

This map is available at the NYS DEC Website - http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/fish_marine_pdf/songlmap.pdf

Song Lake Watershed Planning Committee
1900 Rittenhouse Square
Tully, New York 13159

Winter Yard Care



Now is the perfect time to set in place best management practices for this year's yard and lawn care. While plants are dormant beneath the snow take some time to plan ahead. Begin by taking a good look around your home to identify practices that may currently place our lake at risk. Some of these risks include pollution from fertilizers, pesticides, yard debris, or soil erosion.

Inventory and upgrade your gardening equipment and if you have a mower, be sure the blades are sharpened. Whether or not you are switching to organic gardening practices, be sure to check chemical containers for leaks and rust as well as expiration. To dispose of these safely, call Cortland County Solid Waste Disposal at 607-756-8077.

One of most enjoyable gardening pastimes is planning. Gardening catalogs are wonderful, but before ordering plants take an inventory of your current plants and make plans to replace those that are diseased or have pest problems. You may want to take this opportunity to expand the riparian, that is the natural space between your house and the lake, with native plants. Have fun learning more at the Habitat Gardening for Central New York site: <http://www.hgcny.org/>

If you are planning a lawn, plan carefully for the right grass mix. Find out more about new cultivars at www.gardening.cornell.edu/lawn/index and consider Dutch clover as a ground cover to replace grass lawns. Starting out with the best seed for your landscape conditions will create a healthy, lush lawn that will establish early, prevent erosion, fight off disease and weeds, and require less care.

When spring cleaning begins, remember to pull leaves and debris away from the lake as much as possible. If you haven't had a soil sample taken in the last three years, now is a good time. Soil samples will help identify the specific needs for your yard. If you must fertilize, PLEASE, DO NOT FERTILIZE IN THE SPRING. Experts advise waiting until the fall. Excess fertilizer will only promote top growth at the expense of root growth; weak rooted plants are more susceptible to pests and later summer droughts. Call Cortland County Cornell Cooperative Extension at (607) 753-5077 or go to <http://cna1.cals.cornell.edu/faqs/> to find out more.

Another way to help protect our watershed is to avoid using pesticides. For more information on non-toxic alternatives to herbicide and pesticide options, go to: <http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conservation/greenscapes/index.htm>

These winter yard care steps will set in motion best management practices that will protect Song Lake water quality and create healthy soils, lawns and yard plants. If you still have [Our Song Lake Watershed](#), Volumes 2 and 3, you can read more about "Lawn Care Tips" and "Lake Friendly Landscaping."

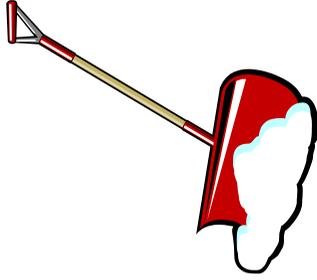
WE WOULD LIKE YOUR OPINIONS ~ WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT

The production of these newsletters has been possible through generous donations to the Song Lake Watershed Fund through the Song Lake Property Owners Association. To continue, we need your support. To help sponsor our next issue, please contact Tarki Heath at 696-5262. Please let us know what you think of our newsletter by emailing your comments to SongLakeIssues@aol.com.

For more information about Song Lake watershed planning contact Tony George -696-8045, Marjie Grillo -696-5963, Tarki Heath -696-5262, or Gloria Wright -696-5524

Issues on Song Lake

America dumps an average of 10 million tons of salt on its roads each year. This salt is applied to approximately 6,000 miles of paved roadways that traverse in and near our watersheds. New York State alone uses 500,000 tons of road salt per year. Part of this is by mandate, as the New York State Department of Transportation requires a road-salt application rate of 225 pounds-per-lane-mile for light snow and 270 pounds-per lane-mile for each application during rapidly accumulating snow. Currently, New York State is considering following Massachusetts's lead and may use alternative de-icers to prevent contamination of drinking water for New York City's watershed (only).



