



Winter 2019 newsletter—volume 8



Permanently protecting the Pierce Pond watershed from development for thirty years

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Hope to see you at
MWWT's 30th Anniversary

**ANNUAL MEETING,
Banquet, & Auction**

Saturday, March 2, 2019
Harraseeket Inn, Freeport, Maine

Planning for the Future

MWWT Board Develops Vision Statement

The Maine Wilderness Watershed Trust has set its sights upon acquiring as much of the Pierce Pond watershed land as possible in the coming years, and is embarking upon a campaign, which will be announced at a later date, to raise the necessary funds. As they were planning this campaign, MWWT's Board of Directors realized that they must begin to think seriously about a future in which most of the Pierce Pond watershed is managed by the Trust.

MWWT's immediate focus is on buying the ~6,800 acre Weyerhaeuser tract, which is largest and most vulnerable in the Pierce Pond watershed that is not yet under MWWT control. We don't expect to make any significant on-the-ground changes until funds are raised and significant amounts of watershed lands have been acquired. Yet we understand that we must have a vision and a plan and be able to convey to you—our supporters and the Pierce Pond community—where we are headed.

So, this past spring, the Board of Directors gathered to discuss the ways in which conservation acquisitions will enhance opportunities to protect and wisely manage the watershed. We want to share with you the following key highlights of a vision statement that was developed and agreed to by the Board:

◆ We hope to facilitate a greater variety of low-impact recreational pursuits in the watershed, including fishing, hiking, boating, camping, wilderness education, and more. We understand that we need to build a long-term constituency of people who will advocate for,

steward, and financially contribute to conservation of the watershed.

◆ We intend to make thoughtful, incremental improvements to trails and campsites, beginning with bringing the current trail system up to par, and perhaps adding a few trails with nice views of the pond. We expect to maintain opportunities, in collaboration with other property owners, for kayaking, canoeing, and island camping. We expect that word-of-mouth about such improvements will happen naturally without any elaborate promotion.

◆ We don't anticipate that recreational improvements will change the look and feel of being out on the pond. Nor do we expect a significant increase in the number of people



visiting the watershed, although we do expect the type of users to become more diverse. Over time, we will evaluate how the initial incremental improvements are affecting diversity of use as well as the wilderness experience, and we will decide further steps as appropriate.

Maine Wilderness Watershed Trust Board of Directors

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Coordinator

Kyle McCaskill, Unity, ME
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Maine Wilderness Watershed Trust

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Message from the President

—Carl Freeman

Another busy year is behind us. The MWWT Board of Directors has been immersed in ensuring that the upcoming Capital Campaign has realistic goals for both land acquisition and funding. It's a complex undertaking that will continue to evolve for the Board and the membership well into the future. Other interesting activities in 2018 included a volunteer trail-clearing effort, and the formation of an MWWT committee to initiate outdoor-education programs in the watershed.

2019 is a milestone year for MWWT: our 30th YEAR as an organization dedicated to the protection of the Pierce Pond watershed! In February 1989, a group of Pierce Ponders gathered to incorporate and launch the Maine Wilderness Watershed Trust. What a fortuitous event! Thirty years later, while we have more to do, I think we can confidently say we have been successful in achieving many of the hopes and goals of that initial Board of Directors.

To the right you can see the first section of the minutes of our first annual members meeting, which was held approximately one year after the incorporation of the Trust. Note the election of the first Board of Directors and officers. Many of that original group are still active participants in the Trust and the watershed. It's always enlightening to engage them in conversation about the concerns and opportunities they discussed around the dining room table at Cobb's Camps during those first years. Please take the time to thank them for their foresight and perseverance! But the best way to honor them is for us to continue the pursuit of total protection of the watershed.

Such total protection may someday include Trust management of the entire watershed. However, in the near term we are going to be firmly focused on the acquisition of the approximately 6,800 acres of Weyerhaeuser land. That parcel is, by far, the largest and most vulnerable part of the watershed and needs to have our full attention.

Our fundraising efforts will reflect this emphasis with a phased fundraising campaign, the first phase of which will address the anticipated costs of the acquisition of the Weyerhaeuser land. Once that is behind us, we'll move into a second phase to fund additional parcels and establish a self-sustaining stewardship endowment. This is serious and extended endeavor, but with a motivated Board and membership there is little doubt of our eventual success.

And we do have a motivated Board and membership! Why else would a gathering of enthusiastic Trust members have set out to clear brush and clean up debris from the new Otter Pond Mountain Trail? What began as a day-long work party was so enjoyable and successful that it will now become an annual event, focused on renovating trails around the watershed. The enthusiasm and dedication of these members are an inspiration to all of us.

