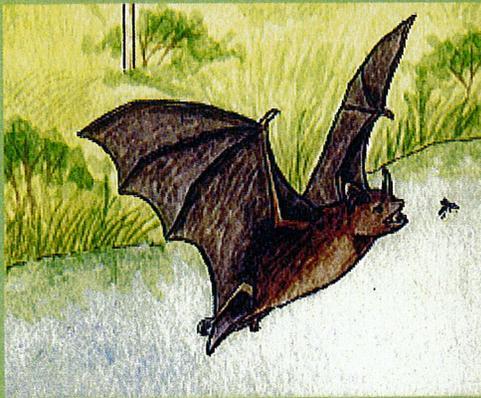


The Reason for Bat Houses

by Thomas Fiorilla

Insect Reduction

Bats will eat a third of their body weight a night. This amounts to thousands of insects per bat, and tens of thousands per swarm.



<http://www.exploringnature.org/graphics/mammals/bat1.jpg>

In addition to being a public nuisance, mosquitoes carry dangerous diseases such as West Nile Virus.

Advantages

The mere presence of bats reduces the number of insects in a neighborhood. Bugs actually hear the bats' echolocation and actively avoid the area.

As a result, fewer pesticides are needed, which is better for the environment, public health, and may put less strain on the bee population.

White Nose Syndrome

WNS is caused by a fungus. It causes bats to act strangely during hibernation and has resulted in decimation of Eastern populations.

Bat houses will provide safe places and help the bat population rebound.



Location

Lakes provide a water source for bats, but also are a breeding ground for insects. A higher bat population will heavily reduce the amount of bugs breeding.



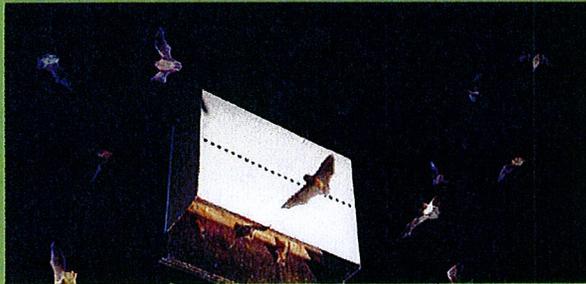
Human Interaction

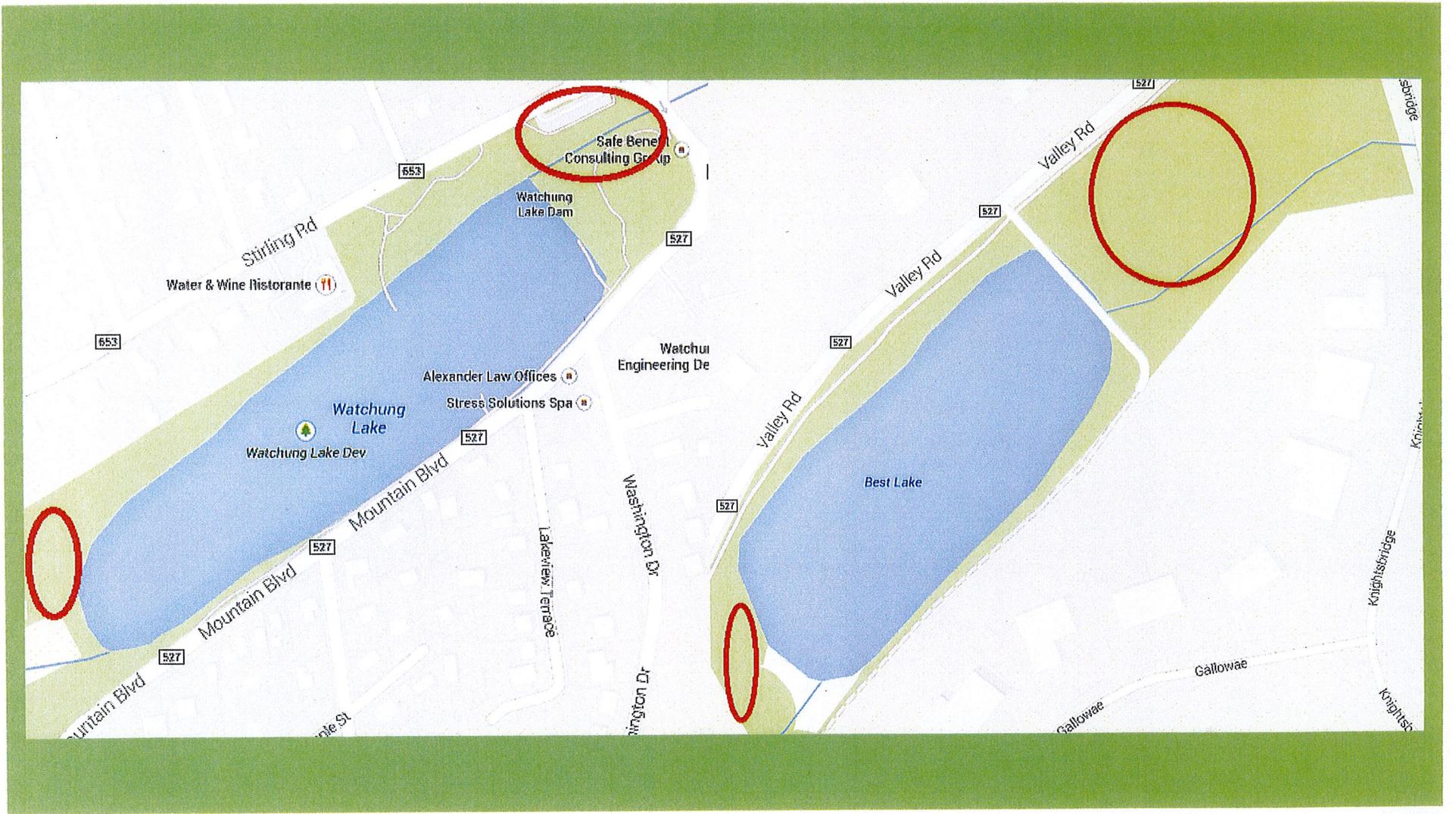
Due to difficulty finding an ideal home, some bats roost in houses. Bat houses will supply alternatives, leaving bats unlikely to enter a human home.



