

2011 WOPWA Annual Meeting Minutes

July 23, 2011

Holderness Historical Society

---Draft (pending approval by membership at 2012 Annual Meeting)---

The Annual Meeting of the White Oak Pond Watershed Association (WOPWA) was called to order at 9:05 am by president Bob Maloney. There were 26 members present and two guest speaker. He announced that we have the room until 1 pm, so attendees can spend as long as they want after the meeting to visit with each other.

In attendance were: Galen Beach, Margie & Mike Bogdanow, Elspeth Falk, Kevin Frank, Blake and Anne Ireland, Anne Knight, Anne Levin, Sid Lovett, Bob Maloney and Bonnie Hunt, Nancy McDonald, Bob Rothschild, Marie Stevenson, Will & Lois Stratton, Roger & Mimzie Uhler, Ted Vansant & Nancy Voorhis, Robert & Lilli Young, Kathy Weymouth, Judi Ruhm, Roger LaRoche (speaker) and Harry Vogel (speaker).

The minutes of the 2010 Annual Meeting were posted on the website so everyone could read them. The minutes were approved unanimously as they appeared on the website.

Nancy Voorhis once again explained how to access the website. Go to www.wopwa.org, (not .com) for access to meeting minutes and general information. To access the member list and other personal information, one must be a member. Then, using your first initial and last name as the user ID and your email address as the password, the remainder of the information becomes available. There is a small amount of information which is accessible only to Board members.

Treasurer's Report - Will Stratton presented the Report which is attached to these minutes. At the end of the report is an addendum on the Mary H Perry Conservation Fund (MHPCF) The Report was approved unanimously. Will reminded everyone to pay their dues, and stated that there are some envelopes addressed to WOPWA available for those who would prefer to mail a check.

The WOPWA Website - Nancy Voorhis reported that she works on it a little at a time, time permitting, and is always eager for new information and especially, new photos for the website. Both may be sent to the the email address on the website or to Nancy's personal email. She also asked for suggestions or comments to be emailed at any time. In response to a question, Nancy said she will try to get more accurate information on the number of "hits" the website receives. When asked how much historical data is already on the website, she reported that the data goes back to 1987, but that it may not be quite complete. Original documents and CD's are stored at the Holderness Historical Society. It was decided to continue to add the remaining material to the Website as time permits because it could be of interest for historical purposes and accessibility would be easy. Anne Knight volunteered to help. Sid Lovett and Anne Levin offered a few historical tidbits regarding White Oak Pond. There is also a blog available in the membership area for people to post comments or stories.

Membership - Lois Stratton addressed membership issues. There are forms available on the table for those who forgot to bring the ones which were mailed. There is also a list of the information currently on file for each person at the meeting to look over and make corrections. The current membership is 44 families. The number varies from year to year. Gaining members is mostly a matter of personal contact. We were asked to check off one or two names on the the separate watershed property owners' list that we will agree to contact and invite to become a member. The

new flyers will be a good way to do that instead of a more impersonal mailing which has not produced good results. Nancy Voorhis reported that Mimzie has been working on updating the list of watershed properties and property owners. Many are not on our current list, so we have many potential members. How to appeal to those who are not directly on the pond is a question we have raised before, especially since they may consider Squam to be their watershed. People should be interested in the preservation of the lake. It would be nice to think of a unique benefit of membership. Sid offered that it is more fun to be part of WOPWA than Squam!

Mary H. Perry Conservation Fund - Kevin reported that the MHPCF has had its 1st request for funds from Bob Haskell, who has conserved 4,800 feet of shoreline. The fund has grown in the past year to \$16,087 and has a goal balance of \$25,000. At goal, 20% of the balance would allow \$5000 to be used to cover most of the eligible costs of putting property into conservation. Because of the 20% rule, the fund will never run out. The policy has been altered in light of actual experience. The Squam Lakes Conservation Society (SLCS), which holds the Fund, must disperse the money by the rules of a charitable agency, namely that the expenses reimbursed must be for legal and other fees required for a property easement to conservation, i.e. The public good. The appraisal fee, for example, is not reimburseable because that is done for a tax benefit for the donor. While the Haskell request was made after the conveyance, in the future most people will work with the SLCS and the vendors from the beginning of the process to make sure they will wait for payment until the easement is actually made. Payment will be made to the vendors rather than to the person after the fact, which is itself a tax advantage. Instead of focusing on the \$25,000 goal or the 20% of the funds available for expenses, it is important to publicize the fund to generate a conversation with people who may be interested in conservation, which is a long process. There was a recommendation from the floor to accept this change in the rules. It was approved. Bob Maloney announced that the fund has done very well compared to other investments.

