

## **APPENDIX A. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS - Headwaters**

### **FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

1. Congress should continue to act to reduce mercury pollution in the region.

#### **US Fish & Wildlife Service's Conte Refuge should**

2. continue to expand environmental education for residents and visitors about wildlife and wildlife habitat in the region.

### **STATE GOVERNMENT**

#### ***legislatures should:***

3. consider various ways to reward landowners for keeping land open to the public.

#### **NH General Court should**

4. provide adequate funding for the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program.
5. update definition of ski craft to include 3-4 person personal watercraft.
6. establish a mandatory registration fee for ATVs that is large enough to provide funds for law enforcement and trail construction; dedicate part of the fee to a landowner restitution fund to which landowners can apply for reimbursement if they have sustained damage from OHRVs.

#### ***NH Department of Safety, Marine Patrol should***

7. continue to inform boaters of the law on non-motorized boating on the designated natural segment.
8. support efforts to update the definition of ski craft to include 3-4 person personal watercraft.
9. increase enforcement of existing boating laws, to prevent boating conflicts and minimize boat wake-induced riverbank erosion.

#### ***State Police should***

10. provide more traffic control on highways during peak travel times for snowmobile trailers.

#### ***NH Office of Energy and Planning should***

11. encourage each New Hampshire town to participate in Heritage Trail planning.

#### ***Fish and Game/Wildlife agencies should***

12. discourage construction of further access for power boats because adequate access already exists.
13. provide limited signage at their river access points in keeping with the rural nature of the region.
14. support and assist towns in providing car-top boat access for canoes and other small craft, on the mainstem and tributaries, because of the low impact of these craft on the river. Screen parking from the river with a vegetated buffer strip. Further access is needed between the Stratford Maidstone Bridge and Guildhall.
15. continue to cooperate to better understand and address the Didymo infestation. Post permanent signage at boat accesses and at popular fishing accesses, including the special regulations area in Pittsburg.

#### ***NH Fish and Game should***

16. repair erosion at its car-top boat access north of Colebrook.
17. purchase land on the NH side of the Columbia Bridge to expand parking and create a small riverfront park.
18. work with the landowners to investigate ways to reduce hazards at the breached Wyoming dam.
19. work with fishing tournament organizers at the Lakes to inform visiting fishermen of boating laws and require boat and trailer checks for invasive species.

#### ***Parks & Recreation agencies should***

20. educate visitors to the region on respect for private land and on visitor responsibility.
21. support snowmobile license reciprocity between the states.
22. encourage interpretive trails to explain forestry practices.
23. work with local volunteers to develop more primitive canoe campsites.
24. help create more hiking options in the CT Lakes Headwaters Forest and elsewhere in the region, separate from snowmobile trails.
25. educate landowners about the benefits of leaving land open to the public and the liability protections offered by existing laws; educate landowners about 20% recreational adjustment under current use in NH.
26. seek new ways to recognize and benefit landowners who keep their land open to the public.
27. consider assigning and training deputy wardens who are members of local ATV and snowmobile clubs, who have a vested interest in ensuring responsible behavior by other riders.
28. promote club management of ATV activities similar to that of snowmobile clubs, including education and training.

29. establish a required safety education course for recreational ATV riders.
30. require mandatory personal injury insurance for recreational ATV riders.

***New Hampshire Division of Parks and Recreation should***

31. collect information on the kinds and levels of recreational use in the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Forest.
32. avoid inviting ATV use in the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Forest and in the Connecticut River corridor, particularly near the designated natural segment.
33. work with the NH Office of Travel & Tourism to educate visitors to the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Forest.
34. assist Colebrook in building a foot trail connecting the Byway center with its new town recreation center.
35. NH Office of Travel & Tourism should share results of research on recreation in the Connecticut Lakes area to help the local chambers of commerce better inform visitors to Byway centers.

***State transportation agencies should***

36. continue to assist towns in establishing and maintaining access to the river where federal transportation funds are used in transportation projects.
37. provide limited signage identifying waterways which is aesthetically in keeping with the area's rural nature.
38. improve bicycling safety and assist towns in creating bike paths.
39. avoid the type of road improvement that could lead to increased traffic speed.
40. ensure that deteriorating rail cars are not stored within view of the river or of the Connecticut River Byway.

