

## Concern of Ballast Boat Damage

Keech Pond is a small 130 acre crescent shaped lake. The average depth is (30") 2 1/2 ft. The average deep water depth is about 11+ feet (3.5 meters). The pond is used in many recreational ways like swimming, fishing, canoeing, kayaking and using motor craft like personal water crafts (jet skies), pontoon boats, ski boats, and now ballast boats.

The ballast boats (3) have been on the pond for 5 years. Since that time the changes are significant.

We own 330 ft along the shoreline. There are two flagged wetlands that penetrate into the land from the pond about 30-50 ft. The shrubs and trees like serviceberry, viburnum, blueberry, alder, and red maple have been severely undermined and eroded away leaving roots hanging in the air. We have used logs, sand bags and boulders to help control the wake damage along the shore. In some areas the splash zone travels 10ft inland. In other areas, the splash goes up 2-3 ft high including on our dock.

Many properties around the lake have installed cement blocks, cement walls and boulder walls to save their shoreline from erosion, against DEM regulations for a natural shoreline. The riparian edge is destroyed if left to erode by boats or edged in hardscape.

Other changes such as small shoreline plants like asters, rushes and sedges have disappeared. There were bull and pickerel frogs in the wetland. Painted turtles that always sunned on the rocks in our shallow rocky cove are no longer.

There is a real safety concern for small boats like canoes and kayaks, as well as paddle boarders when suddenly 3 ballast boats start going by with a 3 ft wake in two directions. Jet skies like to zip by quickly on the wakes and suddenly the narrow lake is very small for all the wave activity. Our pontoon boat was flooded on the deck several times, our friend's canoe capsized with their daughter and finally, our daughter, while paddle boarding with her son was tipped over.

As a member of our Keech Pond Property Owners Association, we feel powerless to control the boats and boaters. We do not want to create animosity with our neighbors, but the boats are dangerous and destructive. Our pond is too small for ballast boats and the wakes they produce. We need help from the state to help us save our small lakes.

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