

F C L P O I N T



Magazine

April Edition 2019 Edition 22



**CLIMATE
CHANGE**

Hokie Weeds

Drawdown 2019

2019 Annual Meeting

All Lake Clean Up Day

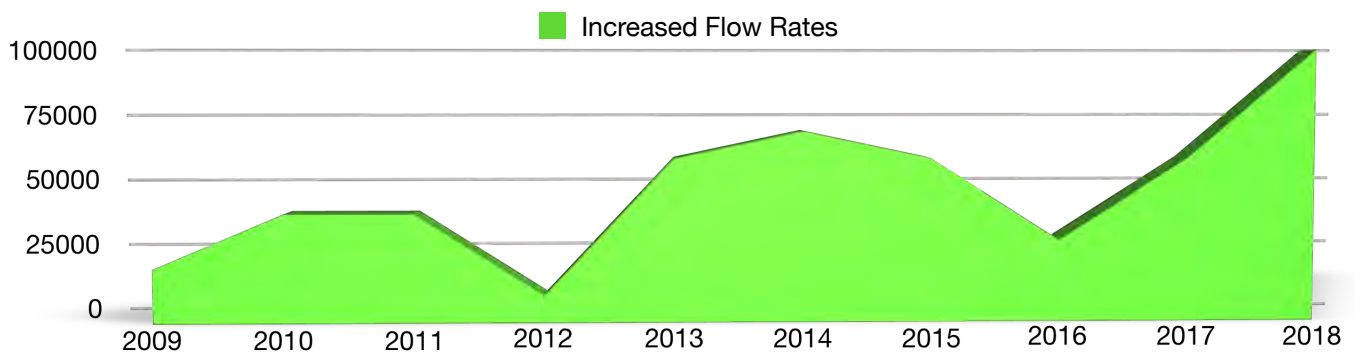
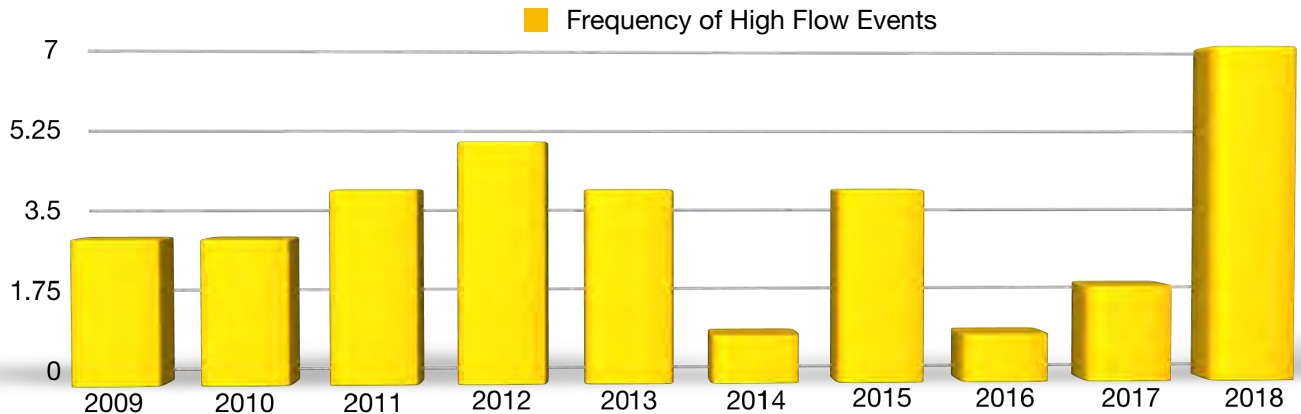
www.focl.org

Once upon a time, in a galaxy far far away, most of us had at least 2 props stored in our boathouse. We did this because, after a week or two of enjoying the great Claytor Lake waters, we would return to the dock with a bent or chipped prop. Out comes the spare and off goes the damaged one for repair.

Thanks to The Friends of Claytor Lake, the past couple decades have minimized if not almost eliminated the need for spare props. With FOCL's clean up crew removing hundreds of tons of debris from Claytor Lake, we have been able to enjoy our days on the water with little worry. Each year FOCL's clean up program hauls staggering amounts of debris out of the lake. 2018 yielded 290.5 roll-off loads (4,357 tons), 59 tires, 229 trash bags, 10 barrels, 14 docks, 1 camper, 2 boats, 1 propane tank, 1 gas grill tank, 1 walkway, and 1 playhouse.

