The Herring Ponds Watershed Association

was established in 2007 as a volunteer association to promote the health and enjoyment of the ponds and their watershed. Our work is done through committees of active volunteers:

Water Quality Committee

Tests pond water to monitor changes in water quality, and informs watershed residents of results.

Education/Outreach Committee

Provides information on practices and products that will improve water quality in groundwater and ponds.

Water Safety Committee

Promotes water safety for swimmers and boaters.

Freshwater Invasives Committee

Educates residents about aquatic plants and teaches them to recognize invasive species.

Government Liaison Committee

Monitors Government actions, proposals, etc... that may affect the watershed. Provides voice for watershed residents.

Program Committee

Plans programs of interest for our general meetings.

We collaborate with other like-minded organizations as well as the town, county and state. Our work is supported by volunteers, private contributions, and by assistance from the Town of Plymouth Environmental Management Division.

We really do need your help! Become a member and join our work!

Register on the web:

www.theherringpondswatershed.org

Or mail to: P.O.Box 522

Sagamore Beach, MA 02562

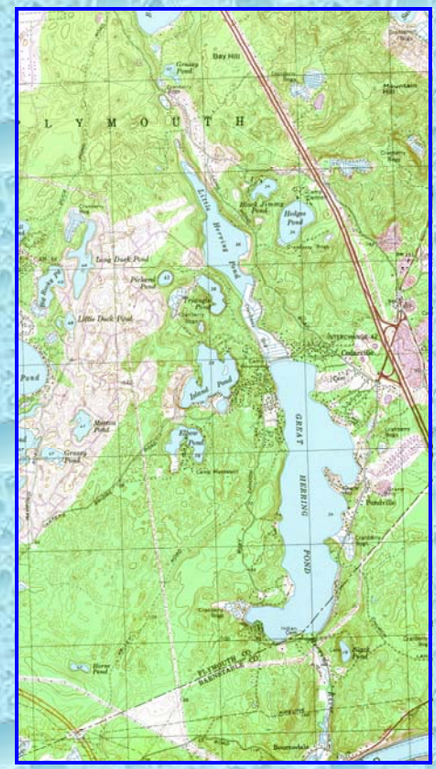
Water Testing Results

Water samples collected by the Watershed Association over several years have contained levels of phosphorus above the eutrophic level. This means the ponds have very high nutrient content which can cause harmful algae blooms and oxygen deficiencies at lower lake levels where cool water game fish prefer to live. The Association is working with the Town and State to determine sources of these nutrients in order to prevent further declines in the health of the ponds in our watershed. Meanwhile, as described in this brochure, there are some specific actions that watershed residents can take to help. On a more positive note, all our water testing has shown very low levels of coliform bacteria, data that should be very reassuring to swimmers.

Help to keep our waters clean & safe!

Join us!

The Herring Ponds Watershed Association



www.theherringponds watershed.org

Little & Great Herring Ponds...

are places of beauty in all seasons. In the summer Great Herring is the stage for a host of recreational activities: swimming, snorkeling, boating, water skiing, jet skiing, windsurfing- and in cold weather ice sailing, skating and ice fishing. Fisherman reel in a variety of fish, among them perch, small mouth bass, hornpout, and pickerel. Alewife and blueback herring migrate through the Cape Cod Canal to spawn in Great Herring Pond. Bird watchers enjoy a great variety of birds and waterfowl, as the ponds are on the "North-South migratory flyway".

The watershed... is the area of land in which water drains to common lowest points be they ponds, rivers, streams or wetlands. Watershed residents share the groundwater from which comes the well water they drink. They also share responsibility for making sure their choices don't harm the water, soil, plants and animals in the area they live. We may not often think about how our habits affect our watershed, but small changes can make a big difference in the health and longevity of our ponds and the quality of our groundwater. Our watershed is the area surrounding and including Little & Great Herring Pond. Little & Great Herring Pond are the two largest ponds in our watershed. Little Herring Pond is a shallow pond of **90 acres** and flows into Great Herring via Carter's River. Great Herring Pond is a **376 acre** pond with an average depth of 20 feet and outlets into Cape Cod Canal at the Bournedale Herring Run.

How YOU can make a difference!

Septic System Care

Homes in the watershed rely on septic systems for wastewater disposal. Septic systems meeting Title V remove harmful pathogens; however will do little to remove nitrogen, phosphates, medications and chemicals. After passing through the treatment system, wastewater is absorbed into the ground and relies on the natural filtering ability of the soils to further clean itself.

Septic systems require regular maintenance. They need to be pumped and inspected every three to five years, depending on usage. Please visit the association website for discounted pumping services and further information on septic systems.

Additional steps to prolong the life of the septic system & protect groundwater:

- Do not use a garbage disposal
- Never flush medications down the toilet.
- Never , dump paint, chemiocals, bleach, coffee grounds down the drain.

Over the last 30 years, the number of homes on Great Herring Pond has increased by 50%. Proper septic system care is more important than ever

How YOU can make a difference!

Pet Waste

Clean up after your pets for your health and the health of our water. When left on streets or lawns, pet waste can wash into a pond, directly or through a storm drain. Either way, it contaminates the water and can cause algae blooms.

Household Products

Phosphate is the main culprit leading to pond eutrophication. You can improve water quality by using phosphate-free household products.

Avoid chlorine and hydrochloric acid (found in bleach & cleaners). Substitute with safer cleaning products such as baking soda with white vinegar.

Waterfowl

Please do NOT feed waterfowl as the droppings include nutrients and bacteria that can be harmful to water quality and human health!

What we put in the ground today,
we may be drinking from our wells
tomorrow!

How YOU can make a difference!

Lawn Care

Lawn care products can easily end up in the ponds and groundwater we drink. Herbicides and pesticides can contaminate pond and groundwater and harm fish and wildlife. Fertilizers containing phosphates promote an increase in algae and aquatic weed growth.

Homeowners can have both healthy green lawns as well as protect the groundwater when they:

- Use organic or **phosphate-free** fertilizer and avoid overuse.
- Don't use fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides near shore lines and before rain storms.
- Direct roof runoff into gardens or **rain barrels** for irrigation. This keeps roof and driveway runoff from washing oils, sediments, waste, fertilizer, etc. into storm drains which discharge into ponds.
- Don't dump grass or leaves into ponds.
- Plant a border of **native plants** (10' to 15' wide) at the shoreline. This will filter contaminants before they reach the water, and improve the groundwater as well.