

To Whom It May Concern;

I volunteer a great deal of time and energy to the Echo Lake Protective Association. There are many people just like me working extremely hard to keep Echo Lake in E. Charleston clean and healthy. My lake association is involved with numerous programs offered by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). One of the best DEC programs that I participated in was the Lake Wise program. It took me three years and a lot of effort to become a recipient of a Lake Wise award, but it was so gratifying to be able to proudly display this sign on my property. Working towards Lake Wise not only transformed my property, but it changed my mindset. I learned how my behaviors and actions on my land affected the water quality of the nearby Echo Lake.

Now there's a proposal in the Governor's FY2024 budget to eliminate the lake Wise Coordinator's position. If you remove this position, you will essentially be putting an end to an immensely successful program. The Lake Wise program is an excellent example of how the state of Vermont and its property owners work together to accomplish the goal of protecting our valuable resource – clean water.

I implore you to reconsider this action and allow DEC to continue this essential and important program with a dedicated Coordinator that will continue to safeguard Vermont's lake and ponds.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter,

Holly Bull