



PO Box 393,
North Bennington VT 05257
(802) 442-8457

www.LakeParanVT.org
www.facebook.com/lakeparan

Good afternoon,

Our names are Camille Kauffman and Alisa Del Tufo and we represent Lake Paran in North Bennington, Vermont. We are speaking in regards to the reduction of funding allocated to Vermont Lakes and Ponds, specifically to Aquatic Invasive Species funding that Lake Paran and countless other lakes in Vermont rely on. Now more than ever we need funding for AIS prevention and control to increase.

Lake Paran is a beautiful recreation destination for many families in the southern part of the state. Thousands of community members use the lake and the surrounding system of trails each year. Because of economic need, many citizens who use the lake have **limited access** to other bodies of water. On a hot summer day, there will be hundreds of people enjoying Lake Paran; in the winter almost as many drill their ice fishing holes and spend entire days outdoors with friends and family. Access to beautiful lakes and ponds is a crucial part of people's lives here in rural Vermont.

However, our lake is under dire threat from invasive and nuisance aquatic plants. **Paran Recreations**, a small not for profit that owns 8 acres of shoreline, and the **Bennington County Conservation District** have partnered to develop a plan to save Lake Paran before it is too late. Together we have embarked on a campaign to **'Save Lake Paran!'** launching a petition that has garnered over 700 signatures (change.org/savelakeparan) and we are providing educational presentations around our community to raise awareness.

There are several things that make Lake Paran unique. Unlike other lakes in Southern Vermont, Lake Paran has neither municipal, state or homeowners that maintain it. The lake is surrounded by property that is either conserved or in the hands of the railway and the state of Vermont. Also, we have a legally binding agreement with the State from 1979 that says, **"The Secretary of State or his/her designee shall be responsible for the operation of the impoundment structure for the purposes of fisheries management and aquatic weed control. The terms and conditions of this Order are binding upon the Agency of Transportation, their heirs, assigns and successors of all or any part of land abutting either dam or the impoundment created by the dam"**. In 1978, the water levels of Lake Paran were lowered to restore the dam. This created a barren lake bottom and a perfect storm for aquatic invasive vegetation to grow which has become rampant in Lake Paran, affecting the recreational and environmental value and health of the lake. Eurasian watermilfoil grows in thick, dense mats, crowding native species of plants which die off, depleting food and shelter sources for fish and other wildlife. It is important to preserve this biodiverse and recreational

asset in our community by undergoing a consecutive year plan for aquatic invasive removal, targeting milfoil and eventually other aquatic nuisance plants that suppress the health of the lake. We know that this is a story repeated in many places around our state. The difference here is the unique value of this resource in a resource starved region, combined with a specific commitment from the state that was supposed to address these problems. We respectfully request that the State of Vermont fulfill its commitment to Lake Paran.

In order to address these problems we have developed a multi level strategy, including a budget, that will enable us to launch a process to save this precious community resource. For year one of a multi-year process, this includes:

1. **Herbicide:** Target Invasive Eurasian milfoil with spot treatment of **ProcellaCOR = \$22,000**
2. **Harvesting Boat:** Fund the purchase of a [Weedo Workboat](#) through a grant to the **Bennington County Conservation District** that will be shared with other lakes, such as Lake Shaftsbury and Big Pond, in Southwestern Vermont. This purchase will enable multiple water bodies in southern Vermont to address their nuisance species problems. **Purchase plus delivery \$125,000**
3. **Long term Biologic Cleaning:** Support a pilot project for long term clean up through the rental of **equipment from [EverBlue](#)** . This will offer Lake Paran a chemical free, full lake, long term, health promoting way to manage the weed problem and can become a model for other lakes.
Estimated Rental Cost = \$15,000/year

We implore you to support our efforts by allocating increased funding to Aquatic Invasive Species management in Vermont Lakes and Ponds before it is too late.

Sincerely,

Camille Kauffman, Director, Paran Recreations

Alisa Del Tufo, Board President, Paran Recreations