

February 20, 2023

Oliver Pierson, Program Manager  
Lakes and Ponds Management and Protection Program  
Watershed Management Division/Department of Environmental Conservation  
Davis Building - 3rd Floor  
One National Life Drive  
Montpelier, VT 05620-3522

Dear Oliver,

We write as environmental groups engaged in water protection to request that the Aquatic Nuisance Control (ANC) Stakeholder Group address the issues and recommendations outlined below at future meetings in order to make meaningful improvements to the ANC permit process.

**Permit Process** - As you stated in the first meeting of the Stakeholder Group, one challenge with the ANC program is that one Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) staff person has the burden of making complicated and often controversial permit decisions. We would like the Stakeholder Group to discuss the decision-making process for these permits, including who at ANR makes the decisions. Specifically, we recommend that Department of Fish and Wildlife biologists and the Department of Health have a formal role in deciding whether a permit should be granted and/or what conditions should be included in the permit.

**Burden of Proof** - We believe that the burden to prove that the adverse ecological impacts of applying an aquatic nuisance control do not outweigh the benefits should rest on the applicant proposing to use a pesticide/herbicide to control an aquatic nuisance.

**Ban of Herbicide/Pesticide Use** - Currently, applications only address using chemicals in a waterbody. We recommend modifications to this approach to allow a petition to request a ban on the use of herbicides/pesticides in a waterbody to address an aquatic nuisance.

**Community Opposition** - Community opposition to applying an herbicide/pesticide to a waterbody should influence the ANC permit process. Widespread community opposition to granting a permit should have significant weight in the permit process.

We would like to discuss how the risk of rapid growth of invasive species in a waterbody should factor into a decision to issue an ANC permit.

**Appropriate Control Response** - Additionally, we would like to discuss how the Department assesses whether other methods of control—such as hand pulling, or benthic mats—might be more appropriate in a given situation.

**Funding** - We would like to discuss the need for additional funding for continued scientific research, data collection, monitoring and reporting on the ANC trends in Vermont.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to discussing these issues at our next meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jon Groveman".

Jon Groveman  
Vermont Natural Resources Council

Jared Carpenter/Lori Fisher  
Lake Champlain Committee

Kathy Urffer  
Connecticut River Conservancy

David L Deen CRVTU

Julie Silverman  
CLF Lake Champlain Lakekeeper