

1 Wayne Conservation Commission

2

3 **Wayne's 100 Acre Wood**
4 **Conservation, Economic and Recreational**
5 **values**

6



7

8

9

10

11

12

Report for the Town of Wayne
June 10 2021

13

14

Table of Contents

15		
16	1.0 Introduction.....	2
17	2.0 Property Description.....	3
18	2.2 Economic Value.....	4
19	2.3 Conservation Value.....	5
20	2.3.1 Water Quality.....	5
21	2.3.2 Forest Management.....	6
22	2.3.3 Wildlife Habitat and Animal Movement Corridors.....	6
23	2.4 Recreational and Health Values.....	7
24	2.4.1 Multi-use trails.....	7
25	2.4.2 Waterfront trails.....	8
26	2.5 Rural Character.....	8
27	3.0 Activities to date and Planned.....	8
28	I think including the letters noted below would be good.	9
29	Further Reading.....	9
30	Photographs of the 100 Acre Wood.....	11
31	Selected Letters of Support.....	12
32		
33		
34		
35		
36		
37		
38		
39		
40		
41		
42		
43		

44 **1.0 Introduction**

45
46 The Wayne Comprehensive Plan, adopted without controversy at Town Meeting in
47 2016, recommends appointment of an “Open Space Committee” to develop an
48 Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Plan (OSP). It also targets retention of 15%
49 (or approximately 1000 acres) of the remaining developable land in town as open
50 space. Elements identified in the Comprehensive Plan supply criteria for
51 implementing the 15% open space goal (pages 2, 39, 42, 90 and other sections).
52 The Comprehensive Plan supplies criteria for assessing property for open space
53 but does not clearly rank sometimes competing values. However, the Plan clearly
54 identifies protecting unbroken forest tracts as a priority. Protecting this land as
55 Open Space is an important step for the Town towards achieving the Plan’s 15%
56 goal.

57
58 In 2013, the Select Board asked the WCC to evaluate the benefits of conserving
59 this land, formerly known as the Wilson Pond Lot. The WCC responded with a
60 strong endorsement of conservation. Later, in 2015, the Board asked the WCC for
61 its views on the costs that would be involved in Town ownership and
62 management. The commission reported on its estimates in some detail at that
63 time. Later, an Open Space Committee studied the situation in detail and sought
64 views at a public meeting. At the 2019 town meeting, the Town voted to retain
65 the property for conservation. In winter 2021, the Select Board named the tract
66 “Wayne’s 100 Acre Wood”

67
68 This report reviews conservation values of the land, recreation and community
69 benefits of this land. It also lists activities on the land to date and nearterm plans
70 for improving access for recreation.

71
72 **2.0 Description of the Land**

73
74 The 100 Acre Wood encompasses approximately 1000 ft. of shore frontage on
75 Wilson Pond and extends up slope toward Morrison Heights. Access is primarily
76 gained from House Rd, which intersects Mt. Pisgah Rd. At approximately 118
77 acres, it is one of 13 remaining parcels over 100 acres in Wayne. The Town’s
78 ownership does not extend to the top of the Morrison Heights ridge line (Hill 664

79 on USGS topo sheet) but does include much of the very steeply sloped eastern
80 watershed draining into Wilson Pond.

81

82 A small section of the northern waterfront is resource protection because
83 it's wading bird habitat which extends around the end of the cove.

84 The combination of water frontage, mixed forests, multiple habitats
85 and most importantly, steep slopes draining into a fragile pond means
86 that careful consideration should be given to its future. Opportunities
87 exist for development of lakeside trails extending beyond the limits of
88 this property.

89

90 *Note: A professional boundary survey has been completed. When*
91 *available, these maps will be replaced by versions from the survey. The*
92 *maps here should not be used to identify specific property boundaries.*

93

94

95

96

97

98

99

100

101

102

103

104

105

106

107

108

109

110

111

112

113
114
115
116
117
118
119
120
121
122
123
124
125
126
127
128
129
130
131
132
133
134
135
136
137
138
139
140



Figure 1. Aerial photograph .