A theme heard in many conversations at our annual meeting last year, as well as around the dining room tables at Cobb's Camps, is the importance of exposing new people to the watershed, especially young people. Gary and Betty Cobb's Wilderness Bound venture of years ago demonstrated the value of the watershed as an educational setting.

**MAINE WILDERNESS WATERSHED TRUST
MINUTES OF FIRST ANNUAL MEETING
FEBRUARY 9, 1990
REYBANK BUILDING
PORTLAND, MAINE**

The meeting was called to order at 4:30pm by MWWT Vice President, Charles Burnham. Approximately 120 MWWT members were in attendance.

Board and Officer Elections. Charles Abbe read the Nominating Committee's slate of nominations for the board of directors, officers, and advisory board. The nominations included the founding directors and officers of the Trust which were initially appointed in August, 1989. They nominations were as follows:

One-year term: Daniel Bell, Pat Jackson, Jr., Charles Abbe, and Jerry Bley.

Two-year term: Robert Eastman, Charles Burnham, Scott Hutchinson, and David F. Soule, Jr..

Three-year term: Richard Pierce, Gerry Morton, Joe Wishcamper, and Wendy Gorman.

Officers: Robert Eastman, President; Charles Burnham, Vice President; Scott Hutchinson, Treasurer; David Soule, Clerk.

Advisory Board: Gary Cobb, Tim Harrison, Greg Drummond, Roland Ware, Bill Wing, Peter Leslie, and Dennis Schaffer.

No additional nominations were offered from the floor. The membership elected the Nominating Committee's proposed slate.

In recognition of this interest, a committee was formed in January to formulate a program that will encourage the exploration, understanding, and appreciation of the watershed. Ideas ran from day trips and workshops to longer programs for both youth and adults.

As we begin to investigate costs and opportunities, we want to get things started by offering one or two activities in the coming year that are educational and enjoyable. Suggestions of interest included a bird-watching trip and a fly-fishing workshop for

women. Don't hesitate to voice your thoughts and preferences when we all get together on March 2.

In the longer term, most likely we will partner with one or more highly respected organizations such as Trout Unlimited, The Ruffed Grouse Society, Maine Audubon, and SAPPI to bring youth and/or adults to the watershed for wilderness learning. This will be a continuing and expanding effort as we acquire additional lands in the watershed. Our hope is to work in concert and cooperation with the watershed's sporting camps, with

which our future is inextricably intertwined. We all understand that ensuring the continuing protection of our watershed treasure requires new Trust members, particularly young people. They are our future! Details of the evolving education programming will be included in the various communiques during the coming year.

And remember – our annual membership meeting, banquet and auction is Saturday, March 2! No excuses! Be there!!!!

Carl Freeman

Wild Brook Trout: Pierce Pond's Unique and Vulnerable Resource

—Jerry Bley

Brook trout (Salvelinus fontinalis) are the only trout native to much of the eastern United States. They have inhabited the East's coldwater streams and lakes ever since the retreat of the continental glaciers across New York and New England, and they have thrived in the ancient valleys of the Appalachians for the last several million years. Arguably the most beautiful freshwater fish, brook trout survive in only the coldest and cleanest water. In fact, brook trout serve as indicators of the health of the watersheds they inhabit. . . .

In pre-Colonial times, brook trout were present in nearly every coldwater stream and river in the eastern United States. Sensitive to changes in water quality, wild brook trout began to disappear as early agriculture, timber and textiles economies transformed the eastern landscape . . .

—**Eastern Brook Trout: Status and Threats** (Trout Unlimited. Produced for the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture, 2006.)

In 2004, a group of public and private entities formed the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture to halt the decline of brook trout and restore fishable populations. The Joint Venture surveyed brook trout populations in 17 states in the Appalachian region. Their 2006 report concluded what many Maine anglers already know, “Maine is the last true stronghold for brook trout in the eastern United States . . . Maine's lake and pond brook trout resources are the jewel of the eastern range” In fact, more than 97 percent of the nation's native and wild brook trout ponds are located in Maine. Maine also is the last true refuge for stream-dwelling populations of wild brook trout, supporting more than twice the number of intact subwatersheds as the other 16 states in the eastern range combined.

We spoke with three leading brook trout experts who are familiar with Pierce Pond about the significance of Maine's wild brook trout fishery, and the leading threats to the resource, with a particular focus on the

Pierce Pond watershed. Forrest Bonney is the retired fisheries biologist for the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife's

(MDIF&W) Rangeley Region (in which Pierce Pond is located) and author of the book, *Squaretails: Biology and Management of Maine's Brook Trout*. Mark Hudy is the retired National Aquatic Ecologist for the U.S. Forest Service, and was the Project Leader for the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture. For the past 50 years, he has spent summers in Caratunk fishing Maine's backcountry streams and ponds. Jeff Reardon is the Brook Trout Project Director for Trout Unlimited.

