

MEMBERSHIP PACKET

The FHRA Welcomes You

The Friends of Hamilton Reservoir Association (FHRA) has been in existence since 2011, when Hamilton Reservoir Association (HRA – Lake Association) was granted non-profit status, and the name was changed. The Hamilton Reservoir Association was in existence from the 1950s, when the Town of Holland purchased the lake, until the change of status in 2011. The FHRA is a group of Holland, MA and Union, CT residents, full time and seasonal, that work together with the town of Holland to promote projects, procedures and activities designed to preserve and protect the health of our lake and ensure the safe recreational use of the lake. Town officials and representatives of the FHRA comprise the Lake Oversight Committee to help accomplish these important goals.

A Little History

Hamilton Reservoir is located in the town of Holland, Massachusetts. Holland is located in south central Massachusetts, bordering Union, Connecticut. In the 1860s the Hamilton Woolen Company dammed the headwaters of the Quinebaug River and formed the reservoir for power. Water flows north through the town of Holland, turns south through Sturbridge and Southbridge, then combines with the French and Middle Rivers to form the Thames River. The Thames flows south through Connecticut and empties into Long Island Sound. The information that follows includes: a membership form, boating regulations, dock regulations, watershed and reservoir protection regulations. More information about the Hamilton Reservoir can be found at our web site: www.hamiltonreservoir.com. Other good information concerning the lake and ponds can be found on the Massachusetts Congress of Lakes and Ponds (COLAP) website: www.colapcentral.org.

Your help is needed, too! Please consider joining the Friends of Hamilton Reservoir Association, whether or not you live on the lake. Your membership dollars will make a difference for everyone surrounding Hamilton Reservoir, but most importantly they will help to preserve our lake, a critical Holland resource.

The FHRA Membership Meetings are held twice yearly on the Saturday before Memorial Day and the Saturday before Labor Day. Look for details in the newsletters. **FHRA telephone 413-668-6851** – You can leave a message and a Board member will return your call.

FHRA Membership Form – Membership \$35.00 per year per family ... Return & Payable to: Friends of HRA, 27 Sturbridge Road, Unit 17, Holland, MA 01521			
Name _____			
Mailing Address: _____		City _____	
State _____		Zip _____	
Holland Phone: _____		Home Phone _____	
North Basin _____	South Basin (CT side) _____	Neither _____	Check
# _____	Date: _____		
Holland Address: _____		Email : _____	
If you'd like to make an additional donation to our membership, please do so. \$ _____.			
All donations are tax deductible.			

What Kinds of Things FHRA Has Done For the LAKE

Contracts and pays for milfoil treatment in the CT portion of the lake annually to minimize the spread of this invasive weed due to the northerly water flow

Works with the town annually to budget police to patrol the lake

Proposed to the town of Holland that they create an official town committee (the Lake Oversight Committee), made up of members from various boards in town, as well as members of the Association to oversee issues affecting the lake

Wrote and received grants that resulted in money for a study to determine where watershed work was most needed

Wrote and received grants that funded the installation of seven new catch basins around the lake and watershed

Wrote and received grants that funded major projects to control runoff into the lake

Built a floating sign for the north basin near the dam warning boaters and posting the speed limit

Built kiosks at several locations around the lake, and keeps them stocked with boating regulations and safe boating tips

Proactively engages in trying to find solutions to a variety of problems and/or issues around the lake; some examples include the following:

- interacting with town officials to replace the south basin boat ramp quickly
- working with homeowners and vendors to test alternative methods of treating other invasive weeds
- providing important information to all members immediately after the 2005 flood, including recommendations from the Board of Health regarding septic systems and wells
- working in the Spring 2006 to clean up debris left from the 2005 flood and coordinating with the town for removal of all free-floating docks, logs, trash, etc.
- sponsoring projects such as “Dig the Lake” to clean up the shoreline after drawdown
- promoting ongoing education opportunities for members, such as weed identification training; dissemination of Massachusetts Congress of Lakes and Ponds (COLAP) information from seminars on existing and/or emerging water quality issues; guest speakers on a variety of topics at membership meetings

Why join?

