

## News from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### State Announces Its 2012 Fall Drawdown of Lakes

Concord, NH – The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES) announced today that the annual fall drawdown of the lakes and ponds controlled by dams owned by DES will be initiated according to the schedule below.

LAKE	RIVER	TOWN	START DATE	DEPTH (in feet) FROM FULL
Angle Pond	Bartlett Brook	Sandown	Oct. 08	2'
Akers Pond	Greenough Brook	Errol	Oct. 08	1'
Ayers Lake	Tributary to Isinglass River	Barrington	Oct. 20	3'
Ballard Pond <sup>1</sup>	Taylor Brook	Derry	Oct. 08	9.7'
Barnstead Parade	Suncook River	Barnstead	Oct. 08	1.5'
Bow Lake <sup>2</sup>	Isinglass River	Strafford	Oct. 08	8'
Burns Lake	Tributary to Johns River	Whitefield	Oct. 08	1.5'
Chesham Pond	Minnewawa Brook	Harrisville	Oct. 08	4' to 2'
Crystal Lake	Crystal Lake Brook	Enfield	Oct. 08	4'
Crystal Lake	Suncook River	Gilmanton	Oct. 08	3'
Deering Reservoir	Piscataquog River	Deering	Oct. 08	4'
East Washington Pond	Beards Brook	Washington	Oct. 08	2'
Glen Lake/Greggs Falls	Piscataquog River	Goffstown	Oct. 27	1.5'
Goose Pond	Goose Pond Brook	Canaan	Oct. 08	7.5'
Grafton Pond	Bicknell Brook	Grafton	Oct. 08	2'
Great East Lake	Salmon Falls River	Wakefield	Oct. 1	3'
Great Pond	Powwow River	Kingston	Oct. 08	1'
Highland Lake	North Branch Contoocook River	Stoddard	Oct. 08	3'
Horace Lake (aka Weare Reservoir)	Piscataquog River	Weare	Oct. 13	5'
Horn Pond	Salmon Falls River	Wakefield	Oct. 1	1.5'
Howe Reservoir	Tributary to Minnewawa Brook	Dublin	Oct. 08	6'
Island Pond	North Branch Contoocook River	Stoddard	Oct. 08	3'
Lake Kanasatka	Tributary to Lake Winnepesaukee	Moultonboro	Nov. 1	1.5'
Kezar Lake	Lane River	Sutton	Sept. 30	2'
Kingswood Lake	Churchill Brook	Brookfield	Oct. 08	4'
Little Sunapee Lake	Kidder Brook	Sunapee	Oct. 15	1'
Lovell Lake <sup>3</sup>	Branch River	Wakefield	Oct. 08	4'
Mascoma Lake <sup>4</sup>	Mascoma River	Lebanon	Oct. 08	3'
Mendums Pond	Little River	Nottingham	Nov. 9	7'

Milton Three Ponds <sup>4</sup>	Salmon Falls River	Milton	Oct. 08	3'
Newfound Lake <sup>4</sup>	Newfound River	Bristol	Oct. 08	2.5'
Nay Pond	Dead River	Milan	Sept. 30	7.5''
Nippo Pond	Nippo Brook	Barrington	Oct. 08	2'
North River Pond	North River	Nottingham	Oct. 08	1'
Northwood Lake	Little Suncook River	Epsom	Oct. 08	6'
Ossipee Lake <sup>4</sup>	Ossipee River	Effingham	Oct. 08	3.25'
Pawtuckaway Lake	Pawtuckaway River	Nottingham	Oct. 08	7'
Opechee Lake	Winnepesaukee River	Laconia	Oct. 08	5'
Pequawket Lake	Tributary to Swift River	Conway	Nov. 1	2'
Pine River Pond	Pine River	Wakefield	Oct. 08	8'
Pittsfield Mills <sup>5</sup>	Suncook River	Pittsfield	Oct. 08	12'
Pleasant Lake	Tributary to Little Suncook River	Deerfield	Oct. 08	3'
Rob Reservoir	North Branch Contoocook River	Stoddard	Oct. 08	2'
Sawyer Lake	Badger Brook	Gilmanton	Oct. 08	3'
Shellcamp Pond <sup>6</sup>	Academy Brook	Gilmanton	Oct. 08	4'
Silver Lake	Minnewawa Brook	Harrisville	Oct. 08	3'
Squam Lake <sup>4</sup>	Squam River	Ashland	Oct. 08	2.5'
Sunapee Lake	Sugar River	Sunapee	Oct. 08	2.5'
Suncook Lakes	Suncook River	Barnstead	Oct. 1	5'
Sunrise Lake	Dames Brook	Middleton	Oct. 17	2'
Sunset Lake	Suncook River	Alton	Oct. 08	7'
Trickling Falls	Powwow River	East Kingston	Nov. 1	1'
Webster Lake	Chance Brook	Franklin	Oct. 08	2'
Winnisquam Lake	Winnepesaukee River	Belmont	Oct. 08	2'