Inset shows the locations of the town of Wayne and the 100 Acre Wood.

2.2 Economic Value

141
142
143
144
145
146
147

It is difficult to place a dollar value on the benefits of conservation of open space especially since these “values” extend far into the future. Balancing future value to the community against potential short term benefits of sale and/or development is challenging. We cannot predict what Wayne will look like or what recreational activities will be valuable 100 years from now. We can assume,

148 however, that there will be more development and more posting of private
149 property. If we do not act now to protect public access to significant parcels of
150 open space within Wayne the opportunities for future residents to visit
151 undeveloped land will decline.

152
153 The economic value of open space now and in the future, is subjective and varies
154 depending on individual preferences and location. There is no “market” trading in
155 these values. Most research on valuation of open space has been done in urban
156 areas because that is where development is most concentrated; as people
157 become more crowded they begin to recognize what has been lost. It is time
158 consuming and expensive to have such a formal economic analysis prepared
159 although tools are available.

160
161 We do know, however, that property adjoining open space is more valuable and
162 even more so if it occurs near population centers. We also know that young
163 families consider opportunity for trails and other local recreation when deciding
164 where to settle. This land is within ten minutes of town by car and in easy walking
165 or biking distance.

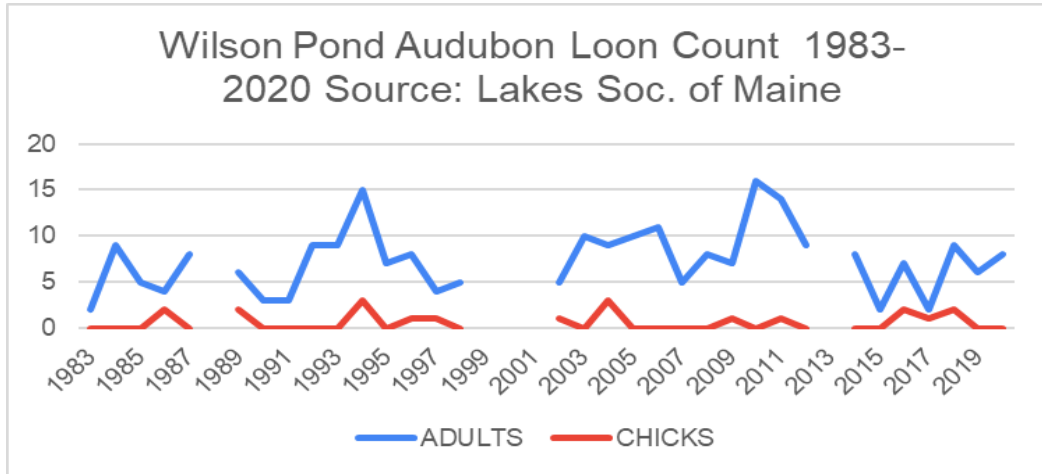
166
167 Maintaining good water quality of the lakes and ponds of Wayne is critical to the
168 economic vitality and the tax base of our Town. Conservation of this parcel as
169 open space is important for protecting the water quality of our most endangered
170 water, Wilson Pond.

171
172 The land provides breeding habitat for forty species of birds. This number
173 increases to 100 species during migration (letter from Jeff Wells, page 18). Birding
174 has the potential to draw in dollars for local businesses, particularly during off-
175 peak months in spring and fall when bird migration is in full swing. Birding is a
176 past-time popular with Maine residents and non-residents alike. Nationwide, in
177 2011, over 7.5 billion dollars was spent by birders on food and lodging. In Maine,
178 689,000 people identified themselves as bird-watchers. Thirty-eight percent of
179 these were state residents and 63% were non-residents.

180
181
182
183

184 Statewide, south of latitude 45 degrees, loon counts have roughly doubled
185 between the early '80s and the last decade. At Wilson Pond, however, no similar
186 improvement is evident.

