

HINCKLEYS POND – HERRING RIVER HEADWATERS ECO-RESTORATION PROJECT



The mission of the nonprofit Harwich Conservation Trust (HCT) is to preserve land that protects woods, water, wildlife and our shared quality of life on Cape Cod.

Thanks to Southeast New England Program (SNEP) funding for ecological restoration design and permitting, HCT is leading the effort to rewild retired bogs on Hinckleys Pond at the headwaters of the Herring River in Harwich.



Aerial map of 31-acre project (Jenkins property)

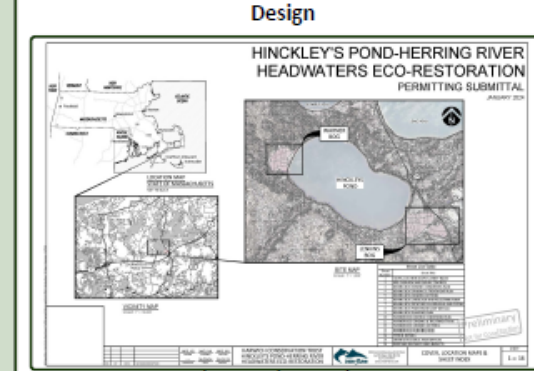


Figure 1: Site Locations



Eco-Restoration Vision

Project Goals

- Revitalize healthy functioning wetlands.
- Enhance water quality.
- Enhance herring spawning habitat in Hinckleys Pond.
- Improve water quality of Herring River downstream of site.

Project Scope

- Ecologically restore two retired bog systems bracketing the NW and SE ends of the 174-acre Hinckleys Pond at the headwaters of the Herring River.
- Ecological restoration design is informed by successful eco-restoration of other retired bogs in southeastern Massachusetts: Plymouth (Eel River, Tidmarsh Farms, and Foothills Preserve) and Falmouth (Coonamessett River and Childs River).

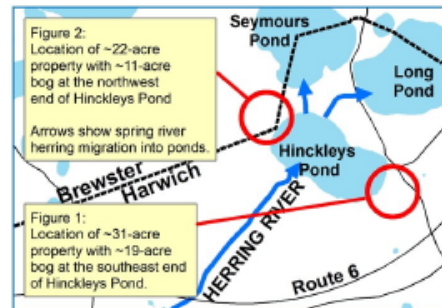


Figure 2: Jenkins Bog Eco-Restoration Design

Project Background

Site Description:

- 11-acre bog (Warner Bog) and 19-acre bog (Jenkins Bog)
- Located at NW and SE ends of Hinckleys Pond at the headwaters of the Herring River (see map below)



Ecological Concerns to be Addressed:

- Excessive nutrient loading into Cape Cod's estuaries and ponds causes water quality degradation, loss of healthy habitat, water access closures, and hinders recovery of the once robust river herring fishery.
- For more than a decade, too much phosphorous entering Hinckleys Pond had caused toxic cyanobacteria algae blooms.
- Ecological stressors from past use like artificial ditching, manipulated water levels, and sand over burden compromise healthy wetland functions.



Project Benefits

1. Create a resilient ecosystem of healthy waters and wetland habitats through the reduction of nutrient loading from two former agricultural sites. Transitioning the property to restored wetland reduces phosphorous load into the pond by up to 7% according to a 2012 Evaluation of Hinckleys Pond water quality report completed by engineering firm CDM-Smith, contracted by the Town of Harwich.
2. Restore 30 acres of healthy wetlands and natural habitat biodiversity.
3. Promote a sustainable community by connecting the public to a new walking trail destination at this ecologically restored destination. Explore potential for creating an All Persons Trail at the 19-acre site that can provide access to people with mobility challenges.
4. Restore public scenic view of Hinckleys Pond from the Cape Cod Rail Trail bike path as well as restore natural pond shoreline to enhance river herring habitat.



Figure 3: Warner Bog Eco-Restoration Design

Sustainable Eco-Restoration Solutions

HCT and partners have been working with Nick Nelson and team from Inter-Fluve, which has completed the 75% design plans for the Hinckleys Pond – Herring River Headwaters Eco-Restoration Project, included in Figures 1-3. For more information about this project, please visit harwichconservationtrust.org.