



FEDERATION OF VERMONT LAKES AND PONDS, INC.
MINUTES—EIGHTH ANNUAL MEETING
JULY 27, 2009

The eighth annual meeting of The Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds, Inc. was held at The Steak House in Berlin, Vermont on July 27, 2009. President Perry Thomas welcomed all participants and called the meeting to order at 9:15 AM. Officers and Board members were introduced, including President Perry Thomas, Vice-President Andy Dales, Treasurer Judy Davis, Secretary Jo Wright, and Board members Cliff Aikens, Art Brooks, Nancy Darrah, Ginny Garrison, Reggie Lamb, John Larrabee, and Don Weaver. In attendance were representatives from 24 lakes and ponds and representatives from the VT Agency of Natural Resources' Water Quality Division.

President Thomas thanked Reggie Lamb for finding the new, spacious location for the meeting, and Ginny Garrison for her work on the spring newsletter. She described the Federation's five committees: Membership Development and Outreach (Chair, John Larrabee); Public Relations and Outreach (Chair, Don Weaver); Legislative Affairs (Chair, Ginny Garrison); Lake Issues (Chair, Judy Davis); and Nominations (Chair, Andy Dales). The President also announced the state grant that the Federation received this year to support efforts to educate lakeshore property owners about the benefits of maintaining lakeshore buffer areas. The agenda for the day was reviewed.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: The minutes from the 2008 annual meeting were reviewed. John Washburn moved that the minutes be approved as written. Andy Dales seconded the motion and the motion passed.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer Judy Davis distributed a financial report showing income and expenses for calendar year 2008 and calendar year 2009 through 7/26/09. The Federation had \$2,605.36 more in income than expenses in 2008, but \$1,033.84 of that was owed to NEC NALMS for dues collected and splitting the conference profit. John Washburn asked what is the net worth of the Federation. As of July 26, 2009, the Federation has \$2,216.09 in the checking account and approximately \$6,000 in a money market account. Current membership includes 24 lakes and ponds, one commercial membership, and 18 individual memberships. Noting that several associations that were members last year are not this year, it was asked what prompts lake associations to join. Don Weaver noted that reminder notices have not been sent out, but they will be and he expects the other associations who had joined in the past will do so again. The question was asked of the membership if any lake associations reach out to members to encourage them to join FOVLAP as individuals. John Larrabee said that individual members weren't being recruited much yet, as the Federation is focusing on what it can offer members before recruiting them. John Larrabee moved that the Treasurer's Report be accepted. Don Weaver seconded the motion and the motion passed.

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES SCHOLARSHIP REPORT: Jackie Sprague, Chair of FOVLAP's Scholarship Committee, described FOVLAP's Environmental Studies Scholarship, which is managed through VSAC. This is the third year FOVLAP has offered a \$500 scholarship to a student pursuing a major in environmental science/water quality protection. VSAC first screens applicants, and then FOVLAP's Scholarship Committee decides on the successful recipient. This year Nathan Moore of Wilmington, a junior at Paul Smith's College, has been named as our scholarship recipient. Nathan also received the scholarship as a freshman. The Committee considered the pros and cons of giving the scholarship to the same student twice, and decided it was warranted here for Nathan.

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ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS: Andy Dales, chair of FOVLAP's Nominations Committee, explained that FOVLAP has four officers with 2-year terms, with two officer positions up for election each year. There are also nine directors with 3-year terms, with three director positions up for election each year. This year, with the nomination of Ginny Garrison to Secretary, her seat, with two years remaining, is also open, and with the resignation of Cliff Aikens due to health concerns, the remaining year of his term is open. Andy presented the following slate of nominations to fill these positions:

Vice-President: Andy Dales, a 2-year term (2009-2011), re-elect
Secretary: Ginny Garrison, a 2-year term (2009-2011), replacing Jo Wright

Directors:

3-year terms (2009-2012):

Greg Allen (Lake Morey), replacing Dave Wood
Cindy Swanson (Echo Lake), replacing Reggie Lamb
Don Weaver (Lake Champlain), re-elect

2-year term (2009-2011)

Al Muenster (Halls Lake), replacing Ginny Garrison

1-year term (2009-2010)

Laura Zantzinger (Silver Lake), replacing Cliff Aikens

Carry-over officers and directors are:

Perry Thomas, President, term expires 2010

Judy Davis, Treasurer, term expires 2010

Art Brooks, Director, term expires 2010

Nancy Darrah, Director, term expires 2010

Bill Fisk, Director, term expires 2011

John Larrabee, Director, term expires 2011

The nominations were closed. Don Weaver moved that the slate be approved as presented, Reggie Lamb seconded the motion, and the slate was approved as presented.

