

# Gregg Lake Watershed Outreach Strategy

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

An Outreach Strategy, or information and education component, is one of the key elements of a watershed management plan (WMP) recommended by the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The Outreach Strategy supports both successful development and implementation of the WMP by guiding collaboration among stakeholders, educating property owners and lake users about the importance of lake stewardship, and promoting sustainable behavior at individual and community levels based on a shared sense of the value of Gregg Lake and its watershed. Ultimately the outreach campaign aims to motivate individuals, community leaders and businesses to make choices that will restore and protect water quality in the watershed now and into the future.

The prevalence of non-point source (NPS) pollution and its impact on lakes highlights the importance of having an outreach strategy for restoring water quality to Gregg Lake. According to the EPA, NPS pollution is the main cause of degraded water quality in lakes and rivers today. NPS pollution is largely unaddressed by permits, laws, and regulations. Instead, it is up to communities like ours to find ways to motivate individuals to prevent pollution. Education will be one of our most important tools for addressing sources of pollution. Carefully linking our outreach goals and objectives to our water quality goals will make our campaign more successful. As our understanding of pollution sources and needed solutions has come into focus, we are able to target outreach-specific outcomes.

This Outreach Strategy is modeled on the EPA outreach manual, *Getting In Step: Guide for Conducting Watershed Outreach Campaigns* (2010). In keeping with the EPA model, the Gregg Lake Outreach Strategy follows a series of steps to:

- 1. Define the mission, driving forces, goals and objectives of WMP outreach
- 2. Identify the audience
- 3. Formulate key messages to key audiences
- 4. Deliver messages via various channels
- 5. Evaluate and retune

## 2. MISSION

Outreach will make the Gregg Lake WMP visible, understandable and relevant to individual, business and community stakeholders, provide opportunities for stakeholder involvement in the planning process and encourage the land and lake stewardship necessary to attain water quality goals.

## 3. DRIVERS

The WMP is organized around three phases:

- 1) Identifying pollution sources and planning solutions
- 2) Implementing solutions
- 3) Evaluating progress and adjusting implementation as needed, starting an iterative process

Outreach will span all three phases of watershed planning and restoration. Success of both planning and implementation will depend on the community understanding the factors impacting the Gregg Lake watershed, valuing its water quality, and sharing a sense of responsibility, ownership and enthusiasm for the restoration plan.

### 3.1 WMP Drivers

Why do we need a WMP for Gregg Lake?

- 1. NHDES has added Gregg Lake to the New Hampshire 303(d) list of impaired waters (for Aquatic Life Use). Members of the Gregg Lake community want to take the steps necessary to remove Gregg Lake from the list, as other watershed groups have succeeded in doing for their lakes. *(NHDES is mandated by the Clean Water Act to*

*identify impaired waters and address the impairments. They fulfill that mandate by “listing” lakes and granting funding for watershed management plans.)*

- ❗ Members of the community have noticed changes in the lake, such as increased nuisance algal blooms and decreased diversity of fish, that they want to work to correct.
- ❗ Members of the community are concerned that there will be other changes in the lake, such as cyanobacteria blooms, that will make it less desirable for use by humans and wildlife.
- ❗ Members of the community have noticed recent changes in the use of the watershed that may adversely affect water quality in Gregg Lake and its tributary streams and wetlands. They are concerned that continued development in the watershed will only increase the number of negative impacts.
- ❗ Despite problems with water quality, Gregg Lake has good potential for recovery. Our watershed is among the healthier watersheds in the state, and we can take steps to preserve that.

### 3.2 Outreach Drivers

Why do we need an outreach campaign for a Gregg Lake WMP?

