Brewster Ponds Coalition

Annual Meeting

August 15, 2026

Our Mission:

To protect and improve the health of Brewster's ponds through science, education and advocacy

Brewster Ponds Coalition

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2026 Annual Meeting Agenda

- Introduction of the Board
- 2026 Highlights
- Current Priorities
- Financial Summary
- Acceptance of ‘25 Minutes
- Board Elections
- Splash Award
- **Keynote Speakers**
  - Mark Nelson, Horsley Witten Group: Brewster’s IWRMP
  - Dr. Kimberley Crocker-Pearson, Brewster Natural Resource Advisory Commission: Brewster’s Pond Management Plan

Board of Directors:

John Keith – President

Kevin Kearns – Vice President

Susan Bridges – Treasurer

Bruce Semple – Secretary, Pond Outreach

Ron Essig – Citizen Science

Marcia Kielb – Pond Education

David Jacobs – WRTF

Administrative Consultant:

Jane Savio

The Leadership Team

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2026 Highlights: IWRMP and PMP

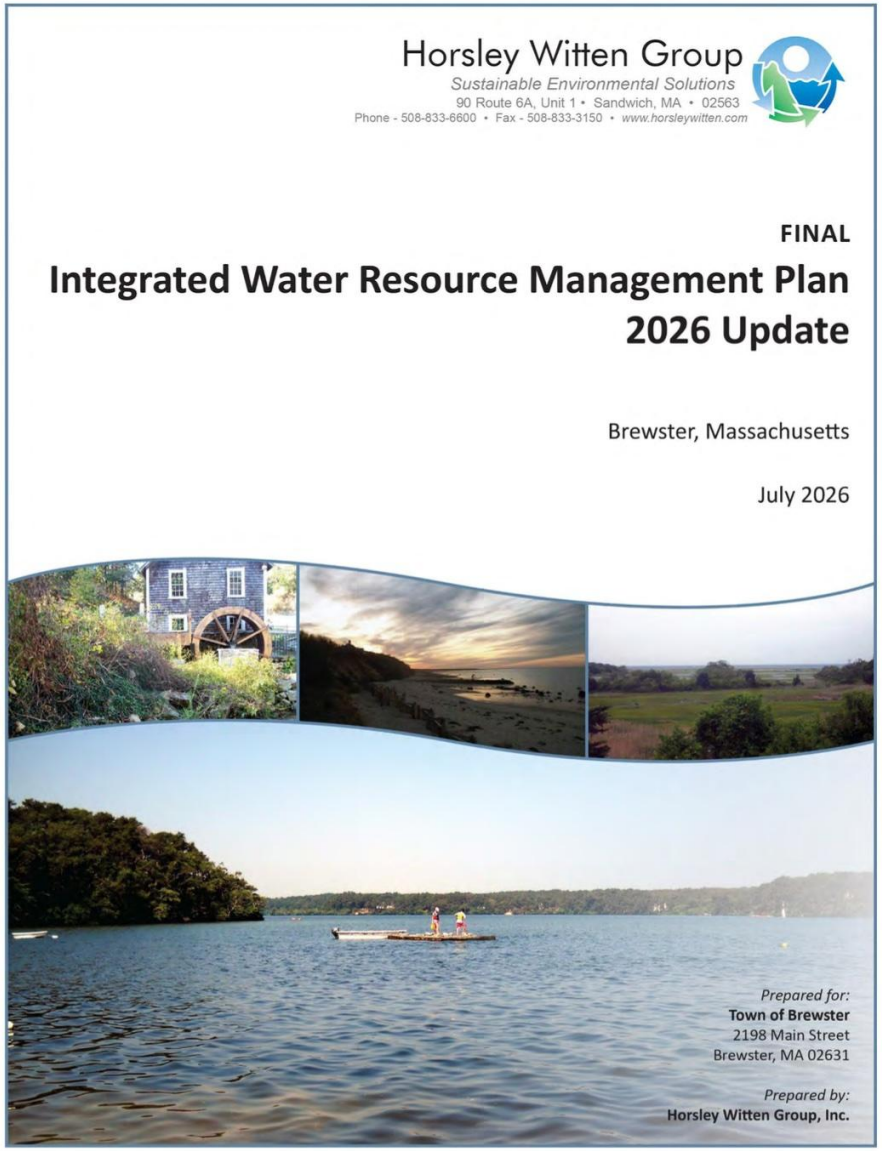
Town completed the updated Integrated Water Resource Management Plan (IWRMP)