When talking about brook trout, Bonney points out that it is important to understand the difference between “native” brook trout populations that exist naturally in a body of water, and “wild” brook trout populations that reproduce successfully in a body of water, but can originally come from either native or hatchery stock. Bonney indicated that Pierce Pond has a wild brook trout fishery, because it has been stocked in the

past. MDIF&W maintains a list of Heritage Brook Trout Ponds with self-sustaining populations that have not been stocked (with any salmonids) in the past 25 years. Of the 578 Heritage Ponds listed in Maine, Grass, Dixon, and Pickerel Ponds are located within the Pierce Pond watershed, along with High, Helen, and Fish Ponds on the backside of Pierce Pond Mountain.

All of the experts agreed that Pierce Pond is a unique brook trout fishery. According to Reardon, most of Maine's wild brook trout ponds are small, with Pierce Pond being one of a handful of larger ponds and lakes. Bonney points to Pierce Pond's high growth rate for brook trout, which can produce “monster trout,” and says that “places like Pierce Pond or the Rapid River exemplify productive habitats.” He believes that a contributing factor may be limestone, with calcium carbonate, that fosters plankton growth and moves up the food chain. Unlike most places, Pierce Pond brook trout continue to grow through the winter (evident from the narrowly spaced rings on their scales), which Bonney speculates could be



Wild Brook Trout

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MWWT Member List (as of 12/31/18)

INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY MEMBERS

Abbe, Chris & Kathy	Cockburn, Robert, & Jessica Bustin	Gage, William and Anne Gale, Tyler V.	LeMaire, Brett Alan	Patterson, William J.
Abbe, Dudley & Elisabeth	Cole, Russell G.	Gallant, Dennis and Joanne	Leo, Chris & Heather	Pauwels, Stanislas
Abbe, Hannah	Collette, Rod & Judy	Gendron, George & Janie	Lepage, Charles & Joan	Payson, III Stanley L.
Abbe, Jeffrey L.	Cook, Floyd A.	Gibbons, Jr John F.	Lepage, James B	Payson, Stanley L.
Abbe, John	Coombs, Colby	Gillis, Raymond and Joan	Lepore, Michael & Mary	Peacock, Carlton D.
Abbe, Stephen	Corbett, John and Katharine	Gilman, Gerald W.	Lepore, Paul	Pechnik, Frank
Abbe, Susan	Corbett-Paterniti, Sara and Mike	Gilpatric, William & Sally	Leslie, John & Susan	Peluso, Allison
Allen, Andrew and Mary	Cournoyer, Edmond, and Cheri Patterson	Goar, Dudley C.	Leslie, Michael W.	Peppard, Isaiah & Stephanie
Allen, Douglas F. Jr.	Couture, Edward J.	Goode, Joanne	Leslie, Peter	Percival, David & Bonnie
Allen, Richardson B.	Cozine, James & Betsy	Goolden, Sandra	Levesque, Richard H.	Perkins, Toni
Ames, Calvin and Cathy	Cronin, Mervell and Anne	Goss, Stew and Hannah	Libby, Leon & Ann	Peron, Violet
Anderson, Clifford John	Daboll, Roger and Barbara	Grady, Jamison	Lilljedahl, Robert	Peterman, Robert & Debra
Anderson, Eric S. & Schneider, Geraldine	Danker, Paul & Christine	Guibord, Russell Palmer	Lowell, Elwood, and Gloria Hall	Pierce, David
Anderson, Robert & Dorothy	Dart, Lawrence and Darlene	Gurley, Bruce	Luczkow, John	Plante, Bill
Anderson, Ronald J.	Davis, Joanne	Haines, Terry & Fran	Lund, Jo-Ann and David	Plourde, Ken
Anderson, Tom and Peggy	Davis, Richard & Sheryl	Hall, John W. & Priscilla D.	Lynn, Sarah & Henry	Podkaminer, Joshua
Arsenault, Don	DeLorenzo, Michael	Hallett, Lucius & Carol	MacNary, Don & Julie	Porter, Janet
Astbury, Art	Demaso, L. William & Marie	Hardesty, Vaughn & Phoebe	Madden, Betsy & John	Post, Benjamin and Sharon-Lake
Aten, Joseph E.	DeSisto, Richard	Harmon, David & Mary	Mahoney, James and Louise	Powell, Nancy & Blaisdell, Phil
Averill, Andrew & Catherine	Dickinson, Gregory J.	Hashem, Sr Daniel F.	Marchant, Doyle	Powell, Ruth
Baker, Dale and Patricia	Dillon-Jones, Carla	Haynes, Adam, & Gennifer Giuliano	Marden, Judith	Purcell, Edward
Baker, Robert W. Jr.	Diprizio, Prisco & Phyllis	Hemkes, Dorothy	Marshall, Bruce & Linda	Pyne, Lawrence
Barriault, Ronald F.	Dornish, Karl & Jane	Henebry, Brendan & Betsy	Massey, Donna L.	Rappaport, Charles
Barter, Albert	Dougherty, Anne and Vince	Hering, Jennifer & Lionel	Matherson, Richard, Steve & Tyler	Ray, Carolyn
Bartlett, William and Julianne	Douglass, Cynthia Ayn	Herrmann, Paul N.	Mathieu, Daniel, and Thomas Potter	Reneson, Chet
Bastien, Margaret	Dow, Mac & Georganne	Herrmann, Peter B.	Matt, Dennis	Richter, James and Claudia
Bates, Linda, & Jeffrey Leo	Drillen, Cyril & Kathlyn	Hildreth, Daniel, and Lillian Harris	Mattar, Sarah & Wheatley, Titus	Robey, Jeff & Abby
Bean, Christopher and Claudette	Drummond, Eileen	Hilton, Hope	Matteson, Paul & Nancy	Roelle, William & Shari
Beck, Kate	Drummond, Greg & Patrice	Hitchcock, Bob and Connie	McCaskill, Kyle	Rounds, Winifred
Belfiore, James	Drummond, Kate, and Peter Elias	Hitchings, David	McCollor, Reginald	Salmon, Richard, & Mary Jane Reed
Bell, Daniel O.	Dugan, Sam & Diane	Holt, Derek W.	McCormick, Kyle & Diane	Sands, Robert, & Susan Firlotte
Berry, Irene & Bill	Dyer, Carole	Holt, Timothy A.	McLaughlin, Robert and Kristen Meader, Heather	Saurman, Thomas
Betts, Cameron & Heather	Eastman, Robert H.	Horn, Daniel & Cheryl	Mehaffey, William and Margaret	Sawyer, Peter
Bickford, Jeff & Julia	Ebbeson, Bruce and Beverly	Horner, Carl A	Meisner, Stephen & Marcia	Schenkel, Andrew and Randy
Bien, Stephen	Edmonds, Tom & Susan	Howard, Gabriella	Messinger, Ann	Schmidle, Heather Anne
Blake, Alfred C and Elaine T	Edson, Charlie & Ann	Hubbe, Peter & Mary	Messinger, Margaret	Schmidle, Hillary
Blake, Kate & Family	Elliot, Lisa	Hutchins, Betty	Michaud, Gary & Carolyn	Schofield, Jr Carl W.
Bormann, Kelly and Darrell	Elsaesser, Frederick	Hutchins, Eric E.	Miles, Keith M.	Scott, Michael V.
Bousquet, Paul R. Jr.	Engelhard, Mary	Hutchins, Scott & Laura	Miles, Paul & Nancy	Scott, Richard
Brasslett, Gordon R. & Clement, Patty	Engstrom, Leroy and Elizabeth	Hutchins, Wayne, & Rebecca Gowen	Miller, Buell A.	Scott, Ted
Brown, Gary	Enright, Richard J.	Iannuccilli, Leonard	Mitchell, Henry W. & Joan	Scribner, Richard and Jo Ellen
Buchanan, Donald W. III	Estes, Brian & Melissa	Jagger, C. Thomas	Molloy, Brian	Sevier, Electa
Burke, Gary & Deborah	Estes, Cynthia	Jeff & Eileen Aten	Molloy, Frederick R.	Shaw, Harold & Suzanne
Burnham, Charles & Ann	Estes, Jason & Pam	Jeffers, Georgia	Molloy, Peter M.	Sheresky, Steven & Tapley
Burnham, Frederick H.	Estes, Stephen & Jo-Ann	Jennings, Rupert, and Carol Robinson	Molzan, David	Sheridan, Kevin
Burns, James and Gloria	Ewing, John	Johnson, Peter & Mary Ann	Moretti, Frances	Shields, Walker and Joyce
Burns, Louis & Elijah	Fagan, Christopher T.	Julia, James D.	Morrell, Doug & Georgette	Shropshire, Ken and Linda
Burns, Robert P., & Elizabeth Spaulding	Fagan, Kathleen	Kay, Ronald & Barbara	Morris, Allen and Barbara	Sikorsky, Igor & Karen
Calder, Wanda	Fahr, Yasmin	Kennedy, Rev. Thomas & Joanna	Morton, Gerald & Jean	Silbor Jr., Hurley and Jean
Cameron, Evan & Janet	Fales, Jerry	Kennedy, Robert G. & Jacqueline A.	Moses, Bradley and Nancy	Silva, John & Eleanor
Campbell, Colin and Regina	Farris, Kenneth E.	Kimball, Kerry & Jeanette	Mosher, David A	Sirianni, Russell and Amy
Canada, Jeanne G.	Feitz, Nick & Pamela	Kittredge, Robert J.	Murphy, Patricia	Siscoe, Bob & Chris
Cardozo, John	Fenn, Ruth & Chris	Kizelewicz, Benedict	Murray, Charles and Amanda	Skelton, John and Jody
Carlson, John and Jane	Fenton, Nancy H.	Koss, Lauron & Mary	Nazemetz, Michael, & Hussey, Ann Lee	Smaglia, Robert and Anne
Carver, Chris and Mary	Field, Peter & Alice	Krohn, William B	Nichols, Michael, & Hussey, Ann Lee	Smallidge, David and Victoria
Charles, Ed & Elizabeth	Flanagan, Dolores	Lagios, Lisa and Eric	Nichols, Don	Smith, Sarah
Childs, Richard and Linda	Flanagan, John J	Langille, Dolores	Nichols, Shane & Darcie	Spalding, Ben
Chipman, David W. & Kathie	Flewelling, Bruce K.	Latini, Anthony and Christine	Norris, James P	St. Pierre, James A
Cobb, Gary A. & Patricia	Foster, David	Latti, Mark and Marybeth	O'Brien, Frederic & Patricia	Stallman III, George L
Cobb, Ruth	Fowler, Judith	Latti, Michael B & Georgia	Oehmig, Keith	Stallman, Alexander and Jutta
	Fraser, Constance	Lavigne, Janice	Oliver, Richard W.	Staples, Stephen
	Frazee, Kenneth E.	Learmonth, Jack	Olson, Jr. Gunnar	Stauffer, Jo Ann
	Gage, Bradlee & Rosemarie	Lee, William	Olson, Sr. Gunnar	Stover, Jacqueline L.
	Gage, Lynda	Leigner, Ethan	Orcutt, Amos and Lola	Stowell, Patricia, and Peter Ver Lee
	Gage, Sr Bradlee E.		Park, Roger & Elizabeth	Stringos, Gust & Jan
			Parsons, III Marcus	Stupak, Joe, & Suzanne Trussell
				Sutherland, Leslie and Constance
				Taylor, Mark & Sheila