- ❗ We know that NPS pollution from lakeshore homes and cottages (from septic systems, stormwater, soil erosion, fertilizers, pet waste, etc.) is often the source of water quality problems, and we will need the voluntary help of informed property owners to investigate and possibly make changes to their properties.
- ❗ The more information we get from the community about their concerns and priorities for the watershed, the better equipped we will be to develop solutions tailored to the needs of the community. Research shows that when watershed groups working on water quality listen to the concerns of the community, they have greater participation in management plans and greater success in meeting water quality goals.
- ❗ We know that run-off from roads can send pollutants into the lake and that correcting the problem depends on town residents being willing to approve funding for solutions like improved drainage and gravel road maintenance.
- ❗ We may be more successful in meeting water quality goals if town zoning laws and permitting processes are modified and that will require town residents to be informed and motivated to make changes to help the watershed.
- ❗ Changes to regulations regarding lake use (motor boat wakes, lake level, fireworks, beach rules) may be required to help us reach our water quality goals, and we will want to build support from both town residents and watershed property owners.
- ❗ Success in meeting our water quality goals will depend on bringing diverse stakeholder groups together as much as possible in a shared commitment to pursue all available solutions.

## 4. OUTREACH GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

WMP objectives can be summarized as follows:

- 1) Assemble water quality data and determine current water quality.
- 2) Identify nutrient sources impacting the lake.
- 3) Set water quality restoration goals.
- 4) Identify BMPs and other actions needed to reduce nutrients.
- 5) Present a road map to restore water quality with indicators for evaluation.

Outreach efforts will support these objectives throughout the period of WMP development and beyond. To successfully identify pollution sources and plan solutions we will need to move the Gregg Lake community from awareness to education to action. Essential to educating the community and motivating them to act is collecting information from them that we will use to define the problem. We will then feed that information back to the community to help them understand the actions they need to take. In turn, the community will provide information about barriers to taking action, which we will address as part of our continuing outreach throughout the planning and restoration process.

With that process in mind, we can identify general outreach goals and associated objectives:

## **GOAL 1. Evaluate the community; identify partners and stakeholders.**

Understanding the Gregg Lake community will be essential for developing and implementing a WMP. Potential partners and key stakeholders in the community will be identified, as well as special skills and experience or business or social connections that may be helpful to the project. We hope to identify potential “Mavens, Connectors and Early Adopters.” Knowledge, beliefs and attitudes of the community relating to Gregg Lake water quality and watershed impacts will be assessed. Knowledge gaps, beliefs, attitudes or constraints that may be barriers to behavior change will also be identified.

### **Objective 1.1—Contact and collaborate with key partners and stakeholders in the watershed.**

- 🔗 Solicit collaboration with major watershed landowners and businesses, including NH Audubon, The Harris Center for Environmental Education, Harbor Camps and Antrim Wind Energy/TransAlta.
- 🔗 Engage the Gregg Lake Association and the White Birch Point Association through presentations at association meetings and solicitations of input.
- 🔗 Engage town boards and officials, including the Parks & Recreation Commission, the Conservation Commission, Town Hall and the Road Agent through membership on the GLWMPC and updates on the WMP project progress.
- 🔗 Inform and engage other influential town organizations and individuals, including students, through presentations at meetings, spontaneous interactions and child-oriented activities.

### **Objective 1.2—Assess knowledge and interest in the community and identify barriers that may limit support for the WMP.**

- 🔗 Use surveys to inventory the watershed and educate property owners and others with regard to septic systems, lake-friendly landscaping, stormwater management and attitudes toward improving water quality.
- 🔗 Through guided discussions, solicit observations, input and concerns from community stakeholders.
- 🔗 Identify key members of the community who will act as “Watershed Ambassadors” to educate and engage neighbors and other community members.

## **GOAL 2. Educate the community about Gregg Lake water quality issues and the watershed management planning process.**

Gregg Lake is located in Antrim, a rural town with a population of 2,600 and a town meeting form of government. Gregg Lake is widely recognized for its contribution to the town’s quality of life. Since budget items that may be required for implementing the WMP will need to be approved at town meeting, it is critical to recognize the importance of gaining widespread town support for improving the Gregg Lake water quality. Education will raise awareness in the community about the condition of Gregg Lake and the WMP project goals, and inform the community about watersheds, water quality, NPS pollution, BMPs, and their stewardship role.