Perry Thomas presented the outgoing Directors with toolboxes (or garden implement boxes) handmade in Craftsbury to Cliff Aikens (Silver Lake), Reggie Lamb (Woodbury Lake), Joanna Wright (Lake Iroquois), and Dave Wood (in absentia). A round of applause was given to all for their many years of service to FOVLAP.

VTDEC/WQD LAKES AND PONDS SECTION REPORT: Susan Warren, VTDEC Lakes and Ponds Section Chief, introduced the Water Quality Division staff in attendance – Ann Bove, Leslie Matthews, Amy Picotte, and Ethan Swift.

- She announced that a special Lay Monitoring Program report was done to commemorate the 30th year of the LMP in 2008. This year seven lay monitors are monitoring periphyton (attached algae) in addition to other parameters.
- Angela Shambaugh worked with the VT Department of Health over the winter to develop a protocol for inland lakes to evaluate blue-green algae blooms – how to identify them and what warrants concern. It is being tested on Lake Memphremagog this summer. See Susan if you would like more information about this protocol.
- There is a display about water chestnut available for viewing at the meeting.
- The Water Quality Division is implementing new field program spread prevention procedures based on a HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) approach to prevent the spread of VHS, didymo, whirling disease, zebra mussel veligers, and other invasive species and diseases that

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are not visible to the eye. Each field program is developing a checklist of procedures to be taken specific to the program.

- The Division is working with several lake associations on watershed surveys: Lake St. Catherine (Jim Canders), Calais Lakes (Laura Brown), Seymour Lake (Peggy + Bruce Barter), Lake Parker (Dave Washburn); several lake associations are doing work to control road erosion (Maidstone, Groton, Silver, Caspian); and northern Lake Champlain (Don Weaver) is working on controlling phosphorus inputs to the lake. Contact the DEC basin planner in your area if you are interested in working with the DEC on watershed surveys or other lake protection projects. There is also a watershed survey booklet available to help in conducting surveys. Contact Susan Warren for a copy of the booklet.
- In response to the aquatic invasive species bill passed by the Legislature this year (H.015 now Act 46, see Legislative Affairs report), a rapid response protocol and general permit is being developed. The ANR also has to submit two reports to the Legislature next January – one on how to raise additional funds for aquatic nuisance control grants, and one on invasive species in general. They are working with the Department of Agriculture, TNC and others on the latter report.
- In response to a question regarding the impact of state budget cuts on lakes and ponds programs, Susan indicated that two of seven planner positions were eliminated; Susan's previous position was lost; they most likely won't be filling any positions that become vacant; and there's less money for printing, travel, sample analyses, etc.

FOVLAP WEBSITE UPDATE: Don Weaver, chair of FOVLAP's Public Relations Committee, reported that there is an email address on the website now for folks to contact the Federation: fovlap@vermontlakes.org. The website will be getting a facelift soon, including legislative links and lake association links. He asked folks to email FOVLAP with suggestions for what they would like to see on the website.