187



188

189

190

191 **2.3 Conservation Value**

192

193 The Wilson Pond land is environmentally sensitive. It may have unique potential
194 as an educational demonstration area which could drive fund raising for trail
195 development to facilitate recreational use. Its size, location and topography make
196 it a parcel the like of which may never be available for conservation and recreation
197 in Wayne again.

198

199 **2.3.1 Water Quality**

200

201 In terms of protecting water quality, the defining characteristic of this property is
202 steep slopes. The map on page 22 of the Comprehensive Plan shows that the
203 average slope of much of this property is over 20%. These are some of the longest
204 sustained slopes in Wayne. The watershed divide is at the top of Morrison
205 Heights where the elevation is between 690' and 700' above sea level. The
206 elevation of Wilson Pond is 242'. The streams on the property are intermittent
207 with little opportunity for ponding so in addition to sheet runoff, there is potential
208 for significant nutrient laden runoff into Wilson Pond during the spring thaw and
209 storm events. Additional disturbance of the hillside may worsen existing water
210 quality problems in the pond. As it is, the forest cover and mostly undisturbed

211 forest floor on the hillsides slow runoff, enhance rainfall absorption and limit
212 nutrient loading in Wilson Pond. This is increasingly important as intense storms
213 have become more frequent and are expected to continue doing so.
214



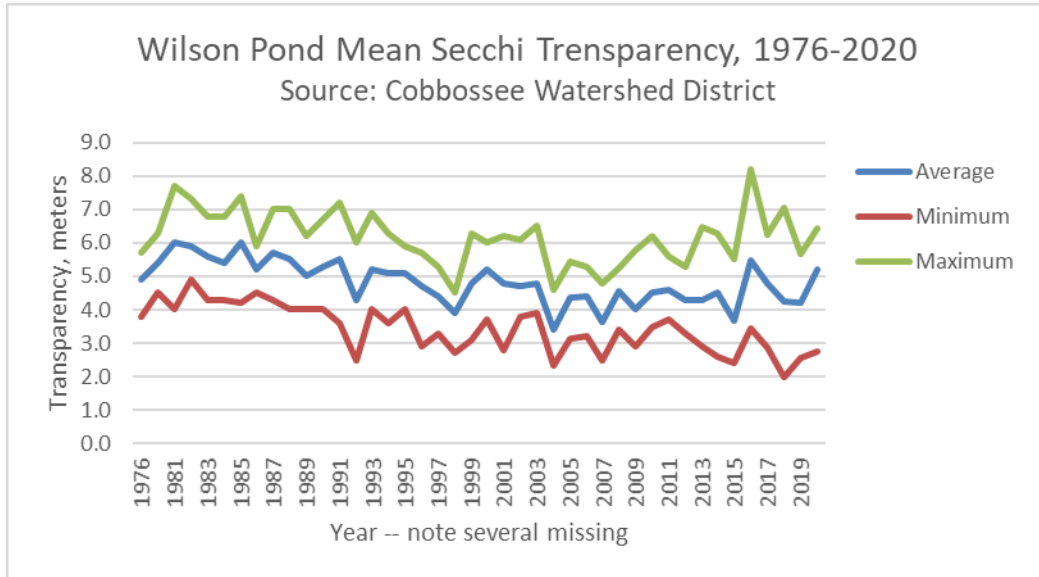
215
216
217 **Figure 2. Contours (10 ft. interval) of the Wilson Pond Lot**
218 **showing greater than 20% slope.**

219
220 Wilson Pond is currently on the DEP 303(e) priority list of impaired Maine lakes
221 and is a focus of remediation efforts. The Cobbossee Watershed District has
222 obtained hundreds of thousands of dollars in grants, including contributions from
223 the Town of Wayne, to assist and encourage landowners to be more responsible
224 for protecting the Pond. In spite of significant efforts on the part of many
225 landowners, the Pond's water quality is not improving. Trails constructed using
226 marked examples of Best Management Practices (BMPs) which minimize
227 environmental disruption especially on steep slopes and in the shoreland zone

228 could educate local landowners about options they might consider on their own
229 property.

