

## Deep Creek Dispatch—Special Edition

We want to find out the views of the Deep Creek Lake Property Owners' Association members about jet skis, also known as personal watercraft (PWC). We are conducting this survey because the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Lake Manager and the Deep Creek Lake Policy and Review Board have been asked to change the DNR regulations that apply to PWC. This issue has been raised by people who sell PWC, and will be discussed at the July 24, 2006 meeting of the Deep Creek Lake Policy and Review Board (at the Deep Creek Lake State Park Discovery Center). Here is the information we have about the issue:

- The people who sell PWC want the state's regulations for Deep Creek Lake to be amended to recognize changes that have been made in PWC since the time when the regulations were adopted. PWC have developed from 2-stroke engines to 4-stroke engines and have become quieter and more environmentally friendly. Also, PWC have grown from small 1-person

models to family-size models that carry up to 4 people and can pull water skiers.

- These changes have made the newer, larger 4-stroke PWC much heavier than the earlier models, which were under 500 pounds. The newer, larger PWC weigh-in at 700 to 875 pounds. PWC under 500 pounds are still made; they are the stand-up 2-stroke models.
- Under the state regulations that apply to the lake buffer strip (the land immediately surrounding the lake), PWC that weigh less than 500 pounds can be beached on the buffer strip instead of being kept at a dock slip. This rule originally was adopted to allow canoes, kayaks and other small craft to be beached on the buffer strip. Pontoon boats, speed boats, ski boats and other power boats must be kept at a dock. Each residential Type A dock permit allows 3 slips for boats, only 2 of which can be power boats. If a

PWC is kept in a dock slip it counts as a power boat for permitting purposes.

- Most PWC owners prefer to beach their PWC on the buffer strip or to put their PWC on a stand on the buffer strip. The stands, which are made locally, must have their front legs in the water and their back legs on the shore. The stands can support PWC far heavier than 500 pounds. Permits from the lake manager are required for the PWC stands. Permits are granted for one PWC stand for every 50 feet of shoreline.
- When permits are requested for the PWC stands, the lake manager asks about the weight of the PWC. Some people with older PWC have no documentation to prove that their PWC are less than 500 pounds, and the people who sell PWC say that it is difficult to get data showing the weight of the older models. Moreover, because people cannot beach the newer, larger and more versatile models of PWC on the buffer strip (because they are heavier than 500 pounds), people who buy the larger PWC will have to keep them at their docks, which would displace 1 of the 2 power boats they are allowed at their docks.
- The people who sell PWC are asking that the state regulations be changed

to allow PWC up to 1,000 pounds to be beached on the buffer strip.

Of course, there are other state regulations that apply to the use of PWC. Statewide regulations prohibit PWC from operating “at a speed in excess of 6 knots within 100 feet of a shore, wharf, pier, piling bridge structure or abutment, or people in the water,” or “within 100 feet of another vessel, except when required to maintain speed in a crossing or overtaking situation...”

Also prohibited is operating a PWC in a negligent manner, examples of which are: (1) Jumping, or attempting to jump, the wake of another vessel, within 100 feet of the vessel; (2) Following within 100 feet of a water skier; (3) Weaving through congested vessel traffic; (4) Speeding in restricted areas; and (5) Operating a personal watercraft in a manner that endangers the life, limb, or property of a person, including the operator. State regulations that apply specifically to Deep Creek Lake say that PWC cannot be used on the lake between the hours of 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. on weekend days and holidays from July 1 through Labor Day, or on Memorial Day weekend.

With this information as a background, we would like you to fill in the personal identification information and answer the survey questions.

## Deep Creek Lake Property Owners' Association

PO Box 816, McHenry, MD 21541

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Lake address \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent address \_\_\_\_\_

Please return your survey in the enclosed envelope by July 12, 2006 (only one response per family).

1. Should the lake regulations be changed to allow heavier PWC to be beached or placed on a stand on the buffer strip?

Up to 875 pounds? Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_

Up to 1,000 pounds? Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_

2. Should heavier PWC be treated like boats, and be required to be docked at a permitted dock slip (which would count as one of the power boats allowed under the dock permit)?

Up to 875 pounds? Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_

Up to 1,000 pounds? Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_

3. Should the lake regulations be changed to allow heavier PWC to operate between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. on weekends and holidays from July 1 through Labor Day and on Memorial Day weekend? In other words, should the lake regulations be changed to allow PWC to operate during the same hours that boats are allowed to operate?

Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_

4. Should the lake regulations remain unchanged?

Retain a 500 pound limit on beached boats?

Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_

Continue restriction on PWC use during the hours of 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekends from July 1 through Labor Day and on Memorial Day weekend?

Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_

Comments (Feel free to give your views about any issues affecting the use of PWC on the lake, in addition to the topics addressed above—include extra sheet if necessary.):

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## POA Board Members

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Property Owner's Association of  
Deep Creek Lake, Inc.  
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