsorship during Meredith Ice Derby Weekend</i>		\$14,640	\$14,640
Targeted Digital Advertising			
<i>WMUR-TV website - 600,000 pre-roll/video ads</i>		\$22,000	\$22,000
<i>Facebook / Twitter Promoted (e.g. During Ice Fishing Derby)</i>		\$10,000	\$10,000
<i>Google</i>		\$2,000	\$2,000
3-month Hosting Renewals (4)		\$439	\$439
1-Year Domain Name Renewals (.net, org, .com, .info)		\$122	\$122
Equipment			
Lead Test Kits for NHF&G (1,000)		\$4,000	\$4,000
Lab analysis of lead tackle - 10 tests		\$1,830	\$1,830

Supplies			
High School Bass Angler Coaches' Kits		\$2,074	\$2,074
Lead-Free tackle for distribution at presentations		\$8,540	\$8,540
Incentives (Raffle Items)	\$165	\$1,635	\$1,800
Incentives - biggest trade-in \$100 1st, \$50 2nd * 12 shops + \$500 biggest trade-in statewide	\$1,485	\$815	\$2,300
Fish Lead Free / LoonSafe Decals	\$1,320		\$1,320
Fish Lead Free / LoonSafe Post Cards, Rack Cards, Posters		\$4,880	\$4,880
Lead Tackle Collection Boxes and Signs	\$1,100		\$1,100
Postage	\$1,426	\$275	\$1,700
Office/Meeting Expenses:	\$275	\$226	\$501
Total:	<u>\$32,812</u>	<u>\$111,068</u>	<u>\$143,879</u>
B-120 Funds Available for Year Four Lead Tackle Buyback Program:			\$32,812
Other Funds Available for Year Four Lead Tackle Buyback Program:			<u>\$43,497</u>
Total Funds Available:			\$76,309
Deficit for Year Four Program:			\$67,570

Year Three of the Lead Tackle Buyback Program in Pictures



Even large retailers saw their inventory wiped out during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, as many people started or returned to fishing as a form of socially distant recreation.



As our participating retailers saw heavy customer traffic, our lead-free messaging reached a tremendous number of people. L.L. Cote collected a huge amount of lead again in 2020, with one customer turning in 200 lead jigs to claim a prize in our “Collect to Protect” contest with prizes for the biggest trade-in at each store and statewide.



Covid-19 did not stop Lead Tackle Buyback Campaign Manager Sheridan Brown from attending a Lead Tackle Buyback display at The Tackle Shack during the Meredith Ice Fishing Derby.

A Catalyst for Change...

SENATE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Date: 2.20.13 Time: 9:15A.M. Public Hearing on SB89

SB 89 - relative to the definition of lead fishing sinkers and jigs.

Please check box(es) that apply:

SPEAKING FAVOR	OPPOSED	NAME (Please print)	REPRESENTING
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brandi Nute	AJ's Bait + Tackle
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adam Chute	AJ's Bait + Tackle
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	REP. PAUL HENLE	MERRIMACK DIST 12
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sen Hilmar	DIST. #12

A.J. Nute, the Owner of AJ's Bait and Tackle continued his journey from dedicated opponent of the lead tackle ban (signed in to the hearing in opposition, above), to strong supporter of the Lead Tackle Buyback Program.



Lead Tackle Buyback Campaign Manager Sheridan Brown and A.J., now an enthusiastic participant in LTB, outside A.J.'s former shop in 2019.



In 2020, A.J. sold his shop to Dale Sandy (the other participating shop owner who has been part of LTB since the pilot) who moved just down the street to become a second Tackle Shack.



A.J. is now focusing full-time on manufacturing non-lead tackle!



Lead Tackle Buyback promotional materials got an upgrade with new Point-of-Sale displays and window posters.



Lead Tackle Buyback Posters like this one at the Meredith Fishing Derby were displayed at participating stores across the state in Year Three of the Lead Tackle Buyback Program to advertise the program and educate anglers and the public about the dangers of lead fishing tackle to loons.

