



2016

ANNUAL REPORT



Brewster is a special place for ponds! Whether swimming, boating, or just sitting on the shore, our town's eighty ponds provide an oasis of beauty and tranquility in today's busy world. But the present-day world also threatens our ponds' very special nature. Human impacts, including septic systems, stormwater runoff, and lawn fertilizers, can impair pond water quality; encourage invasive species and algae blooms; and even cause fish kills.

The Brewster Ponds Coalition's mission is to preserve and nurture Brewster ponds, and in 2016, we worked diligently on this purpose: educating the public on pond-friendly practices; advocating on pond-related issues and projects; building stronger community ties; and developing practical water quality remediation models.

*We seek to keep Brewster's ponds clean,
safe, and beautiful for today and tomorrow!*



**Brewster
Ponds
Coalition**

FINANCIAL

SNAPSHOT

Actual 2016

July 1, 15' - June 30, 16'

Budgeted 2017

July 1, 16' - June 30, 17'

Income	\$22,000	\$26,000
Expenses	\$5,800	\$25,000
Bank Balance	\$19,326	\$20,326
Memberships	300	350



The Brewster Ponds Coalition has become an important environmental asset to Brewster. Its focus on education and proactive stewardship of our ponds is just what is needed. We are supporting members and urge you to join us to improve the health of our ponds.



~ Peter Johnson, Trustee and Land Acquisition Director, **Brewster Conservation Trust**



A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Thank you for being the voices of our ponds!



Tom Vautin
PRESIDENT

We are most grateful to the 300 individuals and families who have supported our efforts this year. This level of commitment is far exceeding our expectations, and it's clear that protection of our fragile freshwater resources is a high priority for the people of Brewster - residents and visitors alike.

Today, our kettle ponds, which formed during the retreat of the glaciers 15,000 years ago, are under enormous pressure from human activities. Brewster's resident population has increased by over 500% since 1970, and many of our ponds are now surrounded by development. Although returning to the pristine conditions that followed the last ice age is not possible, we still must do whatever we can to protect our ponds and their close connection to Cape Cod's precious sole source aquifer.

Through your involvement, the Brewster Ponds Coalition is already making a difference!

ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Exploring healthy ponds through poetry.

Education and Outreach

BPC programs continued to inform the public on pond-related issues and best practices. Over 100 people attended the BPC's first-ever What is a Healthy Pond Art Fest? in March to view pond themed art and explore the healthy pond concept creatively and scientifically. The BPC participated in the Science On The Street learning experience in April and repeated its popular Weed Watchers Workshop in June. Children earned a Be A Pond Hero Badge at July's Brewster Conservation Day by making pond-friendly choices in our new interactive game.

The BPC Organization

The BPC took great strides to build a sustainable organization with active members in the past year. The first Annual Appeal struck a resounding chord and more than 300 individuals (double our expectation) became contributing Annual Members. In February, fifty members attended the first annual Membership Breakfast meeting to share their ideas on BPC direction, which influenced board members' first annual strategic planning retreat in June. Volunteers signed up for newly formed working groups and participated in BPC activities throughout the year.



BPC Volunteer, Catherine Diao, helps with our new Be a Pond Hero Game.

Pond Remediation

The BPC achieved a major milestone this year with the development of its practical resources to tackle complex pond stewardship projects. The Pond Waterfront Improvement Guide - now on the BPC website - directs readers through a rain garden design and installation project, and takes them through a town conservation commission approval process. BPC's forthcoming how-to video addresses stormwater run-off solutions. In July, board members visited Massachusetts Alternative Septic System Test Center to learn about alternative septic systems.



Ben Howard, AmeriCorp Member; Noelle Bramer, Town of Brewster Conservation Administrator; and BPCers Gwen Pelletier, Janice McGann, and John Keith discuss The Pond Waterfront Improvement Guide.

Neighborhood Connections

The BPC began building a network of Brewster pond and neighborhood associations to strengthen community engagement in tackling complex pond-related problems. It organized its first Pond and Neighborhood Summit in July to bring together Brewster associations and homeowner groups to discuss the state of our ponds, protection and remediation strategies, and potential Town regulatory activity. The Blueberry Pond and Elbow Pond Associations connected with the BPC about their specific-pond issues, too.



Hal Minis, Brewster Conservation Trust President; Tom Vautin, Brewster Ponds Coalition President, and John O'Reilly, Engineer discuss storm run-off at Blueberry Pond.

Advocacy

The BPC continues to champion Brewster ponds. BPC board members commented on proposed town septic system and stormwater regulations, and upcoming pond landing projects. It compiled a list of pond road run-off hot spots around town, and discussed with the Brewster Conservation Commission. The BPC works with the Brewster Department of Natural Resources on the Brewster Ponds and Lakes Stewards Program. BPC team members collected over 30 bags of trash and recycling on Beautify Brewster Day, and board members attended the Cape Cod Commission's One Cape Summit on regional water quality planning.



Past BPC President, Karen Malkus-Benjamin and Current BPC President, Tom Vautin, attend the One Cape Summit.

2017 Goals

- Expand member engagement and enjoyment of our ponds through various events, volunteer opportunities, and interactive programs.
- Advocate for pond and water quality protection through expanded educational activities, practical resources, and participation in appropriate regulatory development.
- Answer the question: "How are our ponds doing?" with updated data and improved testing protocols.
- Research state-of-the-art techniques for pilot projects and pond protection and remediation strategies.
- Continue to grow public awareness and strengthen networks with other environmental organizations, and pond and neighborhood associations.

2016-2017 BPC Board Members

Tom Vautin, [President](#)
John Keith, [Vice President](#)
Patricia Monahan, [Treasurer](#)
Gwen Pelletier, [Clerk](#)
Karen Malkus-Benjamin, [Education & Programs](#)
Konrad Schulz, [Communications](#)
Dawn Walnut, [Membership](#)

BPC Communications Team

Judy Pirani
Sue Spencer

“ In my 30 years, as Brewster Town Administrator, I was fortunate to work with many fine organizations. The Brewster Ponds Coalition ranks high on that list. They have quickly stepped into an important leadership role for our ponds. I encourage the Brewster community to enthusiastically support this important group. ”

~ Charles Sumner, Town Moderator, Brewster.
Executive Director for Pleasant Bay Community Boating.

Thank you to Our Supporters

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YES! I want to help too!

Join Us in Helping Brewster Ponds
Annual Membership \$50

Make checks payable to Brewster Ponds Coalition
or donate online at brewsterponds.org

Please include email address and pond affiliation with donation
Members receive our quarterly newsletter, special reports,
membership decal, and invitations to all events.

Members who contribute \$150 or more receive a BPC hat

Thank You!

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