

Memorandum

To: Harrisville, NH Selectboard
From: Stoney Beach Research Group
Date: November 15, 2020
Re: Proposals for changes in the Stoney Beach area of Silver Lake

Part One: Introduction

Thank you for all of your support and engagement this summer – much appreciated.

As you know, the Stoney Beach Research Group was formed in August of 2019 under the following terms:

1. Purpose: To gather information and data pertaining to the Stoney Beach area of Silver Lake to better enable the Lake Association to fulfill its mission of promoting conservation and preservation of the region's natural resources.
2. Members (all are members of the Silver Lake Land Trust and/or the Silver Lake Association).
 - a. Ted Braun.
 - b. George Colony
 - c. John Croteau.
 - d. Josh Houle.
 - e. Andrew Macdonald.
 - f. John Newcomb
 - g. Julie Packradooni.
 - h. Barbara Watkins.
3. Term: Fall/Winter/Spring of 2019/2020.
4. Process: The group spent the year researching all elements of the Stoney Beach Area, meeting periodically to surface new areas of inquiry and pooling information.

The group was formed because we recognized that the usage of the Stoney Beach area has changed considerably over the last five to six years.

Part Two: Research Summary

Our research looked at many topics including ownership, history, State of NH involvement, Town of Harrisville involvement, the dam, the boat landing, changes to the road, State and Town regulations, comparative data from other NH lakes, and other matters. Here are the key findings:

- 1) The area is owned by five entities (see Exhibit 1):
 - a. The dam is owned by the State of New Hampshire and is regulated by NH Department of Environmental Services (DES).
 - b. The boat landing and the majority of the land at the southern end is owned by the State of New Hampshire and is regulated by NH Fish and Game (F&G).
 - c. The Town of Harrisville owns a small section (with water frontage) in the southwest corner of the Lake.
 - d. The Seaver Farm Trust owns a large plot of land to the west of the Harrisville section.
 - e. The road is owned by the State of New Hampshire and is regulated by NH Department of Transportation (DOT).
- 2) The State has designated the area a Road To Public Waters (RTPW) site, thereby placing the burden of management and maintenance on the Town of Harrisville. Officials from DES, F&G, and DOT have acknowledged that the State, in consultation, will follow the Town in policy changes.
- 3) The town ordinance of June 17, 1982, updated on July 28, 1994 (see Exhibit 2 below) pertaining to “State-owned property at Silver Lake” specifies a curfew, no swimming, no alcohol, and no over-night parking, subject to \$100 fines.
- 4) In 2010, when the boat landing was re-built, the Town specified that parking would be located in the parking lot and from the parking lot to Westside Road on the north side of Breed Road. The south side of Breed Road was designated “No Parking.” The State agreed to this design in writing.
- 5) DES has expressed concern about swimming on the dam near the lake outlet – its concern is for safety and erosion.
- 6) Twenty one NH lake boat landings were surveyed – primarily in southwestern New Hampshire (see Exhibit 3 below). The average lake acreage per parking spot for those 21 lakes was 28 acres per parking spot. Silver Lake had the second lowest recorded acreage per parking spot at six, meaning that it has four times the average boat load. This has been a primary factor leading to episodes of high lake loading.

Part Three: Recommendations

- 1) Parking (see Exhibit 4 below). Managing parking will increase pedestrian safety, decrease lake loading, decrease the chances of invasives entering the lake, and decrease erosion from foot traffic. We propose that there be 30 parking spots at Silver Lake. Note that this proposal sets lake acreage/parking spot at 12 (346 acres divided by 30) – putting Silver Lake on par with Dublin Lake, Harrisville Pond, Thorndike Pond, and Skatutakee Lake, but still far from the average of 28 found on other comparable lakes. According to data gathered by Lake Hosts at Silver Lake in the pre-Covid year of 2019, there would have been only three days in that summer when 30 spots would not have

handled all visitors – 32 on July 7, 32 on July 14, and 31 on July 28. Here is the proposal:

