

BOLTON LAKES WATERSHED FRIENDS AND RESIDENTS

SPRING GREETINGS FROM THE FRIENDS OF BOLTON LAKES

Greetings from the Board of Directors of the Friends of Bolton Lakes (FBL). Despite the recent snow and cold weather there are sure signs of spring in our watershed.

With this email we hope to bring you “up to speed” on key activities that are underway regarding the future of our lakes and watershed. It includes our sense of optimism and also some concerns that we are asking your help with.

The lakes have been restored to normal water levels and residents have noted the return of migrating ducks and eagles.

- Some members have taken advantage of the high spring waters to kayak through Middle Bolton Lake, Upper Bolton Lake and Cedar Swamp. They were able to reach the most northern boundaries of Cedar Swamp, including right into the Atlantic White Cedar grove. They encountered geese, ducks and saw beaver huts that look as if beavers may have been resident in them.
- The FBL citizen based monitoring program has gotten underway for its third year, taking measurements and water samples for chemical analysis from Cedar Swamp and all three Bolton Lakes.

At the very top of our list of concerns is the possibility of non-native catfish stocking this spring in Lower Bolton Lake. **We ask that you help us STOP the Connecticut DEEP Department of Fisheries from stocking additional channel catfish in the Lower Bolton Lake.** It is our view that such stocking could be harmful to the Lower Lake’s path of recovery. You will remember that channel catfish stocking was one of the changes the DEEP made in Lower Lake just prior and during the explosive growth of aquatic plants and blue-green algae blooms. While “cause and effect” arguments are inconclusive, we believe it would be prudent to avoid any watershed project that has the potential to interfere with continuing efforts to restore the lake.

On April 11th Members of the FBL Board participated in a meeting with DEEP representatives, Town of Bolton representatives, and Connecticut State Representative Gayle

Mulligan to discuss this situation. FBL asked that non-native channel catfish stocking be stopped at least until Lower Bolton Lake has recovered and restored to sustainable good health. None the less the DEEP indicated that they still want to stock the fish.

We are pleased to say that the Towns of Bolton and Vernon are both in agreement with our objections to the stocking, but **we are asking for your help to make sure it does not happen by writing some emails and letters.**

Please send a simple letter and/or email indicating that:

- You object to the DEEP’s stocking of channel catfish in Lower Bolton Lake
- That you remain concerned about the health of the Lower Bolton Lake and the entire Bolton Lakes Watershed.

Address your letters and emails to the following officials. Thank you for your prompt response. The catfish stocking is planned for May.

Person to Contact	Email Address	Paper Mail Address
Commissioner Rob Klee Director, CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection	Robert.klee@ct.gov	Department of Energy and Environmental Protection 79 Elm Street Hartford, CT 06106-5127
CT State Rep Gayle Mulligan	Gayle.mulligan@housegop.ct.gov	Representative Gayle Mulligan House Republican Office LOB Room 4200

		Hartford, CT 06106
CT State Rep Tim Ackert	Tim.ackert@housegop.ct.gov	Representative Tim Ackert House Republican Office LOB Room 4200 Hartford, CT 06106
CT State Rep Claire Janowski	Claire.Janowski@cga.ct.gov	Representative Claire Janowski Legislative Office Building Room 103 Hartford, CT 06106-1592
CT State Senator Steve Cassano	Steve.cassano@cga.ct.gov	Senator Steve Cassano Legislative Office Building Room 2100 Hartford, CT 06106
CT State Senator Anthony Guglielmo	Tony.guglielmo@gmail.com	Senator Anthony Guglielmo Legislative Office Building 300 capitol Avenue Hartford, CT 06106
Vernon Mayor Daniel Champagne	dchampagne@vernon-ct.gov	Mayor Daniel Champagne 14 Park Place Vernon, CT 06066

Bolton First Selectman		First Selectman Robert Morra
Robert Morra		Town of Bolton
		222 Bolton Center Road
		CT 06043

LOWER BOLTON LAKE STATUS PRESENTATION

Dr. George Knoecklein, of Northeast Aquatic Research, gave his annual presentation on the status of the Lower Bolton Lake on March 28 at the Bolton Town Hall. His presentation and the activities he described are funded by a Connecticut Small Towns Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant awarded to the Town of Bolton to deal with the issues of Lower Bolton Lake.

