

Welcome to the Bolton Lakes Region

Prepared by the Friends of Bolton Lakes 2020

Whether you reside on the lakes or nearby, you have chosen to live in an area that's a recreational treasure with welcoming friends and families.

The Region

The Bolton Lakes Region is made up of three lakes, Upper Bolton Lake [50 acres with a 3' mean depth], Middle Bolton Lake [121 acres with a 12' mean depth] and Lower Bolton Lake [175 acres with an 11' mean depth].

The lakes region is part of a much larger watershed that extends into the towns of Bolton, Coventry, Tolland and Vernon [over 2,000 acres]. Native Americans used this watershed for their hunting grounds decades ago. Ultimately these lands were given over to the European settlers where many of the old hunting trails soon developed into the roads that we travel today.

In the mid-nineteenth century local industrial development was instrumental in the forming of the Willimantic Reservoir from what was a naturally flowing river. This large body of water was used as the source to power downstream energy stations and mills. Later, in the early twentieth century the reservoir was restructured into three impoundments known as the Bolton Lakes. They were soon turned over to the state.

The State's Department of Energy & Environmental Protection [DEEP] owns the dams and the water and manages its downstream flow. Properties on the lake are protected by seasonal water drawdown and restoration. These drawdown efforts control the flow of water through the watershed.

Annually, the towns of Bolton and Vernon request the drawdown. If approved by the DEEP Commissioner, it will commence on or about October 15th and continue until the approved drawdown water level has been reached. DEEP will notify the towns at least two weeks in advance

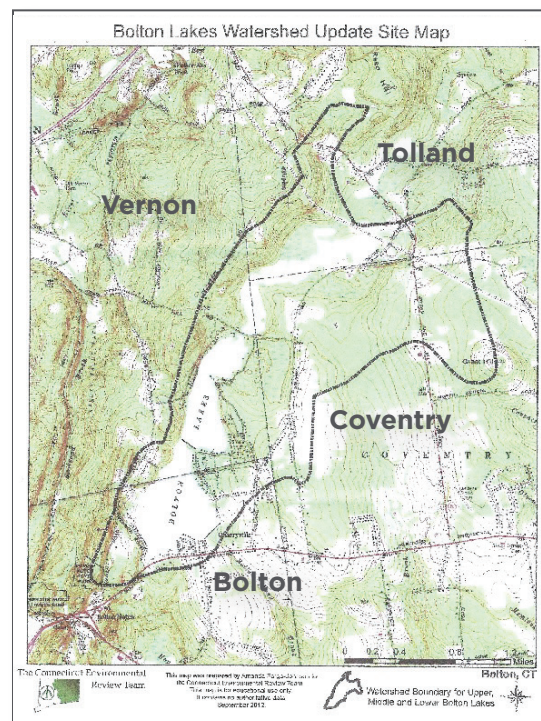
of the drawdown so that property owners or other stakeholders can make appropriate preparations.

DEEP will take the appropriate steps to restore the lake to its normal functional surface level. By April 15th DEEP will determine if weather conditions warrant earlier or later restoration of the lake and notify the towns of its intentions.

In addition to the water management by the state, the Regional Water Pollution Control Authority was formed to manage sewers and sewer usage in the lakes region.

Your Watershed

What each household does as a resident of the Bolton Lakes Watershed has a direct bearing on the health, beauty and sustainability of these resources.



The outlined area runs north & south

The Friends of Bolton Lakes (FBL)

FBL, a not-for-profit organization, was established in 2013 to protect and enhance the ecological health of the watershed and its surrounding areas. The organization brings citizens together to provide one voice related to the needs of this important resource.

FBL promulgated five basic goals,

1. Provide an organization from which citizens can work together on issues related to the health and wellbeing of the Bolton Lakes region and the watershed.
2. Collaborate with towns, state and other organizations to advocate for activities on behalf of the lakes and watershed that are beneficial to the lakes and/or cost-effective.
3. Establish citizen-based monitoring of the lakes to proactively assure early problem identification and intervention, and to assist towns and state with lake and watershed management
4. Identify and engage organizations and expert resources to support the development of an effective lake and watershed management activity that will ensure long-range lake health and minimize cost to towns and state.
5. Disseminate information and organize educational opportunities for watershed and lake residents that encourage and support ecologically sound land and lake water use practices. Makes every effort to notify its membership in advance of the date and depth of the annual lakes drawdown.