***NH DES should***

41. monitor and report on water quality, to ensure that the river is safe for swimming, especially in the many miles in the region that are currently assessed as unsafe for swimming.
42. ensure that houseboats using First Connecticut Lake are equipped with holding tanks for waste, and that there is a suitable location for pumping this waste.
43. discourage further dock construction on the remote and primitive Connecticut Lakes.
44. continue to cooperate with VT ANR and fisheries agencies to better understand and address the Didymo infestation.
45. assist NH Lakes Association in setting up a Lake Host Program to check for invasive species at Connecticut Lakes boat launches on holiday weekends.

**TOWN GOVERNMENT**

46. encourage more car-top boat access between the Stratford Maidstone Bridge and Guildhall; use low-impact design.
47. discourage construction of further access for trailered boats.
48. screen parking at town-owned river access sites with a vegetated riparian buffer strip. Provide limited signage, aesthetically in keeping with the area's rural nature, on bank erosion, invasive aquatics, boater responsibilities, and the boat speed law, including that the river is a no-wake zone.
49. monitor boat access points for invasive plants.
50. encourage more hiking options in the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Forest, and elsewhere in the region, that are separate from snowmobile trails.
51. Pittsburg should discourage further dock construction on the remote and primitive Connecticut Lakes.
52. local fire departments should have water rescue equipment available for river recreation emergencies at all seasons, and the training to use it.
53. notify the public immediately if there is a suspected water quality violation at a wastewater treatment plant during the summer recreation season.
54. encourage birdwatching and other low impact forms of recreation.
55. explore federal and state funding programs, such as SAFETEA to create trails.
56. encourage protection of scenic views of the river corridor.
57. identify opportunities, when land is developed, to retain easements for public access for trails, birding, car-top access, or other public recreation.
58. adopt protocols for campsite siting into their master plans.
59. take advantage of opportunities to conserve riverfront land for public access and recreation.
60. create trail guides to town-owned properties.
61. provide effective traffic control during peak travel times for snowmobile trailers.
62. schools can help foster a sense of respect for the river by engaging students in river-related projects such as water quality monitoring and riverbank restoration.

***Regional Planning Commissions should***

- 63. help neighboring communities coordinate their plans for recreation and open space.
- 64. inventory scenic views along the river corridor and the Connecticut River Byway.

***Connecticut River Byway Council should***

- 65. attract tour groups rather than individual river users to reduce the impact of travel in the area.
- 66. encourage birdwatching and other nature-based, low impact forms of recreation.
- 67. help educate residents and visitors on the respectful use of private land.
- 68. encourage an excursion train along the river.
- 69. encourage inn-to-inn canoe and bicycle trips.
- 70. encourage protection of scenic views of the river corridor.
- 71. help seek protection of sensitive recreational features, to help avoid problems with overuse by tourists.
- 72. provide information on current river conditions and paddling safety.

**PRIVATE SECTOR**

***TransCanada Hydro Northeast and its successors should:***

- 73. continue to maintain public boat access to First and Second Lakes; provide a sign board and erosion control at Second Lake and a sign board at First Lake.
- 74. ensure that there is permanent signage at its boat launches, reminding the public of boating laws, the problem of bank erosion, invasive aquatics, and boater responsibilities.
- 75. assist NH Lakes Association in setting up a Lake Host Program to check for invasive species at Connecticut Lakes boat launches on holiday weekends.

***Public Service Company of New Hampshire should***

- 76. provide a safe portage around the Canaan Dam with a new public car top boat access to the river.

***NH Lakes Association should***

- 77. set up a Lake Host program, with the help of TransCanada and NH DES, to check for invasive species at Connecticut Lakes boat launches on holiday weekends.

