

For Immediate Release

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Vermont Agency of Natural Resources Denies Petition to Restrict Use of Wolcott Pond

MONTPELIER – The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) announced its decision today to deny the Friends of Wolcott Pond’s petition to restrict use of Wolcott Pond.

The Department found that enforcement of the existing 5 mph speed limit is preferred to prohibiting internal combustion motors from using Wolcott Pond.

“Wolcott Pond is an accessible, natural pond with some nice wetland edges that provides important recreational opportunities for fishing and wildlife watching. We are pleased that the pond will continue to be available to all boaters who respect and obey the 5 mph speed limit on all areas of the pond,” said Department of Environmental Conservation Lakes & Ponds Program Manager Susan Warren.

The Friends of Wolcott Pond had asked the Department to prohibit internal combustion motorized vehicles from using the pond. The citizen group sought this ban to protect the quiet nature of the pond and to reduce swimmer safety risks. The Department declined to grant this request after learning that the noise concerns and swimmer safety risks are only an issue when motorboats violate the speed limit.

The Friends of Wolcott Pond also cited pollution as a reason for the petition. The Department noted its decision that it is “unaware of any water quality issues or impairments associated with Wolcott Pond” and that enforcement of existing water quality regulatory controls is the preferred way to achieve a petition’s purpose without unnecessarily restricting use of the pond.

Although the Department declined to grant the Friends of Wolcott Pond’s petition, it will work with the Friends of Wolcott Pond to enhance visibility of the Use of Public Waters Rules at the access area and enhance communication with the enforcement programs.

Copies of the decision can be found on the Department of Environmental Conservation’s website: (<http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/>). For additional information, contact Susan Warren at the Department of Environmental Conservation, (802) 490-6134.

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