230

231



232

233

234 Camp roads contribute the bulk of nutrient loading in Central Maine lakes, more
235 so than agricultural fields, buildings, lawns and flower beds. The road bisecting
236 the tract is private, bordered by very steep slopes and was constructed before
237 relevant ordinances were adopted. Standards for private roads outside the
238 shoreland zone are limited unless these roads are proposed for acceptance as
239 public roads.

240

241 **2.3.2 Forest Management**

242

243 This forest is unusual with its numerous very large trees, which are less commonly
244 seen on managed woodlots in this region. Further, a history of limited
245 management means that the lot is well stocked with standing snags, down tree
246 trunks and branches and woody debris that supply habitat and cover for a variety
247 of creatures. This contributes to an unusual visitor experience as well as a healthy
248 diverse habitat with a healthy soil ecosystem.

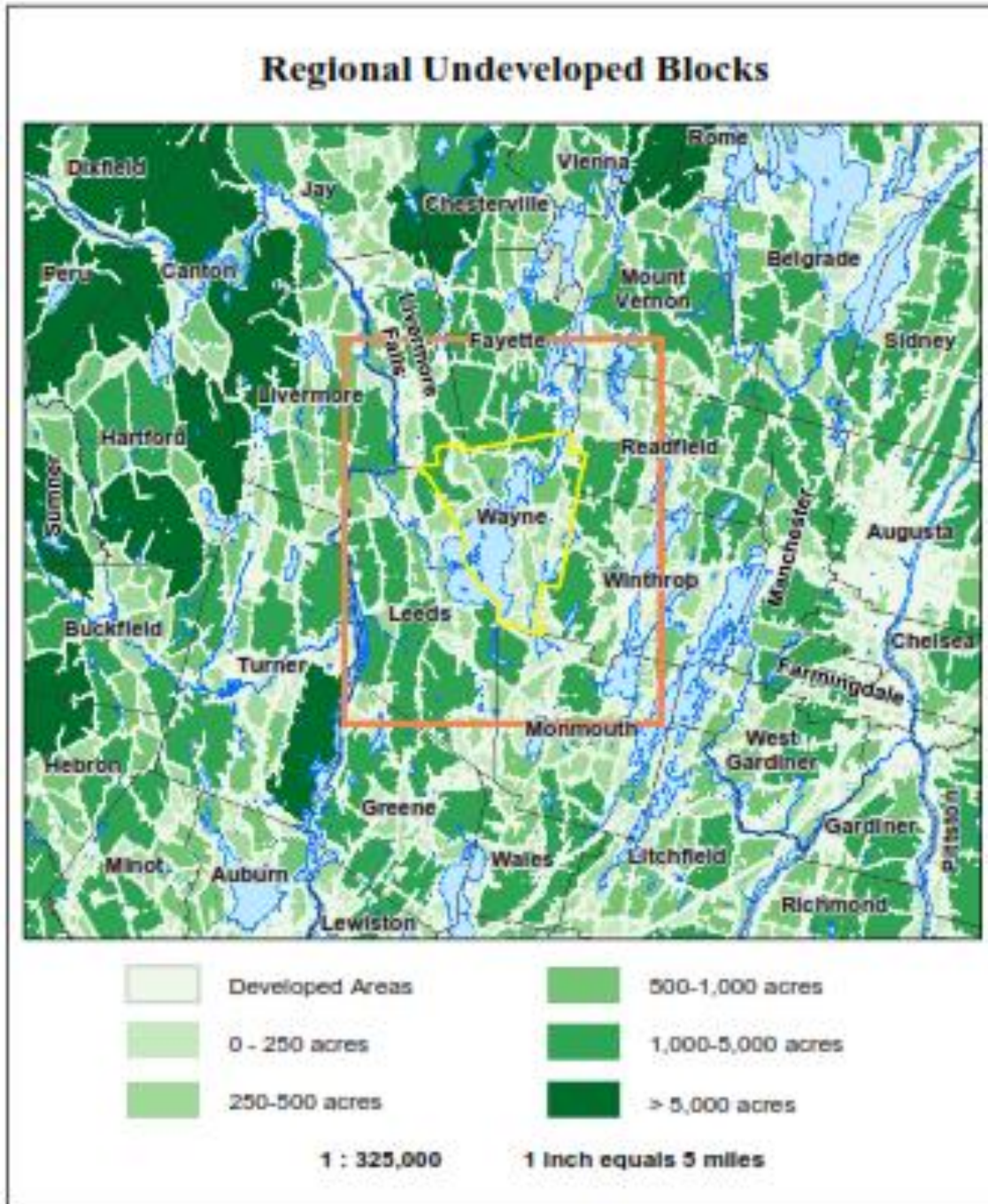
249

250 The Comprehensive Plan includes a list of benefits from forested areas (page 36).
251 That list includes timber harvest, carbon storage, various recreational benefits,
252 wildlife habitat, aesthetic appeal, and protection of water bodies.

253
254 Steep and rocky slopes make timber harvest difficult on much of the property.
255 Most of the higher value timber in the harvestable areas has been cut fairly
256 recently. Analysis indicates that there is currently little marketable timber on
257 most of the property. If suitable areas were managed for a high value product,
258 however, opportunity exists for future limited harvests. A demonstration forest,
259 including sustainable harvest, could be managed for educational purposes. We
260 would expect future forest management to be largely custodial in nature and
261 supportive of recreation values. Small openings might be created, for example, to
262 open up views across the Pond to the east.
263

264 **2.3.3 Wildlife Habitat and Animal Movement Corridors**

265
266 The 100 Acre Wood is part of a largely unbroken forest abutted by properties that
267 have differing levels of private protection: trust protected conservation family
268 lands to the south and a tree farm to the north. Unbroken forest blocks, especially
269 those with access to both water and high ground, provide important wildlife
