

Second Annual
Bolton Lakes Watershed Community Forum
October 22, 2015
Bolton Town Hall

The Second Annual Bolton Lakes Watershed Community Forum took place on October 22, 2016 at the Bolton Town Hall. Organized by the Friends of Bolton Lakes, this year's Forum provided an opportunity for updates from the towns of Bolton and Vernon as well as presentations that focused on the history of the watershed and the current diagnostic testing activities that are being conducted by Northeast Aquatic Research (under Town of Bolton's STEAP Grant) and the Friends of Bolton Lakes volunteer water quality monitoring program.

Taking place in October, the timing of this continuing series of annual Forums has been chosen to provide an opportunity for a fresh look back at each year of lake and watershed activities.

The Forum was attended by approximately 70 people, including representatives of the State of Connecticut, the towns of Bolton, Coventry and Vernon. Running nearly three hours, the meeting included both informal and formal presentations.

Representatives of the towns of Bolton and Vernon provided information. Town of Bolton First Selectman Robert Morra and Lake Commissioner Kim Welch updated the progress of the sewer installation, which has now been nearly completed, and the status of the Lower Bolton Lake. Vernon's Department of Parks and Recreation Director Bruce Dinnie commented on Vernon's continuing support of lake activities.

Informal comments made at the Forum by Hillary Kenyon and Sabina Perkins of Northeast Aquatic Research described their ongoing lake monitoring activities and how 2015 proved to be another challenging year for the Lower Lake due to the discovery of a new invasive aquatic plant (curly leaf pond weed) and the prominence of a dense green algae bloom that, although chemically treated, persisted in August right through to October (and eventually to drawdown in November).

Of particular note was the attendance by representatives of the Coventry Lake Advisory and Monitoring Committee (a subcommittee of Coventry's Conservation Commission) who described their activities including their current development of a Coventry Lake Watershed Management plan. It was noted that they also have detected a new invasive aquatic plant in their lake (hydrilla) and have had a rapid response from Connecticut's DEEP to locate it in the lake.

The status of the activities of the Bolton Lakes Watershed Conservation Alliance were also informally reviewed with a focus on the group's efforts to preserve the Upper Lake and Cedar Swamp region with its unique stand of Atlantic White Cedars.

The Power Point slides for several formal presentations are included on this web site.

They include the following:

- An introduction that provides an agenda and that encouraged attendee participation in a citizens' forum discussion.
- A Historical Perspective of the Bolton Lakes Watershed that was assembled by the Friends of Bolton Lakes. Its purpose was to provide both a history of how the Bolton Lakes were formed as well as to assemble data and observations over a period of 50 years which may help form a basis for future watershed management activities.
- A description of the Friends of Bolton Lakes multi year volunteer monitoring program that gathers water chemistry data and observations that provide early warning of issues as well as contribute to the creation of a scientific knowledge base to support long range, sustainable, affordable and environmentally sound watershed management methods.

The Friends of Bolton Lakes wish to thank the Town of Bolton for the use of the Town Hall, all those who attended and especially all those who presented and participated in the discussions. It is only through active collaboration of State, Towns and citizens that we can hope to preserve and protect the watershed for current and future generations to enjoy.

We look forward to continuing this Forum series in 2016.