



Connecticut Department of

ENERGY &
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION

May 8, 2015

Robert R. Morra
First Selectman
Town of Bolton
222 Bolton Center Road
Bolton, CT 06043

Dear Selectman Morra:

I have received your letter dated April 20, 2015 requesting that DEEP again refrain from stocking Lower Bolton Lake with channel catfish this year. Our office also received several other similar written requests. It was most helpful to meet you and other concerned parties (including other elected officials and members of the Friends of Bolton Lakes) in person on May 5 to discuss our collective interests in effectively managing the Bolton Lakes. Further, I was able to better understand the town's position with respect to resumption of channel catfish stocking after discussing this with you and others at that gathering. You explained that the town of Bolton is simply looking for one more year of no catfish stocking to allow for ongoing evaluations of the lake to take place while minimizing controllable variables.

Both Justin Davis (Inland Fisheries Division Biologist and co-job leader for our channel catfish project) and I were pleased with your apparent strong support for resumption of channel catfish stocking in Lower Bolton Lake in 2016 provided we agree to not stock this year (i.e., in 2015), and barring any convincing evidence that catfish have contributed to water quality issues at the lake. It seemed clear to us that most of the attendees of the recent meeting acknowledge that it is highly unlikely that the stocking of yearling channel catfish into Lower Bolton Lake has or is likely to contribute water quality problems based on the information provided by our office, by Chuck Lee of the DEEP Lakes Management Program, and by the town's lake consultant (Dr. George Knoecklein and his staff from Northeast Aquatic Research). As you know, we stocked the lake annually with yearling catfish between 2007 and 2012 (inclusive), but did not stock in 2013 and 2014 per request of the town and others. I won't rehash our position regarding channel catfish and water quality effects here, but instead refer you to my letter of April 24, 2014 and other correspondence referenced therein should you seek more detail on this matter.

Following our recent meeting, we have agreed to not stock the lake this year but we are planning to resume our stocking program in 2016. As you know, if we were to stock this year we would have reduced the number of yearling catfish to 1,200, down from ~2,700 (the number typically stocked annually). We can discuss our stocking plans for 2016 when we meet with you and others next March as we have all tentatively agreed to do. A meeting in March of

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2016 will allow for a thorough review and discussion of the data collected for the town by Northeast Aquatic Research this year and any additional data that CT DEEP is able to acquire. You should know that we will be electrofishing Lower Bolton Lake this fall.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns (860-424-4171). Alternatively you can contact Fisheries Biologist Justin Davis at the Marlborough office (860-295-9523).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Arrestad", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Peter Arrestad

Director, Inland Fisheries Division