

First Annual Bolton Lakes Watershed Community Forum

On the evening of October 14, 2014 70 attendees turned out to participate in the First Annual Bolton Lakes Watershed Community Forum. Hosted by the Friends of Bolton Lakes (FBL) the event was held, by courtesy of the Town of Vernon, at Newhoca Lodge in Camp Newhoca, on the eastern shore of Middle Bolton Lake.

The forum's purposes were:

- To provide an event where residents, town and state officials could all hear, at one meeting, the full range of activities taking place to remediate and preserve the chain of Bolton Lakes and their watershed.
- To provide opportunity for community feedback and discussion

70 attendees included officials from watershed (Bolton, Coventry, Tolland and Vernon) and surrounding towns as well as representatives from the Connecticut State Assembly and Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

The meeting included 1 ½ hours of the following formal presentations:

- *Introduction*
- *Overview of the purpose and activities of the Bolton Lakes Watershed Conservation Alliance*
- *Overview and activities of The Friends of Bolton Lakes*
- *Town of Bolton summary status of the Water Pollution Control/Sewering Project and the Small Towns Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) activities*
- *Town of Vernon summary of its activities in the watershed (verbal presentation only)*
- *Northeast Aquatic Research's lake monitoring activities under STEAP sponsorship.*

Following the formal presentations, the meeting continued with refreshments and discussion around display tables set up and manned by the following organizations.

- *The Friends of Bolton Lakes*
- *The Bolton Conservation Commission*
- *Northern Connecticut Land Trust*

Each attendee received a copy of the following two Friends of Bolton Lakes documents.

- *"What Near-Lake Residents Can Do to Help Bolton Lakes Water Quality"*
- *"Helpful Resources Regarding Algae, Invasive Aquatic Plants and Caring for our Lakes"*

This document includes active web site links to

- Recognizing and Knowing what to do Regarding Algae*
- Recognizing Invasive Aquatic Plants*
- Creating Rain Gardens*
- General Guidance for Lake Issues in Connecticut*
- Reports and Studies of the Bolton Lakes Watershed*

The Friends of Bolton Lakes would like to thank all of those who attended and participated in the Forum. We felt that the presentations and discussions were very constructive. We look forward to the coming year and continued collaboration among all stakeholders on the path to full restoration of the Bolton Lakes with the ultimate achievement of a long term watershed management plan that can assure a healthy future. As implied in the Forum Title, we hope to follow up this "First Annual" Forum with additional meetings in the future. See you there!