Because if you use the lake or if you don't use the lake and you care about the future of the lake; if you value The Town of Holland, and/or if you value of your property, you will join us in keeping the Lake safe and healthy.

If you have joined the membership and/or you have made a donation to the Preserve the Lake Fund – we thank you.

ALL Massachusetts boating regulations apply to Hamilton Reservoir; the Holland bylaws below are in addition to Massachusetts laws. (Some examples of Mass regulations that apply here are: A person under the age of 16 may not operate a Personal watercraft (PWC)-jet skis, etc. under any circumstances; a person aged 16 or 17 may operate a PWC only if he/she has passed a state approved boating course; and no towing of tubers or skiers behind personal watercraft.) Also Massachusetts has one of the strongest Boating under the influence laws (BUI) in the country. For more Boating information visit the Massachusetts Environmental Police Website: www.state.ma.us/dfwele/dle

HAMILTON RESERVOIR, HOLLAND, MA –

Boating Regulations

I. The following equipment is required for:

A. All Boats

1. Approved Coast Guard flotation device for each person on board and being towed.

B. Power Propelled Boats

1. Front and rear running lights, which must be displayed from sunset to sunrise.
2. Effective sounding device/horn (not required under 16 feet).
3. Approved fire extinguisher (for all boats over 16 feet).
4. Ladder (required when towing persons).

II Registration

- A. No persons shall operate or permit the operation of any power-propelled craft without a registration number as required by Chapter 90B of the Massachusetts General Laws which number shall be visibly displayed.
- B. The Certificate of Number shall be available for examination at all times on the power-propelled craft while in operation.

III. Safety Rules

- A. Power propelled craft shall operate in a safe and reasonable way at a safe speed. Right of way must be given to swimmers, unpowered boats (sailboats, canoes, rowboats, etc.)
- B. No child under the age of 12 may operate a power propelled boat. No child under the age of 16 may operate a personal watercraft (jet ski).
- C. No child under the age of 16 may operate a power propelled craft of greater than 10 horsepower unless in the possession of a safety certificate issued pursuant to Charter 323 section 2.08 (1) of the Code of Massachusetts Regulation and accompanied and supervised by a person 18 years of age or older.
- D. Traffic flow on the lake shall be in counter clockwise direction.
- E. No person under the influence of liquor or drugs may operate a watercraft.
- F. Power propelled boats towing skiers or persons riding other floating or planing devices shall be occupied by two persons minimum (driver and an observer 12 years or older).
- G. Power propelled boats may tow a maximum of two skiers or persons riding other floating or planing devices (unless authorized by the town Selectmen). Jet Skis may NOT tow skiers, tubes, etc
- H. Maximum length of tow rope is 75 feet.
- I. All power propelled boats with skiers or others in tow will ensure that neither the boat nor the persons in tow will come within 150 feet of any shoreline being used as a swimming area or any wharf, dock or float, except when approaching or leaving a landing area.

IV Speed Regulations

- A. Power propelled speed is limited to 10 MPH until 11:00 a.m. on Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays between Memorial Day and Labor Day.
- B. No power propelled craft may operate at greater than 5 mph or headway speed, whichever is greater, within 150 feet of any shoreline being used as a swimming area of any wharf, dock or float.
- C. Power propelled boat speed is limited to headway speed or 5 mph, whichever is greater, during darkness, (½ hour after sunset until ½ hour before sunrise.)
- D. Power propelled craft speed is limited to 5 mph or headway speed, whichever is greater, in the narrows and all coves.
- E. Jet skies, surf jets, wet bikes or similar personal watercraft shall not be operated at speeds greater than 12 mph or during the hours of darkness (½ hours after sunset until ½ hour before sunrise).
- F. Headway speed is the slowest speed at which a motorboat may be operated and maintain steerage, but not to exceed 6 mph except in the case of personal watercraft, which may need to be operated at a speed in excess of 6 mph to maintain steerage.
- G. No power propelled craft shall be operated at more than headway speed:
 - 1. when the operator's vision is obscured by the shoreline, weather conditions, or any other manner.
 - 2. when the craft is operated within 150 feet of a marina, boat launching facility, raft, float or dock.
 - 3. when the craft is operated within 150 feet of a swimmer or of any unpowered craft.
- H. All powered propelled craft racing is prohibited.

