



Lake-Friendly, but Less Convenient Retaining Wall Project

Background

Sue and Dale Higgins were a “dream team” to partner with for a Soak Up the Rain NH (SOAKNH) project. They are members of the Pleasant Lake Preservation Association (PLPA) of Deerfield and Northwood. Together with Sue and Dale and other members of the PLPA, the SOAKNH team toured several lakeside properties to identify potential project sites and make recommendations for improved stormwater runoff management. Sue and Dale were eager to learn, taking careful notes and asking lots of questions. They were also eager to address runoff issues identified on their own property and listened intently to suggestions by the SOAKNH team. Then they took it upon themselves to bring one of the recommendations to fruition by extending an existing retaining wall to block the path of runoff (and people) down a ledge-packed hill toward the lake.

The Project

At the Higgins’ property, runoff was traveling downhill along a relatively



This retaining wall was rebuilt and extended to block a pathway that was allowing runoff to cascade down this ledge-packed hill toward the lake. The pathway was redefined at an angle which reduces runoff while the refurbished planting bed behind the wall captures runoff.



vertical pathway. This convenient path led family and friends directly to the lake front and to an outbuilding where water sport supplies are kept. Sue and Dale rebuilt and extended an existing retaining wall and planting bed across the bottom of the hill all the way to the outbuilding, therefore blocking the path at the bottom of the hill. They then redefined the pathway to run down the hill at an angle. By changing the path from a vertical orientation to an angled orientation, the runoff no longer shoots down the path and has a chance to get soaked up or shunted off the path. Runoff that still makes it down the hill is captured by the planting bed. This project shows the dedication of people like Sue and Dale, who made their property *less* convenient for family and friends but more lake-friendly.

Partner Building

The tour of properties was part of a partnership SOAKNH is building with PLPA. SOAKNH presented at the 2017 PLPA Annual Meeting, telling this very informed and involved lake group about SOAKNH resources and the types of “Stormwater Solutions” promoted by the program. Interested attendees signed up for site visits by the SOAKNH team to get recommendations on how they can soak up the rain on their own properties. As a result of the recommendations, in addition to the Higgins’ project, a number of PLPA members enhanced their lake-side buffer plantings.

If your lake or watershed association is interested in exploring a partnership with SOAKNH, find us on Facebook or on the Soak Up the Rain NH website at www.soaknh.org under “Contact Us.” We’d love to hear from you!



Kayakers on Pleasant Lake