270 habitat and offer travel corridors for animal movement. Beginning with Habitat
271 (<https://www.beginningwithhabitat.org/index.html>) models the habitat block that
272 encompasses the Wilson Pond Lot as a connecting block between large blocks on
273 the west side of Morrison Heights to blocks north of Mt. Pisgah Rd. that, after
274 crossing Route 133, join unfragmented land southeast of Pickerel Pond.
275



276
277
278
279
280
281
282
283

Figure 3. Regional undeveloped blocks (Beginning with Habitat).

In this part of Central Maine few areas remain where wildlife has uninterrupted movement from high ground to water. Hard and softwood forests, water access and elevation change make the land valuable for wildlife year round. The Beginning with Habitat map included in the Comprehensive Plan on page 30 (and

284 visible on the Beginning with Habitat and town websites) indicates good winter
285 terrain for deer in the large softwood stands south of the property. Mapped
286 inland waterfowl and wading bird habitat is present at the head of the cove on
287 Wilson Pond. There is at least one pair of loons nesting in the pond nearby. An
288 eagle hunts from the shorefront. Wildlife potentially using the land includes
289 moose, deer, black bear, coyote, fox, bobcat, beaver, otter, fisher, weasel, mink,
290 porcupine, muskrat, raccoon, chipmunk, squirrel, partridge, and herons. Local
291 hunters use the property during hunting season.

292

293 **2.4 Recreational and Health Values**

294

295 This land enhances recreational opportunities in Wayne especially those which
296 might attract young families and those for senior citizens. Because of its proximity
297 to the Village area (a four-minute drive from the village center) and to Wilson
298 Pond, and given its varied terrain, the property is attractive for hiking, biking, and
299 even handicapped accessible trails. Demand continues to grow for Mt. Pisgah
300 trails.

301

302 Walking is the most common form of exercise. Much of the walking in Wayne is
303 done on roads without sidewalks. Forest trails provide a safer and more
304 aesthetically pleasing option and will likely increase the amount of exercise of our
305 citizens and, therefore, provide for a more healthy community. Hospitals with
306 available land build trails as a means of promoting health. The terrain offers trail
307 potential for a variety of ability and fitness levels.