V General

- A. No craft are allowed on Hamilton Reservoir at any time which are equipped with toilets, cooking or laundry facilities. Chlorinators of any kind shall not be used.
- B. Marina operators and all persons permitting the launching of power propelled craft from their property shall provide refuse barrels and sanitary toilet facilities for their patrons.
- C. Boaters shall not dispose of any material into the lake (such as boxes, paper, cans, bottles, or fishing lures). Human waste shall not be discharged into the lake in any circumstances.
- D. The consumption of alcoholic beverages and /or illegal drugs or the carrying of opened alcoholic beverage containers on any boat is forbidden.
- E. Power propelled craft operators must act responsibly when involved in an accident in term of reporting to State and local authorities and rendering assistance as required.
- F. Powered propelled craft must be equipped with an effective muffler.
- G. No person operating any craft shall fail to stop when requested to do so by a police officer, identifying himself as such, or fail, upon request, to provide such person with full identification.

Chapter II – Hamilton Reservoir Dock Regulations

SECTION 1 | DEFINITIONS (AS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT)

- 1." Waterfront lot" shall mean any lot of real property abutting the waters of Hamilton Reservoir.
2. "High water line" of any waterfront lot shall mean the water's edge of such lot at a time when the reservoir water level is at the level of the spillway.
3. The "waterfront area" of any waterfront lot shall mean an area of reservoir surface bounded as follows:
 - a. by the lots high water line
 - b. by two extended side lines beginning at points at which the side lot lines of the waterfront lot intersect the high water line and extending on the same bearing as the side lot lines at a distance of fifty feet from the high water line or 1/3 the distance to the opposite shore, whichever is less and
 - c. by a line connecting the offshore ends of the extended side lines and parallel to the shoreline.
- 4."Dock" shall mean a walkway extending from the high water line into the waterfront suitable as a mooring place for boats and supported by a rigid framework, by a floating device or by a combinations on the two.
5. A "Mooring" shall mean the location of a boat or other floating object while tied to a dock or other fixed point or while secured by an anchor.
6. Docks, moorings, & other moored objects on or off of the right of ways (easements) shall abide by these by laws.

SECTION 2. | USE OF WATERFRONT AREA

Except in an emergency, no person shall enter the waterfront area of a waterfront lot by means of any watercraft or otherwise without the permission of the owner or legal occupant of such lot.

SECTION 3. | LOCATION OF DOCKS AND MOORING

1. No dock shall be installed or maintained in the waterfront area of any waterfront lot in such a location or in such a manner as to impinge upon or obstruct the waterfront area of an adjoining lot. No dock shall extend any longer than needed to safely moor a boat but shall not exceed fifty feet from the high water line or one-third of the distance to the opposite shore, whichever is less without the express written permission from the landowner.
2. No boat, float, raft or other floating object shall be moored or anchored in the waterfront area of any lot in such a location or manner as to impinge upon or obstruct the waterfront area of an adjoining lot.
3. The strict application of the regulations in subsections 3A and 3B of this chapter may be waived by the board of selectmen on the application of the owner of a waterfront lot or his representative if the board finds:
 - a. that the strict enforcement of such regulations would unreasonable restrict the applicant in the use and enjoyment of his property and its waterfront area, and
 - b. that the requested waiver will not unreasonably detract from the use and enjoyment of adjoining waterfront lots and waterfront areas.
4. In ruling upon applications for waivers the selectmen may take into account the following factors:
 - a. the depth of water and the bottom gradient in the waterfront area.
 - b. the divergence or convergence of the extended lot lines defining the waterfront area pursuant to the definition thereof in section 1C of this chapter.