Dr. Knoecklein's presentation was a very informative overview of the status and future plans for the Lower Lake. We recommend all who are interested to visit the Town of Bolton's website to see the [full presentation](#).

Here are some of the key points:

- Progress has been made in Lower Bolton Lake but Dr. Knoecklein indicated his continued concerns about the lake.
- Lower Bolton Lake continues to have a high algae content, but currently this does not present a hazard because it doesn't include a high count of cyanobacteria (blue-green algae).
- Monitoring of Lower Bolton Lake will continue and seek to identify the causes of high concentrations of Phosphorous, Iron and Nitrogen that contribute to both plant and algae growth.
- As a precaution, preparations for the Lower Lake (including permits for possible chemical treatments) are being made to enable rapid response to outbreaks of invasive plant growth and cyanobacteria in the Lower Lake if they occur.
- Invasive weeds can pose an immediate concern due to the early start of the growing season and previous observation of Curly-leaf pondweed in Lower Bolton Lake and the appearance of Hydrilla last year in nearby Coventry Lake. Such invasive aquatic plants and the presence of high nutrient levels in the Lower Lake can combine to pose a risk of their rapid proliferation.

Dr. Knoecklein requested that all residents and users of the Lower Bolton Lake be vigilant and report any suspicious aquatic plants they observe.

AQUATIC PLANT IDENTIFICATION AND REPORTING

The Friends of Bolton Lakes strongly support Dr. Knoecklein’s request for citizen-based vigilance and encourage its expansion to include the entire Bolton Lakes Watershed, including the Lower, Middle, and Upper Lakes and Cedar Swamp.

To help you in this effort we refer you to [our website](#) where you can find the following information.

Under the [Lake Ecology](#) Section you will find helpful information on identifying aquatic plants and how to report them if spotted.

Included in this section are:

["Helpful Resources Regarding Algae, Invasive Aquatic Plants and Caring for our Lakes "](#)
containing links to informative websites.

An *[Invasive Plant Identification Protocol](#)* that explains how you can gather samples and forward information for plant identification. It can be found at:

A comprehensive brochure entitled *["Connecticut’s Guide to Aquatic and Wetland Invasive Plant Identification"](#)*

This brochure provides photos and information about the key aquatic plants that are currently threatening our watershed. The following can be found on the referenced pages in the brochure:

-Fanwort: a highly invasive plant, found and treated in the Lower Lake; page 9
-Hydrilla: highly invasive, danger of spreading from Coventry Lake; page 13
-Variable-Leaf Milfoil: found in all three lakes, particularly Middle Lake; page 19
-Curly-Leaf Pondweed: highly invasive, found and treated in Lower Lake; page 25

A NOTE ON LAWN CARE IN THE WATERSHED

As a final note, please remember that the nutrients we provide the lawns and plants in the watershed easily find their way into our lakes and streams. Please minimize the use of fertilizers. Ask your lawn care specialist to minimize use as well, and keep fertilizers away from the shoreline. And remember that, whether they are artificial or organic/natural fertilizers—it makes no difference—if it makes your lawn grow it makes aquatic plants and algae grow.

Later this spring, in support of watershed property care, Friends of Bolton Lakes will be distributing brochures to help increase awareness of best practices.

PLEASE CONTINUE YOUR SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATION

The activities of the Friends of Bolton Lakes are only possible through your support and participation. We continue to need volunteers to help us with monitoring, education, communications and just general awareness of our watershed's condition.

Your continued financial support pays for the equipment and laboratory chemical analysis of our water samples as well as other worthwhile campaigns that assure the health and pristine condition of your watershed. While the Connecticut STEAP grant supports efforts in the Lower Lake, it is the work of FBL to provide awareness of the larger watershed, including the Middle Lake, Upper Lake and Cedar Swamp. The grant will not last forever. As an example, the laboratory fee for testing a single water sample is \$37 and we typically take samples at three depths at any one location each date that we test. We will be reaching out to you later for our annual membership drive.

FBL holds meetings the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM at the Notch Building in Bolton.
Please visit.

Best wishes to you and your families-----Enjoy Your Watershed

The Board Members of the Friends of Bolton Lakes