



FEDERATION OF VERMONT LAKES AND PONDS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Summary Minutes February 6, 2023

Very successful Mini-webinar presented by Alison Marchione, Lake Shoreland Coordinator, Feb. 21st: Allison's "Overview of the Lake Wise Program" contained a wealth of ideas and information on how to restore lake front properties and help protect our lakes. Find the [recording here](#).
Watch for information concerning additional webinars to be presented soon in email messages from FOVLAP and/or on the FOVLAP website. You can also sign-up for weekly email updates collected from all the new postings on the FOVLAP website in digest form [here](#).

VSAC (Vermont Students Assistance Corporation) will soon be sending out information about scholarships. **Look for the application to apply for a FOVLAP scholarship.**

[Fall 2022/Winter 2023 Newsletter](#) now available on the website.

News of water-related bills:

- **H.84:** <https://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2024/H.84>
 - FOVLAP supports this bill since the revision it will make to the statute will allow petitions from oligotrophic lakes for reclassification to A1 status to proceed. See Oliver Pierson's Update below.
- **H. 51: AIS Prevention Sticker** <https://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2024/H.51>
 - FOVLAP continues to support this bill that would provide the greatly needed funds for AIS prevention and management on a more stable and permanent basis for the ever threatening aquatic invasives on the doorstep of so many of the inland lakes.
- **H. 31: Herbicide moratorium:** <https://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2024/H.31>
 - FOVLAP does not support this bill.

Rule-making by DEC on wake boats is proceeding. Public comments on the proposed draft rules were taken at a hybrid public meeting February 15th in Greensboro, VT.. This was a pre-rulemaking meeting to gather input. The next step, if approved by ANR Secretary Julie Moore, will be the formal rulemaking process which will include more public hearings and additional opportunities for submission of written comments. To view the DEC draft rule click [here](#). Pat spoke on behalf of FOVLAP in support of the rules presented by DEC.

Two New Pages On Our Website

Check out two new pages on the FOVLAP website - Tactical Basin Plan and Aquatic Invasive Species Funding **Membership/membership renewals** available on the website [Member Community](#). Please take a moment to update your member and association profiles.

DEC/ANR Update: Oliver Pierson

Water bills: Preparing for hearings in case DEC staff are called to testify but here is the ANR position on a few relevant bills:

- ANR **does not** support **H31** -moratorium on herbicide in Lake Bomoseen,
- **H51**- ANR does not support the AIS decal bill, because Governor does not support new fees
- **H64**- ANR does not support this effort to regulate wake boats at the municipal level in oligotrophic lakes.
- **H84**- administration **does support** this amendment to the indirect discharge rules to get rid of 1000 gal/day for new septic systems, and replace it with permitting options. This bill is complemented by the new Anti-Degradation Rule. A meeting with Legislative Committee on Administrative Rulemaking to present the rule will be scheduled next. The intent and reasons for changing the 1000 gpd rule are counter intuitive, nuanced, and require explanation, which has resulted in some misunderstandings. Oliver had conversations with Amy Sheldon, House chair of Environment and Energy, who had concerns about the bill. He has not had a conversation with

Chris Bray, head of Senate Natural Resources and Environment, but has been told he understands and supports the bill. A number of organizations, including FOVLAP, are supporting the bill.

Reviewing responses to RFPs for new Lake Watershed Action Plans (LWAP) for 1) Echo and Seymour Lakes and 2) for Big Pond / Woodbury Lake, Halls Lake and Lake Rescue.

Wake Boats – Oliver briefed all 36 Fish and Wildlife game wardens on the process for rule-making for wake boats and got useful feedback and interesting ideas. Game wardens enforce rules, are pro-conservation, and therefore support the draft wakeboat regulation, even if it means trickier enforcement challenges. DEC is gearing up to Feb. 15th public meeting to get feedback on the draft rule.

- Info on wake sports meeting: <https://dec.vermont.gov/event/public-meeting-provide-update-proposed-draft-wake-boat-rules>

Salt used for deicing and for stabilization of dust on roads – chloride concentration is increasing in tributaries, particularly around state and municipal roads- ex. Lake Willoughby because of tributaries and Rte. 5 and also in Lake Champlain. Angela has raised this issue many times, since concentrations as low as 50 mg/l are harmful to zooplankton. EPA is looking at revising its standards for toxicity for ions like chloride, and DEC will also consider doing the same in its Water Quality Standards. DEC put together some graphics and information that will go out soon, hearings have been held in the Transportation committee about use of chloride and DEC will try to keep the discussion going. Any discussions about chloride in VT lead back to Angela's great work!

Governor released budget for state fiscal 2024 – starts July 1, 2023. Difficult to locate budget at present. Budget eliminates on July 1 the vacant position in Lakes and Ponds that was held open (Amy Picotte's position). The hope was that in the upcoming fiscal year it would be filled. But, because it was held open for so long, it was swept by Dept. of Human Resources in favor of supplying a position in other Agencies that don't have a position but need one. Legislature could still move to reinstate.



What Are Snow Fleas?

During warmer periods in winter, critters known as snow fleas, about two to three millimeters in length and blue-black in color, can be found speckling the snow near your house. **Snow fleas are not actually fleas — and officially, they aren't classified as insects, either!** Often referred to as “springtails” and classified as hexapods, a subtype of the arthropod family, these tiny creatures have six legs, but are more closely related to crustaceans. Snow fleas are not something to fear, won't bite and are actually great for your lawn and gardens because they help to decompose organic material.

The Reason Behind the Name and How Far Can They Really Jump?

Snow fleas have the same super-powered jumping ability that regular fleas have. But unlike cat and dog fleas, which use powerful, enlarged hind legs to leap long distances, snow fleas have a sort of tail, called a furcula, that is responsible for their jumping. As the furcula unfolds, it launches the snow flea **several inches in one leap**— hence the name “springtail.”

Perhaps the most interesting thing about snow fleas is that they produce their own type of antifreeze, a protein that is rich in the amino acid glycine. Glycine prevents the formation and enlargement of ice crystals, enabling these creatures to rise to the surface of the snow to munch on organic materials despite the bitter cold. If you enjoy gardening, then you've probably encountered thousands of snow fleas in your lifetime without ever realizing it. In the summer, they tend to sit on top of rich topsoil but because they are so small and dark, most people don't notice them. They are an essential component in the ecosystem; feeding on decaying organic matter, thus helping it to decay faster.

Should you happen to spot these tiny hexapods this winter, take it as a good sign that the ecosystem in your yard is healthy and rich in plant matter.