- A town-wide summary of wastewater management and water resource protection needs related to drinking water, coastal estuaries and ponds, including treatment needs and a review of alternative strategies
- BPC provided extensive comments and review of the plan, and had the Town enhance several areas of evaluation in the plan

Town completed the draft Pond Management Plan

- Review of the impairment status of and threats to major ponds and prioritization of detailed pond studies
- BPC provided input to plan development, and helped with assessment of septic systems around ponds

BPC advocated for the IWRMP and PMP, which lay the ground-work for future protection on ponds and our water resources



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2026 Highlights:
Septic System Impact Study in Progress

- **Purpose:** to improve the understanding of how phosphorus travels from septic systems to the ponds through sandy Cape Cod soil
- **Variables:** age of system; distance to pond; elevation; iron and manganese in soil; septic system usage
- **Scope:** examine representative homes by installing monitoring wells down-gradient from leach fields and sample over a one-year period for phosphorus, nitrogen, and other parameters

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Septic System Impact Study Status

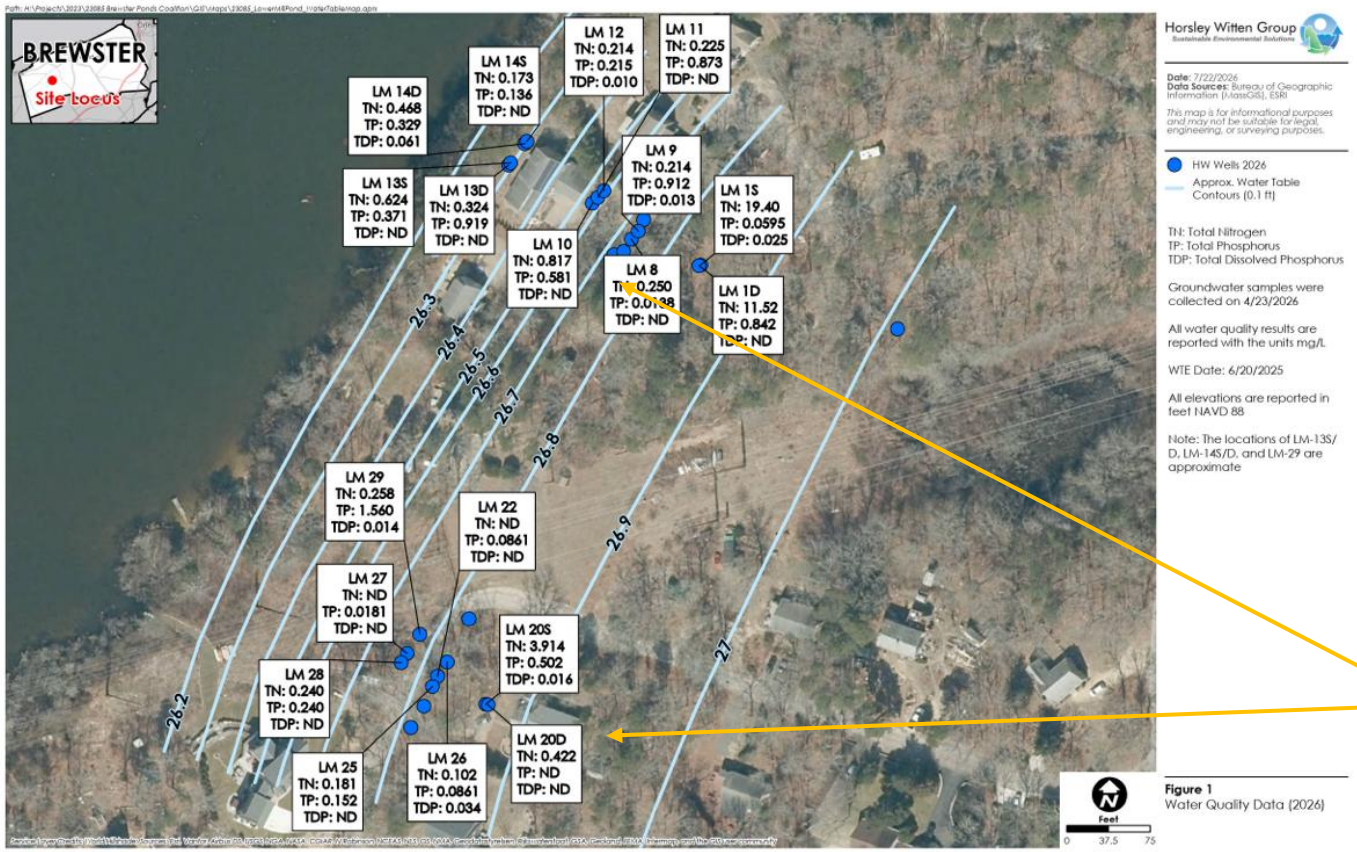

Figure 1
Water Quality Data (2026)

- Monitoring wells constructed and surveyed at two houses on Lower Mill, and one each on Elbow and Griffith ponds
- Groundwater flow direction confirmed
- Samples taken in late summer and fall 2025, and spring 2026
- Sampling planned for August 2026
- Report to be complete in late 2026

Houses in Study:
376 Run Hill Rd
53 Mill Pond Dr

Groundwater flow direction

Preliminary Results:

- Phosphorus travels >200 ft in groundwater from septic systems
