

DEEP CREEK DISPATCH

Summer, 2001

Newsletter of the
Property Owners' Association
of Deep Creek Lake, Incorporated

Deep Creek Lake Recreational and Land Use Adopted

On June 1, 2001 the Deep Creek Lake Policy and Review Board (PRB) adopted, for public comment, the Recreation and Land Use Plan which was required as one of the Board's first duties by the law which created it, enacted after the State's purchase of the Lake and buffer strip.

The plan outlines its purpose and major goals as being: an assessment of existing uses and conditions, the development of a framework for addressing future "wise use, protection and management of the natural and recreational resources of Deep Creek Lake," and a "mechanism" to ensure maximum effectiveness in outlining ways in which DNR, Garrett County and the PRB can better coordinate efforts and decisions pertaining to zoning and lake regulations as well as to ensure that policies are consistent, complimentary and designed to protect the natural resources of the lake and watershed.

A comprehensive assessment of current conditions, uses, facilities and management is included. The Plan addresses a number of issues including recreational activities and areas, commercial and private uses, carrying capacity, shoreline and buffer areas, zoning and lake water quality and quantity.

Identified in the Plan as major issues for future consideration are: lake water quality, carrying capacity, adjacent land use and management of shoreline and buffer strip, commercial uses, visitor access and recreational activity, management of fish and wildlife, and management roles and responsibilities. Initial recommendations are included, generally pending further study of each of the prospective issues. On the issue of car-

rying capacity, the PRB has recommended a new independent carrying study be completed and that it be updated every ten years.

Attached to the Plan are appendices which provide an analysis of resources of the Deep Creek Lake region and a history of the area.

The Board, in adopting the plan, attempted to ensure a preservation of the status quo, which has been the goal of the POA, DNR and Garrett County since the State announced its acquisition of the lake.

A public hearing on the Plan is scheduled for Saturday August 25 at 10:00 AM at Garrett 8 Cinemas (to follow the POA general membership meeting at the same location). The POA has provided copies of the Plan which may be obtained free at the DNR Discovery Center at The Deep Creek Lake State Park from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM or from the Internet at (www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/western/deepcreeklake.html) Since the plan contains 33 pages, we urge you to read and study the plan before the meeting.

POA Membership Meeting Scheduled

The next POA general membership meeting will be at 8:30 AM, Saturday August 25 at the Garrett 8 Cinema. Please note the new location. The community college was not available. We note, however, that the Garrett 8 Cinemas is central to most lake areas. New POA directors will be elected at the meeting.

You might wish to visit the new POA web page at (deepcreeklakepoa.com)

Also note that the public meeting to discuss the Deep Creek Lake Recreational and Land Use Plan will be held immediately after the POA general membership meeting.

Summary of POA June Membership Meeting

President Roger Titus called the meeting to order and introduced County Commissioners Wendel Beitzel and Ernest Gregg. They noted improvements being made to Glendale Rd. and that sewer improvements were coming to State Park Rd. Both Commissioners emphasized that they operate under an open door policy.

Board member Jack Seelig presented a review of lake level problems. Reliant Energy, the new owner of the dam and hydro facility, views the Rule Bands as suggestive. The Maryland Department of the Environment has not forced Reliant to follow the Rule Bands. There is some ambiguity in the Permit MDE issued to Reliant. However, it contains the same wording as the permits issued to Penn Elec, GPU, and Sithe. In the past, the rule bands were followed, except in times of drought when the lake dropped below the lower rule band because of lack of rain.

The lake has generally been above the upper rule band in June and July. For some of you that may be a plus, but for others, your shore is eroding, your trees are being undermined, and dock ramps are awash. If Reliant can keep the level high with impunity, one might assume that they can keep the lake below the lower rule band in August and September. Real time lake level can be obtained on the internet at (www.deepcreekhydro.com). The rule band requirements can also be found at that web site.

Katherine Mateer, representing the Maryland Department of General Services, answered questions concerning the buy down. The buy down portion may be consolidated into one deed when transferred by the new owners. The buy down must be transferred when the adjoining property is sold. It cannot be sold separately.

The buy down property acquired by the new owners will all be subject to the conservation easement. However, after the present window of opportunity has concluded, purchase of the land will not be possible. Land offered, but not purchased by adjoining land owners, may not be offered to other land owners.

The State is not subject to the conservation easement on unpurchased property. The unpurchased land will remain subject to the restrictions now on the Lake buffer strip in COMAR and not subject to the Conser-

vation Easement. COMAR is subject to change and amendments, but subject to the approval of the PRB.

If a lake property owner, who has not yet received an offer to buy down, sells their property, they should notify the State in order that the proper party receive the buy down information.

At this time 80% of those who have been offered a buy down have accepted.

A Tragedy and a Near Tragedy

Saturday July 7, the mast of a Flying Scot sailboat coming in along side a dock on the west shore of Deep Creek Lake several hundred yards south of the Glendale bridge hit an overhead power line adjacent to the shore. The electricity, of course, went to ground through the aluminum mast. The details are not known to us, but apparently a 9-year old boy then jumped into the lake. His father Brian Hatfield of NY jumped in to save the boy. Both were overcome by the electric current. Then the strong current burnt through one or more of the stainless steel shrouds holding the mast upright, and the mast fell down breaking contact with the power line. At this time, long time POA Board member Ed King, who was passing by in his power boat, realized it was now safe to enter the water and effect a rescue. Several others assisted. CPR was effective on the boy, but the father could not be revived.