- a. Single vehicle parking – 15 spots (see Exhibit 4 below).
 - i. Eight in the current parking lot, perpendicular-parked.
 - ii. Seven on the north side of Breed Road adjacent to the parking lot, parallel-parked.
 - iii. Pavement to be marked to indicate spaces.
 - b. Tandem (vehicle with trailer) – 15 spots.
 - i. 13 spots on the north side of Breed Road, starting from the west side of the west entrance of the parking lot extending to West Side Road, parallel-parked. This parking would not encroach on the Seaver Farm Trust conservation land as there is a 12-14 foot right of way to the north of the road (see map and notations from surveyor Ed Goodrich in Exhibit 5 below).
 - ii. Two spots in the parking lot on the north side, east of the perpendicular parking.
 - iii. Pavement to be marked to indicate spaces.
 - c. Emergency/Official parking
 - i. Two spots of parallel-parking on the east side of the dam forebay on Seaver Road for emergency and official parking only.
 - d. No Parking
 - i. On the south side of Breed Road, from the dam reaching west to the Kingsburys.
 - ii. On the north side of Breed Road from Westside Road reaching west to the Kingsburys.
 - iii. On Seaver Road.
 - iv. There is already a “No Parking” sign at the entrance of Westside Road, so no change there.
 - v. At this time, no change is proposed on Eastside Road. However, if boat landing parking were to overflow to Eastside Road, “Resident Parking” or “No Boat Landing Parking” signs should be considered.
 - e. Signage
 - i. “No Parking” in designated areas.
 - ii. “Vehicles With Trailers Only” on the north side of Breed Road west of the parking lot. This is important to ensure adequate parking for trailers.
 - iii. “Vehicles With Trailers Only” on the northeast side of the parking lot.
 - iv. “No Trailer Parking” on the north side of Breed Road adjacent to the parking lot.
 - v. “No Trailer Parking” in the perpendicular parking in the parking lot.
 - vi. “Emergency/Official Parking Only” on the east side of the dam forebay.
 - vii. The SLA has offered to work with the Town to support communication and education around these changes
- 2) New curfew hours. Over the last five years there has been an increase in night-time activity on the dam and in the boat-landing area, including grilling, swimming, fireworks, and partying. According to the standing Town ordinance, the curfew is from 11:00 P.M. to 6:00 A.M.

We recommend that the curfew be changed to 9:00 P.M.-6:00 A.M -- this is a customary curfew found in many NH lake boat landing areas and it accommodates the hours typically required by fishermen. The reasons for this change include safety and the maintenance of reasonable noise and usage levels in night hours.

- 3) Improved signage. In addition to the vehicular signage as mentioned above, we recommend updated signage throughout the area. The reason for this is to make clear the Town and State rules for usage of the landing area. Signage should include:
 - a. Three signs showing the Town ordinance. These should be permanent signs, mounted on U-Channel galvanized posts (see Exhibit 4 below for placement).
 - i. One on the dam.
 - ii. One at the boat landing.
 - iii. One at the west side of the parking lot.
- 4) Increased enforcement. We do not envision continual monitoring of the Stoney Beach area by Town police, but we recommend an increased presence, especially on busy weekends in the summer. The reason is to ensure that users know that the rules and laws governing the area will be enforced. A potential schedule would be:
 - a. One visit a day on summer weekdays – a drive-by at between 9:00-10:00 P.M. to enforce the curfew if Town police are on duty.
 - b. Two visits a day on summer weekends – a drive-by at 1:00-3:00 P.M. to enforce parking, and a second drive-by at between 9:00-10:00 P.M. to enforce the curfew. Again, this would be subject to duty hours for Town police.
 - c. In addition to scheduled drive-bys, an on-call presence is recommended.

By no means do we believe that these changes will address all issues presented by the Stoney Beach area -- and facts on the ground are continually changing. But they certainly set us off on a new course of offering improved management of the resource and lowering the chances of personal injury (on and off the water), invasives moving into the Lake, increased erosion of the Lake shore, and decreased water quality via road salts, phosphates, and other pollutants.

The Silver Lake Association and Silver Lake Land Trust boards reviewed this proposal in October, 2020 and have indicated their support.

Thank you for considering this approach.

Respectfully submitted,

The Stoney Beach Research Group.