- c. the fact that a particular installation not strictly complying with these regulations may have existed without objection before the enactment of this bylaw.
- d. the fact that rights to the use of the waterfront in question are shared by two or more property owners pursuant to deeded rights of access.

5. An application of a waiver may be heard at any scheduled meeting of the board of selectmen. At least fourteen days before the scheduled meeting at which the application is to be heard the applicant shall file with the selectmen a written application stating the nature of the waiver requested and shall notify the owners of adjoining waterfront lots by certified mail or by hand delivery of the substance of the request and the date, time and place of the hearing. The selectmen's ruling and the reasons therefore shall be entered in the minutes of the meeting.

6. Every dock and every boat or other moored object shall be removed from the waterfront area during the period from October 31 of each year to the following April 1st

- a. Those docks now existing that are built in a permanent fashion are grand fathered and are excluded from section 3F.

7. Boats may be temporarily anchored outside any waterfront area while occupied by persons for fishing or other recreational activities but shall not be left unattended.

SECTION 4 | CONSTRUCTION IN WATERFRONT AREAS

No person shall install a pier, retaining wall, boat ramp, platform, building foundation or similar structure designed as a permanent installation in the waterfront area or along the high water line of any lot without having filed with the conservation commission a notice of intent and obtained an order on condition from said commission permitting such installation and without complying with all conditions and limitations of such order.

SECTION 5 | ENFORCEMENT

1. The police department is authorized to notify the owner or occupant of any waterfront lot of any observed violation of the provisions of section 2 or 3 of this chapter. Said owner or occupant has fourteen days after written notification has been received, to correct the violations(s), after which the police department may issue a non-criminal assessment of fifty dollars (\$50.00), and may demand removal of said structure at the owners expense due to non-compliance.

2. The Conservation Commission is authorized to notify the owner or occupant of any waterfront lot of any observed violation of the provisions of section 4 of this chapter. Said owner or occupant has fourteen days after written notification has been received, to correct the violations(s), after which the Conservation Commission may issue a non-criminal complaint pursuant to the provisions of section 21D of Chapter 40 of the General Laws and shall impose a non-criminal assessment of fifty dollars (\$50.00)

Watershed and Reservoir Protection Recommendations For Homeowners on Hamilton Reservoir, Holland, MA

Soil erosion from private property is a significant source of the sediment being deposited into Hamilton Reservoir. Sediment and nutrient overload from private property promotes nuisance aquatic plant growth. The following measures will help protect your reservoir against further sediment and nutrient degradation. Every homeowner and action taken will play a part in restoring Hamilton Reservoir to the healthiest condition possible.

To Reduce Sediment Loading:

- **Hard Surface (paved) driveway or install water bars to direct water off the erodible dirt driveway and into vegetated areas.**

Much of the sediment erosion from private property into the reservoir is from homeowners' driveways. Paving with asphalt or large stone gravel will prevent the driveway surface from eroding into the reservoir. Water bars directing water off of dirt driveways and into grass swales will trap sediment before it enters the reservoir.

- **Create catchment areas for sediment diverted from driveways. Clean regularly.**

Grass swales with catchment basins should be installed to catch driveway runoff from both dirt and paved driveways. Catchment basins should be cleaned of sediment. This sediment should be properly disposed of regularly to avoid overflow into the reservoir.

- **Plant soil-stabilizing vegetation in areas where "natural" erosion is occurring.**

Live vegetation stakes, brush layering and rooted cuttings should be used to stabilize erosion occurring on steep slopes. Wherever bare soil exists, vegetation (grass, seed, and perennial plants) should be planted to stabilize the soil. A mulch of pine needles or tree leaves can also be used to keep soil in place.