Thomas, Kimberly E. Abbe	Freeman, Carl J. Gale, Benjamin
Thorp, Philips & Heather	Gallant, Gerard and Anna
Thunberg, Robert G.	Gibbs, Robert and Thirza
Thurston, Steve	Gibson, Jack & Gail
Timmins, James A.	Gill, Charles and Linda
Torrey, David	Glover, Lynzy
Toth, Mark	Grigerek, Linda and Glen
Townsend, Louise	Hagan, Walter & Gracemary
Trachtenberg, Howard and Carol	Haynes, George P.
Tracy, Mark & Barbara	Hiro, Sue
Tripp, Bruce	Hosmer, III Calvin and Cynthia
Tully, Barbara	Howard, Alice & Phillip
Turgeon, Allan & Suzanne	Hurtig Family
Valentine, Charles and Annette	Jackson, Patrick and Christina
Valentine, Lawrence & Mary K.	Klinkenberg, R.B. & Ann
Van Husen, Ella Mae	Langburd, Alan and Lisa
Verrill, David E.	Leigner, Jr Frank P.
Verrill, Jeffrey D.	Lepore, Michael & Megan
Vogt Sr, James B & Marcia	Lord, Brad
Voisine, Rene & Nancy	Lyttle, Peter T.
Volpi, Robert P	Manthorne, Bill and Jean
Walker, Matthew & Colleen	McKenna, Gene & Jane
Wallace, David & Linda	Meador, Bud
Wallace, Richard & Carol	Meador, Robert & Polly
Wallace, Richard & Christina	Messinger, Corrine E.
Ware, John	Meurer, Glenn & Barbara
Ware, Jr Roland G.	Michka, Alan & Kay
Warner, Seth C.	Milliken, Brian
Waterman, Erik	Moore, Blaine D.
West, Brent	Morse, Peter
Westphal, Christian	Nicholas, Jos
Westphal, Robert & Leslie	Nichols, Zachary & Courtney
White, Donald & Teresa	Parker, Donald S.
Whiting, Bruce	Peacock Family
Whiting, Tim and Anne	Peluso, Mike
Whitney, Doreen	Peppard, David & Theresa
Williams, Gay and Brian	Perry, Thomas R & Yvette
Winslow, Donnabeth	Pierce, Derek, & Hanson, Anja
Wirth, Donald and Jean	Pikaart, Christine
Wright, James M. & Georgiana	Podkaminer, Jane & Nate
Yeaton, Christopher	Powell, Sam
Young, Ron	Rand, Alice H. & Peter W.
	Reynolds, Steve & Kathy
	Ross, John
	Saunders, Eric
	Schmidle, Paul & Wendy
	Shuter, Elizabeth G.
	Siscoe, Nancy
	Soley, Judy
	Soley, Tim, David, & Jack
	Soule, David B. Jr., & Patricia O'Reilly
	Steinhacker, Robert & Marianne
	Stuart, Blake
	Stuart, Ralph & Carol
	Tolley, George & Naomi
	Vetelino, John Frank
	Vogt, Jeffrey Weil
	Whitney, Winston S
	Young, Lincoln C. & Lincoln S.

