

## **Acton Wakefield Watersheds Alliance (AWWA) to Start Youth Conservation Corps to Address Erosion Issues**

In 2004, community members interested in protecting the water quality of lakes that lie within the Ossipee and Salmon Falls watersheds formed the Acton Wakefield Watersheds Alliance. Membership is made up of both community residents and members of area lake associations, currently including Balch, Belleau, Great East, Horne Pond, Lovell, Pine River Pond, and Wilson. AWWA's mission is to preserve or restore the water quality in these watersheds through scientific study, remediation of impairments and public education regarding the importance of water quality. Erosion, which washes pollutants into our lakes and ponds, is the largest cause of water quality degradation. For this reason the Alliance is focusing its' first efforts in this area.

In the summer of 2005, AWWA hired two local youth and worked with existing Maine Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) to complete two demonstration projects. One on Great East Lake stabilized a path that had been eroding into the lake over the years. The YCC put in steps that stabilized the slope and redirected runoff from both the stairs and from the roofline into planted and mulched areas where it could be absorbed. A second project on Pine River Pond prevented road water runoff from washing sand, soil and other pollutants into the lake. A berm was built and planted with bushes along the roadside to stop and absorb the water coming from the road. Stepping stone walkways were installed and the entire area, except for a narrow perched beach, was mulched and planted with ground cover to prevent runoff. Both of these projects demonstrated that erosion could be stopped in an environmentally friendly manner that also beautifies the property.

This spring AWWA will create our own YCC to reduce erosion-caused pollution in lakes in the towns of Wakefield, NH and Acton, ME. After securing funding, we will be hiring a Technical Director who will select a minimum of 15 properties with erosion problems from all requests for assistance. Custom landscape designs based on environmentally friendly Best Management Practices will be created with the property owner, to correct the problems. Assistance with the permitting process and the labor of a 5 or 6 person crew will also be provided.

Design, permitting assistance and construction labor are provided by the AWWA at no cost to the property owner. The property owner will pay for plants and materials used. The Technical Director will also design about 30 additional landscape plans for those who are interested completing the work themselves.

We hope to continue this program in the coming years. AWWA has and will continue to raise awareness of erosion problems through presentations to town officials, member lake associations and community organizations; articles in local newspapers, lake association newsletters and websites; signs at project sites; public tours of projects; and an erosion prevention educational program for local schools.

We are currently looking for property owners who would like to participate in our erosion control projects this summer.

You may qualify if:

1. You own property in Wakefield, NH or Acton, Me in the Ossipee or Salmon Falls watersheds. Lovell Lake and its' tributaries qualify.
2. Storm water runoff is causing erosion into a lake or stream.
3. You would like to have a custom design to solve your erosion problems and have the YCC implement it, all free of charge.
4. You are willing to pay for plants and materials to implement the design.
5. You are willing to allow AWWA to publicize the finished project, so awareness of this program will grow.

Please check for erosion problems on your property during spring melt or heavy rains. It would be helpful if you took some pictures of the problem areas. Perhaps we can help you solve your erosion problems with a beautiful and environmentally friendly solution, at relatively little cost to you

If you are interested in learning more, talking with the technical director about your concerns, and/or participating in this project, please email Carol Lafond at [webmaster@greastlake.org](mailto:webmaster@greastlake.org) or contact the Lovell Lake AWWA representative Dick DesRoches at [dickdesroches@yahoo.com](mailto:dickdesroches@yahoo.com), 603-473-2216.

Please include your name, address and phone number. If you are a seasonal resident also include your local address, phone and the date you can be reached at the local address.