



**TOWN OF CORTLANDT**  
**DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL SERVICES**  
**ENGINEERING DIVISION**

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December 14, 2017

**RE: Wallace Pond / Westchester Lake**

Dear Current Resident,

On behalf of the homeowner's group the Town of Cortlandt retained Woodard & Curran (W&C) an environmental engineering firm based out of White Plains to perform a comprehensive water quality analysis of Westchester Lake / Wallace Pond as well as provide future recommendations to improve the health of the lake. The Lake has been classified by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation as an impaired waterbody due to excessive phosphorus and nutrient loading.

Phosphorus, nitrogen and other nutrients are naturally occurring but their levels in the environment are typically spiked due to fertilizer use, lawn mowing, improper disposal of pet waste and sanitary discharge through leaching and failure of subsurface disposal systems. Excessive nutrient loading leads to low levels of dissolved oxygen in the waterbody, contributing to accelerated decomposition promoting further oxygen depletion. Algal blooms which become prominent late summer are a byproduct. W&C also identified the variety of invasive species of plant observed to be Eurasian watermilfoil, swamp smartweed, duckweed and purple loosestrife.

Based upon the chemical composition of the water and low oxygenation of the lake W&C provided a series of recommendations. These include:

1. **Stormwater monitoring** to further pinpoint sources of pollution.
2. **Stormwater education, outreach and in-reach.** The Town is committed to stormwater education and provides yearly updates to specific watersheds (i.e. Wallace Pond) by targeted mailings as well as the Town at large through its website and seasonal recreation brochures.
3. **Stormwater Retrofits** that would construct post-construction best management practices to intercept and filter pollutants of concern designed to improve water quality.
4. **Bathymetric and pond sediment analysis** to further evaluate the feasibility of dredging portions of the lake.
5. **Dam rehabilitation** to improve water levels in the lake.
6. **Dam removal, stream restoration** to create a natural landscape with restored wetlands and water amenities.

Chemical vegetation treatment and aeration was not recommended due to low dissolved oxygen levels and the shallowness of the pond. The Town of Cortlandt is evaluating the feasibility and potential cost of each alternative. No action is planned to be taken at this time.

In the interim staff is continuing efforts at the State and Federal levels to identify potential funding sources to potentially implement these recommended improvements. As recently as August 2017, letters were sent to County and State Elected Officials and agencies to request assistance and funding. While no funding is available for the rehabilitation of the dam sources are available to restore and enhance the surrounding wetlands. To be

eligible for some sources of funding, serious consideration must be given to the creation of a parks district to create a public recreational area. The district would be established by a good majority of the homeowner's in the former association.

While the Town continues to find ways to improve the health of the lake, we also need your help as a property owner in protecting this important community natural resource. Please limit use of fertilizers, pesticides and other chemical treatments. Pickup pet waste and dispose of properly. Annually inspect and pump out septic systems routinely at least once every three years. Report failing septic systems to the Westchester County Department of Health.

The complete water quality report is available in my office for review. If you would like to obtain a copy or read through it please contact my office. In closing I want to thank you for your cooperation. Together we can maintain and even further improve the visual beauty and health of Westchester Lake / Wallace Pond.

Very truly yours,

*Michael Preziosi, P.E.*

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Michael Preziosi, P.E.  
Director - Dept. of Technical Services

Cc: Linda D. Puglisi, Town Supervisor  
Town Board  
Jeff Coleman, P.E., Director DES  
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