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Bailey, H. Whitney
Bailey, Lawrence E.
Baker, Peter C.
Blake, Patrick R.
Bley, Jerry
Brown, Peter & Karen
Capofreddi, Matthew & Amy
Cobb, Gary & Betty
Curci, Michael & Christine
Douglass, David & Kay
Foss, Patricia
Frantzman, Joel

Wild Brook Trout *continued from page 3*

the result of bottom springs keeping winter temperatures a little warmer at deeper depths.

A thirty-year survey (1970–2001) conducted by MDIF&W identified only thirty lakes and ponds in Maine with recorded brook trout in excess of four pounds. Three of those water bodies were in the Pierce Pond watershed: Pierce Pond, Kilgore Pond, and Grass Pond.



MWWT Treasurer Mike Peluso finds Pierce Pond treasure

And while most anglers pursue brook trout in the watershed's ponds, Hudy suggests that the area's pristine streams are also a valuable wild brook trout resource. Over the past 50 years, he has fished "every inch" of Pierce Pond Stream, the outlet of Pierce Pond that runs steeply for about three and a half miles to the Kennebec River. He describes it as a "classic remote brook trout stream that could have been on the cover of a Field & Stream magazine." Today, the Appalachian Trail runs alongside the cascading stream, which at one time carried logs from the Pierce Pond watershed down to the Kennebec. Pierce Pond Stream has multiple waterfalls that prevent upstream travel by brook trout and other fish species. He says the stream's self-sustaining brook trout population most likely includes fish coming up from the Kennebec in its lower section, fish dropping down from Pierce Pond, and fish that spend their entire life cycle living in stream sections between waterfalls.

The experts all agree that the number one threat to the region's brook trout fishery is the introduction of non-native fish. MDIF&W's Brook Trout Management Plan states, "The introduction and spread of competing fish species has had a substantial impact on the quantity and quality of Maine's brook trout resource." Reardon points out that it is, "not just sport fish like small-mouth bass brought in by unscrupulous fishermen, it is also non-native baitfish that compete with brook trout."

MDIF&W regulations prohibit use of live bait on all Heritage Trout Ponds. Introducing non-native fish to brook trout waters can affect trout populations in a variety of ways, including competition for food and prime space, spread of diseases, and predation, particularly of young.

The brook trout population in Pierce Pond continues to be affected by the accidental stocking of lake trout many years ago. And while the annual stocking of land-locked salmon to Pierce Pond is generally viewed favorably by anglers, Hudy suggests that it "certainly isn't helping the brook trout." The waters of the Pierce Pond watershed have some protection against the introduction of non-native fish by virtue of the watershed's topographic location, with the only aquatic connection to outside waters being Pierce Pond Stream, which provides a strong barrier to migration owing to its steep gradient. Its cold waters are somewhat less hospitable to species, such as bass, that prefer warmer temperatures. In addition, the gate house and limited other public access points to the watershed reduce, but do not eliminate, the illegal introduction of non-native fish. "It only takes one person walking in with a bucket to screw things up," says Hudy.

Other future threats to brook trout in the Pierce Pond watershed include sedimentation resulting from poorly constructed roads and overharvesting of timber, particularly on steep slopes in proximity to spawning areas for brook trout and smelt, as well as climate change and disease. Hudy points out that while the deep, cold waters of Pierce Pond might offer some protection for brook trout against a warming climate, there can be indirect effects on the brook trout through changes to food supply, an increase in diseases, and waters becoming better suited to non-native species. "These are integrated ecosystems and if you change one thing, like temperature, the impacts can ripple through the system."

The three experts all agree that the Pierce Pond watershed is a crown jewel wild brook trout fishery worthy of the Trust's protection efforts. They concur that Trust acquisition of watershed lands would allow for expanded efforts to conserve and enhance the fishery through such actions as establishing un-cut buffers along tributaries to prevent sedimentation and keep stream waters cool, monitoring water quality, conducting research, enhancing spawning habitat, and protecting against the introduction of non-native fish.



