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Waterville
LD 171

Please support LD 171. Courtesy Boat inspections and Invasive Plant Patrols are essential to McGrath Pond and Salmon Lake! We have financially supported and volunteered in both programs for more than 12 years. In 2010 Salmon Lake benefitted from a DEP and lake association joint effort to eradicate Eurasian Milfoil found in Outlet Cove. Today however, lakes infested with Variable-leaf Milfoil lie less than 2 miles from our shores. We know that 'lake hopping' is enjoyed by many and one invasive plant fragment can result in millions of dollars required to control a situation that can be prevented.

LD 171 will help reduce the risk of the spread of invasive aquatic plants by focusing on key management actions on infested lakes. Specifically, this bill will: Strengthen watercraft inspection protocols. The bill asks the commissioners of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the Department of Environmental Protection to assess if current protocols are adequate for these waterbodies, and to develop guidelines for stronger protocols where needed.

Review policies and procedures for surface use restrictions. Boats passing through areas with invasive infestations are more likely to pick up plant fragments and transport those fragments to new lakes. Surface use restrictions in areas of the worst infestations are a common-sense tool that can reduce that spread, but different agencies apply different standards to setting surface use restrictions. Getting commissioners to discuss ways that surface use restrictions can better protect lakes from invasive species spread is an important step to implementing consistency with this important management tool.

We urge passing LD 171 an act to enhance protections regarding invasive aquatic plants infestations in inland waters of the state. Thank you. Kimberly and David Hallee