### **Objective 2.1—Reach out to a wide range of community members; consider all to be stakeholders.**

- 🔗 Seek audiences with groups having different associations with or uses for Gregg Lake.
- 🔗 Engage the broadest possible set of stakeholders in the WMP development.
- 🔗 Encourage questions, comments and feedback at all outreach events.

### **Objective 2.2—Educate the community so they can participate in a meaningful way in making water quality decisions and implementing the WMP.**

- 🔗 Recognize that it can take time to introduce new ideas and change behaviors.
- 🔗 Take a gradual approach to building background knowledge and acceptance for the need for a WMP.
- 🔗 Take advantage of chance meetings and unexpected opportunities to educate and engage.

### **Objective 2.3—Design effective messaging and provide appropriate resources.**

- 🔗 Be organized and prepared for oral presentations. Speak to the individual audience.

- 🔗 Prepare concise, easily understood informational sheets and other materials that address specific areas of concern for Gregg Lake, as well as more in-depth analyses of the Gregg Lake water quality.
- 🔗 Where possible, provide demonstrations and hands-on activities, as well as interactive surveys.

### **GOAL 3. Collaborate with the community to collect watershed information and input into the WMP**

The more complete the information we have about stressors of lake water quality the better we can evaluate what changes will be effective. We will gather observations about the lake and watershed, compile lists of concerns and priorities and obtain information about septic systems, stormwater run-off conditions, and other land-use practices.

#### **Objective 3.1—Develop strategies for collecting information**

- 🔗 Design surveys to collect detailed information from residents about septic systems, stormwater management, landscaping and other land-use practices.
- 🔗 Develop plans for reaching a substantial percentage of the residents, landowners and other stakeholders to collect survey information.

#### **Objective 3.2—Gather complete information from the community**

- 🔗 Take a multi-tiered approach to building trust and gathering complete data.
- 🔗 Encourage stakeholders to participate in door-to-door visits with neighbors to administer surveys and collect watershed inventory data.

#### **Objective 3.3—Share the WMP development process with community members**

- 🔗 Ensure that stakeholders and community members know how access WMP documents.
- 🔗 Regularly update the community on WMP progress and discussions.
- 🔗 Invite comment on the WMP development.

### **GOAL 4. Involve the community in the WMP development**

Involving the watershed and broader Antrim communities in completing project tasks, setting a water quality goal and planning for implementation of BMPs will ensure greater investment in the long-term success of the project.

#### **Objective 4.1—Encourage stakeholders to participate in completing project tasks and developing the WMP**

- 🔗 Offer a range of educational events, such as informational meetings and demonstration projects.
- 🔗 Invite volunteers to help with the watershed land-use inventory, as well as septic, stormwater and landscape surveys.
- 🔗 Recruit volunteers to participate in VLAP water sampling.
- 🔗 Encourage increased involvement in Lake Host and Weed Watcher programs.

#### **Objective 4.2—Convince stakeholders to participate in the process of setting a water quality goal**

- 🔗 Encourage a variety of stakeholders join the Water Quality Advisory Committee.
- 🔗 Provide stakeholders with enough information to actively participate in the process of setting a water quality goal.

#### **Objective 4.3—Encourage stakeholders to participate in educational events**

- 🔗 Provide engaging and informative opportunities for stakeholders to get involved.
- 🔗 Encourage stakeholders to host demonstrations or WMP-related events.

## **5. PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS**

### **5.1 Gregg Lake Community**

The Gregg Lake watershed comprises about 12.6% of the area of the Town of Antrim. The town supports a public beach, a boat launch and recreational activities at Gregg Lake. The community living around Gregg Lake is small, but even so

there are complexities among residents, lake users and community stakeholders. The mix of seasonal and full-time residents in the watershed underscores those. Understanding values and motivations will help encourage behaviors and overcome barriers. Below is a list of partners, stakeholders and community boards and organizations whose behaviors and decisions impact the watershed and will be important for Gregg Lake WMP outreach, as well as potential available technical resources.