2018 was not without challenges. Regardless of your views on "climate change," there is no denying that changes have come our way. 2018 was hit with Hurricanes Florence and then Michael which gave us a, 1-2 punch forcing our clean up operations to hit the reset button. One clear problem this presents, besides the additional debris, is the time it takes our clean up program to retrace their steps along the lake's shoreline to previously cleaned areas, thus leaving less time to help address other more hidden but just as important areas of the lake that need clean up.

Clearly the new data being collected shows an increase in not only the frequency of high flow events but also their velocity and Mother Nature's impeccable timing. Florence and Michael served as evidence that for FOCL to continue an effective clean up program, more equipment, more crew, and more time (weather permitting) will be needed. It has been close to 40 years since the New River and Claytor Lake experienced a 100,000 cubic feet per second flood event. Now 50,000 cubic feet per second flow events and higher are a yearly occurrence.



Science reporting only shows this trend getting worse which means now, more than ever, FOCL needs support from everyone who enjoys the waters of Claytor Lake. Our goal is to assemble 2 crews who can clean different areas needing clean from our supporters both above and below Lowman's Ferry Bridge.

With the cost of over \$250,000 in operations increasing and donations on the decline, FOCL more than ever needs the residents and recreational users of Claytor Lake to help us continue the enormous task of keeping Claytor Lake clean and safe and an enjoyable place to be on any given day.

It is easy to help! Simply get on www.focl.org and click **DONATE!**



READY FOR THE WATER?

YOUR BOAT: TOP THINGS TO CHECK

SAFETY FIRST
Got lifejackets for everyone on board? Two forms of communication? Have you checked the weather?

RADIO WORKING
Know your local VHF channels, and give Coastguard a call on your local channel to do a radio check if you think there's a problem.

NAV LIGHTS
Check the nav lights are working well every time you head out.

BILGE PUMP WORKING
You want to get rid of any water that slops in quickly, so make sure your pumps are up to the task. No pump? Bring a bucket or bailer!

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BATTERIES OK
Check your batteries are holding enough charge to get you home after a day of using your on-board electronics.

ENGINE SERVICED
Make sure the motor has been serviced if you haven't used it for a while. Check the oil and make sure it runs well.

PLENTY OF FUEL
Don't forget to allow 1/3 fuel getting there, 1/3 for getting back, and 1/3 in reserve just in case.

CLEAN BELOW? GOOD TO GO!
A clean hull means a smoother ride, and helps stop the spread of marine pests. Check out www.marinepests.nz for info.

STRESS CRACKS
Check your hull for cracks or damage after it's been stored away. And make sure the bung is in!

5 foot drawdown returns!

Five Foot Drawdown Proposed for November 2019


FOCL and other consulting organizations and agencies have received a plan from AEP for a non-emergency five-foot drawdown of the lake in November to facilitate shoreline maintenance activities by adjacent landowners. Many landowners use drawdown for multiple activities such as debris clean-up, dock and seawall repairs, and shoreline stabilization repair and installation.

The full drawdown is proposed to run from 8 a.m. Saturday, November 9 to 10 p.m. Sunday, November 17, 2019. AEP had initially proposed a three-foot drawdown, but FOCL and Pulaski County requested a five foot drawdown to enable more property owners to access the shoreline and accomplish needed maintenance work. After considering our request which was also supported by Virginia's Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and Department of Conservation and Recreation's Claytor Lake State Park, AEP changed its proposed drawdown depth from three to five feet. AEP will submit its proposed drawdown plan to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) for final approval.

Drawdown of the lake will be one foot per day starting Monday morning, November 4 until the full drawdown level (1841 elevation) is reached by Saturday morning, November 9, where it will remain until Sunday evening, November 17. Refilling of the lake will begin Sunday night, November 17, with a targeted return to normal elevation by Friday evening, November 22, depending on inflow.

As mitigation for the drawdown, landowners and volunteers will again be encouraged to count and gently toss into the water mussels stranded during drawdown. A volunteer mussel salvage event will be held Saturday morning, November 9. Please contact Laura Bullard at sunnyside@psknet.com if you would like to participate in the mussel salvage event. FOCL will also be collecting information from landowners--through mailed and internet surveys--on their use of drawdown and number of mussels salvaged. Please respond to our survey as collection of this information is critical for the continuation of drawdown.

Assuming the drawdown plan is approved by FERC, AEP will notify the public of the drawdown at least 45 days before its implementation. Some activities such as new shoreline stabilization, any changes or expansions to docks or other shoreline structures, removal of vegetation below the 1850 elevation, or dredging may require permits. Landowners considering activities that may require permits are advised to contact Lisa Hammock at AEP (lhhammock@aep.com) **as soon as possible**.