If there are power lines near or over the water near your property notify Allegheny Power.

Wednesday evening, July 11, in the vicinity of the Deep Creek Yacht Club at Deerhaven at about 5:45 PM, a power boat ran over a Laser sailboat, effectively cutting the boat in two. The power boat was operated by a 14-year old boy in the company of three adults. It is a wonder that the sailor was not killed. He has a few broken bones and, as of the following Saturday, "hurt all over." A Laser is not as large as a Flying Scot, but has a 20 foot mast with a large white sail of 76 square feet—hard to miss. The people in the boat said they never saw it. Hey folks—WATCH WHERE YOU ARE GOING! AND SAILBOATS HAVE RIGHT OF WAY! If you can't see because of the sun or fog or for any other reason, SLOW DOWN!

The DNR Police were called and responded promptly—to the wrong Yacht Club! They said they did not

know there were two Yacht Clubs on Deep Creek Lake!

Bears

The Cumberland Times-News reported events at the annual meeting of the League of Women Voters. Delegate George Edwards and State Senator John Hafer were asked about the increasing population of black bears in the county.

One resident present noted that in an area where he hunted deer twenty years ago he saw one bear. Last year he saw 37 bears. Of course he may have seen the same bear several times. But most people think there are a lot of bears in and around Garrett County. Wildlife biologists with the DNR have utilized DNA testing to estimate 227 black bears in Garrett County. The study also put the number of bears east of Garrett County at 100. The black bear is a tough animal on which to get a census. The home range for a male is about 25 square miles.

The study to determine the number of bears used 108 bait stations surrounded by barb wire. When a bear visited the site and its molasses bait, a few hairs were left on the barb wire. DNA testing then determined how many different bears had visited the site.

Biking along Rock Lodge Rd. last week, we noted many large plastic garbage containers had been vandalized, probably by bears, but we can't exclude racoons and dogs. A rental property we visited a few weeks ago had a large steel garbage container by the road. It appeared that it might be bear proof. We urge such containers be utilized at those properties that have regular garbage pick up.

Tour Boat

The 62 foot tour boat has been sold. According to owner Bob Browning, "It's on its way to Louisiana to be used for 'gator tours in the swamp."

You may recall that the PRB agreed to a change in COMAR to permit the tour boat, if all the regulations concerning the boat and its operation were also incorporated in COMAR. The DNR wanted these detailed regulations in a renewable contract. The contract, of course, could have been changed without approval of the PRB. A compromise could not be reached, and the boat is gone.

Personal Watercraft

The New York Times reported that PWC's represent 10% of all registered recreational water craft, and are involved in roughly 30% of all accidents, and about 40% of boating related hospitalizations.

Some groups are concerned about environmental damage. PWC 2-cycle engines dump as much as 25 to 30% of their fuel out the exhaust as unburned gasoline. One answer to this problem is PWC's with 4-cycle engines.

Membership

Some of you were concerned by the dues notice in the Spring issue of the Dispatch. We knew that some of you did not receive the Winter Dispatch due to a computer problem. So, for your convenience, we included a Membership Application and a return envelope. Many of you took this as a bill, and thought that we had not credited you for 2001 dues paid. Although we have found a few errors in our records, we were NOT billing you a second time. The membership form was included as a convenience. We are sorry that it created so much confusion.

Farm Heritage Tours

A new program, organized by the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce and Mountain Pride Cooperative is set to begin by August 1, 2001. There are nine agricultural locations throughout the County. Participants should call ahead. Complete details including maps and directions may be obtained by a call to the Chamber of Commerce at 1-800-800-5557 or locally at 301-387-4386, or stop by the visitor center just off US 219 at the north edge of McHenry. The following locations are available as noted:

Britscehof Farm—1880's Dutch Barn, llamas, goats, hiking and other activities. May through October. Call 301-746-7049. Admission \$5, 6-12 \$2, under 6 free.

Walnut Meadows—Ginseng farm, hiking, farm machinery museum, and climbing wall. Thursday through Saturday all year. Phone 304-379-3596. Cost \$4 for 12 and older.

McClintock Dairy—A fourth generation dairy farm with 400 cows. Open daily. Please call 301-746-8220 for tour hours. Adults \$6, 6-12 \$4 and under 6 free.

Cove Run Corn Maze. August 10 through October. Open Wednesday through Saturday at various times. Call 301-746-8161. Adults \$6, 6-12 \$4, and under 6 free.

Yoder's Tomato Place—Hydroponic tomatoes. May through August, Thursdays through Saturday 10 am to 3 pm. Call 301-334-9258. FREE

The Learning Farm—Tour the agricultural department and greenhouses at the Garrett Community College. Call 301-387-3331. FREE

Deep Creek Cellars—Garrett County's only winery. Wednesday through Saturday. Call 301-746-4349 FREE

Crimson Shamrock Alpacas—Alpacas, angora rabbits, and sheep. Thursday through Saturday. Call 304-735-6413. FREE

Briar Patch Bunnies—Help feed bunnies, ducks, chicks, and geese. Thursday through Saturday. Call 301-387-9044. FREE

What a great idea! Something else to do. Remember, you must call ahead to schedule your visit.

The Wisp

Last month we reported the pending sale of the Wisp. The sale closed on June 12. The resort was founded by Helmuth Heise in 1955, and he developed it from a one-slope ski hill to a resort that attracts about 180,000 skiers per year.

Changes are underway. Chair five is being extended, chair four redirected, and work has started on a tubing park near Boulder Run.

Property Owners' Association of
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