



Watershed Restoration and Protection Plan for Mountain Lake

Developed by Princeton Hydro

With Grant Award from NJ Highlands Council

April 2024

On July 20, 2023, the NJ Highlands Council awarded \$80,215 to Princeton Hydro to develop a Watershed Restoration and Protection Plan for Mountain Lake. The funding is part of a \$334,915 grant awarded to Princeton Hydro for the development of watershed plans for lakes in in Roxbury and Jefferson Townships, as well as Mountain Lake.

The Mountain Lake Community Association helped to spearhead the grant proposal and is partnering with Princeton Hydro on the project. Princeton Hydro is widely regarded as a premier lake management firm, and the Lake Association's excellent working relationship with Princeton Hydro helped to galvanize the grant opportunity and award. The project has commenced and will run through 2024. The new plan, developed in accordance with EPA and NJDEP guidelines, will serve to identify and prioritize water quality issues pertaining to Mountain Lake. It will also strengthen the community's eligibility for future funding for a range of projects, particularly those aimed at improving and protecting water quality and ecological conditions.

The grant award is a significant achievement for the Mountain Lake community. Over the past 50+ years, the Mountain Lake Community Association, on behalf of its members, has been committed to the protection of Mountain Lake. Recent efforts have focused on enhanced water quality monitoring to better track water quality conditions in the lake. To protect the lake from harmful algae blooms, excessive nutrient and sedimentation loading, invasive species, and other issues, a comprehensive watershed plan is needed. The new grant award will make this happen.

During development of the new plan, the MLCA will host meetings and provide information to support community awareness and encourage participation.

The project will involve data collection and modeling of Mountain Lake and its watershed throughout the course of 2024 and culminate with a final report in early 2025. The report will review the results and findings from the data collected during the year; assess the water quality status of Mountain Lake relative to established lake standards and recent and historical data for Mountain Lake; and address any water quality issues identified during the study.

The report will include recommendations for both in-lake and watershed management initiatives best suited for immediate or long-term implementation. Each recommendation will include a preliminary cost estimate and an analysis of any regulatory issues or constraints. The recommendations will be prioritized and broken out into short- and long-term timeframes.