VTDEC INVASIVE SPECIES PROGRAM REPORTS:

Leslie Matthews, Environmental Scientist, VTDEC, gave updates on the Access Area Greeter and VIP Programs:

- Leslie reported that the second annual boat access greeter program training was held in May. There are about 24 greeter programs in Vermont now, with three new ones this year (Eden, Halls, Willoughby). Greeter programs educate the public at access areas regarding invasive species spread prevention. Programs send their volunteers/staff to be trained each year.
- Leslie also reported that the Vermont Invasive Patroller Program, launched in 2007, has trained approximately 230 volunteers to-date to search for new invasive species. She has already held three VIP training sessions this summer, with two more planned. She will work with people interested in hosting workshops. Workshops are 4 hours, and attendees commit to searching their chosen waterbody two times/year for new invasive species. VIP time can be used as local match for aquatic nuisance control grants from the state.
- A question was asked regarding what could be done about the Dept. of Fish and Wildlife's permit fee for greeter programs at access areas, which is perceived as unfair. President Perry Thomas told the attendees that FOVLAP wrote a letter to ANR Secretary Wood about this, asking that the fee be waived. We will also raise the issue with him later in this meeting.
- A question was asked regarding where funds could be found to support additional greeter programs on Lake Champlain. Leslie noted that there are 45 species of concern in Lake Champlain, and currently there are eight greeter programs at access areas on the lake. Private foundations are a potential source of funding. The US Army Corps of Engineers cut Vermont's aquatic nuisance funds in half this year.
- A question was asked regarding what Quebec is doing with greeter programs. Leslie responded that Vermont is working closely with NY and the Adirondack Park Agency on Lake Champlain greeter programs, but she is not familiar with Quebec's programs. Meg Modley from the Lake Champlain Basin Program may know more.

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Ann Bove, Environmental Scientist, VTDEC, gave an update on the status of aquatic invasive species in Vermont:

- Lake Champlain and 20 other waterbodies have water chestnut. There are live water chestnut plants on display at the meeting for folks to view.
- There is also a live sample of Vermont's newest invasive plant, variable-leaf watermilfoil, on display.
- Ann noted that it is important to remember that 79% of Vermont's 280 lakes greater than 20 acres in size are NOT known to have Eurasian watermilfoil. This makes spread prevention programs so critical. She emphasized the annual price tag of running an access area greeter program (roughly \$5K) versus the annual cost of controlling Eurasian watermilfoil once it is in a lake (\$50-100K). She explained that aquatic nuisance management programs are primarily locally funded.
- In response to a question about why have a greeter program on a lake that already has Eurasian watermilfoil, members of the audience explained that greeter programs can still protect Eurasian watermilfoil-infested lakes from other invasive species such as zebra mussels, and they can keep Eurasian watermilfoil from leaving the lake to potentially infest other lakes.
- In response to a question whether pesticides would ever be allowed to control Eurasian watermilfoil in Lake Champlain, Ann responded that non-chemical alternatives are available there, particularly as watermilfoil would rapidly re-invade any treated area from other areas of the lake.
- In response to a question about the longevity of control with pesticides, Ann responded that to-date there have been 10-11 pesticide treatments to control Eurasian watermilfoil in Vermont, with control generally lasting the year of treatment and one year after.
- Ann noted that there is currently no research underway in Vermont regarding the use of weevils to control Eurasian watermilfoil. Joanna Wright has been rearing weevils for introduction into Lake Iroquois for nine years now. Weevils as a watermilfoil control method are still unpredictable. Success is related to lake-specific factors such as predation, Eurasian watermilfoil health, and the ability of the weevils to reproduce. Aquatic nuisance control grant-in-aid funds can be used to fund weevils.

REMARKS BY ANR SECRETARY JONATHAN WOOD: Susan Warren introduced ANR Secretary Jonathan Wood. He is a forester with a degree in environmental science. He's an avid angler, and worked on stream water quality while in college. He became Secretary last November after six years as Commissioner of the VT Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation. Secretary Wood noted that ANR needs partnerships, and he would like to partner with FOVLAP. State agencies just received notice of a budget downgrade, with a 2.5% rescission for ANR expected soon. This will impact important programs. He believes ANR needs to be more proactive, especially concerning invasive species. This is one of the biggest threats to Vermont's natural resources, and he wants to see more resources go here. He also noted that stormwater pollution is a significant water quality challenge, and he doesn't want to cut resources there. Other major challenges are climate change and acid deposition. We are a global ecosystem now, and these problems reach beyond Vermont's borders. He believes Vermont can lead the way in emissions controls and developing a sustainable society. He asked FOVLAP to tell him how he should manage the state's natural resources.