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4 Everyday Boat Maintenance Tips to Give You Total Peace of Mind

1. Keep a close eye on the engine

Routine inspection of your engine, be it outboard, sterndrive or inboard, is vital to **trouble-free cruising**. Always begin with the basics. First, check the oil. Low oil levels—or no oil at all—mean problems sooner rather than later.

Give it a top-up whenever it's looking low to keep your engine running stronger, longer.

At least once every 50-100 running hours, you'll want to do the full oil change. And always refer to your manual for what type of oil to use and how frequently to change it.

Many outboards nowadays are built so you can check and change the oil quickly and easy. Once this is done, and with the engine's cowling already off, it never hurts to:

- Check for fuel or oil leaks. If something looks suspicious, contact your local boat repair shop or call the engine manufacturer for recommendations.
- Lubricate all moving parts with an anti-corrosive.
- Inspect all lines and hoses for wear.
- Check clamps and fuel lines for corrosion.

Additionally, your outboard should be well-secured to the transom. Constant use during the season can potentially loosen hardware and misalign the outboard. Check that all bolts are secure, and tighten things up as needed.

2. Dedicate one area to “dry storage”

Having a dedicated dry storage area is highly underrated. Everyone with a boat should be on top of this. I know, it's hard to keep things dry on a boat, but it's worth the effort. A dry storage area keeps all essentials organized and throwing lifejackets, water toys, clothing or other gear in these spaces make for convenient, quick clean-ups. Yet, wet gear means water, and water can turn into an ugly mess, especially when it's left for long periods.

- Dedicate a dry storage compartment for certain gear. Anything prone to water retention, mold and mildew should live here.
- Dry out your lifejackets, water toys, towels, and clothing before putting them in a storage compartment. Shake them dry, towel them off or let them hang to dry for a while before stowing them.

3. Be a clean machine

Clutter, dirt, mold and mildew can accumulate very easily.

While it often takes some time at first, the more I do it, the less I have to really clean—and the less often I have to spend an entire day of my life getting things neat and tidy.

But what deserves special attention with this common chore?

Here are some words of wisdom from a clean-freak like me:

- If you're cleaning storage compartments or livewells, use a good biodegradable solution. Many livewells are self-draining, but only drains that are flush to the bottom get rid of the majority of the water. Sponge up any excess.
- For dry storage areas, use an outdoor vacuum to clean up dirt or other debris.
- For gunnel storage, ensure everything is stored without protruding gear or lines.

4. Mind the small things

Many cockpit floors are self-draining, making them extra handy for cleaning (among other things). If you have marine-grade, snap-in carpeting, remove it! Water, dirt, food crumbs—you name it—will find its way underneath. For best results, shake the carpet, vacuum debris, pressure wash and then let it hang it to dry.

Scrubbing the foredeck is one of the most important tasks of boat maintenance. Also inspect the exterior of the boat for the following before setting out for a day on the water:

- All the running lights are working—if not, replace them.
- All rails are secure—if they aren't, fix them.
- The fenders are good shape.
- Lines aren't frayed or worn.
- The Bimini top isn't torn, and all associated hardware isn't broken.

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Moving Day for Native Habitat-VT to Claytor Lake

A year of experimentation and testing of new and different methods of growing *Vallisneria americana* (water celery or eel grass) has culminated in planting of the grass in Claytor Lake. It takes a team to make this happen and FOCL, along with VDGIF, AEP, and Virginia Tech, Virginia BASS Nation, and AFTCO have worked together to coordinate funding, growing and planting. AEP approved and supported the project as part of their ongoing habitat efforts at Claytor.

This year Dr. Sara Sweeten, Virginia Tech was added to the team and her interest in the propagating and growing grass resulted in major improvements and a proliferation of grass. She experimented with different planting methods and substrates to determine which method worked best. John Copeland, VDGIF fisheries biologist, Laura Walters and Jeff Arnold of FOCL, Brook Carver, Sara Sweeten and Kate Schaefer, Virginia Tech, and angler Isaac Jones did the onsite planting. While Joan Blankenship, Virginia BASS Nation, was unable to attend this year she continues to be active in continuing to find grant funding for the project. Two new locations were planted along the Bullard Farm shoreline and two sites at the State Park were augmented.

Plants are in the water and caged with tops to reduce the number of predators who seek this lake delicacy. Anglers can help by reporting signs of plants spreading outside of the cages to John Copeland john.copeland@dgif.virginia.gov or Dr. Sweeten.