308

309 **2.4.1 Multi-use trails**

310

311 The WCC believes the land provides an excellent opportunity to develop a
312 wheelchair accessible trail that would be unique in the region and an asset to the
313 town. Similar trails exist at Range Pond State Park in Poland, Wolfe's Neck Woods
314 State Park in Freeport and on the Bethel Pathway. Given our state's aging
315 population, the development of a wheelchair accessible trail in Wayne could
316 attract new residents. It is now possible in many states for physicians to write
317 prescriptions for patients to engage in active outdoor activities.

318

319 Winter trails for skiing and snowshoeing are also attractive options. There are few
320 areas locally where safe parking allows access to such trails. This tract is classic
321 cross-country and snowshoeing country with better views in winter than summer
322 (and fewer bugs). These activities can also use most hiking trails. Skate skiing
323 requires wider groomed trails and probably would not be appropriate or practical
324 here.

325
326 It may also be possible to develop an environmentally conscious bike trail. The
327 "fat tire bike" is becoming popular as a four-season activity. Woodland bike trails
328 have waterbars and gradual corners but are otherwise enjoyed by hikers, bikers
329 and skiers. There are companies specializing in this type of trail development.
330 This is yet another educational opportunity.

331
332 The property may not be large enough to include trails for motorized vehicles
333 especially since most of the abutters do not allow motorized access and there are
334 no existing trails. Noise and safety would be other concerns.

335
336 Interest is rising nationally in the role of outdoor activity for physical and mental
337 health. Across the state, local communities are boosting trail networks. For
338 example, a 47-mile trail now connects Unity to Belfast, spurring economic growth
339 in host towns and expanding healthy recreational opportunities for residents and
340 visitors. It is time for Wayne to join this movement.

341
342

343 **2.4.2 Waterfront trails**

344
345 There is no beach on the shoreline, and swimming is marginal. However, it may be
346 possible to construct a pull out for canoes or kayaks and a trail just back from the
347 water for birders and hikers. A picnic area (carry in, carry out) accessible by foot
348 or canoe could provide a pleasant lunch break for recreationists.

349
350

351 **2.5 Rural Character**

352
353 A goal stated in the Comprehensive Plan (p. 39; p. 106, section 4.1) is to maintain
354 the rural character of the town including protection of viewsapes visible from

355 roads entering town. The Mt. Pisgah Road is a “road entering town” with a fine
356 view from the Tempy Bridge looking across Wilson Pond to the undeveloped shore
357 frontage and the hill. The properties viewing the Wilson Pond Lot slope from the
358 shore will likely be more valuable if it remains undeveloped open space. This view
359 provides an important marker letting people know they are in a special place –
360 Wayne.

361

362 **2.6 Historic and Cultural**

363 While cellarholes and stone walls in the woods are not uncommon in
364 Wayne, this property is said to be the location of one of the Town’s early
365 settlements. It was once partly cleared, apparently for grazing sheep. Several
366 cellarholes offer points of interest and potential educational value.

367

368 Information on the economic value of open space, birding, water quality and
369 related issues is referenced in the Further Reading section below.

370

371 **3.0 Activities to date and Planned**

372

373 Work has been underway, including:

- 374 • In fall 2021, a small parking lot was installed, funded by private donations.
- 375 • Completion of a professional boundary survey just this spring. This will be
376 of value to the Town as well as to abutting owners.
- 377 • Initial surveys of plants and habitat elements
- 378 • A loop trail has been temporarily marked out
- 379 • Fundraising for several additional improvements continues. By early July,
380 70 people had contributed, a gratifying indication of public support for what
381 is being done here.