SLCS - Roger La Rochelle, executive director of SLCS, reported that there are currently 96 properties, including three farms, mostly in the Squam range, in conservation. More significant to WOPWA is that the Herb Brown family, who have property on the southern tip of White Oak Pond, recently announced the conservation of 57 acres on WOP and its watershed. The Conservation Easement is in its final stages and will be signed soon. It includes 500 ft of frontage and some prime wetlands. Herb Brown and his two sons have credited the Haskells as their inspiration. There will be a request from the Fund. WOPWA should give a formal thanks to the Browns. There will be a Bell Ringing service in September as a ceremonial moment to recognize the family's gift.

Roger also reported that there is an effort to create a historic district of almost the entire Squam watershed. The funding is mostly in place. This registration is an Honorific, with not a lot of restrictions, but it provides a way to describe the specialness of the Squam area. SLCS is not the main force in this effort but is very supportive. It will include the preservation of old camps and will call for low impact uses of the property.

Roger concluded by inviting all of WOPWA to the 2011 annual meeting of SLCS to be held on August 20th at 9 AM at Camp Hale.

Water Quality Committee- Galen Beach reported that the return of newts and mussels after ice out signals that all is OK on White Oak Pond. She showed a brochure and information sheet from the NH DES (Department of Environmental Services) on how to prevent phosphorus build-up. Duck and geese are major polluters. Testing the water quality is ongoing and there are no major changes from last year.

We were reminded to watch for cyanobacteria (blue-green scum) and to notify DES if we see it. The committee continues to monitor the dump tributary and will try to find out more about the

testing wells that were installed there and what results have been seen. Because the lake contributes phosphorus on its own, it is important to minimize human impact from faulty septic systems. In addition, we need to do more sampling at the dump tributary, where the conductivity remains high and hasn't changed in 5 or 6 years. The Committee recommends following the stream back with "bracketted testing" to determine the land use upstream and what and where the impact might be coming from. It is no longer obvious that the high conductivity is a result of the transfer station. A motion for bracket testing was presented with the allocation of up to \$200 in additional testing in this area. The motion was approved. It was also recommended that the results be brought to the attention of the Holderness Conservation Committee.

Roger Uhler will be helping with sampling and Margie Bogdanow also volunteered to monitor the lake for invasive weeds (Weed Watcher) and cyanobacteria. It was moved that WOPWA become officially associated with the Weed Watcher program and that motion was approved.

In response to a question regarding cyanobacteria, Galen reported that during the summer of 2010 there were blooms, none serious, which occur naturally, and that DES wants to monitor these in the event any of them become overly large, which would be bad. Anne Knight pointed out that people in the watershed may be affecting the watershed whether they know it or not and that this is a reason to try to get them involved in WOPWA.

Featured Guest - Harry Vogel, Executive Director of the Loon Preservation Committee, spoke about loons. He brought a preserved small female loon and pointed out that loons represent one of the most primitive species of bird, being many millions of years old and are a sentinel of environmental quality. Loons typify the wilderness and that even non-bird watchers are fascinated by them. With their bones more dense than those of other birds, they compensate by having no teeth, but a lightweight strong bill. They must swallow their food whole. Then they ingest small pebbles which help to grind up the fish in their gizzard. Lead sinkers are deadly because they cannot pass through the body like pebbles and the lead gets into their blood stream and kills them within a couple of weeks. No other kind of sinker will hurt them. Last year there were 12 lead sinker deaths among loons. Because of their long life span and small number of young, it is important to keep adult loons alive. Lead is the largest single impact limiting the growth of the loon population. We need to advocate for the elimination of lead fishing jigs by working with the legislature and with the Bass Fishermen's organization.

Floating nests are used to give alternatives for loons who have suffered predation, flooding of nests, and water level changes. The rafts will have a cover where protection from eagles and other large birds is needed. Chicks are a magnet for people; we need to leave them alone. Use binoculars rather than getting close. Harry passed out loon behavior fact sheets and loon identification sheets which will also be scanned, added to the minutes and posted on the website.

In response to questions:

- ⑩ A loon can take a goose. Geese will displace loons if they become too prevalent.
- ⑩ Eagles will take a loon chick and may once in a while take an adult, but not often here. Eagles and loons can coexist; there is a successful loon nest under an eagle nest.
- ⑩ There are 14 pair of loons on Squam this year with about 8 chicks, 1 or 2 of which will probably be lost.
- ⑩ It is unclear whether chicks return to the lake where they hatched. Banding loons is helping to answer some of the many remaining questions about loons and their life cycle. Many loons return to within 15 miles of their birth site.
- ⑩ There is a flyway between Squam and White Oak, with the loons going back and forth.
- ⑩ 100 – 300 acres are needed to support one Loon pair, thus WOP is a good spot for a pair. Smaller lakes seem to have better success, but recently, not WOP. The current pair on White Oak

are unbanded and may be descended from the former resident pair because of a peculiarity of the call. They seem to have been returning since 2006.