### Partners in the Development of the Gregg Lake WMP

- 🔗 Town of Antrim/Gregg Lake Watershed Management Plan Committee
- 🔗 FB Environmental
- 🔗 NHDES
  - Watershed Management Bureau
  - VLAP
  - Lake Host (with NH Lakes) and Weed Watcher Programs

### Stakeholders

- 🔗 Lakefront residents/property owners
  - Seasonal residents
  - Year-round residents
  - Town of Antrim (beach/boat launch/dam)
  - Harbor Camps
- 🔗 Other watershed residents/property owners
  - White Birch Point area
  - Holt Hill area
  - Craig Road area
  - Brimstone Corner Road area
  - Harris Center for Conservation Education
  - NH Audubon
- 🔗 Lake associations
  - Gregg Lake Association
  - White Birch Point Association
- 🔗 Lake users: boaters, fishers, swimmers
  - Local (Antrim and surrounding towns)
  - Out of town or vacationing
  - Antrim Yacht Club
  - Local schools
  - Fishing clubs
  - Boy Scouts
- 🔗 Watershed business stakeholders
  - Builders
  - Landscaping or maintenance contractors
  - Antrim Wind Energy/TransAlta
  - Real estate agents
  - Other businesses that may rely on seasonal work

### Town of Antrim Decision-makers and Local Organizations

- 🔗 Town Boards and Commissions
  - Parks and Rec Commission/Rec Director
  - Conservation Commission
  - Highway Department/Road Agent
  - Planning Board
  - Selectboard
- 🔗 Community Organizations
  - Historical Society
  - Lions Club
  - Brown Bag Coalition
  - Antrim Grange
  - Grapevine/Avenue A Teen Center

### Technical Resources

- 🔗 Southwest Regional Planning Commission
- 🔗 NH Fish and Game Dept
- 🔗 UNH Cooperative Extension
- 🔗 Other regional, state and federal policy makers
- 🔗 Other watershed associations
- 🔗 Engineering and environmental consultants, landscape designers, other professionals
- 🔗 Conservation and environmental non-governmental organizations
  - NH Lakes Association
  - Loon Preservation Committee
- 🔗 Schools: Teachers, Students, Other
  - New England College (Henniker)
  - Keene State College (Environmental Studies)

- Antioch University New England (Keene; Environmental Studies)
- Franklin Pierce University (Rindge)
- UNH and Dartmouth (limnology courses, research scientists)
- Plymouth State University (lake water quality field work)
- K-12
- 🔗 Libraries
  - James A. Tuttle (Antrim)
  - Surrounding Towns
- 🔗 Newspapers
  - Antrim *Limrik*
  - Monadnock Ledger-Transcript (Peterborough)
  - Villager (Hillsboro)
  - Stone Bridge Post (Hillsboro)
  - Messenger (Hillsboro)

## 5.2 Assessment

The Town of Antrim website has a great deal of information on the demographics, attitudes and values of Town residents. For example, the 2010 Master Plan for Antrim states that what most residents of the town are concerned about are maintaining rural character and small town atmosphere, safety and affordable housing. Community spirit, pride in ownership, effective government with wise use and sustainable planning for the future were all valued. The Planning Board is currently working on preparing the 2020 Master Plan, and has committed to including Gregg Lake Watershed Plan considerations.

We can supplement our understanding of the primary audience by contacting stakeholders directly in person or by phone, email, post, or via online discussions, interviews and surveys. Lake Host data from previous years can inform on boating and fishing trends. Lake Hosts also can talk to lake users. Direct observation is also a way of identifying community actions that are relevant to our outreach plan.

Information can include:

- 🔗 Demographics
- 🔗 Activities and knowledge of the issue
- 🔗 Communication channels—how people prefer to communicate, receive information or news, etc.
- 🔗 Attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions
- 🔗 Social data to understand norms, values, attitudes
- 🔗 Levels of concern
- 🔗 Perceptions of the Gregg Lake WMP and its mission

## 6. MESSAGING

Messaging will be critical for leading the audience from the problem to the solution to undertaking specific actions, and will also aim to heighten visibility, recognition and understanding by branding the watershed restoration plan in the community. We will frame messages so they are relevant to the interests of the audience and are positively received.

