PETITION TO HELP BANTAM LAKE

We the undersigned residents of the State of Connecticut, Bantam Lake waterfront property owners and Connecticut tax payers hereby formally request immediate action from the State of CT Department of Energy and Environment Protection (DEEP)

1. We are concerned for the environmental health and welfare of Bantam Lake – the largest natural lake in Connecticut and designated as a "Heritage Lake" by the State of CT in 2006. (State of CT Senate Bill 214 and Public Act 99-135), and more recently designated as a "distressed lake along with the Bantam River"

2. Bantam Lake has been plagued with pollution, invasive weed outbreaks, elevated Phosphorus and Nitrogen levels and algae blooms – specifically toxic Blue Green Algae (Cyanobacteria).

3. In 2011, The State of CT purchased the Beverlys Marina property on Bantam Lake and built a public boat launch along with extensive public parking.   60 revenue generating boat dock slips were also built and installed. This has provided public lake access to hundreds of fishermen and lake visitors on any given day. This acquisition and construction came at a cost of over $1 million dollars by the State. None of this revenue has ever been directed towards the care of Bantam Lake.

4. The State of CT **has not funded** any natural resource protection**,** testing, weed treatments or scientific studies to help maintain the environmental health of Bantam Lake **as proposed in their proposal of 2011** (copy of which is attached) Additionally, as stated in that proposal there has been very limited lake patrols by DEEP enforcement officers. Similar commitments are explicitly set forth under the CT Heritage Lake Act under which Bantam Lake has been designated.

5. The Bantam Lake Protective Association has worked tireless since 1925 to preserve and protect Bantam Lake. We have lobbied for municipal funding, promoted membership donations and fund raised in order to finance lake treatments. In the past 30 years we have diligently collected and maintained articulate scientific data in order to provide for the management of the lake's environmental health.

6. The Bantam Lake Protective Association should not be the sole providers - neither monetarily nor labor - for the environmental health care of the lake; particularly while it remains open as a state public lake.

7. In 1989, the State of CT DEEP issued a consent order requiring the Woodridge Lake Sewer District to upgrade its sewage treatment plant due to the its known inadequacy and possible hazardous impacts on the Bantam River Watershed and Bantam Lake or face substantial fines. No fines were ever issued nor was any progress made on any type of upgrades.

8. In 2021 The State of CT DEEP produced an extensive TMDL report, which has more precisely pinpointed nutrient loading sources of the lake. This document clearly depicts the highest source of nutrient loading is entering from the Bantam River which is being polluted by the Woodridge Lake Sewer District due to their obsolete ridge and furrow type leach field. This high nutrient loading is the main contributor to more frequent algae blooms in the lake, which are of grave concern for health risks to humans and animals. Copper Sulfate treatments are no longer effective and we are now forced to address the possibility of a full lake Alum treatment in order to keep the Cyanobacteria levels in check for the next 10-12 years - if we are lucky. The cost of this treatment is estimated at over 2 million dollars. This cost is beyond the financial capabilities of our organization and shoreline homeowners, and we should not be assumed accountable for same given the input source of the nutrient loading.

9. Bantam Lake is seriously impaired and poses a potential health hazard due to its increasing algae blooms, and the possibility of a complete lake closure. There is need for an Alum treatment to amend this issue and offer temporary assistance until the Woodridge Lake Sewer system impact can be mitigated.

10. The State of CT DEEP also stated its desire to be "a good neighbor" to the Bantam Lake Community yet they have allowed a known pollution influx and health hazard to enter the lake for **over 3 decades**. Bantam Lake is seriously impaired and desperately needs attention and resources in order to improve water quality for all to safely enjoy. It has essentially been financially abandoned by the State of CT. The Bantam Lake Community feels that it has been left with empty promises.

We are requesting that the State of CT allocate sufficient resources, funding, staff and testing to aid in the protection and treatment of this natural resource and to _PROMPTLY_ find a solution to shut down the CONTINUAL influx of sewage from the Woodridge Lake Sewer system.

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