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In addition to this project, the DEP approved grants for 12 other water quality restoration projects across the state totaling nearly \$9.5 million.

“The projects being funded by these grants serve to remind all of us of the importance of caring for our waterways,” said Dan Kennedy, DEP’s Assistant Commissioner for Water Resources Management. “The public should always be mindful of the impacts their daily activities can have on the health of our waterways, as well as the fish and other aquatic life that depend on them.”

Stormwater runoff, also known as nonpoint source pollution, is the most significant issue affecting the quality of water in the state’s lakes, rivers, streams and estuaries. It contains nutrients such as lawn and agricultural fertilizers that can cause excessive algae blooms that deprive waterways of dissolved oxygen needed by aquatic life. Algae blooms also impair the aesthetic value of waterways, diminishing recreational enjoyment.

Nonpoint source pollution also carries pesticides, oil and other automotive fluids, as well as litter, debris, dirt and silt that further degrades water quality and ecological habitats.

The DEP for years has implemented comprehensive programs to mitigate the impacts of stormwater. They include a Municipal Stormwater permitting program that requires best management practices and sets stormwater-system standards for development projects; a municipal permitting program to improve the quality of water discharged from combined sanitary-stormwater sewer systems in urban areas; and incentives for construction of projects to naturally capture and filter stormwater.

For additional information on the Water Quality Restoration Grants for Nonpoint Source Pollution program, visit: www.nj.gov/dep/wms/bears/npsrestgrants.html

For more information about stormwater pollution, visit: www.njstormwater.org

PHOTO/Deal Lake

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