

June 2024

To: Westmore Property Owners and Westmore Association Members  
From: The Westmore Association  
Re: Wakeboats and Wakesports on Willoughby Lake

The Agency of Natural Resources' (ANR) new rule regulating wakeboats and wakesports on Vermont's inland lakes and ponds went into effect on April 15. Under this rule, Willoughby is one of only 30 inland lakes in the state where wakesports will be allowed. Wakesports are prohibited from the remainder of Vermont's approximately 800 lakes and ponds.

**What are wakeboats and what boats are affected by this new rule?** The new rule applies **only** to wakeboats. The ANR has defined a wakeboat as "a motorboat that has one or more ballast tanks, ballast bags or other devices or design features used to increase the size of the motorboat's wake." (VT Use of Public Waters, Section 5.17, p. 14.) **The new rule DOES NOT affect other power boats, waterskiing or tubing.**

**What are wakesports?** Wakesports refer to using a wakeboat with the wake enhancing features engaged or "to use a surfboard, wakeboard, hydrofoil, or similar device to ride on or in the wake i. directly behind a wakeboat without a rope; or ii. directly behind a wakeboat with or without a rope, when the wakeboat has ballast tanks, bags, or other devices or design features engaged." (VT Use of Public Waters, Section 5.17, p. 14.)

**What are the provisions of the new rule?** The new rule limits wakesports to approved wakesports zones (WSZ). An approved zone must be a minimum of 50 acres, at least 200 feet wide, the perimeter must be at least 500' from shore, and the water must be at least 20' deep. The Home Lake provision of the rule requires a wakeboat owner to declare a Home Lake each season. Any boat launched in one of the 30 lakes permitting wakesports must show proof of decontamination by a state approved decontamination station before entering. Any boat used in another body of water must be decontaminated again before returning to the Home Lake. The intent of the Home Lake provision is to reduce the spread of aquatic invasive species.

**Where is the wakesports zone (WSZ) on Willoughby?** Willoughby's WSZ covers over 1079 of its 1733 acres and stretches approximately 4.5 miles down the center of the lake. View the map at [dec.vermont.gov/sites/dec/files/wsm/lakes/docs/Wakesport%20maps/Willoughby.pdf](http://dec.vermont.gov/sites/dec/files/wsm/lakes/docs/Wakesport%20maps/Willoughby.pdf).

**How can you help?** A Westmore Association team is working on a petition to the state to prohibit wakesports on Willoughby Lake. Jet skis and personal watercraft were prohibited in 2004. We need your help to document your prior experience with wakeboats (here or elsewhere) and any incidents you witness on the lake this summer. We would like to know what happened, when, with a description of the boat, and any videos or photos you may take. This information will supplement our petition to the state and will be useful as further legislation regulating wakesports is considered in Montpelier. Send your comments/reports to Deb Richards via email to [drichards065@gmail.com](mailto:drichards065@gmail.com) or via snail mail to 114 Edgewood Park Lane, Orleans, VT 05860. Alternatively, you may call her at 802-673-9802.

Petitions in support of our efforts to prohibit wakesports on Willoughby will be available at the Municipal Building and elsewhere locally. Please stop by to sign and show your support.

Find additional information about wakesports on the Association's website ([westmoreassociation.org](http://westmoreassociation.org)).

Deb Smith, President, The Westmore Association