APPENDIX A – 2020 LOON STORIES:

Dec. 19, 2020

PORTLAND, Maine (AP)

FEWER LOONS FOUND IN MAINE, BUT POPULATION STILL REBOUNDED

https://www.caledonianrecord.com/news/regional/fewer-loons-found-in-maine-but-population-still-rebounding/article_fbb7b29c-cb7b-5b97-b75a-dc6a89015869.html

Dec. 17, 2020

Bethel Citizen

MAHOOSUC BIRD NOTES: LOONS – PART 3

<https://www.sunjournal.com/2020/12/17/mahoosuc-bird-notes-loons-part-3/>

Nov. 18, 2020

Maine Public Radio

MAINE BIOLOGISTS ARE ON A MISSION TO RESTORE THE CALL OF THE LOON TO ITS HISTORIC RANGE

<https://www.mainepublic.org/post/maine-biologists-are-mission-restore-call-loon-its-historic-range>

Sun-Journal

Nov. 12, 2020

MAHOOSUC BIRD NOTES: COMMON LOON – PART 2

<https://www.newsbreak.com/maine/portland/news/2100897370371/mahoosuc-bird-notes-common-loon-reintroduction-part-2>

Sun-Journal

Oct. 29, 2020

MAHOOSUC BIRD NOTES: THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY

<https://xpertflyfisher.com/mahoosuc-bird-notes-the-one-that-got-away/>

Oct. 28, 2020

Public News Service

NH SUES MANUFACTURERS OVER PCB POLLUTION

<https://www.publicnewsservice.org/2020-10-28/toxics/nh-sues-manufacturers-over-pcb-pollution/a71940-1>

Oct. 27, 2020

NHPR

STATE SUES MONSANTO FOR PCB CONTAMINATION, JOINING HUNDREDS OF SIMILAR CLAIMS

<https://www.nhpr.org/post/state-sues-monsanto-pcb-contamination-joining-hundreds-similar-claims#stream/0>

Sept. 14, 2020

VT Digger

LOON POPULATION RISING, BUT NOT QUICKLY, IN BOTH VERMONT AND NEW HAMPSHIRE

<https://vtdigger.org/2020/09/14/loon-population-rising-but-not-quickly-in-both-vermont-and-new-hampshire/>

August 25, 2020

The Laker

LOON UPDATE: HOW THE MAJESTIC AQUATIC BIRDS ARE FARING THIS YEAR

<https://thelaker.com/2020/loon-update-how-the-majestic-aquatic-birds-are-faring-this-year>

August 13, 2020

Laconia Daily Sun

LOON CENTER TO EXPAND

https://www.laconiadailysun.com/boating/loon-center-to-expand/article_34039266-dd92-11ea-b7a0-075f956c39e9.html

July 27, 2020

Caledonian Record

LOON MONITORING & RECOVERY IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

https://www.caledonianrecord.com/news/local/loon-monitoring-recovery-in-new-hampshire/article_19e4c15f-104f-5a6b-8ade-d55c7a8a7705.html

July 27, 2020

Keene Sentinel

FOR THE BIRDS: MOOSE SIGHTINGS HAVE GROWN FAR TOO INFREQUENT, BY CHRIS BOSAK

https://www.sentinelsource.com/news/environment/for-the-birds-moose-sightings-have-grown-far-too-infrequent-by-chris-bosak/article_7ced374e-9b5c-5830-a47e-f6c1f64e80dd.html

July 25, 2020

The Providence Journal

FOR THE BIRDS: ONCE REGIONALLY EXTINCT, LOONS ARE MAKING A MODEST COMEBACK IN SOUTHEASTERN NEW ENGLAND, WITH SCIENTISTS' HELP

<https://www.providencejournal.com/story/news/environment/2020/07/25/for-birds-once-regionally-extinct-loons-are-making-modest-comeback-in-southeastern-new-england-with-113960910/>

June 14, 2020

Union Leader

BOATERS URGED TO USE CAUTION AROUND NESTING LOONS

https://www.unionleader.com/nh/outdoors/boaters-urged-to-use-caution-around-nesting-loons/article_f52b9d9b-50ec-5bc7-a695-ad17abbe56a7.html

July 6, 2020

WMUR

LOON PRESERVATION COMMITTEE URGES PEOPLE TO KEEP DISTANCE FROM THREATENED SPECIES

<https://www.wmur.com/article/loon-preservation-committee-urges-people-to-keep-distance-from-threatened-species/33225655#>

July 3, 2020

Laconia Daily Sun

LOONSAFE EFFORT SEEKS TO KEEP LOONS SAFE DURING 4TH OF JULY WEEKEND

https://www.laconiadailysun.com/boating/loonsafe-effort-seeks-to-keep-loons-safe-during-4th-of-july-weekend/article_c2b390a6-bafb-11ea-972c-5b05f8845ea5.html

July 1, 2020

Union Leader

LOONS AND CHICKS NEED THEIR SPACE THIS HOLIDAY WEEKEND

https://www.unionleader.com/news/animals/loons-and-chicks-need-their-space-this-holiday-weekend/article_2595e2c0-37f2-5249-bb40-ff35a2e545ab.html

