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Date: August 31, 2014

To: Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator, Lakes and Ponds Committee, Lincolnville, ME

From: Pitcher Pond Improvement Association

Subject: Public Access at Pitcher Pond

We are writing on behalf of the Board of the Pitcher Pond Improvement Association to inform you about a change in procedure for public access to Pitcher Pond.

The Pitcher Pond Improvement Association is a non-profit voluntary membership organization representing lakefront property owners and others interested in preserving the health of this small and fragile body of water. We meet annually and the Board keeps property owners informed through an annual newsletter and other communications.

Our concerns include: a) the integrity of the Ducktrap River outlet dam, b) measuring and preserving water quality and c) preventing the introduction of invasive plants into the lake. Over many years we have collected dues, raised special funds, done studies and conducted educational efforts in support of these important goals.

Twelve years ago the Association voted to install a gate with combination lock adjacent to the outlet dam on property owned by the PPIA at the primary boat launch site. This action was taken not to prevent access to the lake but rather to remind those bringing motorboats in that Maine law requires boat owners make sure their boats, motors, etc. are free of invasive plants.

The lock combination has long been known to all who use the gate on a regular basis, and has remained the same. Newcomers have been asked to call 1-877-878-3985 and leave their name and number. They have received a return call with information and instructions and the lock combination.

Effective immediately, we have modified this procedure so that when one calls the above number, they will immediately be given the combination. There will be no need to wait for a return call. The recorded message will also include information about cleaning the boat, motor, trailer, etc. and a caution about invasive plants.

This change in procedure is perhaps a good occasion to call to your attention several important

points about access to Pitcher Pond.

1. The gate has been used properly by the vast majority of boaters over the past twelve years. While it may require some small extra effort, it serves the highly beneficial purpose of reminding visitors that Maine law requires them to check their motors for invasive plants before launching. It may be coincidence but during the years the gate has been in operation, invasive plants have not been sighted in this great pond.

2. Proper use of the gate depends primarily on an honor system. While some Maine lakes and ponds are able to monitor their boat ramps through volunteers, cameras, or other methods, we rely on the goodwill and common sense of visitors.

Unfortunately there have recently been several acts of vandalism involving the gate, including cutting the lock, and otherwise disabling the gate. While we do not believe that the above change of policy will necessarily prevent vandalism, we believe that no one will have reason to complain about being unable to launch a boat promptly.

3. The overwhelming majority of watercraft on Pitcher Pond are kayaks and canoes, many of them used by families with young children. Any visitor bringing kayaks, canoes, or other light watercraft in can portage to the water on the open path beside the gate. Also, some property owners have ramps for small boat launching and allow access to some visitors or renters.

4. Pitcher pond is a small (371 acre) and shallow (average 16 feet) body of water. At its narrowest point the lake is only a few hundred yards wide. These facts, plus the wide use of non motorized boats on the lake, the presence here of precious wildlife, and the frequent swimming from any camp or shore, make this lake poorly suited for large powerboats that travel at high speed and /or produce a large wake. Legal restrictions are limited (jet skis are banned) and so we rely on common sense, public safety, and courtesy to control the use and speed of large powerboats.

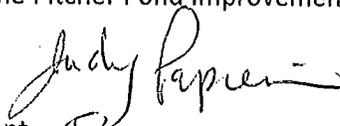
We hope that this information and these thoughts will be useful as the Ponds and Lakes Committee considers public access to Lincolnville water bodies. We are open and welcoming to visitors. At the same time we feel an overwhelming obligation and a commitment to preserve the beauty and purity of Pitcher Pond for current users and for future generations.

We stand ready to answer your questions and to work collaboratively with you.

Sincerely,

Board of Directors of The Pitcher Pond Improvement Association

Judy Papian, President



Peg Miller, Vice President