John Larrabee brought up the access area permit fee currently being charged to access area greeter programs by Fish and Wildlife. He noted how unfair this fee is, since the programs are established entirely to protect the state's waters. Secretary Wood responded that motorboat registration fees and hunting and fishing revenue pays for access areas. Other activities are not a "priority use" of the access area. However, Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board rules allow the Commissioner of Fish and Wildlife to allow for special uses. Secretary Wood said he thought the permit fee should be waived. He indicated he would look into it and intended to have Commissioner Laroche waive the permit fee for access area greeter programs. When asked if a multi-year permit might be possible, he indicated most likely not, as this is not their procedure.

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The issue of the lack of enforcement against boats not registered in Vermont being on lakes for more than 30 days in a year was raised. Secretary Wood responded that this is a very difficult thing to enforce.

When asked about the status of the Clean and Clear Program, Secretary Wood indicated that he is working closely with the Secretary of Agriculture. A challenge is the economic aspects of agriculture. Clean and Clear engineers work throughout the state, not just in the Lake Champlain basin. The Governor is clearly behind the Clean and Clear Program, but he does expect there will be some rescission there.

When asked why Vermont doesn't put more effort towards the environment (we are no longer a national leader here), he noted that ANR is working to advocate for environmental protection. However, he believes the Legislature has put human services and education over the environment, and the state can't be the "best" in every aspect of state government.

When asked about ANR's position on lakeshore buffers and the bill that is currently in the Legislature, Secretary Wood indicated that ANR is generally supportive of buffers, but the devil is in the details. Vermont has a history of no top-down zoning regulation. He believes bottom-up is a much better mechanism for getting zoning regulation. In addition, ANR cannot handle a new program. When asked specifically, he did feel that buffer regulations for lakes, only, might be an easier sell. Judy Davis emphasized that lakes provide valuable ecosystem services to the state, and thus are important for the state to protect. Secretary Wood responded that the current thinking is to provide incentives to folks to do the right thing to protect these ecosystem services. One of his favorite phrases is: "Vermont landowners like to do the right thing until you tell them they have to."

An attendee noted that seasonal conversions of camps with septic systems are happening more and more. Secretary Wood indicated that permits are needed to convert seasonal camps to year-round occupancy. Permits are also needed for additional bedrooms, and/or to increase the size ("footprint") of the building.

LAKE REPORTS: Lake Reports were given by 22 lakes and ponds, with 7 given before lunch, including Lake Willoughby, Woodbury Lake, South Pond, Silver Lake, Shadow Lake, Lake Seymour, and Fairfield Pond.

LUNCH

VARIABLE –LEAF WATERMILFOIL UPDATE: Ann Bove gave an update on the population of variable-leaf watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum heterophyllum*) that was found in Halls Lake last fall. This is the first sighting of this non-native invasive plant in Vermont. The population is primarily located in a 3-acre area of Halls Lake with approximately 300 individual plants found in 23 other locations around the lake. The VTDEC has been aggressively handpulling the population. Last fall they removed 52 cubic feet of plant material. This spring they removed 4.3 cubic feet of plant material...a sign they are making progress. This new invasive species underscores the need for vigilance by VIPs and access area greeter programs. Variable-leaf watermilfoil can out-compete Eurasian watermilfoil!

PLENARY SPEAKER: Kellie Merrell, Aquatic Biologist, VTDEC, gave an engaging presentation titled *Just How Good are Vermont's Lakes? Water quality and habitat integrity in Vermont lakes and reservoirs in relation to regional and national conditions*. Her presentation included results from the recent National Lakes Assessment and Vermont's associated Lakes Survey. Kellie described the water quality indicators developed through the surveys, and what we've learned from the results. It is noteworthy that FOVLAP is the first lake association group in the country to see these results!

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The National Lakes Assessment included 10 lakes in Vermont, chosen through a probabilistic sampling design. The Vermont Survey added 40 lakes so we can compare Vermont's results to National Lakes Assessment results from the region and the nation. Kellie emphasized that the lake-specific data collected is not used to say something about a specific lake, or to make management decisions about that lake, as the sampling was only conducted one time.