***Recreation groups should***

- 78. encourage education of residents and visitors, particularly about the impacts of different forms of recreation and visitor responsibility.
- 79. encourage development of more, dispersed primitive canoe campsites in the region, to help prevent trespassing and disperse camping impacts.
- 80. a local youth group, conservation commission, or trail club should take responsibility for the new public car top boat access at the Stratford-Maidstone Bridge.
- 81. provide better signage for trails, prevent trail erosion with increased trail maintenance, and explore possible connections between trail systems.
- 82. snowmobile clubs should consider ways to acknowledge and thank landowners who allow trails on their land, and continue to educate riders to respect the land by showing courtesy to landowners and other users, and staying off trails when conditions are poor.
- 83. snowmobile clubs, hiking groups, bicycle clubs should monitor trails and educate hikers, joggers, cross-country skiers, snowmobilers, and hunters on the proper use of private land to help prevent unwanted trespassing and littering.
- 84. ATV clubs should build trails only with the written permission of the landowner, and in areas where it is consistent with local planning and zoning, avoiding the Connecticut River corridor.
- 85. encourage landowners to keep their land open to the public.
- 86. The Cohos Trail should build a campsite or shelter for hikers in the Connecticut Lakes Region.
- 87. Paddlers must take care not to attempt to paddle the river without the skill or equipment it requires in this region, or under hazardous conditions.

***Fishing tournament organizers should***

- 88. inform visiting fishermen of boating laws on the Connecticut River.
- 89. require boat and trailer checks before boats are launched in the river or the lakes.

***Land conservation organizations should***

90. help landowners who want to protect their land, providing public recreation access for birding, car-top boats, or trails where possible and appropriate.
91. help protect scenic views and undeveloped lands, especially along the river.

***The Nulhegan Gateway Association should***

92. encourage outfitters and guides to remind their customers of boating laws and visitor responsibility, and caution them not to disturb loons and other wildlife.
93. develop more published information on trail systems.
94. help establish and coordinate a new water trail of primitive canoe campsites in the region; identify potential canoe campsite locations that are not sensitive ecologically or archeologically.
95. encourage local stewardship of recreation areas (campsites, trail heads, trails).
96. encourage development of primitive commercial campgrounds in a way that retains the river's natural character.
97. promote businesses hosting cross-country skiing and snowshoeing on logging road networks with dispersed overnight shelters.
98. should continue to inform local communities about protocols for developing primitive canoe campsites
99. promote inn-to-inn canoe trips to promote low-impact use of the river with an economic return to local businesses; promote inn-to-inn bicycle trips.
100. promote an excursion train along the river.
101. encourage opportunities to conserve riverfront land for public access and recreation.

***Lodge owners, guides, and outfitters should***

102. educate their customers about Didymo and other invasives, and encourage them to clean their gear.

***CITIZENS should:***

103. obey existing boat speed laws.
104. avoid littering at access sites and along the riverbank; participate in volunteer cleanups.
105. use designated public access to reach the river, rather than crossing private land.
106. check boats and trailers before launching in the Connecticut or its tributaries to avoid introducing milfoil, Zebra mussels, or other unwanted invasives.
107. avoid hiking or riding on trails in wet conditions, especially when they are saturated from snow melt and rain.
108. snowmobilers should avoid riding on trails without adequate snow cover.
109. ATV riders should avoid riding on earth fill dams and on the property of others without permission.
110. hunters should ask permission to hunt on private land that is not posted.
111. drivers pulling snowmobile trailers should be careful to stay in their lane.
112. Boaters or divers traveling from waters infested with zebra mussel must wash and dry all equipment before reuse, hose off the boat, diving gear or trailer, and drain and flush the engine cooling system and live wells of the boat, bait buckets and the buoyancy control device from diving equipment.

***Connecticut Lakes property owners should***

113. seek permission from TransCanada Hydro Northeast and NH DES before building docks.
114. remove docks at the end of each season for the safety of snowmobilers using the ice in winter.

***Landowners should***

115. leave a thick riparian buffer of native vegetation on their streambanks and riverbanks to help keep soil in place and reduce erosion.

***Fishermen should***

116. replace lead sinkers and jigs with non-toxic and legal tackle.
117. carry out what they carry in to the riverbank and avoid littering.
118. carefully clean their gear after visiting the Connecticut River and report sightings of invasive aquatic species to state agencies. Do not release unused bait into the water.