

For Immediate Release

July 12, 2017

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RE: WNRCD conducting Shoreland bioengineering restoration project on Lake Iroquois.

The Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District is pleased to announce the initiation of the Lake Iroquois Shoreland restoration project, funded in part through a Vermont Clean Water Initiative Ecosystem Restoration Program grant. The project consists of designing bioengineering practices along six adjacent properties on Lake Iroquois, Hinesburg VT to reduce sediment and phosphorus loading.

Lake Iroquois a 243 acre eutrophic lake located within Chittenden County Vermont is surrounded by mostly seasonal homes and camps that are progressively changing to year round homes. The major water quality concern is the excessive phosphorus enrichment. Studies have shown that the majority of phosphorus entering Lake Iroquois is from shoreland erosion. The current lake scorecard rates the lake as in Fair Condition. The lake is experiencing excessive littoral benthic algal mats that are covering available substrates and potentially impacting recreation, drinking water supply, fish spawning habitats and the overall water quality of the lake. Protecting the shoreline from further erosion will reduce sediment and phosphorus loading to the lake.

During Phase 1 of the project, each site will undergo the VTDEC WSMD Lakewise assessment in conjunction with a thorough site inventory and analysis to identify and assess sources of sediment and phosphorous runoff into the lake. Following the site inventory and analysis phase, the Landscape designer; Dr. Annie White, owner and Principal of NECTAR Landscape Design Studio will develop two design concepts for each of the six properties. The designs will aim to treat stormwater runoff in upland landscape areas, repair eroded shorelines using bioengineering techniques, and restore natural buffers along the shoreline. The landowners will then review the design concepts and landscape visualization sketches and select the concept (or combination of concepts) that best fits their vision and usage of their property. The designer will then complete the final design plans for each of the six properties.

Bioengineering methods help restore natural shorelines through the use of "softscape" engineering practices to stabilize the shore with native and biodegradable material. The Fish and Wildlife access on Lake Iroquois was retrofitted using a bioengineering practice of Fiber "Coir Logs" and has been showcased as a demonstration project conducted by the partners: VTDEC WSMD Lakewise, Vermont Fish and Wildlife and the Lake Iroquois Association. The restoration and protection of the lakeshore will provide bank stabilization, nutrient filtration, provide habitat for fish and wildlife and maintain shaded/cool shoreline waters that will deter excessive algal growth. By protecting the shoreline, the property owners and partners are protecting water quality and property values.

The WNRCD continues to seek landowners interested in conducting shoreland and riparian habitat restoration projects on their property. Anyone interested in learning more about the WNRCD habitat protection, and restoration programs can visit: www.winooskinrcd.org or email: info@winooskinrcd.org for more information.

The Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District is one of 14 conservation districts throughout Vermont. It encompasses all of Chittenden and Washington County as well as parts of Orange County (Orange, Williamstown and Washington). The district relies on grants and individual donations to complete its conservation work. The WNRCD focuses its resources on completing conservation projects within the areas of agricultural assistance, forestland enhancement, urban conservation and watershed stewardship.

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