

Lisbon Town Forest - It's Official!

ARTICLE 9 OF THE 2022 WARRANT PASSES

During the March 8, 2022 Town Meeting residents unanimously passed Warrant Article 9 of the 2022 Warrant designating the property around and including Pearl Lake a Town Forest.



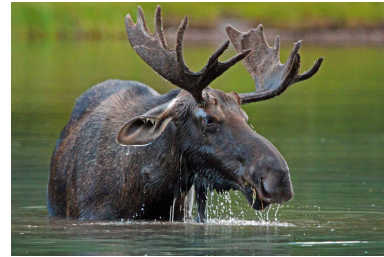
This designation is exciting as the 55.34 acres are made up of high value wetlands, grasslands, hemlock-hardwood pine,

and the abundant wildlife that lives on the land and in Pearl Lake. This area is highest ranked in the biological region by NH Fish & Game Wildlife Action Plan. The Town Forest designation will not only protect the wildlife, but also the approximately 7,666 feet of shoreline on Pearl Lake which will help protect water quality.

As a Town Forest, the land around Pearl Lake will continue to exhibit the natural character that the townspeople have enjoyed for decades; will be well managed for a healthy forest, wetlands, wildlife, and ecosystems; will contribute to climate sustainability; and good water quality.

The Town Forest is the habitat to a host of birds, fish, and mammals. There are endangered species such as the Bald Eagle that hunts on Pearl Lake and nests on the Ammonoosuc River. Other spectacular, but not endangered birds such as Osprey, Great Blue Heron, Loon, and several species of more common birds can be found around the

lake. There have been reported sightings of beaver, otter, fox, mink, fisher cats, hare, black bear, bobcat, moose, turkeys, ermine, turtles,



frogs, toads, and deer to name a few. The waters support perch, bass, trout, and pickerel. The species listed

are from citizen observations and are far from complete.

Whether you come out to Pearl Lake to fish, paddle, or to enjoy the scenery, you won't be disappointed by the abundant natural resources of the Town Forest.

The Conservation Commission has a lot of work ahead to insure this remains the case for generations to come.

We are currently looking into best practices of other NH towns in their management of Town Forests; investigating ways we might secure funding

through programs that support healthy water quality; and seeking partnerships with other local organizations to offer educational opportunities.

If you are a frequent visitor of Pearl Lake we would love to hear your ideas AND we are also interested in fostering a community of volunteers to help us make the best of this land for all of its creatures, no matter the number of legs, fins, or wings. We meet the



third Monday of each month at the Railroad Station on Central Street. Please join us.

RIVERBANK RESTORATION PROJECT - IT'S WORKING

The restoration project next to the Ammonoosuc River just north of town where big equipment was in full operation last summer appears to be working....

The CT River Conservancy (CRC) supported by the Natural Resources Conservation Service agency (NRCS) coordinated this



project to restore approximately 600 feet of river bank on Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust (ACT) land.

The goal was to prevent further erosion and restore the natural contours of the river and flood plain. During the high waters of spring the swift current brought ice and debris around the bend where they were caught by the root wads that were driven into the river bank last summer. This coupled with the various trees planted is creating the environment to drastically slow down erosion.

Putting in these root wads is called "soft-armoring." According to Ron Rhodes, Director of Restoration Programs for the Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC), "Here, the root wads take the brunt of the high water and ice, giving the trees a chance to grow. Once they're grown up, they'll do the job holding the bank together."

Rhodes also noted that the root wads catch sediment and debris as it travels downstream, creating good habitat for fish and other wildlife.

Further, the site's large floodplain will slow rushing water down and keep it from eroding riverbanks farther downstream, creating a chain of environmental benefits.



AUGUST 2022

AUGUST 2021

What looks like some tree stumps thrown against the river bank are actually roots attached to 18 foot tree trunks that were rammed into the riverbank last summer.

In early May, over a thousand native trees were planted by a NorthWoods Stewardship Center crew with support from AmeriCorps members and Northern Vermont University students. Their roots will reach into the soil to anchor the riverbank in place even further.

"Before, there were no roots to hold that bank in place," Rhodes explained. "That wasn't natural; it had been cleared."

"We're never going to stop erosion — that's what rivers do," he added. "But once you get these buffers and the steep slopes peeled back, then we can slow it down to a more natural rate."

Lisbon is so fortunate that ACT (Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust), along with CRC facilitated this bioengineering project at the nine-acre site with the support of New Hampshire Charitable Fund, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the US Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service.

MANY THANKS

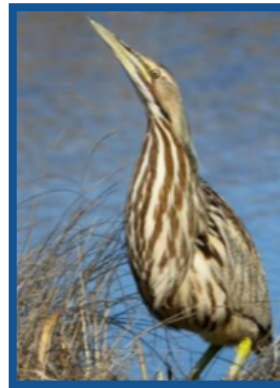
The Conservation Commission would like to thank Betsy Stead for her many years of service on the Conservation Commission. Betsy volunteered her time and energy to help the commission support the natural environment in Lisbon. Our town is better off for her commitment and while we are sorry she has stepped down, we are ever grateful for her years of work with us. Betsy was part of the team that brought the dream of a Town Forest to reality. Her example shows that serving on the Conservation Commission is something that your grandchildren's grandchildren can thank you for. Those voices will ring in the future! For today, your Conservation Commission colleagues thank you, Betsy!

