



WHITE POND WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The objective of the White Pond Watershed Management Plan is to provide the Town with clear guidance for making informed management decisions toward the preservation and improvement of White Pond. The development of the plan included assessing the current status of White Pond and its watershed and providing recommended management actions. A meeting was held on December 15, 2014 to present the draft Plan and obtain community feedback.

The primary community concerns about White Pond include the following:

- Decreased water quality and quantity
- Swimming, particularly from Town lands where “No Swimming” signs were previously posted
- Lack of year-round public sanitary facilities
- Future impact of Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (increased visitor traffic)
- Future impact of alternative uses of White Pond Reservation land

Based on these concerns, the following pond management goals have been established:

- Maintain and improve water quality in the pond and prevent future algae blooms and introduction of invasive species
- Provide managed recreational access to the pond and promote responsible public use
- Maintain a healthy aquatic ecosystem that retains key aspects of kettle pond ecology

Assessment of White Pond’s Current Status

The Good: Although water quality in White Pond has declined to some extent over the long term, it is still in excellent condition for a pond in a suburban setting. The pond supports a diverse warm- and cold-water fishery, provides primary and secondary contact recreation opportunities, and does not suffer from major aesthetic impairments. Additionally, aquatic invasive species – which are a major problem in numerous other water bodies – have not been identified at White Pond.

The Bad: The White Pond shoreline is affected by multiple areas of moderate to severe erosion, including several around the heavily visited area of the pond known as Sachem’s Cove. These are aesthetically unpleasant and increase loading of sediment and nutrients to the pond. Portions of the pond are sometimes affected by algal growth and scums during the warmer portions of the year.

Overall Assessment: Although White Pond does not currently exhibit signs of significant impairment, action is necessary to achieve the stated pond management goals. Timely implementation of the recommended management actions will be important in addressing current issues as well as anticipating future management challenges, particularly that of increased visitor traffic to White Pond through public lands and easements.

Recommended Management Actions

The primary recommendations include the following:

- Stabilize areas of recurring erosion adjacent to the White Pond shoreline to reduce sediments and nutrient loading and improve aesthetics
- Manage public use of Town lands by improving trails, parking and signage to minimize the negative impact of humans on the pond
- Consider limiting or prohibiting domestic animals on Town lands around the pond
- Provide and maintain toilet and trash receptacles for year-round public use
- Implement education and outreach to area residents and visitors to improve awareness and encourage actions that will have a positive impact on White Pond
- Implement and upgrade existing stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) to further reduce watershed loading of pollutants
- Expand monitoring program to include key new elements, such as phosphorus loading, algae monitoring, invasive species prevention, and water elevation.