
Six Ponds Sept newsletter

1 message

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Fri, Sep 23, 2022 at 10:59 AM

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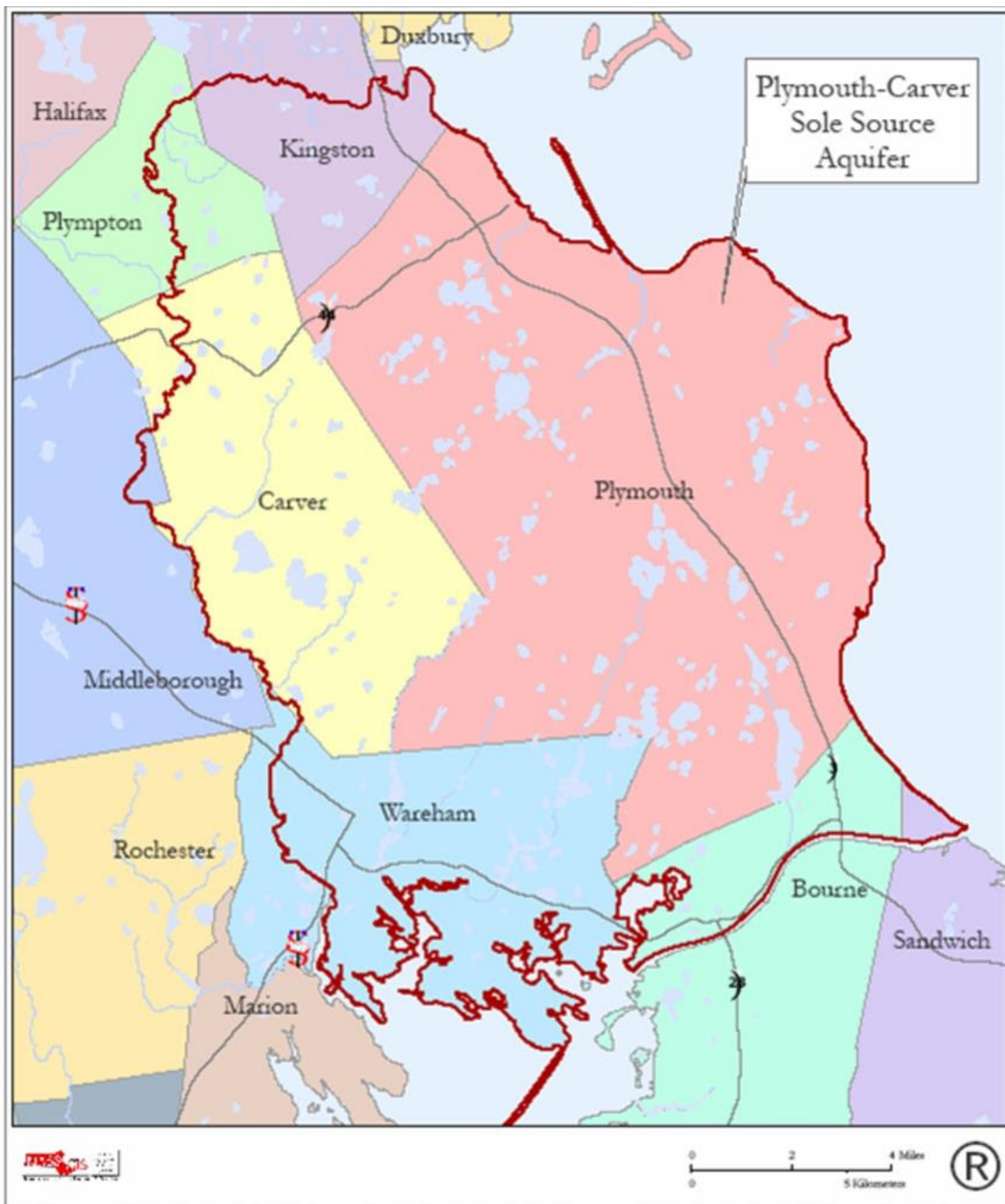
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Six Ponds Summer Potluck Supper

Together in person! It was wonderful to gather on a beautiful summer evening in August at the Wildlands Trust for fellowship and delicious food. Many thanks to Kathy Marks and her volunteers for coordinating such a successful gathering.



2022 Drought

Southeastern Massachusetts is in the middle of a 'critical' drought. Reservoirs are low, and water levels in many wetlands are abnormally low. Wells are stressed by high summer demand that can be nine times winter demand, and many towns have instituted outdoor watering bans, including

Plymouth. Recent rain events have helped, but we are still about 10” under our usual cumulative rainfall for the year.

In the Six Ponds area we all have private wells, but we are accessing water from the Plymouth-Carver Sole Source Aquifer – the same water that the municipality of Plymouth draws from, as well as Carver, Kingston and Wareham.

The problem with private well watering is that every well is a straw sucking water from the same aquifer that feeds our ponds, rivers, wetlands, and municipal wells. The effect of thousands of wells taking water for watering grass is significant. The upper reaches of the aquifer are what maintain vernal pools, recharge wetlands, and feed shallow ponds and streams. If the groundwater level falls below these resources, they will dry up and the wildlife that depends on the moisture will die.

The weather is beyond our control, but the choices we make impact the shortages. The high summer demand for water is primarily driven by outdoor irrigation, and most of that irrigation is to keep lawns green. The combination of no rainfall for groundwater recharge and higher withdrawal for outdoor irrigation greatly strains the aquifer.

How can we help? Water use in homes with irrigated lawns and non-native landscapes is high. Plant species that are water hogs or poorly suited to our soil types, including turf grasses, exacerbates the problem. Lawns require a lot of water to stay green and, even when green, provide little or no support to native species – they are pretty much biological dead zones. Many non-native ornamental shrubs and annual flowers are much the same. They may look pretty, but their presence strains water resources and crowds out more ecologically beneficial native plants.

If we replace our lawn and gardens with more native plantings and allow what lawn that remains to go dormant in summer, outdoor water usage drops appreciably – sometimes to zero! – and your property will also be a haven for pollinators, birds and other wildlife.

Below are photos of a property that has a large planting of natives in the front yard, and the backyard is lawn. The homeowners do NOT irrigate their property at all. Photo August 6, 2022. What a striking difference!

With the global climate crisis, unprecedented heat and summer droughts like we've experienced this past summer are expected to become our new normal.

A significant choice we can make is to replace our thirsty yard plantings with more native plants that support indigenous wildlife species and don't require watering, or pesticides, or fertilizers. Your property will be beautiful, you will not be putting a burden of toxins into our groundwater, you will do less outdoor watering, and it's all easier to maintain – giving you more time to enjoy Summer on the ponds! – *Love Albrecht Howard*





Turtle project in Little Long Pond continues

Dr. Donald Padgett, Professor of Biological Sciences at Bridgewater State University, resumed his study this summer on the abundance of the invasive red-eared sliders relative to the native painted turtles and red-bellied cooters. Dr. Padgett will update us on his project later in the year. In the meantime enjoy this short video about his work.

[Learn More](#)

**It's not too late to join or renew
your membership.**

Please renew or become a member today. If you have any questions, contact Emily Davis snowdavis@aol.com. Thank you for your support!



Renew here



Save the Date

Saturday, October 22

Community Roadside Clean Up

Pick up your purple bags at the corner of Clark and Long Pond Roads at 10 a.m. All ages welcome!

Photo credits: Potluck and Clean Up Day : Caroline Chapin; Drought: Love Albrecht Howard; Video courtesy of Don Padgett.

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