Do you enjoy nature? Are you concerned about the environment?

Then come help maintain and protect our natural resources. Come help us work on the evolution of the Town Forest. The Conservation Commission needs your help. We meet the third Monday of each month at the Railway Station from 5:30-6:30 PM. Come to a meeting to learn more about volunteer opportunities or to become a Conservation Commissioner. If you imagine this land much the same for your children's grandchildren, then get involved. It takes our thoughtful planning now to ensure the lasting beauty of this place we call home.

THE NEWLY DESIGNATED TOWN FOREST AT PEARL LAKE IS FOR THE BIRDS!

Pearl Lake is hosting a nesting pair of American Bitterns this summer. American Bitterns are smaller sized herons, brown and white with shorter, thicker necks. They are not very common to this area, and are easily hidden by their marsh-colored camouflage. Their song is quite bizarre. It has been described as "the gulps of a thirsty giant" or "a serious plumbing problem". Listen for yourself here:



<http://northwestbirding.com/BirdSongs/Recordings/>

[american_bittern_RNWR_05-25-12.mp3](#)

The instincts of birds are amazing, but not a fail-safe for these adaptive creatures. Artificial lights can have terrible consequences for many bird species. According to the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA, is the recognized authority on light pollution and is the leading organization combating light pollution world-wide; working to protect night skies for present and future generations), "Birds that migrate or hunt at night navigate by moonlight and starlight. Artificial light can cause them to wander off course and toward the dangerous nighttime landscapes of cities... Migratory birds depend on cues from properly timed seasonal schedules. Artificial lights can cause them to migrate too early or too late and miss ideal climate conditions for nesting, foraging and other behaviors."

The Loons at Pearl Lake migrated brilliantly. The day after ice out on the lake ushered in the arrival of the first of two Loons that spend from Spring to early Autumn on the lake.





They were spotted "on the nest" in June, but after some wild sounds and commotion, they left the nest and no offspring were seen. At one point three adult Loons were seen, but not for long. A friendly visit or a turf war?

From mid-May through late summer, a nesting pair of Great Blue Herons were feeding a family of four by fishing in Pearl Lake.

These are just a few examples of our winged neighbors in and around the lake. While enjoying the air shows, the mystical call of the Loons and other sightings, keep in mind that your outdoor lighting can adversely effect whether these and other birds can get where they need to go. Please use light sensors, so you can see when you need to and wildlife can follow the nocturnal rhythms that nature intended.



SIGNS, SIGNS, EVERYWHERE A SIGN

As we put on our orange gear and head outside we may notice the signs that tell us what we can and cannot do on the land around us.

So what's the story with posting? A landowner may decide to post their land for a few reasons. New landowners may choose to post because they are worried about liability or the consequences of not posting. Some landowners have had trouble on their land caused by others.

According to SPACE, (Statewide Program of Action to Conserve our Environment) "...the liability of landowners (in NH) that allow free public access is limited. New Hampshire has recognized the value of public access with a statute protecting those generous enough to share their land." SPACE goes on to say, "Although problems with the public's use of

The Lisbon Conservation Commission stewards and protects the town's natural resources through planning, promoting and educating to assist the town boards and the public in conservation matters. We encourage informed decision making to keep Lisbon a livable place today and for decades to come.



private property are real and do occur, landowners should not let the possibility of these events influence their decision to post their land. The majority of landowners never experience problems with others using their land. The likelihood of having any problems is very small."

It is a right for landowners to post their property and this right should always be respected. Follow the sign! SPACE does go on to say, "If you've decided to post your land...the best approach is to try using positive language, such as 'Welcome-Foot Traffic Only' or 'Please, No Trash' or consider posting 'Land Use by Permission Only.'"

Note that there are alternatives to the all-out No Trespassing for any reason whatsoever signs. A landowner that hunts may want to post, "Hunting Permitted Here". That will alert the public on this land to put on their orange and exercise caution. It may be that the Joe or Jane Public find more suitable outdoor locations during hunting season.

Whether you post or don't, it's your choice. Following the signs is a respectful choice. Being thoughtful is a good rule in all of these situations.

What is the Conservation Commission and what does it do?

The Conservation Commission was established under NH RSA 36-A, and was adopted by town vote in 1981. The Conservation Commission is a group of volunteers appointed by the Select Board tasked with conducting the town natural resources inventories, coordinating conservation activities including environmental education, land protection, wetland evaluation, and protection of wildlife and watershed resources. The members serve three-year terms.

Lisbon Conservation Commission Members:

Katrine Barclay, Chair (2023)
Robert Cook (2025)
Becky Lockwood (2025)
Rosalind Page, Recording Secretary (2025)
Mark Roberts (2025)