- P from systems high above aquifer unlikely to impact aquifer if iron present in soil

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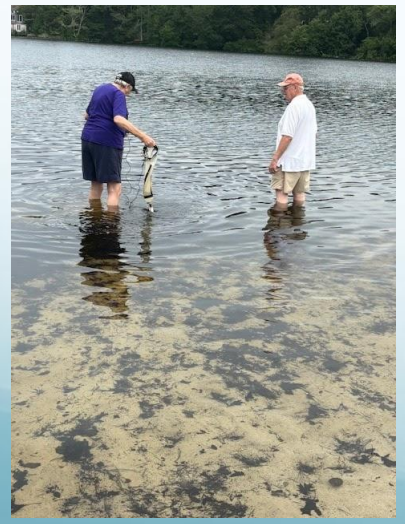
2026 Highlights: Citizen Science



- **Cyanobacteria Monitoring:** in its 10th year with 60 volunteers sampling 19 ponds bi-weekly from May through October.

- **Partnerships:** Water samples collected by BPC volunteers are analyzed by APCC. These results, photographs, and visual observations are considered by Brewster's Health Director in making decisions on posting cyanobacteria advisories.

- **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Project:** in its 5th year with 9 volunteers measuring water clarity at the deepest point of 5 ponds to answer the research question “Can satellite imagery be used to monitor pond health?”

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2026 Highlights: Pond Education

- Provided Pond Education and hosted field trips for 2nd and 5th grade students from the Stony Brook and Eddy elementary schools. Participants this year included 125 students,17 staff, and 15 BPC volunteers.
- Students used magnifying equipment and computer microscopes to view many macroinvertebrates species, including an Eldar (a juvenile American Eel).

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2026 Highlights: Scholarship Awards

The BPC Student Scholarship Committee presented a $2,000 award to each of two Nauset Regional High School graduating seniors who are planning future studies that align with the mission of the organization.

- Bennett McKenna of Brewster plans to study Environmental Engineering and Computer Science at Dartmouth College and is committed to using scientific analysis to guide practical solutions.

- Mae Naas of Yarmouth Port will be studying Chemical Engineering at Brown University and plans to explore how chemical engineering can promote environmental sustainability.

