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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NFWF awards \$480,650 in grant money for streambank stabilization projects in the Upper Musconetcong River Watershed.

The Lake Hopatcong Commission has partnered with the Lake Hopatcong Foundation, with in-kind contributions from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, municipal governments, Morris and Sussex Counties, the Musconetcong Watershed Association, Lake Hopatcong Historical Museum, Rutgers University, NJ Highlands Council and Princeton Hydro to address three priority streambank stabilization projects within the Upper Musconetcong River Watershed.

LAKE HOPATCONG, N.J. (9/20/2021) –The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) announced today that the Lake Hopatcong Commission would receive \$480,650 through the Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund (DWCF). The DWCF aims to conserve and restore natural areas, corridors, and waterways on public and private lands to support native migratory and resident wildlife and fish, and native plants; and to contribute to the social health and economic vitality of the communities in the Delaware River watershed. Major funding for the DWCF is provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

“It’s great to see funding awarded to the Upper Musconetcong River Watershed at the federal level. The Commission was created to promote public health and welfare through the preservation of Lake Hopatcong for recreational and conservation purposes. These projects are consistent with our organizational goals and will enhance water quality and recreational access within the watershed,” said Ron Smith, Chairman of the Lake Hopatcong Commission.

The grant will fund the design and implementation of three streambank stabilization projects, identified as priority projects in the 2021 Upper Musconetcong River Watershed Implementation Plan as prepared by Princeton Hydro for the Lake Hopatcong Commission. They will address important stormwater issues that had been previously identified. The projects are:

- **Lakefront Public Access & Regenerative Stormwater Conveyance at Witten Park (Borough of Hopatcong)**. Witten Park, a forgotten public area, will be restored and serious stormwater issues addressed. The severely eroded Sperry Spring, which feeds Lake Hopatcong, will be rehabilitated and a regenerative stormwater conveyance installed. This device will convey and treat stormwater runoff down a naturally occurring slope, reconnecting it to the original floodplain.

- **Glen Brook Streambank Stabilization in Memorial Park (Borough of Mount Arlington)**. Glen Brook is a major stream entering Lake Hopatcong at Mount Arlington Beach. It is a significant source of stormwater runoff and has been identified as having a negative impact on water quality. Approximately 75 linear feet of Glen Brook, immediately downstream of Memorial Pond will be regraded and vegetated to naturally treat runoff into the lake.
- **Musconetcong River Streambank Stabilization and Floodplain Enhancement in Hopatcong State Park (Roxbury Township)**. This portion of the Musconetcong River at Lake Hopatcong's outlet has been identified as having serious stormwater and flooding issues. An approximate four-acre section of streambank will be restored and stabilized. As part of this effort, invasive species will be eradicated and the existing floodplain rehabilitated through the establishment of native vegetation.

“Environmental impacts associated with development pressure in the upper Musconetcong Watershed around Lake Hopatcong have contributed to reduced water quality. By implementing these projects, we will be able to continue our efforts to improve water quality by reducing phosphorus and sediment entering Lake Hopatcong and the Musconetcong River all while enhancing local wildlife habitat and increasing recreational access around New Jersey’s largest lake,” said Kyle Richter, Executive Director, Lake Hopatcong Foundation.

The grant application requested \$480,650 from the DWCF with a combined local in-kind match of more than \$489,000 from the Lake Hopatcong Commission, Lake Hopatcong Foundation, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Borough of Hopatcong, Township of Roxbury, Mount Arlington Borough, Morris and Sussex Counties, the Musconetcong Watershed Association, Lake Hopatcong Historical Museum, Rutgers University, NJ Highlands Council and Princeton Hydro. This is the first grant that has been awarded to the Lake Hopatcong Commission from NFWF.

“Lakes in the Upper Musconetcong Watershed, like Lake Hopatcong and Lake Musconetcong, have experienced degraded water quality and unprecedented harmful algal blooms from excessive nutrients in stormwater runoff and aging septic systems. We are proud to partner with Lake Hopatcong Commission, Lake Hopatcong Foundation, and local stakeholders on this multi-site stream stabilization project to reduce nutrient runoff, enhance wildlife habitat, and improve public access in the watershed,” said Dr. Fred Lubnow, Director of Aquatic Resources at Princeton Hydro.

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The Lake Hopatcong Commission is an independent state agency created in, but not of, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. The LHC is recognized as a steward of the lake and watershed. The 11-member Board of State and local appointees include representatives of the four municipalities and two counties surrounding Lake Hopatcong. The LHC is responsible for fulfilling the obligations of the Lake Hopatcong Protection Act, to safeguard Lake Hopatcong as a natural, scenic, and recreational resource. To learn more, visit lakehopatcongcommission.org.

The Lake Hopatcong Foundation is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to protecting the lake environment and enhancing the lake experience by bringing together public and private resources to encourage a culture of sustainability and stewardship on and around New Jersey's largest lake, for this and future generations. To learn more, visit lakehopatcongfoundation.org