



## TOWN OF BROOKFIELD

WPCA

BROOKFIELD, CT 06804

August 22, 2019

### CANDLEWOOD LAKE GRANT STUDY SPONSORSHIP

CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) has given Brookfield a grant to study pollution problem at Candlewood Lake at Brookfield. Why is the Brookfield WPCA sponsoring the Candlewood Lake Study at 45%?

### THE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY

- The Water Pollution Control Authority has the implicit task to monitor water pollution by CT State Statute Section 7-246(b)  
*Each municipal water pollution control authority designated in accordance with this section may prepare and periodically update a water pollution control plan for the municipality. ... Such plan shall also describe the means by which municipal programs are being carried out to avoid community pollution problems.*
- It is the right commission in the town to take on the task. It does not fit as well with any other commission in town.
- The largest lake in NJ, Lake Hopatcong, is heavily fouled and closed for all recreation for the summer of 2019. Businesses have shut down. Properties on that lake are now less desirable. Costs in that town are rising dealing with the issues, and taxes increasing while property values are declining. That is the recipe for higher mil rates occurring there. Towns in that lake area are experiencing high foreclosure rates.
- The Brookfield Board of Health has developed a Town Beach Closure Plan in response to occurrences E-coli and toxic algae that has been adopted by the Board of Selectmen. These pollution events are attributed to "human activity." Nutrients from septic systems are a significant contributor to these conditions.
- The Candlewood Lake, the largest lake in CT, is an important economic engine for Brookfield. This is an appropriate use of funds by Brookfield to protect Brookfield.

### THE WPCA AS A UTILITY

- This is a forward-looking initiative, a normal requirement required of any infrastructure utility.
- The appointed WPCA Board of 5 members and 3 alternates unanimously approved this grant study program.
- Connection fees from new customers that are not in an active bond district are set aside for infrastructure improvements and studies as provided by CT State Statute. This fee is called the Capital Cost Recovery Connection Charge (CCRCC) and separate from use charges. The CCRCC fees collected over the last five years more than cover the WPCA portion of the grant costs.

## 2019 OPPORTUNITY

- The opportunity was available this year (2019) to have the Candlewood Lake study leveraged by the State with a 55% grant. That is a tremendous advantage. With this proposal presented in January before the CT DEEP, Brookfield has taken the remaining available Clean Water funds for the current Fiscal Year because this study was regarded as an important initiative.
- Brookfield is one of five towns on the lake. With Brookfield in the lead, chances are Brookfield is ahead of the line for construction grants from the State or Federal sources.
- There is a low appetite from the Brookfield Town Boards to fund this sort of study, as the time horizon for the Town Budget is one year. The need to address the degradation of Candlewood Lake requires a long-term perspective that the WPCA, as a public utility, must have.
- This is a jurisdictional issue. If the initial study program would require sponsorship by Brookfield and other towns, it is unlikely to ever happen.
- Most jurisdictions across America tend to assume someone else will take financial and technical leadership. This is likely why lakes have failed all over the CT and the entire US.

## WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

- The CT DEEP leaders admit Candlewood Lake is important for Connecticut. The grant was awarded by CT DEEP with the view “we have to start somewhere.”
- More than one Land Use leader in Brookfield commented, “Where were you 10 years ago?” The lake is already experiencing decline.
- Most Brookfield residents are saying, “Thank you for taking this on.”

## PROJECT PLANS AND REPORTS

Full projects details are online at <https://brookfieldwpca.org/candlewood>