A simple non-targeted message frame:

- 🔗 Gregg Lake is important for our quality of life.
- 🔗 However, the water quality in the lake is now degrading. We are seeing more and more algae clumps in the water and there is less oxygen for the fish.
- 🔗 The good news is that we can stop the sources of pollution and restore the water quality.
- 🔗 We need your input into developing the restoration plan and in making it a success so we can enjoy Gregg Lake for years to come.

## 6.1 Planning Tasks

- 🔗 Select issues and key audiences on which to focus.
- 🔗 Frame a message that will motivate and appeal to the audience and pre-test it.
- 🔗 Identify barriers and formulate incentives to overcome them.
- 🔗 Develop branding tools, such as a logo and slogan, for the campaign.

## 6.2 Messaging Progression

- 🔗 Begin building watershed awareness and identification among primary audiences.
- 🔗 Encourage stakeholder collaboration in developing the outreach plan.
- 🔗 Develop, distribute and discuss materials that explain Gregg Lake water quality issues.
- 🔗 Explain risk of progressing to cyanobacteria blooms.
- 🔗 Present materials that focus on methods to achieve water quality restoration.
- 🔗 Discuss priorities and expected outcomes with specific restoration approaches.

## 6.3 Barriers and Incentives

Attitudes and other factors may be barriers for supporting or participating in the WMP. Lack of time, suspicion towards outsiders, invasion of private property rights, costs, skepticism of the science, indifference to the resource, contrary aesthetics, or a feeling of inability to change anything are all potential barriers. For example, one obstacle for the WMP is that many property owners are only present at the lake for short amounts of time during the year. Expenses to improve second homes may be less forthcoming. Houses may be shared with multiple owners, complicating decision-making.

Incentives to overcome barriers can take various forms. We can explore possibilities for financial incentives, such as a tax credit to fix a leaking septic system, or discounts from local businesses to pump septic tanks, install rain gardens or reduce runoff from the property. Other incentives could be in the form of public recognition to property owners for maintaining a buffered and lake-friendly lawn and shoreline. Showing how watershed-friendly actions can save money or time in the long run is another incentive. Improved public health can also be perceived as an added incentive. Disincentives like fines for harming shoreline can also be used to discourage unwanted actions; however positive messages are likely to win a more favorable reception.

## 7. COLLABORATING AND COMMUNICATING

The message should be packaged and delivered in ways that speak to the interests and character of the stakeholders. Outreach will focus on building watershed awareness and attaining stakeholder collaboration for input into the WMP. The aim will be to provide a transparent process to ensure buy-in of the final WMP and restoration efforts that follow.

### 7.1 Outreach formats

Outreach will be achieved through a variety of formats, including in-person meetings, presentations and activities, posting information and event schedules online, making printed copies of materials available and summaries published in Antrim's quarterly journal, *The Limrik*.

Stakeholders will be invited to participate personally in the WMP development and in the Water Quality Advisory Committee (WQAC), which will be charged with setting the water quality goal of the restoration plan, via meetings and presentations at different forums designed to reach a wide selection of the Antrim population. Participatory activities, such as watershed tours, mapping or observation of water sampling may also encourage engagement with the watershed restoration. Key stakeholders who may not be reached by local outreach efforts, such as NH Audubon, the Harris Center for Conservation Education, Harbor Camps, and Antrim Wind Energy/TransAlta, as well as officials from the Town of Antrim, NHDES and NH Fish and Game will be invited to provide input into the development of the WMP and to participate on the WQAC.

Documents and event schedules will be posted online in several key locations. A WMP website, [www.gregglake.org](http://www.gregglake.org), will include a summary of progress made on developing the WMP, a schedule of upcoming events, lake history and documents generated in the course of developing the WMP. Information, calendar items and links will be posted on other relevant websites, such as those of the Town of Antrim, the Gregg Lake Association and NHDES. Important events will be announced on the Antrim “News and Events” email list and posted on the Community Calendar.

