

ARROWSIC CONSERVATION COMMISSION

June 17, 2014 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT Mildred Stafford, Noreen Blaiklock, Ralph Pope, Karen Robbins, Phine Ewing, Jack Witham, Bob Ater, Mark Geiger, Jennifer Geiger, Sukey Heard, Bill Savedoff, Michele Gaillard

ICE FISHING Having heard complaints about the increased ice fishing traffic on Sewall Pond and all that it brought, the conservation commission invited shorefront landowners to our June meeting to discuss their concerns and possible solutions.

Inland Fisheries and Wildlife stocked Sewall Pond with Trout at the beginning of last winter, for the benefit and enjoyment of the ice fishermen. Karen reported that warden Doug Kulis told her that IF&W has been assessing ponds down the Arrowsic/Georgetown peninsula for suitability for stocking. Sewall Pond was deemed the most suitable with regard to size and accessibility. They already stock Nequasset and several ponds in Phippsburg.

Along with the lure of the trout came a number of problems. There were a lot of fishermen (up to 70 were counted on one particular day, the day that the Phippsburg Rod and Gun Club sponsored a tournament). This increased activity had a number of negative effects:

- Cars parked along Rt.127 from south of the pond access point to the Aters' driveway, causing safety concerns
- SUVs driven out onto the ice (around the rocks so clearly placed to prohibit vehicular traffic, over brush and small trees)
- Nearby driveway was commonly used as a parking spot by people other than the landowner.
- More beer bottles/soda bottles/other trash left behind than ever before.
- Fishermen made their own trails through the Holt property to cut and haul out firewood for bonfires on the shore and on the ice.
- Such heavy fishing traffic on the ice ruins the cross country skiing and ice skating.

It was noted that the Rt. 127 access point to Sewall Pond is over private property, and that access here is a privilege allowed by the landowner, not a right. If the landowner wishes to terminate public access because of misuse, she can. There would still be access over the town owned conservation area on the eastern shore, although it would not be nearly so convenient for ice fishermen with equipment to haul to the pond.

Some proposed solutions:

- Request that the pond not be stocked
- Request that fewer trout be stocked, especially with regard to the oversized trout

- Contact sponsor of the ice fishing tournament about etiquette and private property concerns
- Contact Doug Kulis and regional fish biologist with list of complaints and ask for meeting

We will talk to Doug Kulis and find out to whom we address complaints.

The ice fishing portion of the meeting ended at 8:00, and everyone left except members of the conservation commission.

**RESIGNATION** In an email containing March's minutes, Nancy Sferra wrote that she thinks it is time for her to step down from the conservation commission, pleading conservation overload. This was not greeted favorably by the committee. There was some grumbling about not accepting her resignation, or requesting she find her replacement before she's off the hook. Thank you, Nancy, for many years on the committee and for all the minutes you've taken!

**MINUTES** of the March meeting were accepted as amended. Minutes of the May meeting were accepted as written.

**LETTER TO RECYCLING COMMITTEE** Phine produced a draft letter to the solid waste and recycling committee concerning roadside clean up. The letter said that picking trash up out of the roadside ditches is hot, dirty work, and that we are not willing to ask volunteers to carry more than the two bags (one for trash, and a smaller one for returnable bottles) that we currently supply them. The letter also invites them to one of our meetings, and/or offers to coordinate with them next year, particularly if they want to separate out the recyclables as the trash arrives at town hall. The letter was deemed fit to send, so everyone signed it and it was delivered to the recycling committee's mailbox.

**PESTICIDE NOTIFICATION** Paul Schlein sent the conservation commission information on peoples' right to be informed about pesticide spraying in their neighborhood, and asked if we would be interested in requesting the selectmen to send it out as an official notice. The commission voted in the affirmative. Phine will send the request to the selectmen.

**TURTLES** Karen reported three dead turtles and two rescued along Rt. 127 within the last couple of weeks. She wondered if a few "Slow, Turtles" signs sprouting along this stretch of road in early June during egg laying season might help save a few turtle lives. She will look into finding some young folks who might be willing to paint such signs.

**ALEWIVES** The alewife trap was installed earlier this year than any previous year, and was pulled on June 5, later than any other year. The water throughout the counting season was cooler than any other year, and the water level never dropped

below the bottom of the culvert. We counted almost 8,000 fish, our second highest count.

**CULVERT** The request for proposals for the culvert was published in the paper today. Bids are due by July 10, and the winning bid will be selected by July 23. Karen expects at least four strong proposals. Construction is to start Sept. 1. Mrs. MacKenzie has not yet signed the easement, but she indicated she will be agreeable, if some of her concerns can be addressed first.

**SCHEDULE** Water quality: July 1 Ralph and Karen; July 15, Noreen and Karen  
Clean-up: June 21 Ralph; June 28 Milly; July 5 Phine; July 12 Ralph

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.  
Respectfully submitted,

Phine Ewing