1. Ballard Pond – a deeper drawdown is being done this year to allow for repairs to be made at the dam.
2. Bow Lake – The Pointe Trinity Association has requested a deeper drawdown for one year only to repair their boat ramp. Next year the drawdown depth will return to 2'.
3. Lovell Lake – every 4 years the drawdown is deeper, to 4'. Next year, the drawdown will return to the normal depth of 3 feet.
4. These larger lakes generally do not reach their full drawdowns late fall or March. The values above are generally the maximum levels reached, although during any given year the levels reached can be either higher or lower due to weather conditions.
5. Pittsfield Mills – special drawdown to clear blocked gate.
6. Shellcamp – will be drawn down 4' this year only at the request of the lake association. The usual drawdown is 2'.

The depth of drawdown listed above is not from the current level, but is from the normal full pond level. Since the hydrologic conditions and recreational uses of these water bodies vary, the degree and date of the start of drawdown for each lake vary and could be affected by the amount of rainfall during the period. In addition, the actual date at which the drawdown will begin could vary by a few days based on operational constraints. However, at three dams, the drawdowns will be initiated on a specific Saturday in October to provide recreational opportunities for canoeists and kayakers in the rivers below these dams. The schedule for these recreational opportunities is as follows:

- On September 29<sup>th</sup>, approximately 250 cubic feet per second (cfs) will be released into the Suncook River from the Suncook Lake Dam in Barnstead. This release rate will be

curtailed at the end of the day, and the lake level held to its usual elevation until the drawdown is resumed on the date listed above.

- On October 13<sup>th</sup>, approximately 450 cubic feet per second (cfs) will be released into the North Branch of the Piscataquog River from the Horace Lake Dam in Weare.
- On October 20<sup>th</sup>, approximately 250 to 300 cubic feet per second (cfs) will be released into the Little Suncook River from the Northwood Lake Dam in Epsom.

These special releases will start at or near 8 AM for the dates specified above, and will be reduced to near normal levels by 4 PM that same day. DES reminds people that canoeing and kayaking have inherent risks, and paddling the state's lakes and rivers is at the paddler's own risk.

Lake drawdowns are conducted each fall to reduce winter ice damage to shoreline properties and to reduce spring flooding. Drawdowns also give property owners an opportunity to conduct any necessary repairs to their waterfront property, provided they first secure a permit from the DES Wetlands Bureau at (603) 271-2147.

Generally, lake levels are allowed to return to the normal full pond level in the spring. However, Chesham Pond is lowered by 4 feet starting after Columbus Day for a period of 6 to 8 weeks and the level is brought up to 2 feet below the normal full pond level for the remainder of winter. In addition, the drawdowns of Opechee and Winnisquam Lakes, which occur on a two-year interval, last only approximately two weeks. This year, the lowering of Opechee Lake will begin on October 9<sup>th</sup>, and it will likely take two days to pass the water from Opechee Lake downstream through Winnisquam Lake. Therefore, the level of Winnisquam Lake is not expected to drop noticeably until October 11<sup>th</sup>. On October 23<sup>rd</sup> flows at Lakeport Dam will be increased to refill Opechee Lake, and the level of Winnisquam Lake should begin to rise late in the day on October 24<sup>th</sup>.

Not included in this schedule is Lake Winnepesaukee. Unlike the other lakes in this schedule, Lake Winnepesaukee is not purposely drawn down in the fall. Instead, each year on Columbus Day, the releases from Lakeport Dam are reduced from a normal minimum of 250 cubic feet per second (cfs) to a flow between 30 and 50 cfs for a period of up to two weeks to allow for maintenance of the dams and hydropower facilities on the Winnepesaukee River. The flow of 30 to 50 cfs is the minimum flow needed to maintain the downstream aquatic life during this period.

By the middle of the fall, Lake Winnepesaukee is, on average, 15 inches below its springtime full level due to evaporation and releases from the lake that have occurred over the course of the summer. As a result of the reduction in the amount of water released from the dam after Columbus Day, the lake level does not drop for the remainder of the month of October and is generally maintained at this level through the month of December. Depending on the amount of snow on the ground in the winter, the lake level may be lowered further beginning in January to a depth of two feet below the normal full level.

A plot of the average lake levels throughout the year for Lake Winnepesaukee is provided on DES's website at [http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/dam/winni\\_levels/index.htm](http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/dam/winni_levels/index.htm). Also included are updated plots of this year's lake levels, releases from the dam, and precipitation.

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