

Municipality Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ email address \_\_\_\_\_

## 2009 Thames River Basin Partnership Municipal Survey

Instructions: Please assign one person to complete this survey with input from the listed municipal agencies, boards, commissions or departments. Check each box that applies. The survey results will help the Thames River Basin Partnership organizations plan future education/outreach programs. Return the survey by March 30, 2009 in the enclosed postage paid envelope to:

Jean Pillo, Coordinator  
Thames River Basin Partnership  
PO Box 11  
Pomfret Center, CT 06259

### Questions for Inland Wetland/Conservation Commissions

*Do you monitor activities or promote practices such as...*

- Tracking water quality in your town through organizations such as:
  - Department of Environmental Protection
  - State and/or local Department of Health
  - Your local Water Pollution Control Authority
  - Regional or local water suppliers
  - The Last Green Valley Water Quality Monitoring Program
- An upland review process which considers impacts to waterbodies and wetlands from upland activities outside the regulated area?
- Encouraging development layouts that provide an open space buffer along rivers and waterbodies?

**Is the water in your community meeting water quality goals as both swimmable and fishable?**

[www.ct.gov/dep/iwqr](http://www.ct.gov/dep/iwqr)

*Do you suggest watershed-wide, river-friendly development alternatives such as:*

- Alternatives to impervious surfaces, such as grid pavers, porous pavement, crushed stone or shared driveways?
- Grass swales instead of paved curbing, where appropriate?
- Encouraging reduced pavement width and the addition of bioretention areas in cul-de-sac turnaround areas?
- Reduced lawn areas with designated low mow and no mow areas?
- Down-gradient vegetated areas to collect stormwater? (rain gardens, bioretention systems, sunken islands in parking lots)?
- Vegetated (or green) roofs?
- Designated snow dump areas away from the river's edge?
- Designated parking areas and paths for heavy equipment during construction to minimize soil compaction and maximize water infiltration?
- Impervious containment areas for storing oil and hazardous materials to prevent spills or leaks?

**Low Impact Development (LID) manages stormwater runoff by mimicking the natural movement of water in the environment. LID decreases the volume of runoff and improves water quality by infiltrating, filtering, storing and evaporating stormwater. For more information on LID, visit the DEP Watershed Management website at <http://www.ct.gov/dep/watershed>.**



This survey was funded by the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Foundation as part of the Long Island Sound Study.



*Do you encourage the use of vegetative buffers along rivers and waterbodies such as...*

- Using a three-zone buffer system? (see inset)
- Establishing and maintaining adequate size vegetated areas along lakes, ponds and streams to provide water quality protection, erosion prevention and habitat benefits?
- Recommending vegetative buffers with specific widths?  
If so, how wide? \_\_\_\_\_
- Encouraging development layouts that provide an open space buffer along rivers and waterbodies?
- Encourage limb trimming rather than tree cutting for enhancing views?

*Are your regulatory agencies equipped with sound land use planning information/strategies on which to base decisions?*

- Have your commissioners attended nonpoint pollution prevention workshops?
- Have your commissioners attended Low Impact Development training workshops?
- As part of your municipal natural resource inventory, have you identified high-quality watersheds?
- Have you identified priority open space acquisitions near high-quality waterways?
- Do you have regulations to limit impervious surfaces to protect water quality in high-quality watersheds?
- Have you utilized greenway designation for your river systems as part of a river protection strategy?

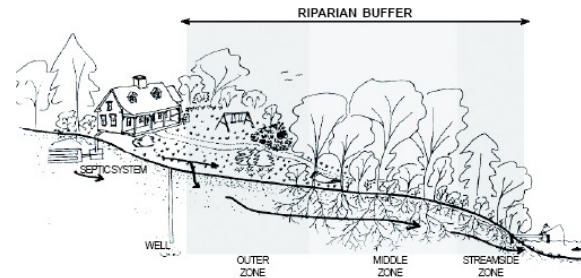
## Questions for the Planning/Zoning Commission

*For Planning and Zoning Commissions, do you...*

- Regulate earth moving, mining, filling and excavation activities?
- Require the applicant to implement measures found in the 2002 *Connecticut Guidelines for Erosion and Sediment Control*?
- Require the applicant to implement measures found in the 2004 *Connecticut Stormwater Quality Manual*?
- Remove steep slopes, wetlands and watercourses and other natural building constraints from the original parcel before calculating the number of permitted building lots?
- Require no net runoff from new development using Low Impact Development strategies?
- Have you created river or lake protection overlay districts?
- Do you require regular street sweeping and catch basin cleanouts for private parking areas?

## Protecting Your River A THREE-ZONE BUFFER SYSTEM

The most effective backyard buffer has three zones:



### Streamside

From the water to the top of the bank. Protects the bank and offers habitat. The best buffer has mature forest but large shrubs may be a better choice where trees have collapsed a bank. Let it grow and let it go for the best protection.

