

## Frequently Asked Questions About Reclassification

**An A(1) lake would be eligible for technical assistance and funding should its phosphorus rise above the required 12 ug/L. What is the source of funding for this and what are some restorative actions the funding might be used for?**

An A(1) lake would be eligible for additional technical assistance and funding to keep it at A(1), or to keep its TP concentrations from ever exceeding 12 ug/L and becoming impaired for A(1). The funding sources from this work are from the future Act 76 Water Quality Enhancement Grants, current VT Clean Water Program, and other federal, state, and local water-quality related grant opportunities. The A(1) status will provide a lake with a unique and “blue-ribbon” label that place it in an elite category in the state, if not the nation as what we are hoping to do through reclassification of high-quality waters has not been done extensively yet, and this status can be references in any funding proposal or decision-making process and should put A(1) lakes at or near the top of the list for water quality-related work. We are essentially stating that rather than waiting for lakes to become impaired for B(2) and then spend millions to restore them (Carmi, Memphremagog, Champlain), let us invest funds to maintain high-quality waters where it is more cost-effective and makes more sense from an ecological standpoint as well.

**Can Echo Lake reclassify without the support of Seymour Lake and Morgan choose not to reclassify?**

So, arguably, if Echo Lake is reclassified, that new A(1) status could pertain to all waters within its watershed, unless the rulemaking process dictated otherwise. Given that these two lakes are linked in a somewhat unique way, and both are eligible for reclassification to A(1), the ideal situation would be a joint petition to the state, assuming both lake communities are interested in proceeding with this process. A potentially tricky situation could emerge if Echo Lake submits a petition and the Seymour Lake Community doesn't support the new designation, which would come out during public hearings on the matter. The State may be reluctant to designate the Echo Lake Watershed as A(1) if there was significant opposition to said designation in and around Seymour Lake.

### **Are there additional restrictions to landowners other than the septic system restrictions?**

There could also be some land users who may oppose a potential 50-foot buffers on either side of a lake tributary (stream) in an A(1) watershed, but the 50-foot buffer is *just an idea and not a requirement* yet. Best Management Practices for agriculture and accepted management practices for logging already contemplate these types of buffers, but they are not always required.

### **Would being an A(1) lake help us if aquatic invasive species were found in Echo Lake?**

Unfortunately, the State of Vermont and the EPA do not always categorize aquatic invasive species infestations as a clean water issue and list these waters as “altered” due to the presence of AIS, as opposed to impaired.

**Altered** – impacts are attributable to non-pollutant (e.g., AIS, quantity/flow/water level alteration).

In addition, if an A(1) lake became infested with an AIS or if ELPA wanted to take preventive measures against AIS, the A(1) status would support our efforts to seek funding for those actions. But the traditional state of Vermont funding source for AIS-related work, namely the Aquatic Nuisance Control Grant-in-Aid Program, is so over-subscribed that the A(1) status would only increase our award amount marginally. It would increase the likelihood of an award, so that is encouraging.

### **Are there any long term benefits to being classified as A(1)?**

It is possible but not guaranteed that A(1) status will make a lake more competitive for clean water related funding (CWIP Funds, Act 76 Water Quality Enhancement Grants, DEC Watershed Grants, etc.), particularly if it is aimed at stressors that are degrading water quality and/or push the lake into an impaired status. But, if ELPA is seeking funding for projects that meet the definition of eligible projects for CWIP or Act 76 funding, such as projects to limit external nutrient loading into the lake, the A(1) status will be beneficial.