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*The Lake Waramaug Task Force is a non-profit scientific and educational organization dedicated to restoring and maintaining the ecology and water quality of Lake Waramaug and its watershed.*

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*Photo Credit: Kristen Browne*

## LWTF Winter 2017 Brief

### Good News on Erosion Control

The Task Force continues to move ahead to control the many soil erosion sites on Sucker Brook and other smaller streams that are harming the lake's ecology. Storm water conveyed soil deposits from these erosion sites are creating deltas at stream and culvert inlets. These deltas rob the lake depths of the vital cold, well oxygenated water Lake Waramaug needs to stay healthy. They also create ideal habitats for invasive aquatic plants.

On Potash Brook, which runs to the lake from above the Hopkins Vineyard, we have permits in place to stabilize a stream bank erosion site and clean out eroded soil from an in-stream collection basin. Another soil full sediment basin on Hawes Brook in Warren is also permitted to be cleaned out in 2017.

But here's the best news. One of the worst of 20 erosion sites we identified on Sucker Brook will finally be stabilized by the State Dept of Transportation. Located next to State Rt. 45 just above where the stream flows under the highway this site has eroded so close to the highway the pavement is in jeopardy of collapsing into the stream.

The Task Force notified the State of this risk in 2011 and again last year based on our surveys of the 5 mile stream shore line. A construction design concept plan prepared by ConnDOT shows the State will stabilize an approximately 200 foot long 20 foot high steep eroded embankment. This fix will keep tons of soil from flowing into Waramaug. This is a big boost to our Sucker Brook erosion control effort!

### Task Force to Test New Curly Pondweed Strategy

We've been experiencing a startling expansion of the invasive curly leaf pondweed plant in Lake Waramaug. Last year our plant scientist, Dr. George Knoecklein, found 100 new sites. Even more worrying is that Knoecklein has identified a handful of cold water sites that sprout more plants each year. *This is despite the Task Force's 10 year history of increasingly aggressive and expensive diver hand pulling and suction harvesting.* Unless we contain such major growth sites, Waramaug is at risk of its shorelines becoming blanketed with this aggressive invasive plant.



*What Curly Leaf Pondweed can do. Bone Lake, WI*

Our experts tell us the only alternative solution for such critical sites is to apply an aquatic plant killing product in the spring, followed by close monitoring and hand pulling during the summer. We believe the best plan is first to conduct a test of this strategy, and are working with property owners along Sucker Brook Delta's Shoreline to assess the efficacy of such a product on a small, but intransigent area of curly leaf pondweed patches on their individual shorelines.



*When Curly Leaf Takes Over, Lake Hubert, MN*

This test will use Komeen<sup>®</sup>, one of the safest products available. Komeen<sup>®</sup> is a copper based product that has been in use since the 1950's both in Connecticut and elsewhere for weed treatment in drinking water supply reservoirs. It will be applied by Solitude Lake Management a certified applicator and one of the largest and most respected lake management firms in the Northeast. The test will be done in one day in the early spring when these cold water plants are the first to begin growing and can be specifically targeted for treatment. We will closely monitor this Sucker Brook delta after the test to document its effectiveness and will continue diver hand pulling of any plants found still growing. We welcome your questions as we work to keep our Lake beautiful and curly leaf pondweed free.

## LWTF Water Quality Protection Service Going Strong

Beginning in September, 2016 the Task Force retained the Northwest Conservation District (NCD) to provide lake area landowners with a free professional advisory service designed to protect the Lake's water quality. Since then, the NCD's soil scientist and water quality expert Sean Hayden has reviewed numerous development plans in Warren and Washington. Almost all of his recommendations have been incorporated into these development plans. These include better measures to control soil erosion, design modifications to rain gardens, water runoff detention basins and shoreline buffer landscaping. Land use staff in both towns have welcomed, and are cooperating with this project.

***This service is available to property owners for projects that have the potential to have a direct water quality impact on Lake Waramaug.*** Typically these are major projects on or near the Lake, for example: a new house, major additions, new driveways and other impervious surfaces, and alterations to the shoreline (such as shoreline erosion stabilization). Depending on proximity and the expected degree of Lake impact this could also include landscaping plans or projects that alter land contours or requiring excavation, especially on steep slopes or near wetlands. ***For more information or to discuss a possible project and review by Sean Hayden call or email Tom McGowan at 860 576-0555 or mcgowan.taj@gmail.com.***

## What's Up with the Washington Dam?

The Town of Washington hopes to complete the much-needed repairs to the Lake Waramaug outlet dam in New Preston this summer. Lenard Engineering, the town's consultant, has finished the construction design drawings, submitted these to the State of Connecticut and the Town is awaiting State permit approval. Upon approval the Town will seek construction bids, award a contract and only then will a construction work schedule be established. The critical part of the repair is installation of a modern dam water outflow control mechanism. The current mechanism is very old and difficult to adjust with any precision. The greatest worry is it could become stuck open during summer, especially under drought conditions.

Currently the engineers estimate it will take "four weeks or so" to complete the dam construction work. During construction, the lake water level must be lowered and a temporary coffer dam installed surrounding the dam face. But at this juncture we do not have answers to these important questions - when will construction start, how long exactly will it take, how much will the lake will be lowered and how will this impact lake shore areas.

We will keep you updated.

## Summer 17 Intern

The Task Force will engage a highly qualified intern this summer. Holly Geddes is a junior biology major at Central Connecticut State University focusing on limnology (lake studies), water chemistry, water quality and environmental science. She has completed an independent research project on water quality aspects of multiple water bodies conducting both field and lab work. And she has a State boating license!

The water quality analysis work she has done coincides with all our key Waramaug in-lake testing elements. Dr. Kortmann reviewed her resume and recommended her as a good fit for Waramaug. He is developing a summer work program for her to complement his detailed in-lake testing program.

We hope before long you will see Holly out on the lake conducting these tests, helping monitoring for invasive plants and other elements of the Task Force's water quality programs.