Some key findings of the sampling programs:

- 49% of the nation's lakes have good biological integrity.
67% of the lakes in the northern Appalachian region (our region) have good biological integrity.
- 14% of the lakes in the northern Appalachians have considerable loss of taxa (groups of aquatic organisms).
- 0.4% of the lakes in the northern Appalachians have a high risk of blue-green algae blooms (note that the samples were taken in the middle of lakes, not where blue-green algae blooms usually accumulate). This is lower than the national risk.
- 74% of Vermont's lakes ranked "very good" in relation to total phosphorus concentrations.
- 85% of Vermont's lakes are well buffered (against acid rain). 12% are stressed by acid deposition, and 3% are impaired.
- Only 52% of Vermont lakes ranked "good" in relation to shoreland disturbance. 38% ranked "fair" and 10% ranked "poor."
- Regionally, high phosphorus concentrations affect about 20% of lakes. Susceptibility to acid rain only affects about 5% of the lakes regionally. However, more than 50% of lakes regionally are in fair or poor condition in relation to shoreland disturbance.
- Kellie noted the disparity between the larger number of lakes in Vermont affected by shoreland disturbance (48%) versus the greater emphasis (funding and programs) spent on controlling phosphorus (26% of lakes affected) and acid rain (15% of lakes affected).

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: Ginny Garrison, chair of FOVLAP's Legislative Affairs Committee, handed out a 2009 Legislative Affairs Committee Report (attached). The key piece of legislation passed this year was H.015, the aquatic invasive species bill. The Committee will be reviewing the two reports ANR is required to submit to the Legislature next January. Most of the other bills introduced in the Legislature last year are still in their original committee, and it is expected that most of them will not be acted upon next year. Folks interested in obtaining updates during the legislative session should join FOVLAP's Yahoo email discussion group.

LAKE REPORTS: Lake Reports were given by 15 lakes and ponds after lunch, including Peacham Pond, Lake Parker, North Montpelier Pond, Lake Morey, Miles Pond, Maidstone Lake, Lake Memphremagog, Little Hosmer Pond, Lake Iroquois, Lake Hortonia/Burr Pond, Harveys Lake, Halls Lake, Lake Groton, Lake Eden, and Caspian Lake. In addition, the Northern Lake Champlain Advisory Committee passed on giving a report, and representatives from Curtis Pond had been present earlier in the day, but had left by the time the reports were given. As always, the lake reports contained a wealth of interesting and informative information about what groups are doing to protect the water quality of Vermont's lakes and prevent or reduce the spread of invasive nuisance species, what challenges they face and creative solutions to those challenges. Many lake representatives spoke about their involvement in the VIP and access greeter programs, lay monitoring, stream monitoring, and lake and watershed surveys. Many expressed their concern over increasing development pressure and the conversion of seasonal camps to year-round homes. The reduction in funds available for aquatic nuisance management and spread prevention programs is creating a real challenge for groups. Silver Lake reported they celebrated their 25th anniversary this year, with a Sabra Field print "Mountain Lake" made especially for the anniversary. Loon chicks were reported on only two lakes this year (one chick each). Creative fundraising, educational and buffer-promoting activities were reported, including among others, a pictorial CD of changes around the watershed from the 1800s to present, a book of

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cottage histories, a lake calendar, plant swaps for shoreland buffer plants, welcome packages for new shoreland owners, a new booklet adapted from Squam Lake in NH (*50 Ways to Save Squam Lake*), scholarships, an essay contest, and new and updated websites. Thanks to all the dedicated volunteers who spend countless hours caring for their special lake!

OTHER BUSINESS: A lake association representative asked why the Annual Meeting is always held the fourth Monday in July. An earlier date would be before many of the member associations' annual meetings, and thus information gained at FOVLAP's meeting could be brought back to member associations at their annual meetings. Perry explained that the date of the Annual Meeting is set in FOVLAP's Bylaws.

DOOR PRIZES: A loon photo went to Reggie Lamb; a water lily photo went to Bert Desrochers; and a handmade Craftsbury toolbox went to David VanShagen.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 PM, and all were wished safe travels home.

Respectfully submitted,

Ginny Garrison, Secretary