

2nd Quarter 2005 Newsletter



FRIENDS
OF THE LAKE

Dear Members, Friends and Supporters:

As the water begins to warm and the docks and boats return to Lake Lillinonah, we wanted to update you on all the Friends of the Lake (FOTL) activities over this past winter.

FOTL membership continues to grow and we thank our members for spreading the word and their active participation. Not only does the need for FOTL to exist, but the strength of the membership has been successful in pushing for action steps towards protecting our precious lake. We all understand that a solution will not happen overnight, but the time has now come for us to work with the neighboring towns, businesses and politicians to make sure that no more damage is done to this precious resource. The highlights below will provide you with an update on what are being done and what next steps needed to be taken to insure our lake is protected for generations to come.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact us at info@savingthelake.org or (860) 210-8064. Your opinions and suggestions are very important to FOTL executive board members.

Best,

FOTL Executive Board

Debris update:

The last edition of the newsletter reported the success of FOTL and the Lake Lillinonah Authority (LLA) in requiring that Northeast Generation Company (NGC) bear the full cost of implementing a Debris Management Plan (DMP) to remove unsightly and dangerous floating debris from Lake Lillinonah. Since that time, NGC has submitted its proposed DMP to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) for approval.

The good news in the proposed DMP is that NGC has acquired a skimmer craft and has committed to begin debris removal operations this summer. The equipment identified by NGC is manufactured by United Marine International, which has put more than 50 units into service over the past decade in numerous locations – including New York Harbor, Baltimore Harbor and the Susquehanna River hydroelectric projects.

The bad news in the proposed DMP is that the level of debris removal activity and strategies to measure progress in cleaning up the debris problem appear plainly inadequate. For example, NGC's proposed DMP would limit operations to two days per week during a May 1 to September 1 debris removal "season" and would divide this restricted time commitment between Lake Zoar and Lake Lillinonah. To anyone who has observed the massive debris fields that appear on summer weekends when NGC raises the level of Lake Lillinonah so that it can maximize power production for peak electricity demands (and prices) on Monday mornings, this level of activity seems to be no more than a figurative "drop in the bucket." Further, NGC has suggested that its first formal report on the effectiveness of the DMP would not be due until March of 2007, almost two years from now.

Both FOTL and the LLA have written to FERC, expressing concern that NGC continues to seek to limit its financial commitment by proposing a DMP that unreasonably delays true remediation efforts, leaves key elements of the DMP vague and non-specific, and does not include adequate evaluation, monitoring and input from stakeholders in the ongoing operation of the DMP. FOTL and LLA have submitted suggestions to FERC.

(A copy of the FOTL Letter is enclosed in the newsletter) to improve the DMP, including: expanding the debris removal season; focusing operations on days when the water level is elevated; increasing the number of days of debris removal on Lake Lillinonah; and providing more reporting to and input from stakeholders.

FOTL WILL BE MONITORING DEBRIS CONDITIONS AND REMOVAL THIS SUMMER

We need your help with the following action items:

- ✓ DOCUMENT DEBRIS CONDITIONS AND REMOVAL ACTIVITIES
- ✓ REPORT ANY DEBRIS-RELATED PROPERTY DAMAGE OR INJURIES

Please send us letters, e-mails, photos or digital images. All this information is important as we monitor the NGC Debris Management Plan.

Water Quality update:

The FOTL executives have met with the City of Danbury, CT-DEP (CT Department of Environmental Protection), CFE (CT Fund for the Environment), LLA (Lake Lillinonah Authority), HVCEO (Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials), and several political and grass roots organizations over the last 18 months. FOTL continues to insist that the DSTP (Danbury Sewage Treatment Plant) adopt a year round phosphorus reduction policy to reduce the nutrient loading from the DSTP. FOTL firmly believes that high nutrient levels (especially phosphorus) contribute to Lake Lillinonah's severe algae blooms in the summer months. These algae blooms are not only unsightly, but emit noxious odors and contribute to a host of environmental problems. Due to the oxygen depletion after algae blooms large fish kills have been documented down river. Our Still River Study suggests the Still River has a huge impact on the Lake Lillinonah nutrient level.

Further, an article published in the North American Lake Management Society's (NALMS) newsletter cites "[e]xtensive evidence worldwide" that a nitrogen reduction program implemented without a corresponding program to reduce phosphorus can cause blooms of blue-green algae or "cyanobacteria." Cyanobacteria produce foul odors and emit toxins that cause health problems in humans and animals. A recent letter from FOTL to Danbury officials raised this concern as a compelling reason that the DSTP must implement phosphorus reduction along with its planned nitrogen reduction program.

