

## **Lake Boon Commission Annual Report**

### **Approved February 21, 2024**

#### **Statement of Purpose:**

Formed under Chapter 712 of the Acts of 1941 by the Massachusetts legislature, the LBC embodies an enduring commitment to the preservation and sustainable management of Lake Boon. With a rich history rooted in stewardship, the commission remains steadfast in its mission to uphold the ecological integrity and safety of Lake Boon, while also promoting community engagement and environmental stewardship. Under its purview the commission can create and enforce regulations governing activities on and around the lake. These regulations, enacted as by-laws, may cover aspects such as boating, fishing, water quality, on ice activities, shoreline development, and environmental protection.

This annual report reflects the principal programs and initiatives in advancing the purpose and mission of the LBC during the year 2023.

#### **Composition and Engagement:**

Comprising three unpaid members—two appointed by the Stow Select Board and one by the Hudson Select Board—the LBC operates with transparency and inclusivity at its core. Holding publicly posted meetings approximately eight times per year, the commission encourages community participation and insight into its activities and initiatives.

Despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2023, the LBC remained dedicated to facilitating public engagement by transitioning meetings to a virtual format via Zoom, prioritizing both safety and accessibility. In 2023, the LBC was comprised of: Conray Wharff (Commissioner/Chairperson, Hudson), Dan Barstow (Commissioner/Clerk, Stow) and Dan Tereau (Commissioner, Stow).

#### **Year End Report:**

The Lake Boon Commission plays a crucial role in protecting the ecological health, recreational opportunities, and overall well-being of the Lake Boon community. Established to oversee activities in and around the lake, the Commission ensures sustainable resource use, water quality protection, and habitat preservation. Through regulation enforcement, maintenance coordination, and community involvement, the commission promotes collaborative lake stewardship, fostering harmony among residents, visitors, and the environment. Its presence highlights the importance of proactive governance in sustaining Lake Boon's integrity and vitality, benefiting present and future generations. This annual report reflects on the commission's dedication to safety, enjoyment, and cooperation in safeguarding Lake Boon and its community.

#### **Winter Rules Implementation:**

Recognizing the unique challenges posed by winter activities on Lake Boon, and in response to considerable feedback from lake residents regarding safety on the lake, the LBC undertook the initiative to establish Winter Rules. These rules, based principally upon Massachusetts laws related to the use of Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV's), unanimously passed after a thorough review process and public hearing, supplement existing regulations to address safety concerns during colder months. By extending safety measures to cover activities such as OHV, nighttime activities, snowmobiling, skating, etc., the Winter Rules demonstrate the LBC's collaborative and community focused approach to safeguarding the well-being of residents and visitors alike.

**Healthy Lake Boon Initiative (HLBI):**

Despite the conclusion of the HLBI grant in 2022, the Lake Boon Commission remained steadfast in its commitment to monitoring the health of the lake. Through the involvement of residents as "Citizen Scientists" and the establishment of a Scientific Advisory Board, the project continued to collect valuable data on water quality, nutrient levels, and emerging environmental threats. This collaborative effort reinforces the commission's dedication to preserving the ecological balance of Lake Boon for generations to come.

**Weed Treatment and Drawdown:**

Addressing the persistent challenge of invasive weeds, the LBC continued its comprehensive lake management program in 2023. By implementing measures to reduce nutrient loading and conducting licensed herbicide applications in accordance with state permits and local regulations, the commission actively mitigated the spread of non-native vegetation. The ongoing focus on education, invasive weed treatment, and lake drawdown, supported by data collected through the HLBI, underscores the commission's commitment to preserving the ecological integrity of Lake Boon.

**Exceptional Service Recognition:**

The Lake Boon Commission (LBC) extends heartfelt appreciation for the outstanding dedication and selfless service rendered by David Gray of Stow in overseeing various essential tasks concerning drawdown operations and fostering community engagement through effective communications. Additionally, our profound gratitude goes to Red Aylward, also from Stow, for meticulously coordinating the vital weed treatment efforts, ensuring the preservation of the lake's ecosystem and recreational amenities. Their tireless commitment and unwavering support play a pivotal role in the conservation and enhancement of our cherished lake environment, embodying the spirit of volunteerism and stewardship. We are deeply grateful for their invaluable contributions, which significantly enrich the well-being of our community and the sustainability of our natural resources.

In addition to Mr.'s Gray and Aylward, we would like to additionally recognize the town boards of Stow and Hudson as well as the local law enforcement community in their collective efforts to maintain and protect the safety and enjoyment brought to users of the lake.

Respectfully submitted,

Conray Wharff, Commissioner/Chairperson, Hudson

Dan Barstow, Commissioner/Clerk, Stow

Dan Tereau Commissioner, Stow