**Press Release**

 **“Adirondack Lawn” – A Grassroots Initiative**

Hopefully you’ve noticed the small, triangular signs with a bright red border sprouting up on properties around the lake in recent weeks. The lawn sign proclaims: “Adirondack Lawn GROWS HERE.” The arrow on the sign points to a lawn that uses no fertilizers or pesticides. Even though winter is just around the corner and many of us will need to bring our signs in to protect them from the plows, there is still time to post one of your own!

Local water quality activists define an “Adirondack Lawn” as a property that does not use harmful chemicals and adheres to good stewardship practices; they are advocating for towns within the Lake George watershed to adopt a common Lake George Fertilizer Restriction Law. In order to show support of adopting an effective fertilizer law for Lake George, all residents are encouraged to display these lawn signs.

The lawn sign is an initiative of the Hague Water Quality Awareness Committee (HWQAC). The HWQAC and other WQACs are grassroots community based groups around the lake. Resident activists are focused on water quality issues. When the Hague WQAC created this sign to raise awareness and educate property owners regarding increased algal blooms and impacts to water quality from fertilizers and pesticides, all groups supported the initiative.

“I’m very encouraged by the response to the signs,” said Al Rider of the Hague WQAC, who designed and initiated the Adirondack Lawn sign. “We’ve already distributed more than 600 of these signs to property owners. There is clearly a growing awareness among residents for the need for protective actions, including a fertilizer restriction law.” Al said he has also discovered that many people, once they become aware of the impacts from fertilizers, commit to not using fertilizers. “That’s what this is all about – neighbors talking to neighbors to educate them about concrete actions they can take to protect the lake,” Al said. He noted that fertilizers stimulate algae growth, which in turn depletes the lake of its dissolved oxygen. Property owners have some measure of control over sources of nutrients that stimulate algae growth, from fertilizer use, septic systems and stormwater runoff, he explained.

“It is up to each individual who cares about the health of Lake George to ensure that our delicate water and ecosystems are protected. Posting a sign is one individual way to be proactive and to help unify a lakewide voice” says Lisa Adamson of Assembly Point. “Even though we are at the end of the season, you can still post these signs until the snow comes. If necessary, bring your sign inside to avoid the harsh winter and snow plows and get ready to repost them in early spring. By then hopefully all towns and the village will have the new proposed fertilizer restriction law on their meeting agendas and all municipalities will adopt the Lake George Fertilizer Restriction Law, unifying lake protection on this one issue.”

“Fertilizers not only feed the lawn, but also feed unwanted algae and invasive aquatic plants in the lake. To avoid the need to use fertilizers, mow your lawn to a minimum of 3 inches, leave the grass clipping on the lawn to provide nitrogen (in lieu of adding fertilizer), and periodically aerate the soils to encourage healthier growth. Replace expansive lawns with native trees, shrubs and perennials to add root depth and increase infiltration and treatment of stormwater.” says Kathy Bozony, Lake George scientist, diver and activist.

To show your support for this critical action to address fertilizer use in a lake wide initiative to pass a uniform law, consider posting your sign where walkers or drivers recognize its message. At the north end of the lake, call Al Rider 518-636-6326; at the south end please call Lisa Adamson 518-656-9794 to obtain your sign. Bring signs in when necessary and post them again very visibly this spring!

Please note the sign in this photo of the Old Gates Homestead proudly and with commitment sporting one of these tasteful signs!

In addition, the FUND has published a *Do-It-Yourself Water Quality* guide with valuable tips and information for property owners. The guide is available online at [www.fundforlakegeorge.org](http://www.fundforlakegeorge.org), at the Fund’s office, and at Town Halls around the lake.

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