Buffers

What is a Buffer? A section of land surrounding a river or other waterbody composed of natural land and vegetation.
Why are they Important? Buffers slow down runoff coming from impervious surfaces from all over the watershed and provide natural filtration. As a result, buffers reduce the amount of pollutants, excess nutrients, and sediments entering the waterbody. Native plant buffers also provide valuable habitat.
Buffers in Brentwood: Brentwood has established a shoreland protection district in their zoning ordinances to protect the Exeter River, Little River, Piscassic River and Dudley Brook. A major piece of that ordinance is no cutting of trees or shrubs within 75 feet of these rivers .

Learn more at www.brentwoodnh.gov

Remember: It is important not to add fertilizer within a buffer as those nutrients have a direct path into the waterway and will not have time to filter.

Other Resources

http://www.epa.gov/region1/soakuptherain/

http://www.prep.unh.edu/

http://www.exeterriver.org/

http://www.lawns2lobsters.org/

http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/index.htm

http://extension.unh.edu/

http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/stormwater

http://www.greatbay.org/

Contact RCCD: 603-679-2790 www.rockinghamccd.org

The Exeter River Project

In 2012, Brentwood, in partnership with RCCD as the project manager, completed its second year of work along the Exeter River in Brentwood. This project includes stormwater treatment, riverbank stabilization, and a conservation easement on 18 acres to protect over 5,600 feet of river frontage. Work conducted in 2012 included permitting, construction of vegetated treatment swales, construction of a stormwater treatment wetland, construction of infiltration stairs/boating access, stabilization of an eroding riverbank along a road shoulder, and buffer enhancement. This work will improve water quality of the Exeter River, which feeds into Great Bay.

This project was funded by a Watershed Assistance Grant from the NH Department of Environmental Services with Clean Water Act Section 319 funds from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as well as funds from the sale of the Conservation License Plates (Moose Plates) and NH Trout Unlimited. Thanks also to the many Brentwood Volunteers, the Exeter River Local Advisory Committee, and the project landowners.

BRENTWOOD

EXETER RIVER

Help Our River

Save Our Bay

How Brentwood Residents Can Help Reduce Nutrient Pollution

Compiled by the Brentwood Conservation Commission and the Rockingham County Conservation District

Exeter River and Great Bay

The Exeter River is one of seven major rivers that drains into Great Bay. The health and future of Great Bay is at risk from nutrients and polluted runoff moving through the watershed. Most pollutants come from sources that can not be linked back to a specific place and have many contributors, also know as nonpoint sources. Examples of nonpoint source pollution include rain runoff carrying pollutants such as lawn fertilizers or groundwater carrying pollutants from septic systems. They are significant because small amounts of pollutants and nutrients from many places add up to a lot of pollutants in our surface waters. Landowners can make a big difference with small actions like using rain gardens, scooping pet waste, and limiting fertilizer use.

How you can help

Four main ways landowners can help reduce inputs from nonpoint source pollution are:

- Voluntary fertilizer reduction
- Soaking up the rain
- Maintaining septic systems
- Maintaining vegetative buffers along waterways

The small steps that individual citizens take to help reduce nonpoint source pollution are extremely valuable to our ecosystems.

Voluntary Fertilizer Reduction

Nitrogen is the biggest contributor to decreased ecosystem function in Great Bay

Low Input Lawn Care: Suggested by UNH Cooperative Extension

- Leave grass clippings on the lawn, it is a natural source of nitrogen
- Mow as high as you can, leave at least 3"
- Add clover or other low growing legumes to your lawn
- Apply no more than one inch of water per week to avoid leaching from over watering
- If unfertilized lawn is acceptable , don't fertilize
- Don't guess: get a soil test! UNH has a kit! http://extension.unh.edu/Agric/AGNLT/Docs/kitorder.pdf
- If nitrogen levels are acceptable, choose a potassium or phosphorus only fertilizer.
- Apply fertilizers only after spring "green up" and no later than October 15th
- Maintain a soil pH of 6.0-6.5
- Use slow release formulas
- When using synthetic fertilizers, apply 1/2 to 1/3 of the amount recommended on the bag

See the full UNH Extension article: http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource000877_Rep923.pdf

Soak Up the Rain

Presently, we are seeing a change from natural land uses to pavements and other impermeable surfaces. Rather than slowly making its way into rivers and waterways through the soil, rain moves over these surfaces, picks up pollutants, and nutrients, while increasing temperature and runs untreated into our waterways. When we soak up the rain, we reduce the amount of rainwater runoff from our properties.

- Build a rain garden
- Place a rain barrel under your downspout
- Redirect downspouts to places such as lawns where more infiltration can occur
- Use permeable pavements
- Aerate your lawn if the soil is compacted or if it has > than 1/2in thatch

See http://www.epa.gov/region1/soakuptherain/ for more details

Septic Systems

Maintaining your septic system is an important piece of reducing nutrients and contaminants in our waterways. Maintaining a system before it breaks saves you money!

- Inspect your leach field annually. Wet spongy areas can indicate a failed system. A failed system can cause overflows that pollute water and threaten public health
- Pump septic tanks every 2-3 years
- Don't dump harsh chemicals or grease down the drain. This can interfere with a system's ability to process waste