



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Over the last decade Friends of Bolton Lake hosted many educational and delightful events for our membership. The Officers and Directors of FBL thank all of you for your unabated support and your participation with your organization. It is the membership that keeps this organization afloat. As we embark on the next decade, I can report that the wind is blowing securely in our sails. This will be the decade of our organization's formative years.

The FBL goals for 2020 are a bit aggressive but we are trying to get a foothold on the important issues of watershed management.

- Secure a fiduciary for a grant that will allow funding for developing a Bolton Lakes Region Watershed Plan.
- Continue to seek state funding for the Hatch Hill culvert [dam] renovation. The design was approved by Vernon and the DEEP Division of Dams and Dam Safety in 2018. The project permitting and State Bond Commission funding are two of the final steps in the process. There are many pieces to this request for proposal and FBL is poised to stay involved.
- Bring together the stakeholders of the Bolton Lakes Watershed to develop an effectively managed drawdown program. The program would promulgate a set of protocols for maintaining the seasonal water levels of the State-owned impoundments that lay within the Towns of Vernon and Bolton, CT. Further, the program would establish a long-term strategy that could mitigate the known upsurge of invasive plants and other non-native species that are infiltrating the lakes.

FBL continues to represent its members and 2019 demonstrated those efforts.

- FBL said goodbye to Joyce Stille, Bolton's Town Administrator. She was a valuable asset to FBL and was supportive of many of the programs. Josh Kelly is replacing her and has pledged to continue support. FBL also said farewell to Paul Weisser, FBL Treasurer/Membership Chair/Communications Chair and to board member Jeff Phelon.
- The Connecticut Federation of Lakes awarded FBL a grant to purchase equipment that will monitor Cyanobacteria in the lakes and allow FBL to share data with a collaborative studying algae blooms.
- The Spring Seminar presented by UCONN faculty and their graduate student on the results of the Atlantic White Cedar deep soil sampling was well received.
- An FBL portal was developed for use by board members and those with need-to-know to offer a platform for maintaining a historical record of documents, photos and FBL institutional knowledge and governance.
- FBL supported HB6637 Boat Stamp Fee. FBL testified at the Environment Committee's hearing in support of the bill. It was later passed by the legislature.
- The Annual Fall Forum was a workshop by the Connecticut Agricultural Experimental Station environmental research team. They demonstrated how to identify invasive plants in the lakes.
- Invasives such as fanwort and milfoil continue be on FBL's radar. We are working to find ways for early detection and remediation methods. That includes the Suspicious Plant Reporting Tool on the FBL website. If you see something, report something.
- FBL continued to monitor and test the water quality and clarity in the Bolton Lakes and report the finding to the towns and North East Aquatic Research.
- FBL facilitated meetings with towns and state officials that resulted in the suspension of the 2019 stocking of channel catfish in the Lower Bolton Lake
- The Friends of Bolton Lakes are, in collaboration with the Bolton Lakes Watershed Advisory Committee, pursuing grants to create a management plan for the three Bolton Lakes and its watershed. We are working to obtain the cooperation of the four watershed towns; Bolton, Vernon, Tolland, and Coventry, the North Central Conservation District, and the Connecticut DEEP. We can report good progress toward this important goal.
- FBL was awarded second place in Bolton's Christmas Tree challenge for nonprofits.

Please welcome Ute Winebrenner to the FBL board as its treasurer. I again urge and challenge everyone to stay involved with FBL and attend at least one monthly meeting during 2020. The meetings are held in the Notch Building 106 Notch Road, Bolton at 6:30 PM on the third Wednesday of each month.

We have lots of important goals to achieve this year; let's achieve them together.

On behalf of the Board of Directors,
Happy New Year

David Forrest, President FBL