On a very warm and muggy day late last July, an energetic and enthusiastic crew of Pierce Pond volunteers succeeded in opening up the newly created Otter Pond Mountain Trail. “We had a blast!” reported one volunteer. Indeed, everyone really seemed to enjoy themselves—though many were dragging by the end of a hard but rewarding day of work.

Recently a trail crew had cleared the newly designed Otter Pond Mountain trail, funded by a grant from Bangor Savings Bank. But while the trail route had been cut, the trees and brush had not been pulled into the woods. We needed a crew of volunteers to pull away the brush, clip any remaining bushes, and paint blazes. So we put out a call to MWWT members. The response surpassed our hopes, with 29 people participating. As always, Pierce Ponders were willing to step up and help care for the watershed!

The resulting trail extends about two miles from a trailhead on the Otter Pond Cove Road, a short walk up from the camping area and boat launch. The trail leads to three scenic lookouts from ledge outcrops, terminating at the highest of the three. As the trail designer noted, “The openings above the cliff bands on Otter Pond Mountain have spectacular views. It is rare to have such nice views with short, easy routes.” There is a spur trail leading to the shore of Pierce Pond, and also the option of extending the trail to the top of the mountain, as funding allows.

The new Otter Pond Mountain trail exemplifies the MWWT Board’s intention that trails should be created and maintained in a way that protects the watershed’s natural resources and wilderness setting. The goal is that trails provide access to points of interest and views of the ponds, offering a rich experience for users of a wide range of skills and abilities, without increasing pressure on the ponds and the ecosystem. They should avoid sensitive areas and take up the smallest

footprint possible. Techniques such as routing the trail on appropriate soils and limiting steep pitches will be used minimize erosion.

Board member Mike Peluso affirms that the new Otter Pond Mountain trail perfectly fulfills the Board’s vision of a “wilderness trail.” As he describes, it is a winding natural path that meanders along the marsh and shoreline, as it rises up to the old logging road that traverses the higher elevations above the rock slide. At various points along the way, you are treated to spur trails that bring you to the water’s edge and to three rock outcroppings with magnificent views of the Lower Pond and Bigelow Mountain. One of these outlooks has a field of lichen that is said to be as old as

1st annual trail clearing day

100 years. The trail-clearing volunteers laid a path through it bordered by rocks to protect it from foot traffic.

Feedback from members using the trail has been overwhelmingly positive. “Really well designed,” said one member who hiked the trail shortly after its completion.

“We loved the beginning part that goes up through the nice woods and boulders.” Another commented, “We thoroughly enjoyed the trail; the work party deserves congratulations on a first-rate job.”

Many of the volunteers who participated in the trail-clearing day expressed gratitude to MWWT for hosting the event. While everyone worked hard, no one anticipated the camaraderie and good feelings engendered by pulling together for the Pierce Pond watershed. So many of the volunteers expressed enthusiasm for doing another work day that it was decided to make this an annual outing, a time when MWWT members and Pierce Pond friends can “give back” to the watershed. There are a lot of old trails in the watershed that need work. So last July’s work day was redubbed the First Annual Trail-Clearing Day. MWWT’s Second Annual Trail-Clearing Day is tentatively scheduled for the last weekend in July: pencil it in on your calendar and watch for announcements!





Boys Camp Alumni Reunite Scenes from the Wilderness Bound Reunion

—Chas Gill, Jennifer Cobb Hering, & Igor Sikorsky

Gary and Betty Cobb ran the Wilderness Bound boys camp from 1969 till 1986. Every summer, 30 to 40 boys would spend weeks exploring the area and taking trips throughout the woods and rivers of northern Maine.

Over Labor Day weekend, the first reunion of Camp Wilderness Bound was held at Pierce Pond. With 35 or so WB alumni and their families, there was not an empty bed at Cobb's Camps. The Cobb's Camps crew went above and beyond with the food, cookout, and special touches, and deserves a big thank-you for making sure that everything ran so smoothly.

It is hard to describe the energy of the weekend, with everyone "coming home" to Pierce Pond and being reunited with people they'd shared so many unforgettable experiences with. Many of us had not talked to or seen each other for 35 or 40 years, but that did not seem to matter. "When you spend the summer together at that age," recalls Chas, "great lasting friendships are made. Gary and Betty taught us so much about everything—not just camping, cooking, and canoeing, but how to get along as a group, and do it all with fun and humor."

It was a relaxed weekend. People hiked, canoed, fished, and mostly just hung out and caught up. Lots of pictures and slides were shared. And a lot of laughter, for sure! Some went over and explored the new Otter Pond Mountain trail. The hike provided the perfect opportunity for more catching up—as well as for a couple of old WB pranks, such as rocks snuck into backpacks (Sam!). One crafty family who had already finished the hike thought it would be funny to move boats down the shoreline (RB!). Of course the weekend included bean-hole beans, and yeast rolls cooked with reflector ovens, and even a few sardines and vienna sausages for appetizers. (Maybe we'll cook up some SPAM at the next reunion!)