These goals have been met with a number of accomplishments during the past several years. The membership of over 150 residents has assisted in the following areas:

- Remediation of Lower Bolton Lake;
- Developed a web site for communications of important and information topics;
- Developed a collaboration among the state and towns to better manage and monitor winter drawdowns;
- Organized and hosted annual Bolton Lakes Community Forums to listen to and inform its membership;
- Created a science committee that regularly gathers data for water quality and water chemistry then report its findings to the proper authorities;
- Communicates the date of the annual drawdown and water treatment undertakings to its members.

Join Us

FBL encourages each resident to partake in the organization's activities and participate in their board meetings at 6:30 P.M. on the third Wednesday of each month at the Bolton Notch Building. Agendas, important events, newsletters, membership and other information are posted on the FBL web site:

www.friendsofboltonlakes.org

You may contact FBL at
FBL@FriendsofBoltonLakes.org



Bolton Lakes Watershed Property Care

Many residents in proximity to the lakes have been connected to the pressurized sewer system. This has eliminated the need for septic tank systems and should reduce the amount of nutrient flow into the watershed. Fully functional in 2015, and regulated and operated by the Bolton Lakes Regional Water Pollution Control Authority, FBL is hopeful that is an important step forward in preserving the health of the lakes. There are regulations and best practices that homeowners should be aware of:

- The Town of Bolton web site has information on regulations and best practices under section entitled Bolton Lakes Sewer Project: <http://www.bolton.govoffice.com>
- The Friends of Bolton Lakes can also provide additional information on operation and maintenance of the grinder pumps.

How to Care for Shorefront Property in Connecticut (adapted from a Wisconsin publication)

The quality of our lakes and streams is ultimately a reflection of how we take care of our land.

Waterfront property owners, inland residents, recreational users, agricultural producers and other businesses all can play a positive role in maintaining and improving the water quality of our lakes and streams.

Healthy watersheds make healthy lakes and bring higher property values. The quality of our lakes and streams is ultimately a reflection of how we take care of our land. Gravity along with weather events or construction can move substances applied to the land into our lakes and streams.

A watershed is the land area that drains into a lake or stream. Waterfront property owners, as well as inland residents, recreational users, agricultural producers and other businesses all can play a positive role in maintaining and improving the water quality of our lakes and streams. Check with your town as to dates and locations for drop off of hazardous waste.

1. Curb pollutants at their source – fertilizers, household toxins, eroding soils, malfunctioning septic systems. If you must fertilize, choose zero phosphorus fertilizer. Remember, it's phosphorus that accelerates algae growth in our lakes and rivers. Most lawns and gardens already contain adequate – and often excessive – amounts of phosphorus. Connecticut now has a law prohibiting application of fertilizers containing phosphorus to established lawns unless one of three conditions is met. One condition is that no fertilizer containing phosphorus be applied to any portion of a lawn that is located 20 feet or less from any brook, stream, river, lake, pond or Long Island Sound. Phosphorus is an essential nutrient for aquatic plants. However, when too much phosphorus makes its way into our lakes and streams it promotes the rapid growth of weeds and algae and decreases water clarity, often turning lakes green. Decaying algae also depletes

oxygen in the water, so that fish can no longer thrive. Human activities contribute a great deal to the amount of phosphorus that enters a lake or stream. If you follow the instructions on a bag of fertilizer containing phosphorus, you may be adding over 50 pounds of phosphorus to a half-acre lot each year.