Exhibit 1: Map showing ownership of the Stoney Beach area

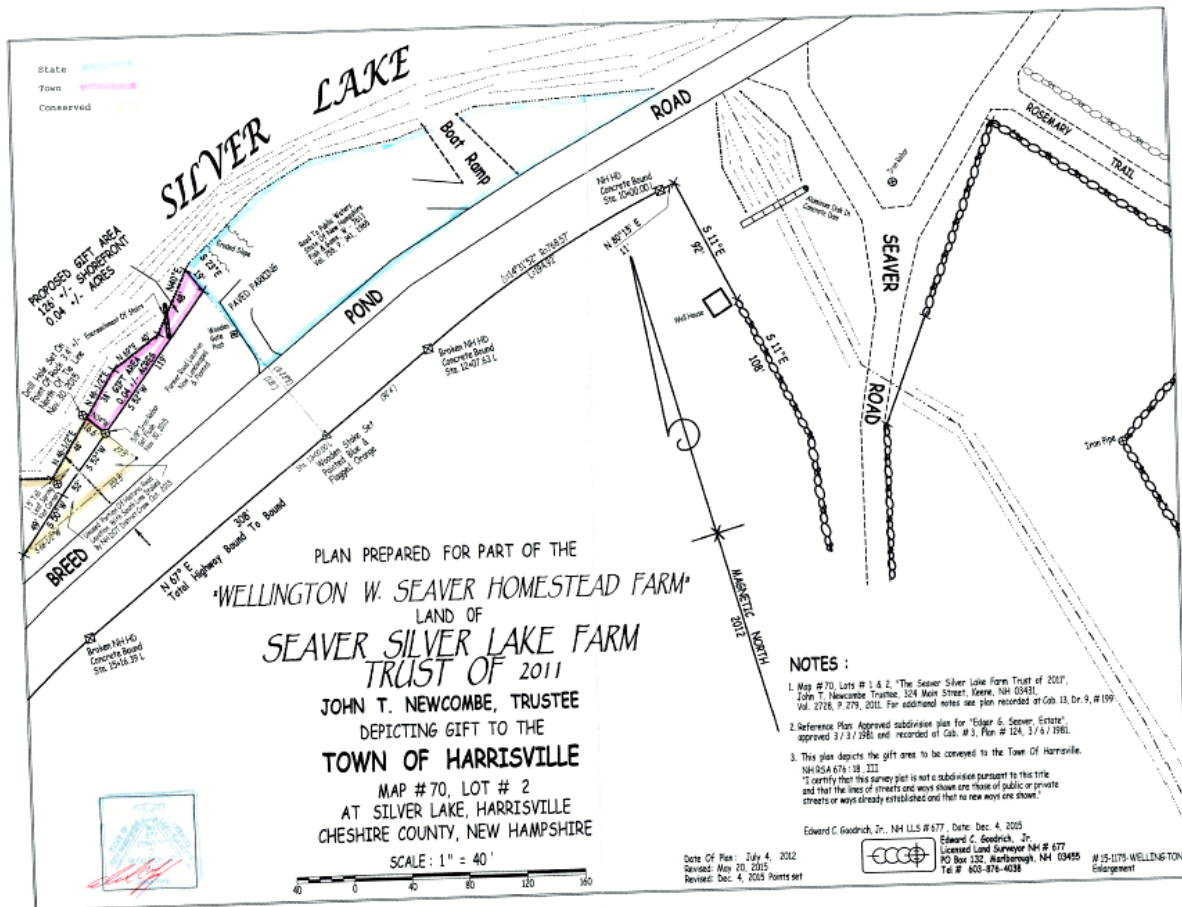


Exhibit 2: 1994 Town of Harrisville ordinance governing the Stoney Beach area

0-2-94

July 28, 1994
To Gretchen Poisson
Town Clerk
Harrisville, NH

Please record in the records of the Town the following changes in the Silver Lake Boat Landing Ordinance, enacted this day by the Selectmen.

This ordinance regulates activity on State-owned property at Silver Lake, Map 73, Lot 1.

1. No alcoholic beverages allowed.
2. Curfew 11:00 PM to 6:00 AM.
3. No over-night parking.
4. No swimming.

These regulations will be enforced by the Police Department per order of the Selectmen.

Any violation of this Ordinance shall be subject to a fine of \$100.00

Marilyn A. St. Peter
Marilyn A. St. Peter

Alan M. Laufman
Alan M. Laufman

Lawrence Rathburn
Lawrence Rathburn

[Signature]

See Selectmen - not Town meeting

Exhibit 3: Spreadsheet comparing 21 NH lakes

NH Lakes Data Base					
The Stoney Beach Research Group. Data gathered and compiled from July 15, 2020-August 4, 2020					
Lake	Town	Acres	Landings	Total	Acres Per
				Parking	Parking Spot
Squam	Holderness/Center Harbor/Sandwich/Moultonborough	6790	4	124	55
Newfound	Bristol/Hebron/Bridgewater/Alexandria	4451	1	39	114
Sunapee	Sunapee/Newbury/New London	4136	4	457	9
Ossipee	Ossipee/Freedom	3245	1	42	77
Silver	Madison	969	1	30	32
Spofford	Spofford/Chesterfield	739	1	16	46
Nubanusit	Hancock/Nelson	718	1	83	9
Highland	Stoddard/Washington	697	2	30	23
Monomonac	Rindge/Winchendon	594	1	14	42
Little Sunapee	New London/Springfield	486	1	13	37
Franklin Pierce	Hillsboro/Antrim	483	1	43	11
Powder Mill Pond	Bennington/Greenfield/Hancock	435	2	120	4
Contoocook	Rindge/Jaffrey	380	1	15	25
Silver	Harrisville/Nelson	346	1	74	5
Thorndike	Jaffrey/Dublin	249	1	22	11
Dublin	Dublin	240	1	21	11
Granite	Nelson/Stoddard	233	1	12	19
Skatutakee	Harrisville	228	1	13	18
Gregg	Antrim	201	1	36	6
Harrisville Pond	Harrisville	138	1	12	12
Swanzey	Swanzey	108	1	10	11
Average		1232		58	28