382
383
384
385

386 Further Reading

387

388 Adams, Glenn. 2018. Trail networks sprout up, generally seen as win-win. Maine
389 Town and City, Nov. pp. 7-12.

390 [https://www.memun.org/DesktopModules/Bring2mind/DMX/Download.aspx?Co](https://www.memun.org/DesktopModules/Bring2mind/DMX/Download.aspx?Command=Core_Download&EntryId=12199&language=en-US&PortalId=0&TabId=119)
391 [mmand=Core_Download&EntryId=12199&language=en-](https://www.memun.org/DesktopModules/Bring2mind/DMX/Download.aspx?Command=Core_Download&EntryId=12199&language=en-US&PortalId=0&TabId=119)
392 [US&PortalId=0&TabId=119](https://www.memun.org/DesktopModules/Bring2mind/DMX/Download.aspx?Command=Core_Download&EntryId=12199&language=en-US&PortalId=0&TabId=119)

393

394 Beginning with Habitat, 2018. Town conservation maps.

395 https://www.beginningwithhabitat.org/the_maps/index.html

396 Ducharme, Jamie, 2018. A prescription you can't fill at the Pharmacy. Time, Nov.
397 19, p. 20.

398 Fausold, Charles J. and Robert J. Lillieholm. The Economic Value of Open Space
399 [Land Lines, September 1996](https://www.lincolnst.edu/publications/articles/economic-value-open-space) (Lincoln Institute of Land Policy).

400 <https://www.lincolnst.edu/publications/articles/economic-value-open-space>

401

402 Green, Bill. Newscenter (WCSH) story on winter trails.

403 [https://www.newscentermaine.com/mobile/article/sports/outdoors/purpose-](https://www.newscentermaine.com/mobile/article/sports/outdoors/purpose-built-trails-attract-winter-warriors/622734097?fbclid=IwAR3yAzIHWVd_BHO-QWCkgZSnXigo_1pwzMQmXYSme29qGlst2g9Tz0CUgfs?fbclid=IwAR3yAzIHWVd_BHO-QWCkgZSnXigo_1pwzMQmXYSme29qGlst2g9Tz0CUgfs)
404 [built-trails-attract-winter-warriors/622734097?fbclid=IwAR3yAzIHWVd_BHO-](https://www.newscentermaine.com/mobile/article/sports/outdoors/purpose-built-trails-attract-winter-warriors/622734097?fbclid=IwAR3yAzIHWVd_BHO-QWCkgZSnXigo_1pwzMQmXYSme29qGlst2g9Tz0CUgfs?fbclid=IwAR3yAzIHWVd_BHO-QWCkgZSnXigo_1pwzMQmXYSme29qGlst2g9Tz0CUgfs)
405 [QWCkgZSnXigo_1pwzMQmXYSme29qGlst2g9Tz0CUgfs?fbclid=IwAR3yAzIHWVd_B](https://www.newscentermaine.com/mobile/article/sports/outdoors/purpose-built-trails-attract-winter-warriors/622734097?fbclid=IwAR3yAzIHWVd_BHO-QWCkgZSnXigo_1pwzMQmXYSme29qGlst2g9Tz0CUgfs?fbclid=IwAR3yAzIHWVd_BHO-QWCkgZSnXigo_1pwzMQmXYSme29qGlst2g9Tz0CUgfs)
406 [HO-QWCkgZSnXigo_1pwzMQmXYSme29qGlst2g9Tz0CUgfs](https://www.newscentermaine.com/mobile/article/sports/outdoors/purpose-built-trails-attract-winter-warriors/622734097?fbclid=IwAR3yAzIHWVd_BHO-QWCkgZSnXigo_1pwzMQmXYSme29qGlst2g9Tz0CUgfs?fbclid=IwAR3yAzIHWVd_BHO-QWCkgZSnXigo_1pwzMQmXYSme29qGlst2g9Tz0CUgfs)