A lot of team work goes into this project and to put it all together requires a lot of volunteers. *Vallisneria americana* is a plant that likes lots of love and attention. They need to be monitored daily on a year round basis. Anyone interested in learning more about the project should contact Dr. Sara Sweeten at sweeten@vt.edu. All questions about the grant funding from AFTCO should be directed to Joan Blankenship, Conservation Director for the Virginia BASS Nation at bass2class@gmail.com.



Our 2019 Calendar is again filled with great lake events for the entire family. Everyone is welcome to attend any and all events.

2019

May 22nd, 2019 - 8th Grade Day on the Lake

June 2nd, 2019 - Veteran's Fishing Day

June 8th, 2019 - Claytor Lake Festival

June 29th, 2019 - All Lake Clean Up and
FOCL Annual Meeting

July 10th, 2019 - FOCL night at Calfee Park

www.focl.org/calendar

BOATER SAFETY TIP – NAVIGATION RULES

There are quite a few rules to safe navigation – but most are simple common sense. Learn them all at BoaterExam.com

Meeting A Power-Driven Vessel Head-On

Operating a power-driven vessel is a lot like driving any vehicle on the road. A proper lookout, safe speed and a little common sense will go a long way out on the water.



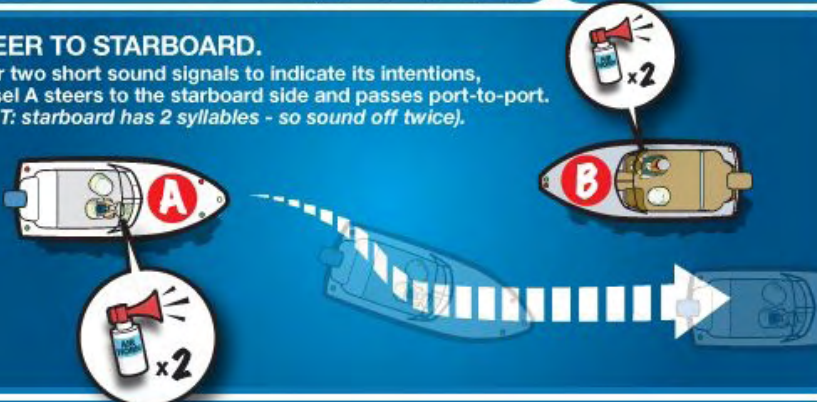
IN MOST CASES...

You will react just as you would in a car – steer to the right.



STEER TO STARBOARD.

After two short sound signals to indicate its intentions, Vessel A steers to the starboard side and passes port-to-port. (HINT: starboard has 2 syllables - so sound off twice).



BUT WHAT IF YOU CAN'T GO TO STARBOARD?

What if there's an obstruction? Like another vessel – or perhaps swimmers? What are your options?



Learn which options are available to you – visit BoaterExam.com today and find out more about all the rules of navigation.

TIPS FOR BOAT CLEANING AND UNDERWATER BOAT MAINTENANCE

Wash the boat frequently



When this not cleared, it will lead to drastic results such as reduced boat speed, more consumption of fuel, and in total, the performance of the boat will be reduced.

Change the oil



Oil filters in the boat should be changed and refilled frequently as we do in other vehicles like a car.

Check the propellers



They are very important that even a simple issue can lead to damaging of your engine. Sometimes, so, to be on the safer side, check your propellers regularly.

Check the hull



Being the main body of the boat, the hull should be checked regularly. Hulls are prone to water leaks, scratches, dents and few more.

Check the battery



Batteries are one of the biggest problems for the owners. There are many battery maintenance methods and follow them for avoiding inconvenience.

Service the engine



When coming to the engines, you should be very much cautious. The engine should be serviced at least once a year.

[HTTP://WWW.BARRACLBUSTERS.COM/SERVICES/UNDERWATER-YACHT-MAINTENANCE/](http://www.BARRACLBUSTERS.COM/SERVICES/UNDERWATER-YACHT-MAINTENANCE/)

ALL LAKE



CLEAN UP

Saturday, June 29th - 9:00am - 1:00pm

Dumpster Locations: Harry DeHaven Park / Claytor Lake State Park / Conrad's Marina

Prizes Awarded at Annual Meeting:

For Most Trash Collected & For Strangest Item

Orange Trash Bags can be gotten at dumpster location or contacting FOCL

Annual Meeting

Saturday, June 29th - 2:00pm

At Appalachian Picnic Grounds above Claytor Lake Dam.

Lunch will be provided. Come join The Friends of Claytor Lake and help discuss about all our projects for 2019!

RSVP by June 17

(540) 395-FOCL or info@focl.org

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PRIZES AWARDED AT ANNUAL MEETING!