Exhibit 4: Proposed Silver Lake parking and signage configuration

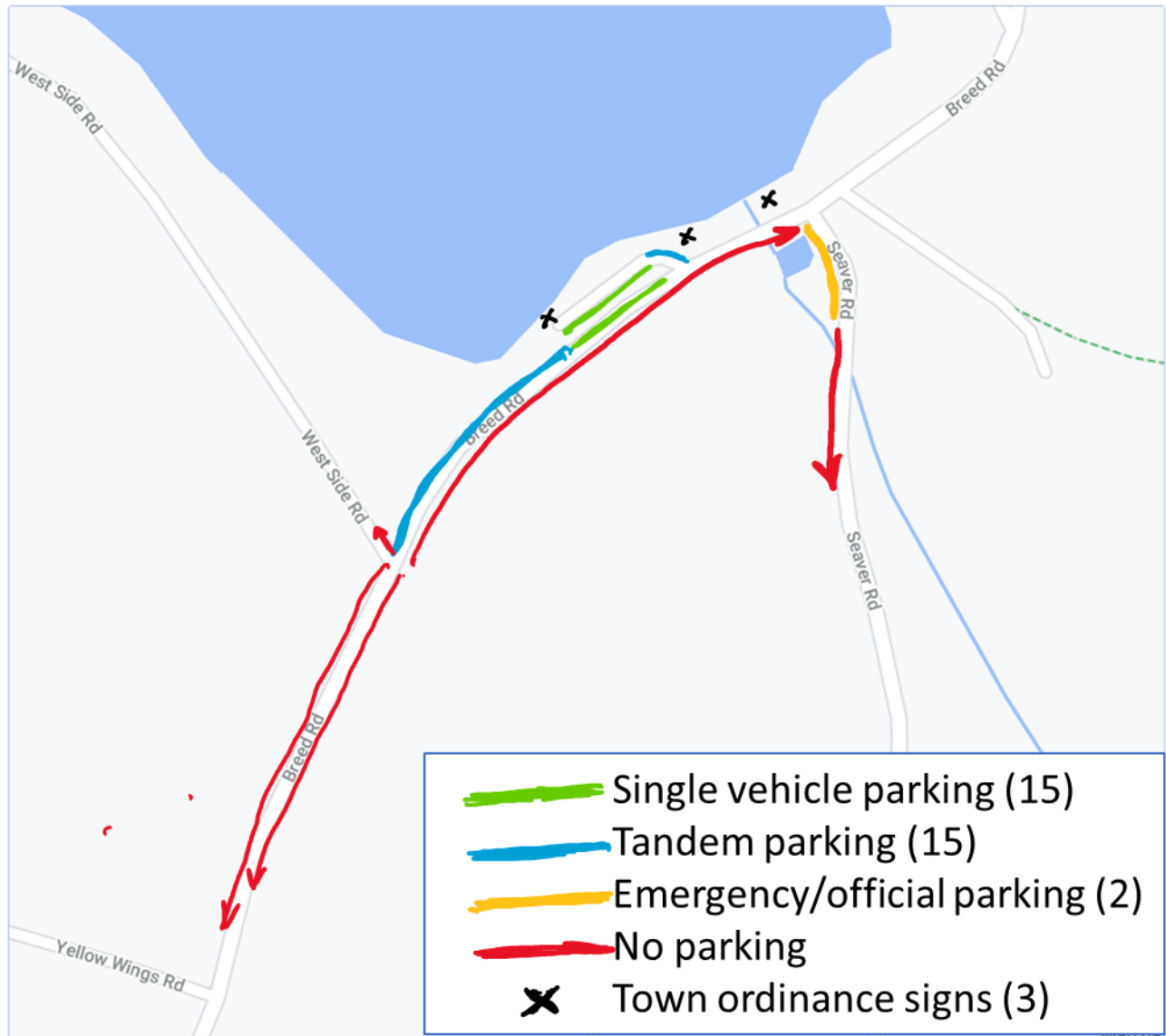


Exhibit 5: Survey showing right of way on the north side of Breed Road