- ⑩ Banding is done at night with bright light and a net.
- ⑩ Some loon calls are the yodel, hoot, wail and tremello.

In the long ongoing investigation of loons on Squam, it has been determined that whatever is causing their decline is coming from Squam, not from the ocean or other sources. Testing is being conducted, including looking at the contaminants in unhatched eggs, in particular, contaminants that do not degrade easily and that bind to fat cells, such as PBDE (flame retardants), PFOS (stain guards) and PCB (industrial insulating/cooling agents). The investigation is looking at the transfer station as one possible source, so they will be interested in our testing plan. Loon Preservation has an egg from White Oak this year for testing, which costs \$2,000. The Squam Swim raises funds for the work of research and monitoring the loons. Contributions can be made at www.loon.org or the Squam Lake Loon Initiative. The latest report will be on the Loon Center website soon. We were given a sign for White Oak Pond which urges people to take responsibility for protecting loons. Bob Rothschild will amend the sign somewhat to highlight the important points and will post it. Up to \$100 was authorized for the preparation and posting of two signs. The work of the Loon Center helps other wildlife as well and ultimately people. Nancy McDonald will be doing the Squam Swim and we were urged to donate in her name.

Election of Officers and New Board Members Roger Uhler, "Nominating Committee of One", reported that President Bob Maloney will be serving the 2nd year first term ending at the annual meeting in 2012 (eligible for re-election then) and Vice-President Ted Vansant will be serving the 2nd year second term ending in 2012 (limit). The Treasurer and Secretary are one year terms and to be elected every year. Secretary Mimzie Uhler (3 term incumbant) and Treasurer Will Stratton (15th year incumbant) agreed to stand for re-election, and there being no other nominations from the floor, the officers were elected unanimously.

Anne Ireland, Galen Beach and Will Brown have completed their 2nd year second term (limit) and are not eligible for re-election in the current year as defined in the bylaws. The three were thanked for their service.

Kathy Weymouth and Anne Levin will continue on the board starting their 2nd year first term. Bob Rothschild, Roger Uhler, Lois Stratton and Janet Coochiaro are starting the 2nd year second term ending at the Annual Meeting in 2012 and will be going off the Board then.

Roger reported that Corinne Hirsch and Blake Ireland have agreed to stand for election for 1st year first term. Nominations were requested from the floor and their being none, the returning and new nominees were unanimously elected.

Contributions Contributions of \$250 to the Loon Preservation Committee and \$300 to the New Hampshire Lakes Association were recommended and approved unanimously. Bob Maloney recommended a contribution be made to the Holderness Historical Society as thanks for the use of the building for our meetings and for providing storage space for our files. The amount of \$100 was suggested and approved.

New Business

Breakins Bob Maloney reported on a series of recent breakins in Holderness which was brought to the attention of the board by Officer Seth Learned of the Holderness Police Department at the June Board Meeting. These breakins occur when no one is home and are thought to be opportunistic and drug related. No weapons are thought to have been involved.

Suggestions for protecting your home are:

- ⑩ Lock your doors when you are out.
- ⑩ Use dead bolt locks
- ⑩ Have motion sensor exterior lights
- ⑩ Security signs (whether you have an actual system or not)
- ⑩ Interior lights on timers
- ⑩ Actual security systems (like ADT)

Chuck Vicinus Memorial A gift of \$100 to the SLCS in memory of Chuck Vicinus was suggested and approved. We were reminded that the photo on the WOPWA website was taken by Chuck from his property.

Wildlife Report The wildlife report included sightings of a porcupine and its baby, a baby fox, bears and cubs, bears in trees and a bear chasing a wild turkey, more deer than in the past (and more deer ticks as well) and a flock of geese which frequent Anne Levin's beach. A prevalence of geese will deter loons. Bob Maloney is willing to scare them off with a gun. Sheep dogs are a deterrent also. This is the first year we've seen geese on White Oak. The wildlife sightings will be posted on the website.

Miscellaneous Roger La Rochelle added that the outflow from White Oak Pond into Millbrook is eroding on the Squam Lake side of Route 3 & 25, and SLCS is working to have this controlled. The historical uses of the brook were discussed and mention was made of the white sucker fish. We were asked again to be aware of people taking large quantities of them during the spring migration and report it to the SLCS or SLA.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mimzie Uhler
Secretary