



Foster's Pond Corporation

www.fosterspond.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Steve Cotton
Pomeroy Road
President

Lynne Whitefield
Pine Tree Lane
Vice President

Janet Kenney
Foster's Pond Road
Secretary

David Brown
Glenwood Road
Treasurer

Dave Adilman
Foster's Pond Road

Steve Ellis
Willard Circle

Amy Janovsky
Snowberry Road

Kemper Mazzarelli
Foster's Pond Road

Martin Rabinowitz
Willard Circle

March, 2011

Your invitation to the Annual Meeting on March 23 is enclosed, along with your 2011 Donation Form.
Thanks!

Steve

Dear Neighbor,

As someone who lives near Foster's Pond, you've driven past the dam on Rattlesnake Hill Road countless times and you've seen it become a gracefully landscaped neighborhood park. It takes a remarkable amount of work to maintain this dam.

All that work is done by the **Foster's Pond Corporation (the FPC) - a non-profit, community-based, all-volunteer organization dedicated to preserving and protecting Foster's Pond.** We own the dam, the only spot where Foster's Pond is visible or accessible from a public road.

This is your neighborhood, and the FPC is your organization. In this annual newsletter letter, I would like to give you a quick update on the FPC, the Pond, and the dam. I invite you to attend the Annual Meeting on March 23. (A notice of the meeting is enclosed with this letter.) And, yes, I'm going to ask you to make a tax-deductible contribution. There's a donation form on the flip side of the meeting notice. Please mail it in, bring it with you to the Annual Meeting, or make your donation on-line at www.fosterspond.com.



The Foster's Pond Dam is owned and maintained by the Foster's Pond Corporation. The crest of the dam is now a community park.

Foster's Pond is a community treasure. Its abundant wildlife, towering pines, tranquil coves, and rich history are woven into the fabric of Andover. But it is a fragile resource, and without help from those of us who have the good fortune to live near it, the Pond literally cannot survive. **The Pond's very existence depends on us.**



Hundreds of hours of volunteer labor enhanced the safety of the Foster's Pond Dam. The granite on both sides of the picturesque spillway allow the dam to handle high water without overtopping the earthen crest.

It all starts with the Foster's Pond Dam. Without our 150-year-old dam, Foster's Pond would practically vanish. The original Pond (named in the late 1600's for Andover's 21st resident, Andrew Foster, whose wife Ann was convicted of witchcraft in the Salem trials and

died in prison), occupied a small fraction of what is now the Main Pond. The present dam,

built after the Civil War to capture water to power mills in Ballardvale during the dry season, had been ravaged by decades of weathering, off-and-on care, and some inartful repairs dating to the 1930's, when the Foster's Pond Corporation was founded to accept ownership from Frances Foster.

In 2007, we brought our dam back from a poison ivy-invested jungle to a charming and tranquil spot from which the entire community can enjoy a magnificent vista of the Pond. But an earthen dam is under constant assault from New England's extreme weather, and our dam requires constant TLC.



This two-foot sinkhole was created by last March's rains.

In 2010, heavy March rains which flooded the Merrimack Valley did not spare our dam. The downpours caused leaks sinkholes, and major repairs were needed.

Like so much of what we do, this work was largely performed by area residents who donated their time. **But we must pay for materials and engineering services, and your contribution is essential for us to**



It took two tons of concrete to fill this cavern under the spillway after the March flooding.

maintain the dam.



Volunteers excavate the sinkhole last summer..

The 2010 repairs required an engineer's inspection, rental of a mini-excavator, and deployment of concrete truck and a pump truck to pour seven cubic yards of concrete. We had to buy tons of crushed stone and loam. We even needed to pay for a police detail to direct traffic around the dam. And we needed to buy grass seed to restore the erosion-



The Pond was kept low last summer so that leaks in the sluiceway could be repaired by neighborhood residents.

resistant grass cover that protects the dam's clay fill during heavy rains.

Even with the hundreds of hours of volunteer labor donated by area residents, we couldn't have restored the dam without your financial support.

Thank you to our many volunteers - and our many donors!



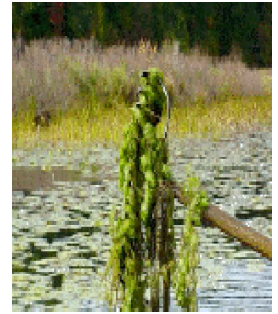
Seven cubic yards of concrete, pumped from equipment on Rattlesnake Hill Road, fortified the dam's most vulnerable flanks.



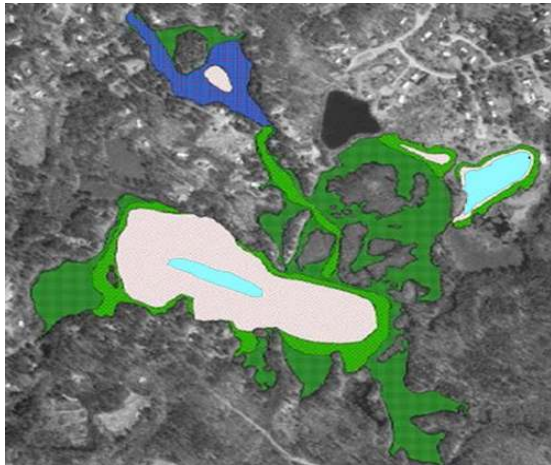
Tons of loam and crushed stone went into finishing the work last Summer.

The FPC has made just as dramatic a difference to Foster’s Pond itself.

