

Bantam Lake water improving

BY JOHN MCKENNA
REPUBLICAN-AMERICAN

MORRIS — Water quality in Bantam Lake is improving due to an ongoing effort to control algae and non-native invasive weeds, and identify sources of pollution in the 21-square-mile watershed feeding the state's largest natural lake.



Trolle
REPUBLICAN-AMERICAN

That was the message promoted during Bantam Lake Protective Association's (BLPA) annual meeting Saturday at Town Hall.

"We think we've made great progress and are moving closer to a solution due to the studies we have done and the information we have gathered from them," BLPA

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LAKE: Efforts to stem algae, invasive weeds are playing off

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President Connie Trolle of Morris said. "We've treated the lake for algae and weeds and have a storm water plan in place, so there is a lot to be optimistic about."

The BLPA for several years has focused on the lake's watershed, which stretches north to Goshen and Torrington, and identifying sources of pollution. The watershed includes two golf courses, several farms, the Litchfield trash transfer and recycling station and, in Goshen, the Woodridge Lake Sewer District wastewater treatment facility.

A study by the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and the federal Environmental Protection Agency in 2020 showed that 65% of the nutrient load entering the lake in storm water comes from the Woodridge Lake facility, which sits near a branch of the Bantam River.

The results of the study will help the BLPA develop future strategy for the lake, said James Fischer of Litchfield, a BLPA member and research director at White Memorial Conservation

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JAMES FISCHER
BLPA MEMBER AND
RESEARCH DIRECTOR
AT WHITE MEMORIAL
CONSERVATION CENTER

Center. Fischer gave a detailed and enthusiastic state of the lake presentation during the meeting.

"For the first time, we know where the nutrients are coming from," Fischer said, noting that phosphorous and nitrogen entering the lake from the watershed fuels the growth of algae and non-native invasive weeds. "This is an important thing to recognize." The Woodridge Lake Sewer District is under DEEP order to address the condition of its treatment facility. A plan to pipe wastewater to Torrington's treatment plant was deemed too costly and another proposal to pipe wastewater to Litchfield's treatment

plant is on hold while Litchfield's Water Pollution Control Authority studies how much it would cost to upgrade its facility.

Meanwhile, the BPLA will be part of the newly-formed Bantam Lake Watershed Task Force charged with using local resources to identify ways of funding best-management practices that will improve the quality of the lake's water.

Fischer and Trolle are serving on the task force as are BLPA members Anne Murdica, Peter Longo, Kathy Hill and Devon O'Neill. Others on the panel are Litchfield Selectman Jonathan Tarrant, Goshen Selectmen Mark Harris and Dexter Kinsella, Litchfield water pollution control facility Superintendent Red Donoghue, Lindsey Larson and Mike Jastremski of Housatonic Valley Association, Michael Doyle of Morris Inland Wetlands Commission, White Memorial Foundation Executive Director Lukas Hyder and Jerry Abrahams of Woodridge Lake Sewer District.

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