2. Reduce runoff – cut the amount of runoff that picks up pollutants and carries them to the waterway by minimizing the hard surfaces that creates runoff. Do not pour old motor oil or pesticides into the ditch or wash paintbrushes at the end of your driveway. Where do these pollutants end up? In our groundwater, lakes and streams! Gasoline, oil, solvents, old paints, thinners, fertilizers, pesticides, cleaners, pet waste and many other products need to be disposed of properly. The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) organizes household hazardous waste programs and collection schedules for many Connecticut towns.
3. Capture and cleanse – capture and cleanse pollutant-carrying runoff before it reaches the waterway - with shore land buffers, rain barrels or rain gardens. When you're planning a construction project, follow these steps to protect the lake: "*Caring for our Lakes*" is a free booklet developed by Connecticut DEEP and available for download at: [http://www.ct.eov/deep/lib/deep/water/lakes/Caring for Our Lakes.pdf](http://www.ct.eov/deep/lib/deep/water/lakes/Caring%20for%20Our%20Lakes.pdf).
4. Inspect and maintain the septic system regularly. Just like owning a car, there is maintenance, inspection and service required for septic systems in order to prevent premature failure.
5. Minimize the amount of hard surfaces like rooftops and driveways on your property.
6. Build a rain garden to absorb runoff from downspouts. *Rain Gardens in Connecticut: A Design Guide for Homeowners* provides easy-to-follow instructions to designing, planting and maintaining a rain garden.

How does a rain garden work? Rain gardens are just what they sound like – areas that soak up rain water during wet times and serve as a beautiful garden all the time. They are landscaped areas planted to wildflowers and other native vegetation to replace areas of lawn. The gardens fill with a few inches of water and allow the water to slowly filter into the ground. The plants in the rain garden act as filters for the rain water, helping to slow the runoff and allowing it to soak into the ground rather than flowing out into storm sewers, ditches, or drainage ways on the way to lakes and streams. Keeping rain on your property, where it naturally belongs, will help solve some of our water pollution problems. In addition to the benefits they provide to our water supply, rain gardens also provide wildlife habitat for birds, butterflies and dragonflies and are an aesthetically pleasing addition to any property.

Boating Safety & Security & Violations

Boaters are welcome on the Bolton Lakes. Every boater should know the rules and etiquette needed to have a safe and enjoyable experience. The State of Connecticut requires a 6 MPH speed limit and a no wake zone. The allowable motor size is limited to 6 HP. Ensure that your boat has the appropriate number of life preservers. There are public swimming areas and camp aquatic zones that are used by children. Be mindful of these areas and stay clear.

A special note for ice fishing – please pack all trash and food and remove it when you leave.

If you observe anything unusual, please call the DEEP hot line – 860-424-3333.

Emergency Numbers

Town of Bolton

Emergency	911
Resident State Trooper	860-643-6060 or 860-465-5400
Emergency number during Bolton Town Hall business hours	860-649-8066 x6111
Emergency number off-hours	860-375-0112
Sewer Emergency	BLRWPCA (Bolton Lakes Regional Water Pollution Control Authority)
Volunteer Firehouse, routine calls	860-649-3910
Health Department, Bolton Office	860-649-8066 x 6108
To report trespassing, illegal activity on Town property (beach at Indian Notch) call State Police Resident Trooper	860-643-6060
Routine questions or problems	860-649-8066 x6111
For animal control issues, contact the Vernon Animal Control Officer	860-992-4166
Emergency Notification System	www.bolton.govoffice.com

Town of Vernon

Emergency: 911	911
Fire Department, routine calls	860-871-7468
Police Department, routine calls	860-872-9126
Sewer Emergency during business hours for overflows, blockages, and other sewer emergencies the Sewer Department Business Office	860-870-3699
Sewer Emergency all other hours, Vernon Police Department	860-872-9126
Dog Warden	860-870-3558
Animal Control	860-872-9126
Health Department during business hours	860-872-1501 or 745-0383
Health Department after hours	860-870-9126

“A Lake Carries You Into Recesses Of Feeling Otherwise Impenetrable.”

– William Wordsworth

As a resident of the Bolton Lakes Region and its watershed you are a valued constituent. YOU have the ability to control land use, runoff, toxic materials, and water quality and preserve shoreline structures. You are a stakeholder and have a voice. Please use the resources of the Friends of Bolton Lake – *your association* – to keep the watershed in a pristine condition. FBL offers a good platform to express your ideas, contribute your time and energies and participate in educational forums.

Friends of Bolton Lakes
www.friendsofboltonlakes.org

email
FBL@FriendsofBoltonLakes.org