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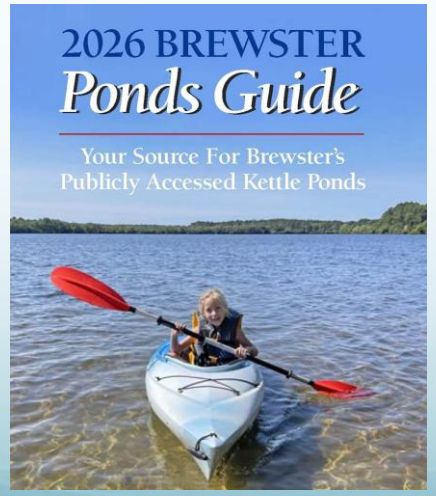
2026 Highlights: Pond Outreach



- *2026 Ponds Guide* available at public beaches and other locations
- Working with pond associations regarding their beaches to:
  - Allow Town to conduct cyanobacteria monitoring and if needed posting advisories
  - Register for required E. coli testing by Barnstable County
- Discussions about projects to reduce stormwater runoff to Greenland, Seymour and Upper Mill ponds
- Expansion of the Pond Protection Pledge Program with new signs

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Fall 2025 and 2026 Adult Programs

- Old Ladies Against Underwater Garbage talk about cleaning up ponds
- Peter Jensen (Terra Firma Permagardens): Zen and the Art of Watercycle Management; Climate-wise Lawns and Meadowscaping
- 2026 Pond Summit: How Brewster Protects Pond Users from Cyanobacteria Blooms
- Flora & Fauna at Brewster's Ponds: Peter Trull and Julie Hambrook

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2026 Highlights: Town-wide Events

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Strategic Long-Term Planning Goals

Our Mission: To protect and improve the health of Brewster's ponds through science, education and advocacy

- Work with the Water Resource Task Force and Select Board to implement wastewater management and water protection measures as described in the 2026 update to the Integrated Water Resource Management Plan and Pond Management Plan
- Continue and expand water quality testing and scientific research
- Work with neighborhood associations, the DPW, DNR, and Conservation on pond remediation projects
- Educate the community about water quality issues and their critical role in protecting this important resource

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2026-2027 Priorities

1. Assist the Town with conducting detailed Pond Studies
    - With the Town, develop scopes of work and initiate work on 4 or 5 detailed studies on priority ponds (with most work being done next summer)
    - Fund two or three studies (with other studies to be funded by the Town)
    - Provide volunteer support for work in the studies where feasible in order to reduce costs, expedite work, and have community engagement in the work
2. Complete the Septic System Impact Study regarding phosphorus travel from septic systems towards ponds, and share findings broadly with the Town and others
3. Continue to work with the DPW, pond associations. and Brewster Conservation Trust regarding stormwater remediation or other projects to protect ponds
4. Continue cyanobacteria monitoring and testing program
5. Continue pond education and awareness programs for students and adults

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Financial Summary

Unrestricted Income & Expenses (thousands)

FY - 2025

Total Income: $103.0

Total Expenses: $99.8

- Administration $15.1
- Programs & Projects $42.1
- Education & Outreach $37.2
- Fundraising $5.4

Account Balances (as of December 2025):

- Unrestricted cash: $220.8
- Restricted funds: $39.7

July YTD - 2026

Total Income: $41.6

Total Expenses: $45.6

- Administration $7.6
- Programs & Projects $15.4
- Education & Outreach $18.8
- Fundraising $3.8

Account Balances (as of July 2026):