- **Remove on-site, soft surface boat launching areas and use public boat launching ramps.**

Personal boat launching areas, formal or informal, should be either paved or vegetated. Two public boat ramps now exist for launching and removing watercraft. One is on the South Basin on Shore Drive (not public & no parking). The other ramp is a public boat launch on the North Basin on Leno Road adjacent to the dam, with parking available.

- **Reduce boat speeds whenever possible, particularly near shore to reduce bank erosion.**

In conjunction with storm waves, boat wakes cause serious erosion to the banks of the reservoir. Where the shoreline is protected only with lawn grass, the erosion is most severe; however, all unprotected sections of the shore are vulnerable to undercutting and erosion. Wave action also creates currents that help to transport sediment around the reservoir.

- **Remove fixed bulkheads and walls and replace with native vegetation to stabilize the reservoir bank.**

Reinforced reservoir banks tend to deflect waves from boats and storms and concentrate the energy. These waves will direct their force on the unprotected banks causing even greater bank undercutting and erosion. Natural grass and shrub vegetation along the shore will help to absorb wave energy as well as hold the soil in place.

- **Practice erosion control methods when performing construction on your site.** Properly installed silt fences, hay or straw bales and geotextile fabrics should be used to stabilize soil and retain soil on site. See the Holland Conservation Commission for further details.

To Reduce Nutrient Loading and Pondweed Growth:

- **Properly install and maintain septic system.** Homeowners have many responsibilities with an on-site septic system. An improperly installed and/or maintained

system will result in excessive nutrient influx, particularly nitrogen & phosphorous in the reservoir. Phosphorous is a

a primary nutrient necessary for the growth of aquatic plants. Check with Board of Health in Holland for septic system maintenance guidelines.

• **Reduce the use of lawn and plant fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides.** Lawn fertilizers contain high phosphorous concentrations that migrate via runoff and groundwater flow into the reservoir and will promote aquatic plant growth. Pesticides and herbicides are a potential health risk to nutrient-absorbing aquatic life and swimmers.

• **Thoroughly clean all parts of your boat after use in another lake and before launching in the reservoir to prevent the spread of invasive pondweeds.**

Nuisance aquatic plants can enter the reservoir and root themselves from plant fragments caught on boat trailers, boat motors, boat bottoms and fishing gear. Many non-native aquatic plants and animals spread rapidly and cannot be readily controlled.

Fertilizers

One of the keys to survival of our lake is reducing nutrients entering the water. Below are some suggestions that each of us can do to curb nutrients entering the water:

- NO lawn fertilizers or use a program that contains no phosphates and a slow release nitrogen. One pound of phosphorous may produce over 10,000 pounds of wet weeds and algae.

- Apply nitrogen fertilizer when the grass is actively growing to minimize loss of nutrients to nearby water. Begin fertilizing in the spring when temperatures are warm and discontinue before the grass ceases to grow in the fall.

- Avoid applying fertilizer prior to rainy days.

- Perforate lawn periodically, seed and mulch exposed soil (to prevent erosion).

- Remove aquatic weeds and other debris that washes up along the lakeshore so it will not decay near the lake.

- Remove fallen leaves and branches near the lake.

- Remove all goose and duck droppings and deposit in trash containers. **PLEASE DO NOT DEPOSIT INTO THE LAKE.**

- Do not feed the ducks or geese!

- Most "starter" fertilizers are 18-24-12 (Nitrogen-Phosphorous-Potash). It is the middle number (Phosphorous) that we are really concerned about. Remember that one pound of phosphorous may produce over 10,000 pounds of wet weeds and algae.

These nutrients feed and strengthen the wet weed root systems. Please do not use fertilizers. In the spring the rain flushes these nutrients right into the lake. **Remember we are helping fund an Environmental Engineering company to eliminate these nuisance weeds.**

There is a lot of sandy soil around the lake. Sand is very porous and will not hold nutrients. Property owners who are applying a fertilizer containing phosphorous are contributing to the number one weed and algae producing agent right into the lake.