Printed materials, including Frequently Asked Questions and summaries of Gregg Lake water quality areas of concern will be distributed at meetings, posted at the Town Beach and made available at central locations, such as the James A. Tuttle Library and Town Hall.

## 7.2 Building watershed awareness

The Gregg Lake WMP Committee will take advantage of Gregg Lake Association and White Birch Point Association meetings to build awareness of the WMP project within the watershed communities. Members will also present the WMP concept at other community group meetings to try to reach a wide sampling of the community. Periodic updates given to groups such as the Brown Bag Coalition (a group of community leaders who meet monthly to work together to address community needs), the Antrim Parks & Recreation Commission, the Antrim Conservation Commission, the Antrim Historical Society and the Antrim-Bennington Lions Club, will bring the project before a diverse selection of local residents who are already actively involved in the community and can be ambassadors to help deliver the message.

Informational tables will be set up at community events, such as the annual Home & Harvest Festival and spring festivals at the local schools, and periodically at the Town Beach to reach beach and boat-launch users. Demonstrations, as well as printed literature, will be used to present watershed and water quality concepts. A water quality summary written for a lay audience, as well as single-page informational flyers with frequently asked questions and summaries of water quality issues of concern specific to Gregg Lake will be developed. Literature will also be posted at available sites, such as Town Hall, the public library, the Gregg Lake beach bathhouse, the boat launch kiosk and the Post Office. WMP progress updates will be published quarterly in *The Limrik*.

Efforts will be made to engage local youths in watershed-related projects, for instance by sponsoring school science projects, leading hands-on water science camps for local teens or providing community service opportunities for local Boy Scouts.

## 8. EVALUATION AND INDICATORS

Success in achieving the water quality goal for Gregg Lake requires substantial buy-in from both private landowners and lake users; thus outreach is critical for building both understanding of the issues and commitment to solutions. Periodic evaluation of progress towards the water quality goal will be used to refine future outreach needs.

### 8.1 Evaluation

Outreach was initiated with the first steps of the development of the WMP and community members were encouraged to participate at all steps. Outreach success will be measured by:

- 🔗 Repeat invitations to present at GLA meetings
- 🔗 Participation in WMP development events, such as the septic survey, Water Quality Advisory Committee, and Action Plan public meeting
- 🔗 Participation in WMP educational events, such as the gravel roads workshop, Soak Up the Rain/LakeSmart/Landscaping at the Water’s Edge and septic maintenance programs
- 🔗 Donations of time or money towards WMP development or action items, including conservation easements
- 🔗 Increased participation in Lake Host, Weed Watch, and VLAP programs
- 🔗 Adoption of BMPs at private properties
- 🔗 Implementation of septic upgrades
- 🔗 Participation in lake-protective behaviors, such as obeying horsepower limits & no-wake zone regulations



Evaluation planning tasks:

- 🔗 Use late summer (usually late August) GLA meeting to ask residents what was accomplished that year, what is planned for the coming year and what assistance might be needed
- 🔗 Following receipt of final water testing results for the summer (usually late September), plot data, assess trends and progress toward water quality goal
- 🔗 Update spreadsheet of erosion hotspots needing remediation and water quality progress
- 🔗 Present previous year's results at spring (usually late May) GLA meeting, along with update of outreach efforts
- 🔗 Full assessments of outreach effectiveness as part of project assessments in 2023 and 2028

## 8.2 Indicators

Impact evaluation indicators relate to the achievement of WMP goals and objectives. Social indicators evaluate behavior changes in the primary audience, and, for the Gregg Lake WMP, could include:

- 🔗 Increased awareness of technical issues or recommended practices
- 🔗 Changed attitudes
- 🔗 Reduced constraints to change
- 🔗 Increased capacity to leverage resources
- 🔗 Increased adoption of practices to protect or restore water quality

Surveys, news stories, and interviews are all tools to evaluate social indicators. Reporting should be transparent. Activities such as the stormwater survey, septic survey, and BMP recommendations will include indicators to measure impact and assess community context.

