

Lindsey Schreier

From: Charles Coughlin <charliecoughlin@icloud.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 12, 2026 8:54 PM
To: Lindsey Schreier
Subject: [External] 25-P045 - Vermont Use of Public Waters Rules

[External]

Dear Rutland Counter Senators and Representatives,

I am a Rutland County resident who spoke during the recent hearing in Brandon regarding the proposed wakesports rule changes .

I recently learned that Vermont Lakes for Responsible Wakes had an information table set up in the State House, and after hearing that, I felt it was important to follow up and restate my perspective directly to our local representatives.

At the hearing in Brandon , I shared concerns about balance, fairness, and the way information is being presented around this issue. I respect everyone's right to participate in the process, but I worry that this particular group is presenting a one-sided narrative that does not fully reflect the experiences or views of many everyday Vermonters who responsibly use our lakes.

Thank you for your time and for your service to our community.
Sincerely,

Charlie Coughlin
Rutland County Resident

My thoughts and concerns

There are the current "Wake Sport Zone" rules that went into effect on April 15, 2024

1. 50 acres
2. 500 feet from shore
3. 200 feet wide
4. 20 feet deep

Theses are the proposed new rules changes there looking at

3,000 Foot Straight Run

1. There is no scientific or environmental research establishes 3,000 ft as necessary. This number comes from *typical ride length* and geometry — not hydrodynamics. This just doesn't make any sense, this a very long distance and it seems like a very random, like pick a number out of the air on how this would help anything.

500 ft From "Any Object" in wakezone

1. Wake studies discuss shoreline wake attenuation, not 360° object exclusion bubbles. Vermont already operates under a 200-ft safety framework. This proposal creates a moving exclusion zone that makes use nearly impossible.

100 Acre Minimum – 50 is what was reports in 2022 petition

1. Lake acreage is math, not environmental response. Wake energy does not change based on lake surface size. This is a policy tool that removes lakes by definition.

NON “Normal Use” of Vermont Waters definition of a wakeboat

1. Towed watersports with inboard boats clearly predate 1993. Technology evolving does **not** make the activity a “new use.” Wake surfing is an evolution of long-standing boating recreation.

Section 3.7 Lake Management Project / Research Provision

1. This section creates a pathway where an approved lake could be restricted under a “management” or “research” designation **without a clearly defined reinstatement timeline.**

That introduces uncertainty and effectively allows a lake to be removed from use without a guaranteed, transparent, science-based return process.

Regulatory tools should include **clear criteria, defined study parameters, and a set reinstatement schedule**, otherwise this functions as an indefinite access suspension mechanism rather than a research process.

General comments

1. Vermont’s current rule is already one of the most restrictive in the country, so why changes it? No one has really answered that question

2. There seems to be a shortage of facts and abundance of opinions and emotions that doesn’t really help the problems. We need more fact based decisions

3. The newest regulations were implemented about two years ago, so we’ve gone through two summers with them. To The best of my knowledge there’s been very little complaints, issues or citations with them.

4. We haven’t lived with the newest regulations long enough to fully understand how they’ve impact our lakes. And it’s too soon to make more demanding and impactful changes with new regulations.

5. Some of the new proposed regulations will be very difficult to manage. It will create specific moving wake boat zones around each boat 500 X 3000, that will be difficult to enforce and hard to keep track of. So if a boat crosses into my wake zone path through no fault of my own, who’s the problem and who will be held accountable.

6. It will also create two sets of rules, one for wake boats and one for traditional motor boats, doesn’t make sense.

7. How will these changes help impact the invasive species problem that we have in almost all the lakes in the states. All boats can carry invasive species from one lake to the next and there’s probably 20,000 of these boats on our lakes during the summer in Vermont. There’s only 300 wake boats in the state and for the most part there is very limited movement from lake to lake so how much of a problem are they really?

8. These rules would reduce the amounts of usable from 30 lakes to 18 lake.

9. There’s only 300 wakes boats in Vermont and there more than 20,000 motor boats, pantoon and fishing boats in Vermont. Their acting like limiting or fixing or removing the 300 or 1% of all wake boats from Vermont lake will solve most of the problems. This ignores the huge balance of remaining boats with no changes required from them what so ever, really. Their not the problem so they don’t have to make any changes what so ever, really who are we kidding?

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