

February 3, 2021

Senator Cohen and Representative Borer

Environment Committee, Co-Chairs

Legislative Office Building, Room 3200

Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Chairman Cohen, Chairman Borer, and Committee Members,

I am writing to you as a resident of the Lake Beseck community in support of H.B. No. 6384 An Act Concerning Aquatic Invasive Species' Effects on Lakes and Related Funding

As a resident of Middlefield, I have witnessed/experienced the challenges that the dense aquatic plants at Lake Beseck have created. Despite a drawdown schedule designed in part to assist with invasive aquatic plant control, our winter temperature patterns have changed; sustained colder temperatures are not being recorded until mid to late January. This effect has allowed nuisance weeds to become intolerable to many. According to past and recent studies, in order for winter drawdowns to be an effective way to manage invasive plants, two things need to be achieved 1) the sediments must be exposed to freezing temperatures and 2) this process is effective only after the sediments have had the opportunity to properly de-water.

The Town of Middlefield, Lake Beseck Environment Committee, and Lake Beseck Association have taken a whole approach to improve the Lake Beseck system. The Town of Middlefield has invested in a Watershed Management Plan, ongoing water and plant collection; and professional consultants. Efforts include annual workshops and events that provide the public with ideas on how they can follow Best Management Practices. Several projects have been implemented such as a LakeSmart Home award program, watershed signage, outreach mailers, and lakefront improvements projects that protect the lake from sedimentation and excessive nutrients. Despite the efforts in place to take a balanced and environmentally friendly approach, nuisance aquatic plants continue to limit access and recreational activities that include swimming, fishing, and boating, which have a direct impact on property values.

I ask for your support in extending the six-foot draw down period of Lake Beseck during odd-numbered years from December 31 to January 31. This change will be instrumental in allowing the lakebed sediments additional time to de-water, increasing the likelihood of root exposure for aquatic plants to the necessary temperatures that will assist with effective management of the Lake Beseck system.

Additional: When the lake was drained I made a call to the State regarding the tall evasive plants that were growing back. I was advised emphatically that they would disappear with the winter cold. That did not happen and they continue to grow and expand each year. They get tangled in your oars when you want to kayak. They get caught in the propeller of your boat. They are so invasive at times you cannot use the lake at all.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Croteau

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