## 9. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

During the process of developing the WMP for Gregg Lake, specific tasks will be directed toward outreach activities. Effective outreach in this phase will set the stage for collaboration and cooperation in the later phases of the WMP. We will begin by gradually presenting the WMP message to the community, asking and answering questions, and seeking feedback on the effectiveness of our approaches.

### 9.1 Water Quality Advisory Committee Outreach

A Water Quality Advisory Committee will be established to review existing data and set a water quality goal. In order for the Gregg Lake community to be fully invested in the water quality goal, it will be important to have widespread representation on the WQAC, including members from volunteer water quality monitors for Gregg Lake, the Gregg Lake and White Birch Point Associations, watershed landowners and the Town of Antrim.

Outreach Activities:

- 🔗 Clearly present water quality data so lay committee members are able to understand the water quality issues and make informed decisions.
- 🔗 Reach out to leaders of major watershed landowners NH Audubon, the Harris Center for Environmental Education and Harbor Camps to invite them to participate in the WMP development. Keep them apprised of major project developments so they can contribute when appropriate, and encourage participation in the WQAC.
- 🔗 Reach out to Antrim town officials not involved in the everyday process of developing the WMP, such as the Road Agent and the Town Administrator, to invite them to participate, and keep them apprised of major project developments so they can contribute when appropriate. Encourage participation on the WQAC.
- 🔗 Invite past and present water quality monitors, Lake Hosts and Weed Watchers to participate in the WQAC.
- 🔗 Invite members of the Gregg Lake and the White Birch Point Associations, as well as watershed landowners and other Town residents to participate in the WQAC.

## 9.2 Phosphorus Management Outreach

Educating the Gregg Lake community about the critical role phosphorus concentrations play with regard to water quality and communicating the current trends and potential consequences is essential to convincing lake users, land managers and decision makers to consider their role in improving water quality.

### Outreach Activities:

- 1 Explain that phosphorus is generally the limiting nutrient—controlling its levels controls algal growth—and that stormwater tends to carry the bulk of the phosphorus into the lake.
- 1 Prepare a document explaining the seasonal succession of algae and its relation to phosphorus loading and water temperatures
- 1 Educate residents and lake users, as well as decision makers and other land managers in the watershed, about the consequences of current water quality trends.
- 1 Educate residents and lake users, as well as decision makers and other land managers in the watershed, about how they can make a difference in lake phosphorus loading.
- 1 Develop a method for Gregg Lake residents, watershed land managers, and town officials to assess their contributions to phosphorus loading and see what they can do to reduce their own phosphorus footprint. For residents, this may be done in an online format, in which values can be changed to see the effect they make, or as a door-to-door survey.

## 9.3 Septic Maintenance Outreach

Outdated and unmaintained septic systems can contribute to lake phosphorus loading. Proper septic design and maintenance can substantially reduce phosphorus entering the lake waters. Outreach and education to property owners about proper septic maintenance will be provided.

### Outreach Activities:

- 1 Survey lake shoreline property owners about the condition of their septic systems.
- 1 Discuss proper septic maintenance.
- 1 Host a septic party at site of rebuilt septic system.

## 9.4 Gravel Roads Outreach

Large amounts of sediment wash into Gregg Lake from gravel roads—both public and private—in the watershed. Sediment is now recognized to be a major source of phosphorus in NH lakes. Educating both the town and watershed residents about the importance of limiting sediment entry into the lake will be critical for implementing suggested BMPs.

### Outreach Activities:

- 1 Ask the lake community to help document sites of sediment deposition from runoff from watershed roads.
- 1 With permission, evaluate run-off on private property.
- 1 Invite an outside speaker, such as Russ Lanoie, to speak to area residents and the town Highway Department about gravel road maintenance, including road runoff and water quality considerations.