Igor brought his float plane and spent most of the day flying fellow WB alumni around the watershed, in return for donations to MWWT. They were treated to glimpses from the air of the outlet, Upper Pond, Grand Falls, and High and Helen Ponds. Igor comments, "These flights gave me the added benefit



of spending close time with Wilderness Bounders and their wives and children. What an amazing group of people, many of who now have careers entwined with the natural world. Wilderness Bounders are climbing North America's high peaks, cave dive-mapping in Mexico, supporting renewable energy projects, guiding, educating, and farming. Everyone there was so connected, and so happy to be back at the Pond." The flights generated a lot of support for MWWT, and we want to thank all of the donors and encourage everyone to continue helping.

What a kick it was for the returning Wilderness Bounders to look at the names on the "Wilderness Shield," the long bridge across the cove, the canoes, the bunk house, and the cabins, and remember. Hanging out under the Pierce Pond twilight and being transported back to our youth—we all felt so lucky to be able to go back to a place where we learned so much.

Jenn had planned the reunion, and notes that the weekend surpassed all of her expectations. "Some of the best moments were seeing people greet mom and dad and each other. There was such joy, and the feeling remained all weekend. Andy and I grew up at Wilderness Bound, so I was so happy to see some of my old friends again. Mom and Dad were thrilled and proud to see how these fine young men 'turned out.'"

Hopes are high for another reunion to take shape within a few years. This summer actually marks the 50th anniversary of the first year of camp, so stay tuned!





mwwt

Maine Wilderness Watershed Trust

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Maine Wilderness Watershed Trust is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization dedicated to protecting the wild character, natural resources, and scenic beauty of the Pierce Pond watershed and preserving traditional public recreational use of the area.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS! Have you renewed your MWWT support for 2019?

Send your membership donation to MWWT, PO Box 5660, Augusta, ME 04332, call us at (207) 835-4535, or RENEW ONLINE at www.mwwt.org.

Make Pierce Pond Part of Your Legacy. Become a Pierce Pond Guardian

Pierce Pond Guardians are special people who love a special place—people who feel so connected to Pierce Pond’s unspoiled shores that they want to preserve them for future generations. A planned gift of any size is the perfect way to help permanently protect the precious Pierce Pond watershed.

Whether it be through a bequest, insurance policy, retirement account, annuity, or another arrangement, planned

giving can provide a way to make a sincere and lasting commitment to the Pierce Pond watershed, while also providing you benefits that may include lifetime income, immediate tax deductions, favorable capital gains treatment, or estate tax savings.

Create a promise for the future. To learn more about becoming a Pierce Pond Guardian, contact MWWT Coordinator Jerry Bley at (207) 685-3872.

Future *continued from page 1*

◆ We understand the importance of exposing new and younger people to the watershed, and expect to do this through educational programming. Most likely we will partner with one or more highly respected educational institutions and nonprofits to bring youth and adults to the watershed for wilderness learning. Such groups might stay at one of the existing camps at a time that is compatible with traditional uses. Or they may camp in more remote watershed sites, if it can be done with minimal impact on the resources and character of the watershed.

◆ We expect to leverage ownership of watershed lands by implementing exemplary management practices, and facilitating land- and water-resource monitoring and research. For instance, we intend to research how best to protect brook trout and smelt spawning

areas, how to prevent milfoil, and how to eradicate lake trout. Upland, we intend to engage in innovative forest management, and research issues such as how to protect the deer wintering areas. We plan to engage professional and academic partners to pursue such research and management projects. We are developing relationships with national organizations such as Trout Unlimited, The Ruffed Grouse Society, and Maine Audubon, who have proven records in resource management and enhancement, and can serve as role models. We believe that all such projects should result in benefits for these partners as well as for our members, the Trust, and the public good.

◆ While we do not expect to acquire land outside the watershed in the near term, it would be considered when and if an

opportunity arose where acquisition of such land would clearly benefit the watershed, help protect brook trout, or otherwise directly enhance our mission.

In summary, we know that managing most of the land in the watershed will change our responsibilities, and that we will have to expand staff capacity and increase our annual budget accordingly. Yet we don’t expect such changes to be dramatic. We know that the watershed needs new users and advocates to provide for its long-term conservation. We want to conduct research and exemplary management initiatives. We want to conserve the watershed even more effectively and more assuredly than in the past. Yet we intend to proceed slowly and cautiously, and avoid changing too much, too fast.

We would love to hear your thoughts and ideas about moving forward. Please send your comments to info@mwwt.org.

