

## RESOLUTION FOR LAWN CARE TO PROTECT WATER QUALITY

### **Rationale for the Town of Harpswell and its residents to use “green methods” on lawns to protect our water bodies**

WHEREAS we know that what happens on land sooner or later ends up in the water nearby, particularly as this applies to the use of pesticides and fertilizers (weed and feed) routinely spread on our lawns; and

WHEREAS Casco Bay, one of the richest and most diverse estuaries in the nation, has a watershed area that encompasses 41 towns and houses 25% of Maine’s population on only 3% of its land area; and

WHEREAS this density, taken in combination with a 700% increase in the usage of garden toxins over the last 12 years (Maine Board of Pesticide Control) has significantly raised pollution levels, and affected the water quality of Casco Bay as recorded by 20 years of water sampling by the Friends of Casco Bay; and

WHEREAS locally nitrogen, the worst polluter in salt water, affects the health of our clam and eelgrass beds, jeopardizing the breeding areas, and creating stress on the lobster, clam and bait fishing industries; and

WHEREAS, similarly, all freshwater bodies including ground and potable water supplies are equally at risk, and because one (1) pound of phosphorous entering an inland wetland, pond or stream produces 50 pounds of algae that absorb the oxygen and kill aquatic species; and

WHEREAS, the threat by synthetic chemicals sparked a bill, passed by the 2007 legislature, requiring the Maine Department of Environmental Protection to set standards on nitrogen discharges into the ocean; and

WHEREAS, some Maine coastal towns (Camden, Rockport, Castine, Brunswick, Kennebunkport), wishing to protect the health of their people, pets and wildlife without waiting for State controls, have opted to authorize the discontinuance of fertilizer and pesticide use applied to lawns for “cosmetic” purposes

WHEREAS there are now viable ecological, non-toxic lawn care alternatives, which assure a self-sustaining healthy environment,

WHEREAS *Best Management Practices (BMP)* such as *Bayscaping* on ocean frontages, and *Yardscaping* on fresh water frontages have proven both environmentally sound and more effective because these organic approaches enrich the soil with compost, which micro-organisms break down for the plants to absorb; and

WHEREAS such gardening and yard practices are a way of showing our neighbors we care for Harpswell and for the future of its limited supply of potable water; and

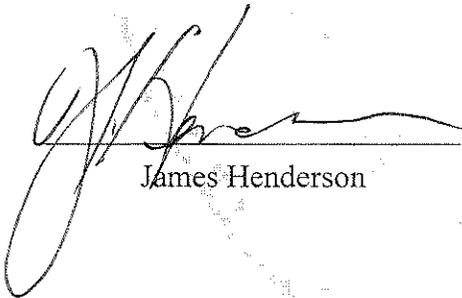
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WHEREAS healthy garden and yard practices will alleviate the build-up of contaminants from such non-point sources as lawn runoff, difficult to detect and treat by other means, and insure a green yard that keeps Casco Bay blue; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Selectmen of the Town of Harpswell adopt a policy of exercising "green garden practices" on public lands, and encourage residents to follow suit, in such a manner that contributes to the health and safety of the environment, sustains a balance with nature, and incorporates the following principles:

- Replace water soluble 'weed and feed' chemicals that endanger our water with slow release, non-soluble organic nutrients that feed the soil and plants without runoff
- Favor native species for resilience against disease, climate and soil constraints
- Enrich biodiversity by avoiding monoculture and by promoting diversity of plant species
- Seek alternative design solutions for lawns when hostile factors of grade, shade and drainage exist: and

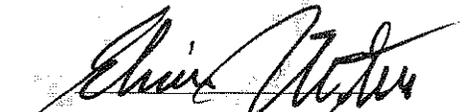
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Harpswell Conservation Commission provides information and suggestions to landowners in order to affect this Resolution and these principles



James Henderson



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Available educational materials at <http://www.harpswell.maine.gov/> :  
*Six Point Best Garden Program for a Healthy, Self-Sustaining Lawn*  
*Six Point Best Garden Program - Seasonal Schedule*  
*Turf Pests and Diseases, and How to Treat Them*