### Middle Zone

From the top of the bank inland. Protects stream water quality and offers habitat. Varies in width depending on size of stream and the soil type, slope and use of nearby land. The best buffer has trees, shrubs, and perennial ground plants. It can accommodate some clearing for recreational use.

### Outer Zone

Includes the yard, garden, or woods between your home and the rest of the buffer. Traps sediment. Play areas, gardens, compost piles, and other common residential activities are suitable here.

*Illustration and caption provided by Adair Mulligan  
The Connecticut River Joint Commissions  
www.crjc.org*

## REDUCE RUNOFF

**SLOW IT DOWN**

**SPREAD IT OUT**

**SOAK IT IN**

*Are applicants for development encouraged to:*

- Comply with CT DEP's Stormwater Management Permit when disturbing more than one acre of land?
- Design a plan to control stormwater runoff after construction?
- Use existing natural grades and vegetation for natural drainage?
- Avoid clear-cutting and filling in wetlands and undisturbed natural areas?

*Do you encourage the applicants for development to use watershed-wide, river-friendly alternatives such as:*

- Sinking landscaped areas below grade to act as a stormwater filtration system in paved areas?
- Shared parking and/or parking lots designed for average use rather than peak times?
- Maximized efficiency in parking areas to reduce the amount of pavement per vehicle?
- Reduced pavement widths to make roadways as narrow as possible while still accommodating emergency services safety concerns?
- Reduced driveway areas or shared driveways?
- Reduced impervious surface throughout the development but especially next to lakes and rivers?
- Vegetated buffer areas along river corridors, water bodies and wetlands?
- A stormwater management plan that incorporates infiltration structures into its design (rain gardens, infiltration beds, dry wells and perforated pipe), where appropriate?

## Questions for the Public Works Department

- Is there a containment system for wash water or are municipal vehicles washed in a commercial facility?

*Do you implement pollution runoff controls such as:*

- Regular street sweeping and reduced salting?
- Reduced use of fertilizers and pesticides?
- Frequent catch-basin cleaning?
- Prioritized street maintenance?
- Periodically review stormwater treatment structures for necessary maintenance?

## Questions for the Chief Elected Officials

- Do you have an annual local household hazardous waste collection day?
- Do you have a septic system inspection program?
- Do you utilize organic land care practices on municipally owned land and playing fields?
- Does your municipality participate in the Connecticut Clean Energy Initiative?
- Does your municipality encourage the installation of solar and/or wind power with tax incentives?
- Is your Inland Wetlands Agency separate from your Conservation Commission?
- Does your municipality have a car wash ordinance to discourage washing private vehicles on driveways?
- Do you have a local pet waste collection policy?

All Thames River watershed towns contribute nitrogen into Long Island Sound. Deep water habitats of Long Island Sound, (including Norwich Harbor) suffer from seasonal oxygen deficiencies related to excess plant nutrients. The three most significant sources are:

- Wastewater treatment plants
- Atmospheric deposition
- Stormwater runoff

**If your municipality has a specific watershed protection regulation or ordinance you wish to share with other municipalities in the region, briefly describe it. Please be sure to attach a copy (and/or supply a specific town website URL) when returning this survey.**

## Help Us, Help You!

Please help the Thames River Basin Partnership to design our future educational programs for municipal officials by placing a check next to each workshop topic that would be of interest in your municipality.

- CT Clean Energy Initiative
- Benefits of Organic Land Care Practices
- Low Impact Development Strategies that Work
- How to Create and Use a Natural Resource Inventory
- Conservation Subdivision Design
- Benefits of Riparian Buffers and Strategies for Local/Regional Actions
- Using CT Greenway Status as Part of a Water Protection Strategy
- Backyard Water Conservation Strategies for Homeowners
- Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for Municipalities
- Local Ground Water Protection Strategies (not for CT-regulated Aquifer Protection Areas)
- Local and Regional Flood Management
- Local or Regional Stormwater Authority Opportunities
- Meeting or Exceeding Minimum Measures Associated with the CT Phase 2 Stormwater "MS4" General Permit
- Grant Writing for (inter)Municipal Conservation/Watershed Projects
- River and Stream Restoration/Enhancement
- Linking Land Use to Water Quality
- Managing Stormwater in Urban Areas
- My municipality would be interested in participating or attending a regional forum focused on successful water protection resource strategies.

Other (please list)

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The Thames River Basin Partnership is a coalition of government agencies, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, private industries and municipalities with a shared vision to conserve the natural resources of the greater Thames River Basin, which includes the Five Mile, French, Moosup, Natchaug, Pachaug, Quinebaug, Shetucket, Willimantic, or Yantic Rivers. For more information on the Partnership, visit [www.trbp.org](http://www.trbp.org).