

Lake Pocotopaug News and Notes

Ninth Edition Spring 2004

Sustainable Landscapes for Water Quality

SUSTAINABILITY – Meeting the needs of today’s population without diminishing the ability of future populations to meet their needs. *Sustainable landscaping* designs and creates systems that imitate nature and turn problems into solutions. The Goal of Sustainable Landscapes is to prevent/reduce nonpoint source pollution (NPS) from the residential sector focusing on landscape management techniques and practices.

(NPS) is contamination that cannot be traced to a single source; a nonpoint source produces pollution in a diffuse manner: roads, farms, construction sites and oil spills are examples. Sometimes activities such as improper fertilization application can cause NPS pollution.

3 STEPS TO DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPE

1. **Site Design** – Understand what you have on the site and work with the landscape.
2. **Plant Selection** – Select and use plants that are appropriate for the location use a mixture of trees, shrubs, ground covers and native grasses. Native plants generally require little in the way of water, fertilizer, or pesticides.
3. **Landscape Management** – Manage the property by utilizing natural principles. Use slow release fertilizers that have lower potential to leach into groundwater.

Finally consider the lay of the land – Identify the existing topography and figure how water flows across the site and how it drains into the soil. Identify areas that are sunny/shady and dry/wet and use plantings that are appropriate for these conditions. Always remember to protect the watershed, creeks, drainage swales and storm drain outlets. Manage runoff and pollution from impervious surfaces and use buffer zones to intercept and filter pollution. Examples of buffer zones and sustainable landscaping areas can be found in Sears Park.

Sears Park Update

- The reconstruction of the Pavilion at Sears Park, lost in a fire in March of 2003, is scheduled to begin this summer. Improvements such as bathrooms, security, concession stand and office upgrades are incorporated in the new building. Many thanks to the East Hampton Rotary Club for there financial support in making the new improvements possible.
- The Parks and Recreation Department is in the process of working with the East Hampton Lions Club on a covered outdoor picnic shelter for the North end of the park. This construction project begins this spring.
- At their February 10, 2004 meeting, the East Hampton Town Council rejected a proposal that would have made monies available for improvements to the Sears Park boat launch. As presented by the State of Connecticut DEP Boating and Fisheries Division’s and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board the project would have included the redesign and construction of the parking lot, roadway and turnaround areas of the boat launch with federal grant money. The proposal included a commitment from DEP Fisheries on a stocking program that would have included Trout and Walleye. If the above proposal was approved it would have granted access to non-residents and residents 365 days a year 24 hours a day.
- Since the proposal was denied the Parks and Recreation Department has received inquires and pledges from local residents on making future improvements to the boat launch. Anyone wishing to volunteer their time or make a donation toward improvements is encouraged to contact the Parks and Recreation Department at 267-6020.
- Sears Park Stickers – Sears Park Boat and Vehicle stickers will be available for purchase starting Monday April 19 at the Town Clerk’s Office and the Parks and Recreation Office. Vehicle registration must be presented at the time of purchase.

Walleye Stocking Program

For the third year in a row the Town of East Hampton has participated in a stocking program for Walleye in Lake Pocotopaug. Over 7,000 Walleye were released in October of 2003. Over the past three years the Town has stocked the lake with over 20,000 Walleye. When fishing Lake Pocotopaug the minimum length Walleye can be kept, is 20 inches. The daily creel limit is two fish per day. This will allow the Walleye to grow for an additional 2 to 3 years putting predation pressure on perch and other pan fish. These species of small fish eat Zooplankton which is beneficial to the lake in that it eats algae. The Walleye are important to help reduce the pan fish and perch populations there by helping to restore and maintain the Zooplankton.

Spring Approaching!! Fertilization Helpful Hints

1. Conduct a soil test to determine the appropriate amount of fertilizer to use. Contact the UCONN Extension Center for further information at 860-345-4511.
2. Calibrate your spreader before spreading fertilizer.
3. Use a slow release fertilizer.
4. Do not fertilize within two days of a predicted rain storm.
5. Apply fertilizer only where and if needed.
6. Clean up any excess fertilizer that may have been spread onto impervious surfaces such as sidewalks, driveways and roads.
7. Do not use fertilizers right next to the shoreline.
8. Do not over fertilize.

Boating Helpful Hints

1. Wash down your boat (preferably on land) with water only and let it dry for 48 hours before launching again (this helps prevent European Zebra Mussels and Eurasian Milfoil from spreading).
2. Remove any plant fragments from boats and trailers before leaving any water body, this helps prevent the spread of possible foreign aquatic weeds from entering the water body.
3. Avoid propeller disturbance of the lake bottom.
4. Respect speed limits; large wakes cause wave action that contributes to shoreline erosion.



This newsletter is produced by the East Hampton Parks and Recreation Department periodically to provide information on Lake Pocotopaug and to help improve water quality. We welcome your comments and suggestions. For previous copies please contact the Parks and Recreation Office at 267-6020.