Considering Alternative De-Icers

Alternatives: Pros and Cons

- Sodium Chloride or “rock salt” works to 15° F. This product contains cyanide and presents many negative chloride impacts on the environment.
- Calcium Chloride works to -25° F. There is no cyanide however; there are chloride impacts on the environment.
- Magnesium Chloride works to 5° F and is less toxic and safer for the environment than calcium chloride.
- Urea 20 works to 25° F. This is not a suitable alternative since it is nitrogen based, and contains nutrients that cause water quality issues.
- Calcium Magnesium Acetate (CMA) works to 25° F. It is a less toxic product than those above.
- Sand has no melting effect on ice, but it does provide traction. It accumulates in streets and streams so needs to be swept up in spring.
- Kitty litter and ashes are much like sand, but messy.
- Sugar Beet Juice: In Ohio, and other mid western states, they are experimenting with a 10 % sugar beet juice mixture with salt and/ or calcium chloride. The verdict is still out, but the beet juice rejects freezing to below 20° F.

Best Management Practices:

- Shovel early and often. De-icers work best when there is only a thin layer of snow or ice that must be melted.
- Check the packaging closely. The first ingredient listed is the main ingredient.
- If you must, apply salt early, but sparingly.
- Consider nearby vegetation. Look at the plants growing within five or ten feet of your application area. Some plants are salt sensitive, and you may want to use CMA as a safer alternative, or use sand for traction.

Information for this article was taken from:

Shawn Dell Joyce, Sustainable Living: Consider safer alternatives to road salt www.recordonline.com/sustain Tom Schueler, **Snow, Road Salt and the Chesapeake Bay**, Center for Watershed Protection And http://www.usatoday.com/weather/research/2008-02-21-beeting-ice_N.htm

For more details on road salt impacts and alternatives you may want to read: <http://www.newyorkwater.org/downloadedArticles/ENVIRONMENTALIMPACT.cfm>

What's Wrong With Road Salt?

Road salt has a largely negative effect on wildlife, soil erosion, corrosion, and most importantly, water quality.

- Salt destroys soil structure by killing some soil bacteria.
- Because salt doesn't evaporate, it remains a persistent risk to water quality, with a negative impact on aquatic plants and animals.
- 55 percent of road salt runs off with snow melt into streams, with the remaining 45 percent infiltrating through soils and into groundwater aquifers.
- Salt slowly kills trees, especially white pines, and other roadside plants. The loss of indigenous plants and trees on roadsides allows hardier, salt-tolerant species to take over.
- Salt can change water chemistry, causing minerals to leach out of the soil.
- Salt cracks animal paws, injuring wildlife and house pets.
- Salt erosion contaminates drinking-water supplies to levels that exceed standards. Road salt can seep into drinking water increasing dietary sodium associated with hypertension.
- Salt corrodes metal and can cause safety issues for automobiles (brake linings and frames).
- Salt can penetrate concrete to corrode reinforcing rods, causing damage to bridges, roads and cracked pavement.

Coalition Meeting of Lake Associations in Cortland and Onondaga Counties

On December 30, 2008, approximately 20 members, representing four central New York lakes, met to discuss the possibilities for forming a coalition of lakes within Cortland and Onondaga Counties. Attendees included board and committee members from the Song Lake Property Owners' Association, Crooked Lake Homeowners' Association, Tully Lake Property Owners' Association, and Little York Lake Improvement Society. The meeting was facilitated by Anne Saltman, Senior Planner, Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board. Bill Kappel, of the United States Geological Survey presented to the group, and Pat Reidy, of the Cortland County Soil and Water Conservation District was on hand to add his knowledge to the discussions. There was broad consensus that with so many shared concerns, the forming of a coalition should be pursued. The group will meet again in March for a transitional planning meeting. If you are interested in attending, please call Tarki at 696-5262.



Song Lake Watershed Picnic Update

Our first planned outreach and education event was a wonderful success! On September 25th at Camp Hoover, approximately 70 visitors stopped by. There were many residents from Song Lake as well as Crooked Lake, Tully Lake, and Little York Lake. It was a free-flowing evening of food, education and fun. Cortland and Onondaga Counties' Cornell Cooperative Extension experts presented valuable information on the lawn outside the lodge. Inside the lodge, great food accompanied informative displays and continuous raffles. We hope this social and educational event will be the first of many to provide all our neighboring lake residents a chance to come together and share. Some pictures are available to view at <http://good-times.webshots.com/album/568129524PJBvHU>