



# Liberty Township Environmental Commission 2021 Annual Report

## **Roster**

Chairman Larry Supp, Doug Hankin, Vice Chair Richard Larsen, Dan Kurela (Resigned March), Maureen Bonner, Sarah Longo, Member (liaison to LT Land Use Board) Doug Wright, Martine Kieffer, first alternate Diane Gonski, second alternate Michael Hoffman (Resigned Oct.), Secretary Carrie Gajda

Meetings are held the third Thursday of each month, 7 PM at the Municipal Building and/or via Zoom. Membership in the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions was maintained.

## **Aquatic Weed Control**

The agreement with Solitude Lake Management was approved for assessment and treatment two times per month during July and August. 2. Any growth of undesirable aquatic weeds and vegetation found within the designated treatment area with each inspection was treated and controlled through the application of aquatic herbicides and aquatic surfactants, and Greenclean rather than Copper Sulfate was approved for algae treatment, if needed. The starting date was July, not May, because the contract was late in arriving, to be corrected next season. Pending further study by the LTEC of EPA's divergent risk analysis which approves Diquat treated water for child swimmers, but not for drinking, and in view of adverse publicity involving Roundup, Solitude was advised by Mr. Supp not to apply Rodeo (Glyphosate) or Diquat, but Flumioxazin was tentatively approved for 2021. The LTEC study of herbicides was completed late in 2021 and it will form the basis for treatment recommendations in 2022.

## **Arbor Day**

Free Trees were given away to residents and the surrounding communities on April 24<sup>th</sup>. The event was held as a drive-thru tree pickup at the Municipal Building. Event was promoted online and through social media, local blogs, etc. Commissioners gave away 500 tree seedlings, successfully.

## **Native Seed Garden**

The wildflower Peaceful Garden was maintained with weeding and trimming all season. A QR code was established for plant identification, which will be posted on-site next season.

## **Fish Habitat at Mt. Lake**

Porcupine cribs were installed in the southerly (outlet side) portion of Mountain Lake at a depth of about 12 feet, in the time period between October 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>. This project was organized using resources of the State of New Jersey, by the MLCA-WAG and with the knowledge of LTEC.

## **Community Day/Septic Awareness Month**

LTEC used the township's annual Community Day as an opportunity to education the public on supporting clean water in Liberty Township. Warren County Septic Program Director, Elyssa Loiacono attended to serve as our environmental health specialist who was happy to answer any questions attendees had regarding maintaining proper septic maintenance. Facebook posts were used in promoting septic education during the month of September for Septic Awareness Month. The previously purchased sandwich board signs were used to promote proper septic maintenance, encourage regular pumping, and enhance awareness about how people impact our waters.

## **HAB Subcommittee**

Two LTEC members have been participating on a Lake Subcommittee to partner with designated members from the Township Committee, Recreation Committee, and the Mt. Lake Community Association in order to strategize best efforts to increase water quality and reduce HAB's and treatment at Mountain Lake. The Mountain Lake Monitoring Program was designed and carried out by LTEC and MLCA-WAG cooperatively, using

bi-weekly volunteers, and Princeton Hydro was retained by MLCA-WAG, using their own funds, to oversee the plan and to write a report at the end of 2021 using all the data gathered by the volunteers. Additional programs for water quality improvement, both volunteer-based and professionally managed, are being actively pursued by the Subcommittee membership, along with funding sources which include so-called 319(h) grants.

### **Educational Expenses**

Due to Covid-19 and social distancing rules, many events, programs, and workshops that the LTEC would have attended or hosted, were cancelled. In order to continue to boost environmental education within the community, the LTEC used the previously purchased sandwich board signs along with newly acquired inserts (septic awareness, dark skies, wildlife, water quality, etc.). These inserts will change to broaden the message shared with the community during these times.

Approved 2/17/2022