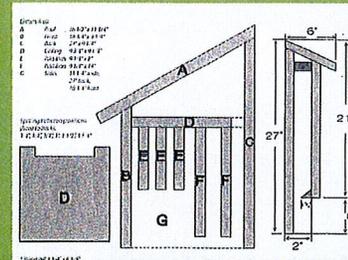
The Plan

Four houses will be mounted in trees around Watchung and Best Lakes





Construction



Using one sheet of 4'x8' plywood for each house and other materials, the final cost of the project is estimated to be just under \$150

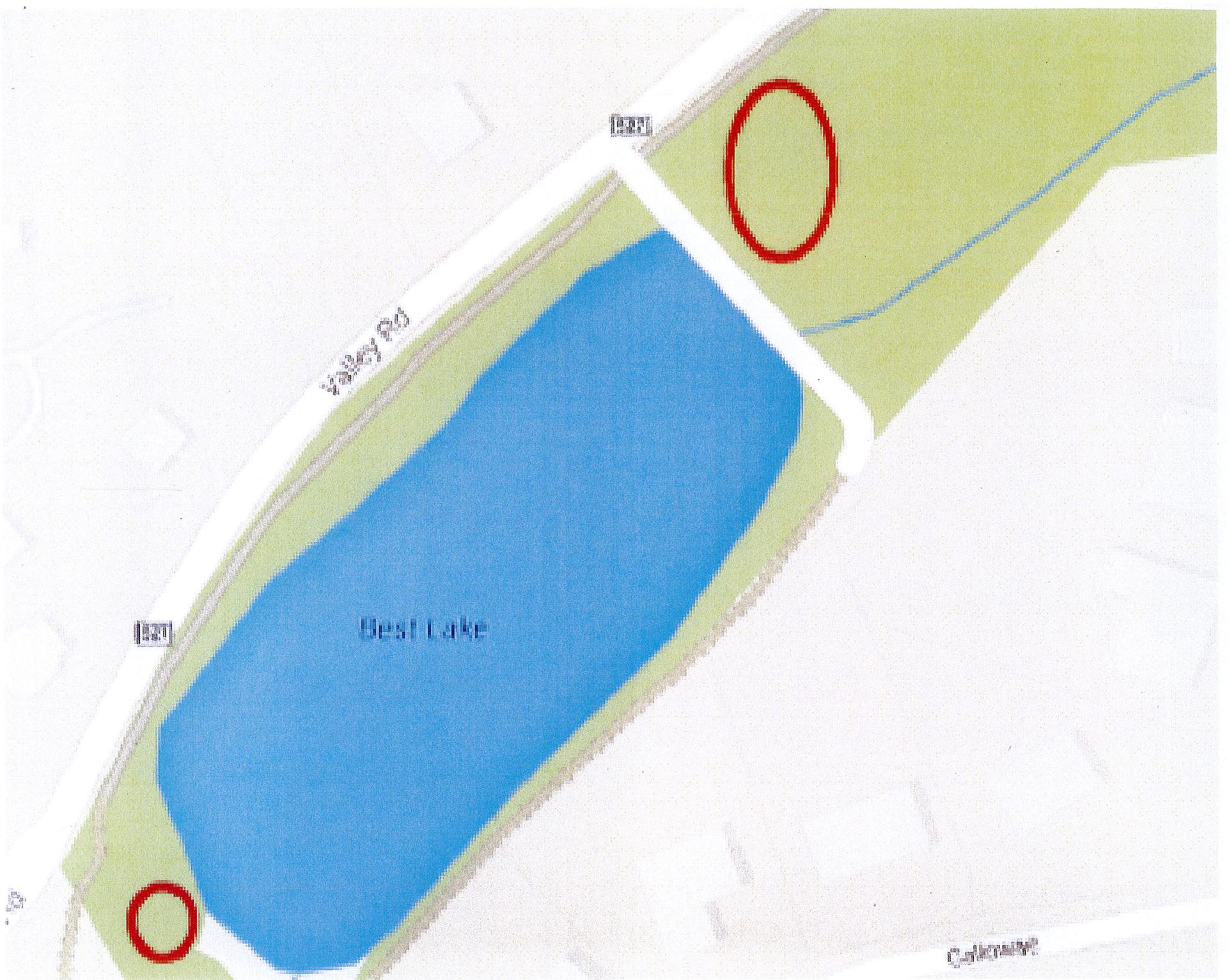
All labor will be volunteer work provided by Watchung Troop 32

Public Information

I would like to post plans and information for why people should build bat houses on the environmental commission's website, as well as posters in the Municipal Building and the library. I would also seek mention of the project in local papers, referring to the environmental commission's site.



Watchung Lake --- Mobus Field
Red box = house location





**Best Lake --- Parking Lot, by the creek
Red box = house location**



Winthrop
Elementary School

Minister G. Wilson (Presbyterian)

Winthrop Lake Dam

Stony Brook

Washington Dr



Best Lake --- Park



**Watchung Lake --- Below The Dam, by the creek
Red box = house location**