

Lake-Friendly Landscaping Workshop: What, Why and Try

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JACKIE UNDERHILL

WHAT

On July 26, the New Hampshire Lakes Association and Eastman's Lakes & Streams Committee co-hosted a workshop at The Center. It was promoted as a free training workshop to learn all about lake-friendly landscaping techniques. The workshop included a focus on Eastman's Youth Conservation Corps (YCC), whose work was showcased in a presentation by Jackie Underhill, chair of Lakes & Streams, and Jane Tangen, a four-year veteran of the YCC. A tour of their landscaping projects at South Cove took place that afternoon. The workshop concluded with a hands-on landscaping project at South Cove in which all the workshop attendees participated. Attendees were from regional lake protection associations such as Kolelemook in Springfield, Goose Pond in Canaan, Millen Pond in Washington, Clough Pond in Loudon and Silver Lake in Madison. Several Eastman residents were there as well, including six members of Eastman's 2013 YCC.

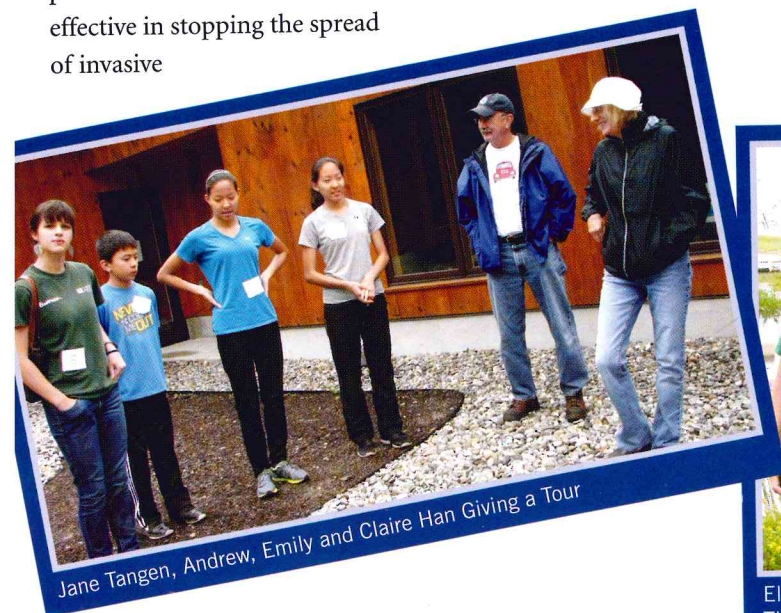
In her opening remarks, Andrea LaMoreaux, vice president of NH Lakes Association (NHLA), stated that the NHLA is a statewide, non-profit, member-supported organization. Its mission is to protect New Hampshire's lakes and their watersheds. She pointed out that there are two major threats to our lakes and ponds today, the first being invasive, aquatic plants and animals. Their Lake Host program is very effective in stopping the spread of invasive

species hitching a ride on boats traveling from lake to lake. The second threat is stormwater runoff, which is defined as water from rain or melting snow that doesn't soak into the ground. Their YCC program is very effective in controlling or limiting the pollutants that flow into our waterbodies via stormwater runoff. Their youth and adult volunteers are taught how to use best management practices or BMPs to infiltrate and filter the water before it reaches our rivers, lakes and ponds. Examples of BMPs are rain gardens, drip line trenches, dry wells, rain barrels and water bars. A major purpose of our workshop was to facilitate a better understanding of stormwater problems and to offer practical solutions that anyone can utilize.

