

Citizen

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Dredging Proposal Draws Fire

By FAWN FITTER
Staff Writer

A United States Army Corps of Engineers proposal to control flooding on the Winnepesaukee River is before the state Senate Appropriations Committee for the fifth year in spite of longstanding local opposition on environmental and economic grounds.

Several Lakes Region environmental groups appeared before the committee yesterday to tell members the project is not only an unnecessary expense to taxpayers but could cause severe damage to the environment.

Members of the Lakes Region Clean Waters Association, Loon Conservation Commission, Lake Winnepesaukee Association, Friends of the Winnepesaukee River and Tilton Conservation Commission testified yesterday against HB 100A, which contains a \$1.2 million appropriation to dredge sections of the Winnepesaukee River. The appropriation was tacked onto the bill as a rider while it was in the House, said Donald P. Foudriat, director of the Clean Waters Association.

That dredging is part of the Army Corps' \$6.4 million flood control proposal, which also includes recommendations to build a hinge dam near the crossing of Rte. 140, make structural improvements to bridges and manage the level of Lake Winnepesaukee and subsequent water releases on the river.

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Dredge

that it can accommodate predictable spring rains."

The groups claim the WRD is not releasing enough water from the Lake, soon enough, to prevent flooding.

Knowlton retorts if the Lake were regulated by releasing maximum water flow in anticipation of flooding, the Lake level would change dramatically from one day to the next, causing a liability.

"You could be sued for damages," Knowlton said, adding, "It would be reckless operation of the Lake."

Proposals to keep Lake

levels down 2-3 inches at all times are diametrically opposed to lakeside living, Knowlton alleged.

"You would have navigation problems and it would mean everyone would have to reconstruct their docks closer to the water and it would flood like before," Knowlton said.

Opponents proposed using a computerized model to regulate Lake levels as a more cost-effective and environmentally conscious method of Lake management.

"The computer model is in the developmental stages,"

Knowlton said, making clear the WRD does not intend to depend entirely on such a system for control.

The computer model would assemble all relevant parameters for controlling the Lake level by using weather data. "It's nice to have as a guide, but most of the material will tell you what did happen, not what will happen," Knowlton said.

"Do you believe your weatherman?" he asked, citing the hurricane of 1986 which dumped 12 inches of rain on Concord, then abruptly took a turn away from the Lakes Region.

"You can't run lakes that way. This lake operated for 150 years with a dam at this location. There is a lot of experience how this lake reacts and the outlet dam

cannot pass the water it needs to keep the lake under control. "If this were a privately owned dam, we would require

Gunstock Ski Patrol tops in eastern patrol

GILFORD -- The Gunstock Ski Patrol, which three years ago won the NSAA National Safety Award has again been honored as it was recently named the Eastern Divisions, Patrol Of The Year by the National Ski Patrol System. As winner of one of ten national divisions the Gunstock Patrol is eligible for a national award to be made in late May.

Under the direction of Safety Services Director, Jeff Theis, the Gunstock patrol

more water than it's passing," Knowlton said of the Lakeport Dam.

was recognized for its innovation in chairlift evacuation equipment, skier education and staff medical training. With five doctors on the Gunstock Ski Patrol it is one of the United States best equipped and trained injury treatment units.

Gunstock Patrol Supervisor, Lee Murphy, who prepared the Gunstock entry noted that the accident rate at the Gilford resort was down 30% this year. An active risk management effort at Gunstock involved every member of the staff and was directed at the skiing public as well.