Head’s Pond Conservation Area

Public Meeting
Hooksett, NH
November 9, 2020

Prepared by Content Providers, LLC   November 2020
Welcome Hooksett Residents

- We are here tonight with the Hooksett Conservation Commission to help guide the direction of the Head’s Pond Conservation Area
- We are joined by Swift Corwin of Calhoun and Corwin Forestry, who along with Jeffrey Littleton of Moosewood Ecological, LLC, developed the draft Stewardship Plan
- Your input is important!
- Thank you for being here!
Agenda

- What is the Hooksett Conservation Commission?
- Where is the Head’s Pond Conservation Area?
- Why is it important to Hooksett?
  - History
  - Significance as a natural resource
- Recommendations in the Stewardship Plan
- Your ideas and suggestions
Town of Hooksett

- Founded in 1824
- Population ~14,000
- Located between Manchester and Concord
- Land area: 36.3 square miles
- Bisected by the Merrimack River
- 25% of land has been designated conservation land
What is the Hooksett Conservation Commission?

- Five members and three alternates appointed by Town Council
- Enrich the quality of life and land value in Hooksett by protecting its natural resources
- Ensure public access to conservation land for recreation and education
- 2015 Community Impact Award by Hooksett Kiwanis
- Meetings: 2nd Monday of every month, 4:30 PM

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Awarded an $80,000 grant by the 2021 NH Recreational Trails Program from NH State Parks!

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Conservation Members

- Cindy Robertson, Chair
- David Ross, Vice-Chair
- Phil Fitanides
- Deborah Miville
- JoCarol Woodburn
- Alternates:
  - Robert Better
  - William Herlicka
  - John Pieroni

- Alex Walczyk, Town Council Rep
- Leann Fuller, Staff support

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Head’s Pond Conservation Area Location
Head’s Pond Conservation Area
Head’s Pond Conservation Area History

- Land area was used by natives as a travel route and for hunting
- European settlers cleared some of the land for pastures, but it was primarily used as a woodlot
- In 1847, the Concord to Portsmouth railroad was laid out and ran for 15 years
- The rail bed was converted to a recreational path by the Hooksett Kiwanis. The Head’s Pond Trail is very popular today.
The Head Family

- The Head’s Pond area is named for a prominent Hooksett family and the only NH governor from Hooksett, Governor Natt Head (1879-1881)
Head’s Pond Conservation Area Today

- 438 acres of conservation land
- Conservation easements are held by the Town for: Carriage Manor  University Heights  Town Pond  The School District
- The area makes up more than 19,500 acres of unfragmented natural habitat, the largest in southern New Hampshire
- The land connects to Bear Brook State Park and Hooksett’s Clay Pond Headwaters Conservation Area to the east
Head's Pond Trail Map

Existing Trails Map

Map 9

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Why is this area important to Hooksett?
Welcome Jeffry N. Littleton

- Principal Ecologist, Moosewood Ecological, LLC
- 30 years of experience in ecological research, natural resources inventory, and education
- Extensive experience working with conservation easements in NH
- Key author of the Clay Pond Conservation Area Stewardship Plan in Hooksett
Welcome Swift Corwin

- Swift Corwin, Licensed Forester in NH for over 30 years
- Develops and implements forest management plans to complement trail development and to protect and enhance wildlife habitats
- Partner with Calhoun and Corwin Forestry, LLC
- Key contributor to the Clay Pond Conservation Area Stewardship Plan in Hooksett

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Stewardship Plan

- Trail Management
- Wildlife Management
- Forestry Management
- Recreation
Highest Ranked in Wildlife Habitats

- The property is ranked among the “highest” wildlife habitat in the state by the 2015 N.H. Wildlife Action Plan
NH Wildlife Action Plan

HIGHEST RANKED WILDLIFE HABITAT BY ECOLOGICAL CONDITION

- Highest Ranked Habitat in NH
- Highest Ranked Habitat in Biological Region
- Biological region: a TNC-recognized subregion for terrestrial habitats or watershed group for wetlands and forest-biogeoclimates.
- Supporting Landscapes (of regional significance)
- Wildlife Habitat not top-ranked (healthy; significant habitat scores to be terminated)
- Developed land cover
- Conservation or public land

Information about habitat condition was analyzed to develop a statewide and regional ranking and identify the highest quality habitat relative to all polygons of a given habitat type in the state.

- The goal is to provide regional planners and conservation professionals a tool in identifying the most critical wildlife habitat locations.
- Results will be re-evaluated to monitor the effectiveness of conservation actions and respond appropriately to new information or changing conditions.

Please refer to accompanying documents describing habitat condition/scoring.

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Wetland and Stream Habitats

- 30 acres of open water
- Habitat for state-endangered Blanding’s turtles and state-threatened spotted turtle
- Aquatic and semi-aquatic habitats include: fish, newt, tadpoles, otter, beaver, frogs, waterfowl, and more
- 18 acres of marshes
Wildlife

- Mammals include beaver, otter, red fox, fisher cat, white-tailed deer, bobcat, coyote, bear
- Variety of resident bird species (Canadian goose, wild turkey, barred owl, pileated woodpecker)
- Forested swamps provide ample opportunity for strong amphibian populations
Forestry, Vegetation

- Area contains forested swamps and upland forests
- Native trees include white pine, black oak, white ash, red maple
- Forests are in good shape and show few signs of invasive species or forest pathogens

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Recommendations

10-Year Management Plan Timetable:

- 2020 Conduct trail use study
- 2020-2021 Mark boundaries
- 2021 Establish policy for trail use
  Conduct inventory of wildlife and rare species, verify vernal pools
10-Year Management Plan Timetable (continued):

- 2022 Establish trails and prepare trail maps; install culverts and bridges
- 2022-2030 Enforce trail use policy
- 2030 Revise land management activities as needed, including a determination if timber harvesting for wildlife management is applicable

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Your input
Thank You, Hooksett!

Hooksett Conservation Commission

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Photo credits: Steve Andrews, Swift Corwin, Barret Gau

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