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Freeport

Hello, Thank you to everyone that is working to resolve this sensitive issue and to come up with safe rules and regulations for airboat noise.

We are not in agreement with the idea of raising the noise level to 90 dB which is proven to cause gradual hearing loss in children and adults. This noise level is higher than acceptable noise in an industrial work zone.

We moved to our very small coastal camp located in a quiet residential area, to be a part of Maine's outdoor community that respects others health and welfare and values the pristine wildlife habitat.

We have six children and six grandchildren who's health and welfare will be impacted by the noise pollution caused by the airboats. Our quality of life will be severely impacted by the suggestion the noise should be increased to levels equivalent to the noise of a subway or motorcycle zooming by our open windows at random times of day and night. In the summer our windows are open and the house is about 20 feet from the high water mark. It wakes up our family and scares the children. It causes great trauma to the whole family.

Today's technology allows for all types of internal combustion engines to run quieter and to be more efficient. If we, as residents of the State, decide to allow increasing noise levels to dangerous levels when the research has already proven it is damaging to humans as well as to the wildlife, we will no longer be a State with the motto 'the way life should be.'

We have personally observed two elderly paddle boarders hurry over to a dock and going under it, crouching down panicked, as an airboat drove by at full throttle. Human's and wildlife's quality of existence are being threatened by the noise of airboats. We've witnessed, on two many occasions, people putting their hands over their ears, stopping everything they are doing and just waiting for the airboat to go by. Paddlers head to the shore when one of these boats are heard from miles away.

We understand and support harvesters, but we think there must be a better solution to this problem. Harvesters have been using regular boast for years. Now that the airboat is being used more frequently the public is very concerned about its unacceptable and unsafe noise levels for humans and the wildlife. The noise airboats create increases stress levels for everyone involved. Stress causes health issues and disease.

Has anyone researched modifying the boats to respect the current noise regulations?

Would it be possible to set up a fund to be utilized by harvesters with existing airboats with the intent of modifying airboats propellers to reduce the noise?

Is Maine going to permit anyone to use an airboat along the shores or are they to be limited to harvesters going forward?

Are specific rules in regards to airboat safety and no wake zoning and regulations being explored and developed?

Is the Department of Environmental Protection involved with this group? If not why?

We are concerned that if anyone is able to buy and use airboats off the coast of Maine for recreation and touring, in addition to the use of airboats by harvesters, that the pristine intercostal environment will be put at risk.

Many studies have already proven that wildlife species are negatively impacted by excessive noise. We all have the ocean and coastline resource to share and protect. It is important to think of this resource and how we can protect it and pass it on to the future generations.

Regards,

Claire and Jay Martin