

Town of Windham

Environment & Sustainability
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MEMO

DATE: February 15, 2019

TO: Town Council
FROM: Highland Lake Leadership Team, Technical Advisory Committee
THROUGH: Don Gerrish, Interim Town Manager

RE: Highland Lake Watershed Management Plan Update – Septic System Survey

A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has been formed within the Highland Lake Leadership Team (HLLT) to start the process of drafting an updated Highland Lake Watershed Management Plan ('the Plan'). The Plan must be accepted and approved by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to be eligible to apply for future DEP funding to assist with water quality improvement efforts throughout the watershed. The process to incorporate all required elements and ultimately draft the Plan is time-intensive and requires participation from multiple entities (municipalities, lake association, conservation district, DEP, etc.).

As a part of compiling known data of potential pollutant and phosphorus inputs into the lake, Windham's Environmental and Sustainability Coordinator, Town of Falmouth, the TAC and State professionals are looking into the impact of septic systems to Highland Lake's water quality. Based on discussions with DEP, systems located within the shoreland zone (250 feet from Highland Lake) and also on sensitive soils areas, could inadvertently impact water quality even though they appear to be functioning properly. Therefore, the Towns of Windham and Falmouth will be conducting an exercise to determine the relative impact of these systems to the Lake's water quality. The findings will be included in the draft Management Plan to be presented to Council and the public this summer.

"Working in the Public Interest"