Foster’s Pond faces an ongoing threat from non-native, invasive weeds. One species - *Cabomba caroliniana*, or “**fanwort**” - nearly took over the Pond, driving out native plants while growing to cover over half the surface area. Fanwort clogged much of the Pond with mats thick enough to trap fish and dense enough to drain life-sustaining oxygen from the water. Left unchecked, fanwort can kill a pond.

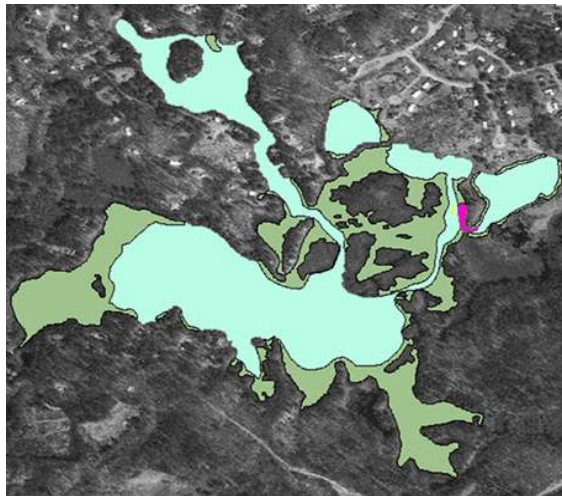


Fanwort, before treatment: Stick a fork in the Pond, and you’d come up with this.



2004: Before we treated the entire Pond in 2005, weeds were everywhere, and fanwort was the dominant plant in the pink, blue and light green areas above. The dark green is lilies..

But with the help of people like you, we are saving Foster’s Pond. Based on careful research and field study, we’ve developed a comprehensive lake management program to combat nuisance weeds and keep the Pond healthy. In 2005, we treated all 120 acres of the Pond. In 2006, we extended the treatment to “Dug Pond,” the adjacent Town-owned swimming hole on Glenwood Road. In 2007, we re-treated an 18-acre area in which fanwort’s basketball-sized root masses, buried deep in the Pond’s thick sediments, had survived.

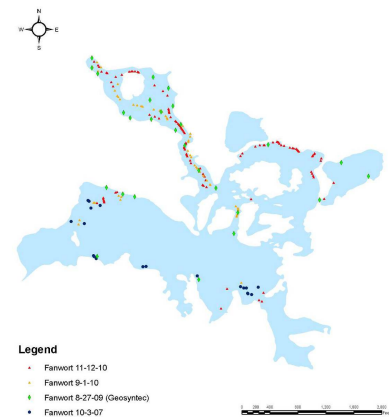


2008: The only fanwort detected in 2008 was growing in the pink area. Green denotes water lilies, blue is open water.

We keep a close eye on how the Pond is doing, so that we can make informed decisions on how to manage it. We’ve commissioned surveys of aquatic vegetation in Foster's Pond every year since 2004. The results of our treatment program remain astonishing. In 2004, before we treated, fanwort was the dominant plant in Foster’s Pond. **Before we treated in 2005, fanwort was practically everywhere, covering more than 54% of the Pond. In 2008, fanwort covered less than 1% of the Pond, and in 2009 it occupied just 6% per cent of the surface area - one-ninth of its pre-treatment level.** Overall, the Pond remains healthier than it was before we treated. The

2009 survey found 23 native submersed or floating plant species growing in the Pond, up from only 11 in 2004. The total plant cover in 2009 was 34.2%, just half of what it had been five years earlier.

But as we expected, fanwort is beginning to come back. Our 2010 survey found a lot of it in the Channel, in the Outlet Cove near the dam, along the northwesterly shore in the vicinity of Snowberry Road and Azalea Drive, at the mouth of the Mill Reservoir, and in scattered locations in the Main Pond. It is time to treat the entire Pond once again, so that fanwort does not take over. We've had



2010: The dots show fanwort infestations.



Before the first treatment . . .

remarkable success in restoring a more balanced ecosystem, but fanwort is a persistent pest. Weed treatments are not permanent. And they cost money.



. . . and after

The Pond is a living eco-system. Protecting it is a constant - and at times expensive - job. **We can't do**

it without your help. Please contribute what you can to save this wonderful resource in your backyard.

How much should you give? **Based on our experience over the last few years, we suggest an annual contribution of \$250.** Our pledge to you is that we will plan carefully and spend wisely to sustain a program that will protect Foster's Pond for years to come. Whatever you choose to give will be helpful and welcome.

Please complete and return the enclosed contribution form in the envelope we've provided.

Your **tax-deductible contribution** will go towards preserving and protecting Foster's Pond.



Photo by Jon Richards

I invite you to **become a member** of the Foster's Pond Corporation. **Everyone who cares about preserving and protecting Foster's Pond - one of the crown environmental jewels of Andover - is welcome to join.** Come to the Annual Meeting on March 23.


We are entirely a volunteer organization. Your dues and your donation will pay for the substantive work of saving the Pond and protecting its environment - work like fighting weeds, repairing the dam, maintaining the park next to the dam, and mailing out

information like this letter. **The FPC is tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, so your dues and your additional contribution are both fully tax deductible as charitable donations.**

To learn more, visit our Web site, www.fosterspond.com.

And please feel free to contact me - my e-mail address is scotton@fosterspond.com - if you have questions or would like to volunteer. If you **send me your e-mail address**, I'll add you to our list for receiving **periodic updates** on news affecting Foster's Pond. **Your e-mail address will not be furnished to any other individual or organization for any other purpose whatsoever.**

Thank you for doing your part to preserve and protect Foster's Pond.

Sincerely,

Steve Cotton

P.S.: You can also join the Foster's Pond Corporation or donate on-line at www.fosterspond.com. It's easy, and you'll get an instant tax receipt for your records.