

February 5, 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 member of the Town of Middlefield Lake Beseck Environment Committee in **support of H.B. No. 6384 An Act Concerning Aquatic Invasive Species' Effects on Lakes and Related Funding**

Nuisance aquatic plants have plagued Beseck Lake for many years, inhibiting residential access to open water, limiting recreational activities that include swimming, fishing, and boating. Dense plant beds also contribute large amounts of plant matter to the deep-water sediments at the end of each season, which increases oxygen demand, available nutrients, and the risk/frequency of harmful algal blooms. In cooperation with WCSU and Aquatic Ecosystem Research LLC, we have been monitoring water quality and the algal community in an effort to inform and protect lake users from the presence of cyanotoxins. We also are concerned that our non-native plant monitoring program's efficacy is reduced by the dense plant beds and that a reduction of those local populations is imperative to manage Beseck Lake.

According to past and recent studies, winter drawdowns expose sediments to freezing temperatures effective in killing invasive aquatic plants when winter conditions are suitable. The kill is most successful when the freeze occurs after the sediments have had a chance to dry. According to Greg Bugbee of The CT Agricultural Experiment Station, Mark June-Wells and Larry Marsicano of Aquatic Ecosystem Research LLC, we are missing this window of opportunity by limiting Beseck drawdowns to months that are warmer and less likely to expose plant roots to the coldest winter temperatures.

For this reason, I am writing to 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 Beseck Lake system.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,
Amy Poturnicki, Vice Chair
Lake Beseck Environment Committee
8 Pequot Rd
Middlefield, CT