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CCOM: NEARLY 170 SEPTICS PUMPED THROUGH “SAVE THE LAKE – SAVE THE POND” WATER QUALITY STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Montauk, New York – Concerned Citizens of Montauk (CCOM) reports that during 2017, nearly 170 septic systems have been inspected and pumped out as part of their ambitious educational campaign to protect and improve the water quality of Lake Montauk and Fort Pond.

CCOM received a generous grant from the Long Island Community Foundation for the “Save the Lake – Save the Pond” program which, through ongoing public outreach and the help of community volunteer “Ambassadors,” encourages Montauk home and business owners to enroll as “Clean Water Stewards” by taking action to address the human causes of the water quality problem. In the first year of the program CCOM partnered with Hampton Septic Services to offer financial discounts to program participants.

“Septic systems, even when functioning properly, are a major source of nitrogen pollution to our ground and surface waters,” says Laura Tooman, CCOM President. “Most of the septic systems currently in use were never designed to remove nitrogen, they were designed to treat waste. Moving forward, we would love to work with our Clean Water Stewards to take the next step and apply for Town and County rebate and grant programs to install low-nitrogen systems which are designed to achieve a higher rate of treatment.”

In the second year of “Save the Lake – Save the Pond,” the organization will be expanding its educational outreach to include stormwater runoff management. CCOM Environmental Advocate, Kate Rossi-Snook, says “everything on your lawn or street – fertilizers, pet waste, and the like – can get washed into our waters with heavy rains, leading to plumes of nitrogen and bacteria contamination. Rain gardens and waterfront buffer zones help to slow the runoff and take up the excess nutrients. These actions are an incredibly effective, and beautiful, way to improve the health of our Lake and Pond.”

For more information about the program and becoming a Clean Water Steward, please visit www.SaveTheLakeSaveThePond.org or call the CCOM office at 631-238-5720.