Province Lake Watershed Plan Project

Response to Public Questions

April 14, 2014

The Province Lake Association (PLA) hosted a public meeting on January 18, 2014 for the purpose of developing a draft Action Plan to include in the Province Lake Watershed Management Plan. Because the meeting was held during the "off season" the PLA and their watershed plan partners decided to offer a public comment period for those who could not attend the meeting. Responses to comments and questions received during the public comment period are provided in this document. These questions and comments will also be taken into consideration during the development of the final Action Plan and Watershed Plan.

(Note: This is intended to be a working document and will be periodically updated to include additional questions that come up during the remainder of the watershed planning process.)

Septic Systems and Outhouses	
Question	**Response**
SS.1 Green Toilets: What about exploring the possibility of replacing outhouses with "green" toilets?	The watershed plan will include recommendations for improvements to on-site waste water treatment (including outhouses). Information about green systems such as composting toilets and other methods will be included.
Roads	
Question	**Response**
R. 1 Route 153: Is the culvert at Shore Acres too small & contributing to flooding?	The watershed plan will include a recommendation to work with Maine DOT to evaluate culvert size relative to the drainage area. If culverts are discovered to be undersized, the recommendation will include a suggestion that the culverts be replaced and sized to accommodate flow.
R.2 Route 153: Guardrails will not control erosion; is there a better way to control runoff from the road?	A comprehensive, multi-solution approach will be needed to address all aspects of the road runoff and beach erosion problem. Several options for controlling road runoff and addressing beach erosion will be recommended in the plan: installing stabilization measures such as geogrid, rip rap or vegetation along the road shoulder, shimming and re-crowning the road so that stormwater drains away from the lake and managing foot traffic and parking to minimize erosion. Foot traffic and parking on the road shoulder exacerbate erosion by breaking down the road shoulder and killing shoreline vegetation. A guardrail has been proposed as one way to address the parking and foot traffic aspect of the overall problem. (Also see question R.3)

Question	Response
R.3 Route 153: Installing a guardrail on route 153 will prevent beach access.	The intent for recommending a guardrail is to provide better management of access to the lake and alleviate issues related to parking on the road shoulder. With the guardrail, beach access would still be available; however, the access points would be reduced and concentrated, which would prevent broad-scale erosion arising from access over the length of the beach.
R.4 Route 153: Concerns about aesthetics of guardrails.	If a guardrail is proposed, aesthetic concerns would be discussed and incorporated into any recommendations.
R.5 Private Roads: Education is needed for people who maintain private roads; especially about proper materials and how to grade the road.	The watershed plan will include a recommendation for private road maintenance education programs.

Municipal Ordinances & Other Regulations

Question	Response
MO.1 Fireworks: Would it be possible to explore a ban on fireworks?	The towns are aware of water quality concerns related to fireworks. Some towns have discussed regulating fireworks, but no action has been taken. (Also see question REC.1)
MO.2 Shoreline Regulations: Interested in seeing if NH's shoreline regulations could be modified to be similar to Maine's where rip rap or stone reinforcement of the shoreline is allowed in certain circumstances.	While New Hampshire does not currently permit the use of rip rap or rock walls to stabilize lake shoreline (in most cases), the plan will include a recommendation that officials from New Hampshire and Maine evaluate ways to streamline and coordinate regulations between the states to promote better water quality.

Recreation and Boating

Question	Response
REC.1 Fireworks: Increased use of fireworks is a concern. What can be done?	Education is the best way to inform people about the negative impacts of fireworks on water quality. The watershed plan will include a recommendation that a fireworks education program be developed and implemented to help reduce impacts from fireworks.
REC.2 Boating: Do jet skis stir up the water? Would a ban on jet skis help improve water quality?	Some studies show that boating and personal water craft use contributes to erosion and turbidity in lakes; particularly in shallow areas. Addressing this issue will require many steps including research, public outreach, and education. The watershed plan will include recommendations to evaluate boating impacts.

Water Quality	
Question	**Response**
WQ.1 Aeration: Would installation of a mechanical aerator or water "bubbler" improve water quality?	Artificial mixing was conducted in the mid- 70s as part of a study to evaluate whether mechanical aeration would improve lake water quality. The results from the study were inconclusive; however, the watershed plan will include recommendations for evaluating the effectiveness and feasibility of various water quality improvement approaches.
WQ.2 Water Level: Would dropping the water level during the summer improve water quality? How does the dam affect water quality & flushing rate?	To the best of our knowledge, watershed sources of pollution have a greater impact on water quality than the dam. Additionally, previous studies indicate that water quality concerns existed well before the dam was built. Therefore, it is critical to focus management efforts on identifying and reducing watershed sources of pollution & preventing polluted runoff from getting into the lake. The Maine Department of Environmental Protection provides some excellent answers to questions about dam impacts to lakes: http://www.maine.gov/dep/water/lakes/waterlevel.htm