

Dear Friends of Crescent Lake,

LET'S BE CLEAR, Protecting Crescent Lake, the body of water we love, is not a new idea. Writings can be found from decades past that echo the same goal...protection. The only difference over time is the "why" behind the plea to protect Crescent Lake.

Extreme weather events, like what we have witnessed this past summer, along with accumulating phosphorous levels can result in excessive amounts of contaminants in the lake. These contaminants have the ability to change the chemistry of the lake, for example, resulting in Cyanobacteria blooms, which could be dangerous to people and pets. As some of you may have seen in various media segments this summer, an unprecedented number of active Cyanobacteria warnings have been issued by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. This is a list we can avoid.

The goal of this letter is to educate our community on what actions every individual can take to make a lasting, positive difference. Small changes in the way we manage our properties can have a positive impact on the waterbodies we play in and depend on. Attached, you will find several documents that will get you started.

The Crescent Lake Association voted to form a Water Quality Group at its July 2023 meeting. Since July, this team has officially formed and defined the following responsibilities:

1) Education of Our Community regarding Watershed Friendly Actions

- On July 1, 2023 we organized a Water Quality Forum that was attended by over 100 people where subject matter experts talked about protecting and enhancing water quality on our lake. We provided attendees with a list of things you can do as your part to help in this effort. We have attached the document to this letter.
- Regular communications will occur via email newsletters and through the new Water Quality section of the Crescent Lake Website www.crescentlakeassn.org. The website will evolve over time and will host original content as well as links to important websites.
- Educating our community by helping navigate permit rules. Trying to get a clear answer on what requires a permit and what does not can be a daunting task. We have attached a quick reference guide to help you.
- We will be promoting a program called "Soak Up the Rain". This program educates homeowners on the small changes they can make to their properties that will keep contaminants from running into Crescent Lake.

2) Partnership with Towns of Unity and Acworth and Sullivan CTY Conservation District.

- We will work with entities to secure grants, propose changes to road infrastructure that result in positive impact to water quality, etc. We drafted and submitted a letter of intent for funding for a water quality assessment which, if we are selected, would start work in late 2024. We will post updates on this initiative on our website.

THANK YOU for your involvement and interest to protect Crescent Lake!

Prepared by the Crescent Lake Association Water Quality Group. Questions? Contact: CLwaterquality@gmail.com

Attachments: 1) WHAT YOU CAN DO WITH SEPTIC FLYER 2) PERMIT FLYER 3) SOAK UP THE RAIN PROGRAM FLYER

CRESCENT LAKE: WAYS YOU CAN HELP

When conditions are right, Phosphorus in our water creates Blue-Green Algae (Cyanobacteria). Once algae blooms in a lake, it is very costly to treat, kills pets and sickens humans, lowers property values, and will change our way of life forever. Every person living in or around the Crescent Lake watershed can make a positive impact by taking action on these five items:

1. Phosphorus and nitrogen are used in **FERTILIZERS** because they promote plant growth. Unfortunately, when these nutrients leach into waterbodies, they continue to promote growth and may trigger algal blooms. In turn, algal blooms have a negative impact to water quality by reducing water clarity, reducing water oxygen levels, and ultimately threatening the survival of fish and other aquatic life. The proper use and application of a fertilizer is therefore extremely important. **Consider eliminating the use of FERTILIZERS** on your property. If you must use fertilizer, only use products that are phosphorus-free and do not apply fertilizer within 25' of any water. The SWQPA prohibits the use of fertilizers within 25' of the reference line of public waters. This includes organic products. No chemicals, including organic pesticides, can be applied within 50 feet of the reference line, except by a professional licensed for pesticide application by the State of New Hampshire.
2. Keep your **SEPTIC SYSTEM** in good working order. A malfunctioning septic system discharges phosphorus and other nutrients into the watershed, or for those living directly on the lake, directly into the lake. Inspect your septic system yearly and have it pumped at least every 3 years or as directed by your septic pumping company. The DES guidelines on septic care are a good information resource and a copy is attached to this reference sheet.
3. **STORMWATER RUNOFF** is water from rain or melting snow that does not soak into the ground. Plants help remove the oils, salt, heavy metals, fertilizers, and other contaminants from stormwater runoff before they enter into Crescent Lake. Native plants slow down, absorb, and purify much more stormwater than plants with shallow roots typically found in lawns. The Shoreline Water Quality Protection Act (SWQPA) restricts the removal of native plants in proximity to the water in order to preserve this natural benefit. If you own lake front property, ensure there is a **VEGETATIVE BUFFER** between the water and land. Natural buffers are best - simply stop cutting the vegetation and allow natural plants to grow. In addition, buffers are a natural defense against Waterfowl entering your property. Also **COVER** any areas of **BARE SOIL** with plants or mulch. Share this information with landscapers and yard crews.
4. **DOG WASTE**. We all love our canine friends however, their poo carries bacteria, viruses and parasites that can threaten the health of humans, pets, and wildlife. **Pick up** after your dog and dispose of waste in the trash.
5. **BE AN ADVOCATE** for clean water. In addition to taking action on your own property, make your thoughts known to town officials. Be an influencer. Talk with friends and neighbors about protecting Crescent Lake!

“Protecting Crescent Lake, A Water Quality Forum” Held at Unity Elementary School on July 1, 2023



PO Box 131 * Acworth NH 03601



TOWN OF UNITY, NH
CONSERVATIONCOMMISSION



TOWN OF ACWORTH, NH
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Town of Acworth
New Hampshire