- Unrestricted cash: $216.8
- Restricted funds: $39.7

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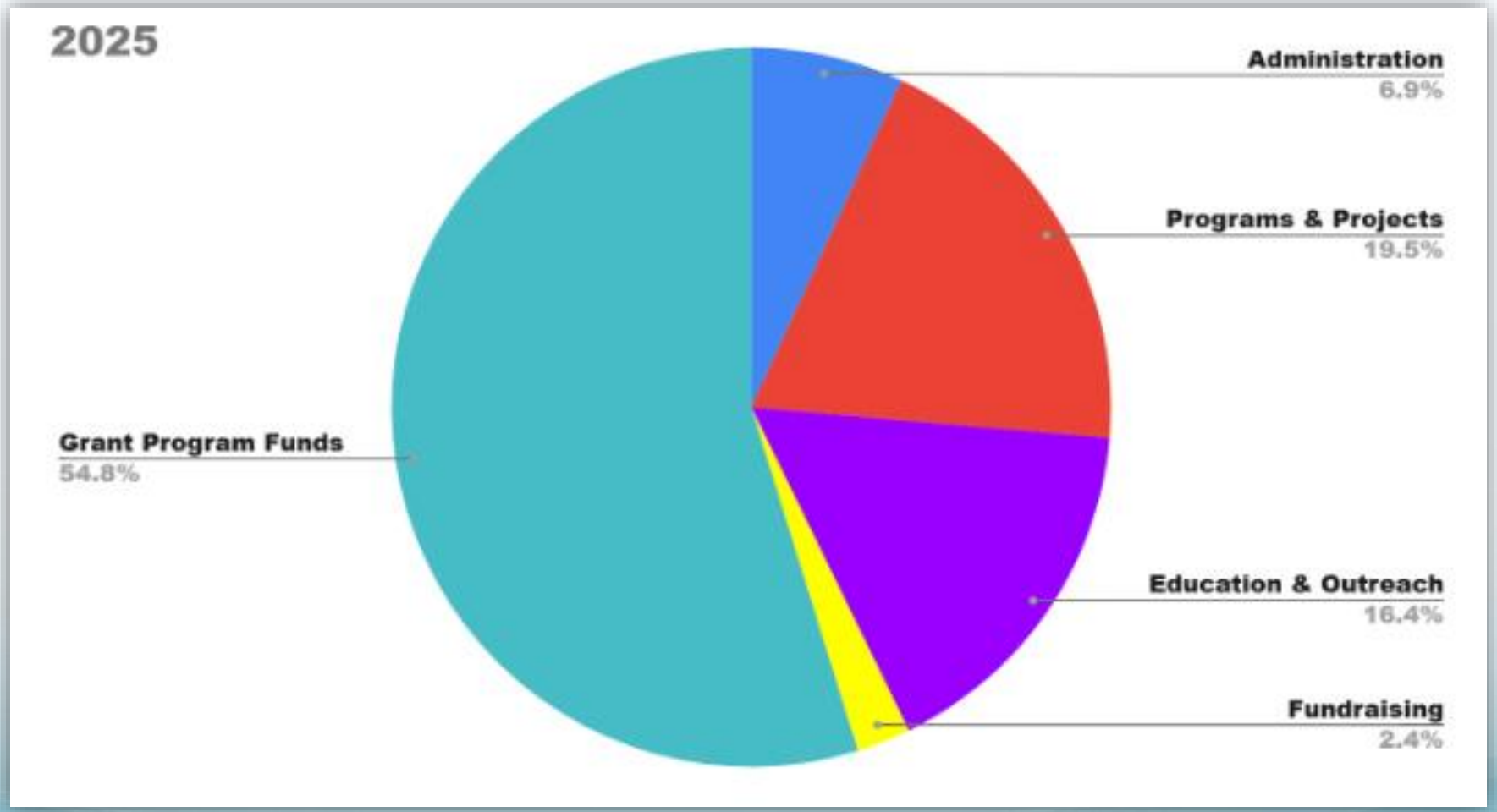
How We Spend Your Donations



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Status of the Board of Directors

Background

In accordance with the Bylaws of the Brewster Ponds Coalition, election of Directors takes place at the Annual Meeting of the Corporation.

The BPC Board of Directors has staggered three-year terms to ensure continuity of leadership. Current “classes” are:

2027 – Ron Essig, John Keith, Marcia Kielb
2028 – Susan Bridges, David Jacobs, Kevin Kearns, Bruce Semple

As all seven members of the Board of Directors are currently within term, no annual elections are required.

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2025 Splash Award

Awarded annually to the BPC volunteer who has made a ***splash*** through his or her contributions to improve the water quality, beauty, or natural habitats of Brewster's Ponds.

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Opportunities for Participation in BPC Work

Our Mission: To protect and improve the health of Brewster's ponds through science, education and advocacy

- Join our Citizen Science Team for cyanobacteria monitoring of ponds
- Help work on detailed Pond Studies when initiated – shore line and biota surveys, data evaluation, possibly other (drone surveys?)
  - Volunteers can keep costs down and expedite work, maybe enable more studies
- Join our Education or Events team to help raise awareness about water quality issues and pond protection needs
- Take the Pond Protection Pledge (signs available)

Please Join Us!