



St. Albans Area Watershed Association

From the President

Eric Wolinsky

I am writing this from Hathaway Point Road Island; Hathaway Point Road has been closed for a few days now. The fun of driving across the water in a hay wagon behind a tractor has worn off. How exactly and to what extent the flooding will impact water quality has not been determined. The lake level is unprecedented, so there is not much data to go by. The cleanup may allow us to work on some longer term improvement projects.

There is much activity going on in our Lake cleanup efforts but the real progress of improving water quality continues to be slow but steady. We have a new administration in Montpelier, with new players in key positions. Julie Moore, the head of Clean and Clear from its beginning, has left government service. We will miss Julie. David Mears, formerly of the Vermont Law School is the new Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Conservation. David brings a new perspective to the Agency and has a long history of support for efforts to clean up the lake.

The EPA has taken the unprecedented step of opening up the TMDL. The TMDL (total maximum daily load) is both the total amount of phosphorus that the lake can support and still be clean and the name of the plan for achieving a clean lake. It is the document that controls the overall Lake cleanup efforts. Opening the TMDL contains some risks but also significant opportunity for rewards. The opportunity to review the overall plan for cleaning up the lake and having EPA support for those efforts, is a significant

opportunity for seeing increased action.

The Bay Association will continue to harvest weeds, and continue to look at improvements to this program. We will look at new technologies, new equipment and new ways to support the program. I believe that weed harvesting can and will have a significant role to play in our Bay restoration efforts.

The Town of Saint Albans has displayed a new and welcome interest in water quality issues. The Town voters have supported money for improving the Town Park beach. Engineering and permitting is underway to move sand up onto the rocks which will make removing the weeds with equipment much easier.

The ultimate goal is to return swimming to the town park, but in the short term, reducing the noxious smell would be a great first step. The opportunities for participation for all our members remain. Don't forget the Walk-a-thon on June 4th.

Come to our meetings the third

Wednesday of the month at 5:00 PM at the Town Park in the summer and the St. Albans Free Library in the winter. Finally, talking to Legislators is a significant help to our efforts. Many of the regulation are governed by State Law and changing those laws to better support our efforts is where we can make the most progress most quickly.

Thank you to all who volunteer and work to help support the Bay Association.

Thank you.



6th Annual
"Fun"
Walk or Run!

June 4, 2011

See insert for
details

Summer 2011
Weed Harvesting

Send your
contributions today!

P.O. Box 1567
St. Albans VT
05478

Please note on
check for
"weed harvesting"

or visit our website

We meet the
3rd Wednesday
of each month

Next Meeting
May 18th
5:00 p.m.

St. Albans
Free Library
Join us!

EPA Takes Step to Improve Lake Champlain Water Quality

Boston, Mass. – Jan. 24, 2011) – After a careful review, EPA has disapproved Vermont's 2002 water quality plan that set phosphorus targets for discharges into Lake Champlain. Following this action, EPA intends to work closely and collaboratively with the State to develop a new plan for reductions in phosphorus from sources in Vermont. Elevated levels of phosphorus cause algae blooms and other water quality problems in Lake Champlain. Today's action follows EPA's reconsideration and withdrawal of its 2002 approval of the plan. The Conservation Law Foundation had challenged that approval in federal court.

EPA's decision concerns Vermont's 2002 Lake Champlain Phosphorus "TMDL," a technical document that establishes the "Total Maximum Daily Load" for phosphorus in the lake. The TMDL is a pollution budget for an impaired water body, which identifies the pollutant loads that may be contributed by various sources at levels that will restore and maintain water quality. Under the federal Clean Water Act, TMDLs must meet certain requirements.

In the decision announced today, EPA concluded that certain aspects of Vermont's 2002 phosphorus TMDL for Lake Champlain did not satisfy federal requirements. EPA found that the TMDL did not provide sufficient assurance that phosphorus reductions from polluted runoff will be achieved, and it did not provide an adequate margin of safety to account for uncertainty in the analysis. EPA will now begin working closely with Vermont environmental officials to prepare a new TMDL for the parts of Lake Champlain addressed in Vermont's 2002 TMDL. During this upcoming process, EPA will ensure ample opportunity for public input.

"We plan to work together with the State in our shared goal of better protecting Lake Champlain," said Curt Spalding, regional administrator of EPA's New England office.

"Our action today doesn't mean that Vermont's earlier efforts haven't had value. But looking forward, clearly more needs to be done to address the challenges presented by ongoing pollution. This action also should not affect ongoing lake restoration projects such as those supported by Vermont's Clean and Clear initiative and the Lake Champlain Basin Program. These projects are very important and should continue while the TMDL is being revised."

With or without the 2002 TMDL in place, Lake Champlain remains impaired and in need of restoration. Water quality monitoring data clearly indicate that significant work is needed to reduce phosphorus to the levels necessary to protect the lake. In the past, some observers have speculated that a new TMDL could result in stricter pollution limits for wastewater treatment plants within the Lake Champlain basin, but Spalding cautioned that "It is too early to know what effect a revised TMDL will have on permits for wastewater treatment plant discharges or stormwater discharges. This will become clearer as the TMDL is developed."

Although this disapproval does not apply to the New York portion of the Lake Champlain TMDL (which was approved separately from the Vermont portion in 2002 and was not contested), EPA will seek to involve New York in the development of any aspects of the new Vermont TMDL that might affect the New York TMDL, including for example, any updates to the lake modeling work used to develop the phosphorus loading capacity of the lake.

Contact:

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(617) 918-1017

THANK YOU 2011 Walk-a-Thon SPONSORS!

It's happening
June 4, 2011

Burlington Bagel Bakery

Community National
Bank

Corporate Outfitters

Cross Consulting
Engineers

Dussault Auto Sales

Franklin County
Industrial Development
Corporation

Franklin County Regional
Chamber of Commerce

Hannaford

Mimmo's

Northwestern Medical
Center

Paul Poquette Realty

S.B. Collins



Remember to deposit your redeemable bottles and cans at the Lighthouse!

Located at the foot of Lake Street. Help support SAAWA's efforts and keep our environment litter free.

If you have some free time this summer and would like to assist with emptying the lighthouse & taking cans for redemption, contact us via e-mail at sawatershed@myfairpoint.net



**Become a Member or renew your Membership
St Albans Area Watershed Association**

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Summer Address (if applicable): _____

CHOOSE YOUR MEMBERSHIP LEVEL

- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|-------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|-------|
| Student | \$5 | _____ | Lake Advocate | \$ 50 | _____ |
| Individual | \$10 | _____ | | (receive a SAAWA Hat) | |
| | (under 18 receive a SAAWA Hat) | | Lake Steward | \$100 | _____ |
| Family | \$20 | _____ | | (receive a signed Mike Winslow book) | |
| | | | Business | \$150 | _____ |

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