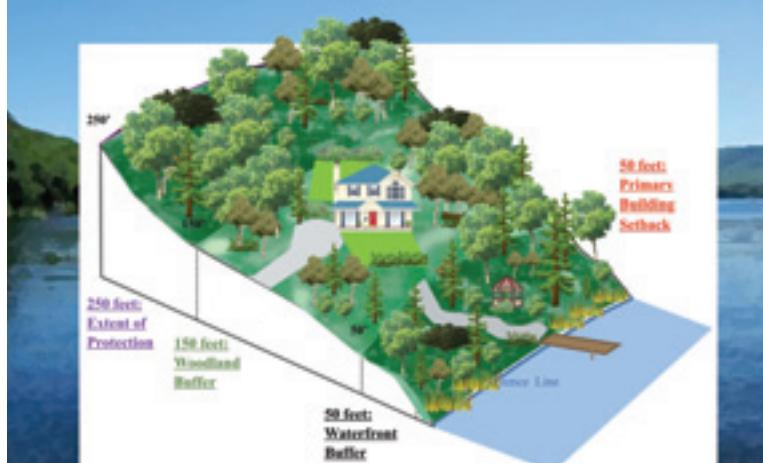


## The Protected Shoreland



Graphic provided by Jason Aube, NHDES.

### Conservation Corner – Vegetation Management

#### The Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act in Andover

Jenny Bodwell,  
Andover Conservation Commission

Andover is fortunate to have an abundance of public water resources including lakes, ponds, rivers and streams, some of which serve as sup-

plies of public drinking water. Unfortunately, unplanned and uncoordinated development adjacent to these resources can threaten them by increasing unfiltered storm water runoff to them. Today, stormwater runoff poses the greatest threat to our waterbodies because it contains the elements that accelerate the natural aging process of

our waterbodies. Stormwater decreases water quality and clarity and increases the likelihood of toxic algae blooms and sedimentation. If left unchecked, this pollution could render our public water drinking supplies unfit for consumption. Fortunately, we have the Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act in the state of New Hampshire to help prevent this from happening. This article will explore what this law means for our residents, and will give you information so you can make informed decisions when planning projects so you can better ensure that you and your family can enjoy Andover's waters for generations to come.

In short, the Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act (SWQPA) seeks to protect the land around our waterbodies in order to protect water quality and provide wildlife habitat for the organisms that depend on the water and the surrounding lands. Water quality is tremendously dependent on a natural buffer or protective area consisting of native trees, saplings, shrubs and ground covers that aid in intercepting and filtering stormwater runoff; the more native vegetation surrounding a waterbody, the better the water quality will be. Additionally, from an economic standpoint, protecting water quality also

serves to protect the value of shorefront properties.

The SWQPA protects all lakes, ponds and impoundments greater than 10 acres, designated rivers and river segments designated under RSA 483, the Rivers Management and Protection Program, and all 4th order and greater streams and rivers.

In Andover, the waterbodies protected by the SWQPA include the Blackwater River, Frazier Brook, Cascade (or Eagle) Brook, Highland Lake, Bradley Lake, Elbow Pond, Adder (or Hopkins) Pond, Horseshoe Pond and Cole Pond. Although many of Andover's smaller waterbodies are not protected by this law, they also serve an important role in filtering and cleaning our water. All waterbodies protected by the Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act (SWQPA) are on a comprehensive list maintained by the Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) called the NHDES Consolidated List of Waterbodies Subject to the SWQPA and can be found at [https://www.des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wetlands/cspa/documents/consolidated\\_list.pdf](https://www.des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wetlands/cspa/documents/consolidated_list.pdf)

If you are planning any new construction, excavation, or filling, within 250 feet of a protected waterbody, a

See Shoreland on page 31

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