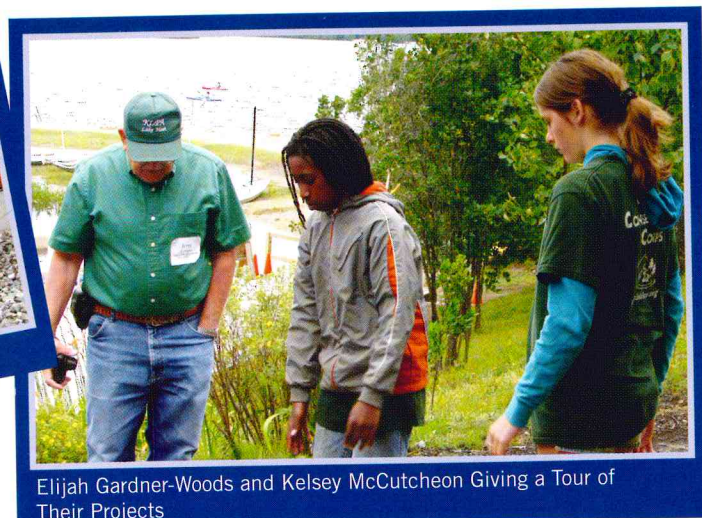
WHY

The keynote speaker, Jillian McCarthy from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, talked more specifically about why stormwater runoff is a problem, how it affects water quality and how we can all be part of the solution. Here are some major points from her presentation:

- **Stormwater causes or contributes to over 80% of the water pollution problems in New Hampshire.** The increasingly intense rain storms that we are experiencing cause significant erosion that washes soil and sediment into our waters. This negatively affects the clarity of the water, harming wildlife that's dependent on it and impacting recreational use. Stormwater runoff often carries oil and road salt from driveways and roads, as well as litter. All of these pollutants further degrade our waterbodies.



Jane Tangen, Andrew, Emily and Claire Han Giving a Tour



Elijah Gardner-Woods and Kelsey McCutcheon Giving a Tour of Their Projects



Planting the Vegetated Buffer Garden at South Cove

Stormwater also carries fertilizers from our lawns, gardens and farms that lead to increased algae growth and blooms, some of which are toxic to animals and humans. Animal waste from wildlife, dogs and farm animals gets washed into the water, resulting in a high bacteria count that often necessitates beach closures.

- **We are all part of the stormwater problem.** In forested areas, 50% of stormwater gets reabsorbed into the ground and 10% runs off into waterbodies. In developed areas, those figures are practically reversed. About 55% of stormwater runs off of our buildings, homes, driveways, roads and parking lots with only 15% going into the ground to recharge our groundwater supply. The many impervious surfaces often direct the water into areas that are not capable of handling the higher and more forceful volumes of water.
- **We can all be part of the solution.** We can emulate nature by allowing the rain water to be absorbed where it falls with do-it-yourself stormwater solutions found in the NH Homeowner's Guide to Stormwater Management. A copy can be found at South Cove or at this website: <http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/stormwater>

TRY

The DIY projects that are featured in the Homeowner's Guide are relatively simple and effective. As Robie Parsons, NH Lakes program director, says "Many of them involve digging a hole, lining it with geotextile fabric and filling it with crushed stone." She has overseen many stormwater control projects throughout the state with a number of Lake Conservation Corps groups. Both she and Andrea were instrumental in helping to establish Eastman's Youth Conservation Corps. Since 2010, the YCC has completed the following projects many of which *you* can try at home:

1. prepared and planted two beautiful rain gardens
2. dug out drip line trenches and numerous drip line extensions
3. added four water bars along a sloped walkway
4. planted blueberry bushes and ground covers on the hillside in front of Peppermint Patty's
5. added a lovely split-rail fence along the pathway to South Cove beach
6. dug four dry wells
7. cleaned out stormwater basins and completed maintenance work on other stormwater projects
8. rehabbed a section of the Lake Trail near East Lake Beach
9. built a small bridge at West Cove A Beach that spans a swale near a boat rack
10. built a fantastic set of new stairs to access the beach from the South Cove dock

The vegetated buffer garden that was planted with the help of 25 workshop attendees on the afternoon of July 26 is a beautiful addition to the South Cove dock area. We were honored that the NH Lakes Association chose to highlight the accomplishments of our very own YCC! The workshop and hands-on project were made possible by grants obtained by the NH Lakes Association from the NH Charitable Foundation Wellborn Ecology Fund and the Jack and Dorothy Byrne Foundation. **E**