June 30, 2020

The Wanderer

THE MIGRATION LOONS OF SUMMER

<https://www.wanderer.com/features/the-migration-loons-of-summer/>

June 28, 2020

Carriage Towne News

EARLY 2020 LOON DEATHS PROMPT REMINDERS

https://www.carriagetownenews.com/news/local_news/early-2020-loon-deaths-prompt-reminders/article_d9f14d29-e82b-5e3f-ad26-9cb95ff7e91e.html

June 19, 2020

Conway Daily Sun

BIOLOGIST CONFIRMS 2019 LOON-ON-EAGLE ATTACK

https://www.conwaydailysun.com/news/local/biologist-confirms-2019-loon-on-eagle-attack/article_5b6707e8-9c47-11ea-a927-b713701df35a.html

June 16, 2020

92 Moose FM

NH LOON CAM IS YOUR MOMENT OF ZEN

<https://92moose.fm/nh-loon-cam-is-your-moment-of-zen/>

June 11, 2020

Conway Daily Sun

LOON PRESERVATION COMMITTEE SAYS TO KEEP DISTANCE FROM LOONS

https://www.conwaydailysun.com/community/organization_clubs/loon-preservation-committee-says-to-keep-distance-from-loons/article_2e8e65ee-ac29-11ea-8448-ff71e7728ece.html

May 27, 2020

National Geographic

WHY DID A LOON STAB A BALD EAGLE THROUGH THE HEART?

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/2020/05/why-loon-stabbed-bald-eagle-heart/>

May 26, 2020

Live Science

LOON STABS BALD EAGLE TO DEATH

<https://www.livescience.com/loon-stabs-bald-eagle.html>

May 22, 2020

NECN

WILDLIFE OFFICIALS BELIEVE LOON STABBED, KILLED BALD EAGLE IN MAINE

<https://www.necn.com/news/local/wildlife-officials-believe-loon-stabbed-killed-bald-eagle-in-maine/2275761/>

May 22, 2020

News 10 Boston

INVESTIGATORS BELIEVE LOON KILLED BALD EAGLE IN MAINE

<https://www.nbcboston.com/on-air/as-seen-on/investigators-believe-loon-killed-bald-eagle-in-maine/2129640/>

May 21, 2020

Union Leader

NH BIOLOGIST FINDS SLAIN BALD EAGLE STABBED IN THE HEART BY LOON

https://www.unionleader.com/news/animals/nh-biologist-finds-slain-bald-eagle-stabbed-in-the-heart-by-loon/article_76ea0947-c474-5b61-b681-e9a1acbc0f6a.html

May 21, 2020

AP

LOON KILLED BALD EAGLE BY STABBING ITS HEART, WILDLIFE OFFICIALS SAY

<https://kval.com/outdoors/loon-killed-bald-eagle-by-stabbing-its-heart-wildlife-officials-say>

May 20, 2020

Bangor Daily News

A MAINE LOON KILLED A BALD EAGLE BY STABBING IT IN THE HEART

<https://bangordailynews.com/2020/05/20/outdoors/a-maine-loon-killed-a-bald-eagle-by-stabbing-it-in-the-heart/>

Apr. 28, 2020

Laconia Daily Sun

THE YEAR LOONS BATTLED FOR SUPREMACY ON A LOCAL LAKE

https://www.laconiadailysun.com/community/outdoors/the-year-loons-battled-for-supremacy-on-a-local-lake/article_10868cf4-899a-11ea-a43b-7b3e57d3e36d.html

Mar. 31, 2020

UNION LEADER

PCB LEVELS IN SQUAM LAKE FISH PROMPT NEW CONSUMPTION LIMITS

https://www.unionleader.com/news/environment/pcb-levels-in-squam-lake-fish-prompt-new-consumption-limits/article_2035ae52-c2d6-5ed4-9308-6c719f2df6c2.html

Feb. 10, 2020

MPR News

MINNESOTA TO PITCH ANGLERS ON GOING LEAD-FREE FOR LOONS

<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2020/02/10/effort-aims-to-persuade-minn-anglers-to-go-leadfree-for-loons>

Jan. 23, 2020

Price County Review

FOCUS ON NATURE: THE DEADLY IMPACT OF LEAD ON WILDLIFE

https://www.apg-wi.com/price_county_review/free/focus-on-nature-the-deadly-impact-of-lead-on-wildlife/article_181b2d7a-3d33-11ea-8716-33d65199f7a9.html

Social Media:

World Migratory Bird Day – May 9, 2020

Pre-roll Video, June 1, 2020

Loons on Nests Release June 8, 2020

Loon Mortality Release June 18, 2020

Safe Boating Release June 29, 2020

Fourth of July content July 3, 2020

Loon Appreciation Day, July 18, 2020