## 9.5 Stormwater Outreach

Stormwater carries sediment as well as other pollutants, such as oil, into the lake water. Outreach will focus on adoption and maintenance of stormwater BMPs on both public and private properties.

### Outreach Activities:

- 1 Prepare a Gregg Lake-specific document on water quality concerns with trends in increasing lake color and turbidity and decreasing water transparency.
- 1 Distribute NHDES document on effects of boat motors in stirring up sediment and fragmenting aquatic plants.

- 🔗 Document sites of sediment deposition from runoff, especially on public property.
- 🔗 Offer courtesy inspections of drainage on private property, with suggestions and installation guidelines for reasonably priced BMPs.
- 🔗 Encourage partnering with NHDES's Soak Up the Rain for grant funding to support private homeowners to install BMPs to reduce pollutants carried in stormwater runoff. Visit Silver Lake in Harrisville to see rain garden and infiltration steps. Encourage formation of a local Soak Up the Rain Group to be a long-term driving force.
- 🔗 Provide informational handouts about handling water flow.
- 🔗 Inquire whether a local group, such as the Lions Club or the Boy Scouts, would be interested in collaborating with the town to build a rain garden or infiltration steps at the public beach.
- 🔗 Distribute information and speak about the effects of bringing in sand to create or expand beaches.

## 9.6 WMP Outreach

Outreach will be conducted in support of developing a WMP for the Gregg Lake watershed, with the aim of gradually introducing the watershed community to the WMP project. Speakers will attend the annual meetings of the Gregg Lake Association and the White Birch Point Association and make presentations and prepare materials for distribution at other local group meetings.

Outreach Activities:

- 🔗 Provide regular project updates at semi-annual GLA meetings and annual WBPA meetings to reach the seasonal lakefront community as well as year-round residents.
- 🔗 Seek out other venues to reach other community groups, such as BBC meetings and Parks and Recreation Commission meetings, and set up displays and information at festivals, concerts or at the public beach.
- 🔗 Prepare and distribute Gregg Lake-specific documents to explain water quality issues at meetings and strategic locations around town, such as the library, Town Hall, Post Office, bulletin boards and kiosks at the beach and boat launch. Seek feedback on the value of these documents and modify, if possible.
- 🔗 Build an informational website with background information, Gregg Lake data analysis, formal and informal documents prepared during the process of developing the WMP, and other information relevant to the Gregg Lake community. Link to other sites, such as the Town and the GLA websites, to maximize community input into developing the WMP.
- 🔗 Seek out opportunities to reach out and/or educate about water quality issues, such as teaching a teen summer camp on water quality, inviting others to join in the water sampling process, sponsoring a school science project.
- 🔗 Recruit volunteers to continue the Lake Host, Weed Watcher and VLAP programs.
- 🔗 Publish the final WMP on the Town website.

## 9.7 Outreach in Phases 2 and 3

Building a sound foundation during Phase 1 will set the stage for outreach in Phases 2 and 3 as continuing communication within the Gregg Lake community to build support for implementing BMPs and other recommendations identified in the WMP.

## 10. SUMMARY

If we are to successfully reverse the declining water quality in Gregg Lake, it is critical for the widespread Gregg Lake community to recognize the water quality issues currently affecting the lake, understand the causes and support efforts to remedy the situation. Outreach efforts will be tailored to reach diverse members of the community, from those who live by the lake to those who use the lake for recreation, those who own large pieces of property or run businesses in the watershed, and town officials.

Reasons for developing a WMP will be explained. The science behind the water quality issues and the suggested solutions will be clearly presented. The community will be encouraged to participate in setting water quality goals, share information about their properties to help set goals and determine and prioritize solutions. Outreach efforts will take

different forms in different places, with speakers giving presentations at local group and lake association meetings, making written summaries available in public locations, placing materials and up-to-date information online and taking advantage of other opportunities as they arise. This Outreach Strategy will motivate individuals, community leaders and businesses to make choices that will restore and protect the water quality in the Gregg Lake watershed now and into the future.