

Honorable Members of the Legislative Committee,

I stand before you today in staunch support of the proposed legislation aimed at the reasonable reduction of lake levels at Deep Creek Lake. This legislation is not only prudent but imperative for the preservation of our natural ecosystem, the well-being of our community, and the sustainability of our local economy.

First and foremost, the proposed reduction of lake levels falls well within existing rule bands, ensuring that it remains a measured and responsible action. By maintaining this balance, we can mitigate any potential adverse effects on the lake's ecosystem, safeguarding its delicate balance of flora and fauna for generations to come.

Moreover, the management of shoreline grasses through the lowering of water levels during winter months presents a natural and effective solution to address the challenges faced by dock owners, boaters, and swimmers alike. These grasses, left unchecked, pose significant obstacles and nuisances to recreational activities on the lake. By leveraging this natural approach, we can effectively retard their growth without resorting to potentially harmful chemical interventions.

It is essential to address the concerns raised by Brookfield Renewable Power, the multinational owner of the dam and hydroelectric rights. Despite their resistance to lowering water levels, historical evidence and expert analysis suggest otherwise. Skepticism regarding their claims that such reductions would impede essential activities like electrical generation, whitewater rafting, or fisheries management is warranted. We must prioritize the preservation of our natural resources over corporate interests.

Furthermore, let us not be swayed by scare tactics or baseless assertions. The historical record clearly demonstrates that Deep Creek Lake has consistently refilled by early spring after winter-level reductions. We cannot allow fear-mongering to cloud our judgment when it comes to safeguarding our environment and our community's well-being.

Finally, we must not overlook the critical economic importance of Deep Creek Lake to Garrett County. As the primary driver of property tax revenue and local spending, the lake serves as the lifeblood of our community. Anything that detracts from its allure to vacationers and potential homeowners poses a direct threat to our county's ability to meet the needs of its citizens.

In conclusion, I urge you to support this legislation for the reasonable reduction of lake levels at Deep Creek Lake. By doing so, we affirm our commitment to environmental stewardship, community prosperity, and responsible governance. Let us ensure that Deep Creek Lake remains a cherished resource for generations to come.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sandra Bello

Vice President

Deep Creek Watershed Foundation