FOTL acknowledges nutrient reduction must be multifaceted. We are working on several additional projects including the following:

- ✓ Continuing to study the Still River watershed to identify point and non-point source areas of nutrient loading
- ✓ Lake Lillinonah Watershed management guide for landscapers
- ✓ Public awareness program
- ✓ Continuing to work with CFE, CT-DEP, LLA, HVA and other agencies to promote TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) studies in the Still River and Lake Lillinonah
- ✓ Seeking grant funds to research secondary water treatments within the Still River and other water quality related projects

As we continue to try and work with the City of Danbury on an action plan that will occur within a reasonable period of time, we have developed two Watershed booklets.

- ✓ A "Landscaper's Guide for Lake Lillinonah Watershed" which will be released in the coming weeks. Please forward the contact information for Landscapers who provide services in the watershed and lakefront areas to info@savingthelake.org, so that we may contact them and encourage them to adopt these guidelines.

- ✓ The Lake Lillinonah Watershed Awareness and Lake Preservation Booklet, which will be distributed at no cost to our membership base starting in June.

Save the Lake Day Update – June 4, 2005

Preparations for Save the Lake Day are in full swing. With the help of FOTL members Kathy Berg, Barbara Petriccone and Linda Voelzke, we've mailed postcards to over 500 people calling for volunteers and for pontoon boats. Flyers have been prepared by one of our sponsors, Phuture Design, and are being distributed to local Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, schools, fishing clubs, firehouses and civic organizations. Northeast Generation, LLA, Waste Management and Flagstar Mortgage have been confirmed as sponsors, and we are working on confirming several others. We are still in need of volunteers and pontoon boats to come out and help preserve Lake Lillinonah. If protecting our lake were not enough, all active FOTL members, and those that sign up that day, will receive a Friend's of the Lake T-shirt at the Save the Lake Day registration tent. Please spread the word and be part of the solution. We encourage anyone who knows a potential sponsor or is interested in volunteering to please contact Kathy Berg at 203-775-1646 or Linda Voelzke at 203-775-2617 or email us at info@savingthelake.org.

Additional FOTL Information:

FOTL Volunteer Opportunity

People are needed to hand out FOTL brochures at the following local events:

- Paddle Days 2005 – event starts on Friday, May 13 and ends, Sunday, May 15th. It runs between the hours of 9am to 6pm. We only need people to work a few hours.
- New Milford Rotary Club – event is on Saturday, May 14th. Once again, we need people to work the booth for only a few hours.

Please contact us at (860) 210-8064 or email us at info@savingthelake.org.

Lake Lillinonah Authority Update

The Lake Lillinonah Authority (LLA) has been working hard on several fronts to improve the safety and water quality of our lake. Chairman Ann Schiessl reports that 2004 was a good year for safety on our lake, with the LLA reporting no fatalities. There were a few boats that required towing, due to mechanical breakdowns, to the Route 133 ramp by the lake patrol. Two unusual items were removed from the lake in 2004, a large boat with motor intact and a port-o-potty. Two less items to pull out of the lake during the June 4th Save the Lake Day☺.

Spots are open on the LLA Board and the FOTL strongly encourages our members to volunteer for these positions. The LLA currently has vacancies for the following towns: **New Milford, Newtown, Roxbury and Southbury**. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming an LLA member, please feel free to contact FOTL for more information by calling (860) 210-8064 or emailing us at info@savingthelake.org. You can also contact your first selectman or mayor and LLA town representative.

Friends of the Lake Second Anniversary Celebration

The FOTL second anniversary celebration will be hosted once again at the end of August at the home of Jeffrey and Amy Silverman in Bridgewater. The cocktail party is for members and invited guests only. Invitations will be sent out in the middle of July.

Student Internship Program Opportunity

The FOTL has a Student Internship opportunity available. If you know someone looking for an internship program in Marketing please have them contact the FOTL office at (860) 210-8064 or email at info@savingthelake.org.

FOTL 2005 Funding Opportunities

A number of companies, organizations and trusts have expressed interest in underwriting an FOTL program. If you or someone you know is interested please have them contact the FOTL office at (860) 210-8064. For as little as \$2,500 opportunities exist to help sponsor a program that will save and protect Lake Lillinonah. 100% of the money will go towards the program.

Membership Drive

For those members that are approaching their one year anniversary as a member of FOTL, please look for the renewal membership form in the mail. We not only ask you to renew, but to try and increase your membership level. For those that have not joined, we encourage you to join now. Our success has been based upon our large and active membership base. A lot was accomplished in 2004 with your membership and support – let's keep up the momentum. The executive Board would like to sincerely thank all FOTL members for your continued support.

Friends of the Lake (FOTL) is a non-profit group of concerned citizens who care about the management, safety and recreational uses of Lake Lillinonah and wish to develop a lake community to encourage the continued protection of its natural beauty and wildlife. The objective is to work closely with the Lake Lillinonah Authority, elected officials and residents of the bordering towns to increase awareness, foster stewardship and solicit additional funding for prioritized projects in order to reduce debris and pollution so that we may protect and maintain the quality of Lake Lillinonah now and for future generations