407
408
409 Irland, 2018. Maine's public estate and conservation lands: brief history and assessment. Maine
410 Policy Review, 27 (2):11-29.
411
412 Land for Maine's Future Board. 2011. Evaluating the economic benefits of land
413 conservation in Maine. White paper prepared for the board of directors of LMFB.
414 36 pp.
415 https://www.maine.gov/dacf/lmf/docs/EvaluatingEconomicBenefitsOfConservation_20110608.pdf
416
417
418 Land Trust Alliance. 2011. Fact sheet. The economic and tax base benefits of land
419 conservation. Washington. pp 1-3. [http://www.wvlandtrust.org/wp-](http://www.wvlandtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/econ_tax_benefits_LTA_2011.pdf)
420 [content/uploads/2015/09/econ tax benefits LTA 2011.pdf](http://www.wvlandtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/econ_tax_benefits_LTA_2011.pdf)
421
422 Maine Land Trust Network. 2017. Land Trusts work for Maine. 12 pp.
423 <http://www.mltn.org/perch/resources/land-trust-highlights.pdf>
424
425 Maine Legislature. 2018. Study of conserved lands owned by nonprofit
426 organizations. Augusta. 128th Legislature, 2s regular session. 18 pp.
427 <https://legislature.maine.gov/doc/2165>
428
429 Merriam, D.; Bality, A.; Stein, J.; Boehmer, T. 2017. Improving Public Health
430 through Public Parks and Trails: Eight Common Measures. Summary report. US
431 Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and
432 Prevention and US Department of the Interior, National Park Service.
433 http://go.nps.gov/improving_public_health
434
435 Rooks, Doug. 2016. Leafy assets: Municipal forests offer recreation and revenue.
436 Maine Townsman. March. pp. 7-10.
437 [https://www.memun.org/DesktopModules/Bring2mind/DMX/Download.aspx?Co](https://www.memun.org/DesktopModules/Bring2mind/DMX/Download.aspx?Command=Core_Download&EntryId=9443&language=en-US&PortalId=0&TabId=204)
438 [mmand=Core_Download&EntryId=9443&language=en-US&PortalId=0&TabId=204](https://www.memun.org/DesktopModules/Bring2mind/DMX/Download.aspx?Command=Core_Download&EntryId=9443&language=en-US&PortalId=0&TabId=204)
439
440 Ruoff, Mary. 2016. Accessible trails aren't hard to come by in Maine's Parks and
441 preserves. Maine Today. Aug 26. [http://mainetoday.com/maine-](http://mainetoday.com/maine-travel/handicapped-accessible-trails-arent-hard-come-maines-parks-preserves/)
442 [travel/handicapped-accessible-trails-arent-hard-come-maines-parks-preserves/](http://mainetoday.com/maine-travel/handicapped-accessible-trails-arent-hard-come-maines-parks-preserves/)
443

444 Shoup, Lily and Reid Ewing. 2010. The Economic Benefits of Open Space,
445 Recreation Facilities and Walkable Community Design. Research conducted by
446 Active Living Research, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson
447 Foundation, with direction and technical assistance provided by San Diego State
448 University.

449 [https://activelivingresearch.org/economic-benefits-open-space-recreation-](https://activelivingresearch.org/economic-benefits-open-space-recreation-facilities-and-walkable-community-design)
450 [facilities-and-walkable-community-design](https://activelivingresearch.org/economic-benefits-open-space-recreation-facilities-and-walkable-community-design)

451
452 USFWS. 2011. Birding in the United States: A Demographic and Economic Analysis.

453 [https://www.fws.gov/southeast/pdf/report/birding-in-the-united-states-a-](https://www.fws.gov/southeast/pdf/report/birding-in-the-united-states-a-demographic-and-economic-analysis.pdf)
454 [demographic-and-economic-analysis.pdf](https://www.fws.gov/southeast/pdf/report/birding-in-the-united-states-a-demographic-and-economic-analysis.pdf)

455
456 Waldron, Todd. 2018. Buying land next to public lands. Fountains Land. 5 pp.

457 <https://fountainsland.com/becoming-a-neighbor-to-public-lands.html>

458

459 **Photographs of the 100 Acre Wood**

460

461



462

463

464

465

466

467

View of from Mt. Pisgah Rd.



468
469
470
471
472
473

View of shoreline.



474
475
476
477
478
479
480
481
482

The steep eastern slope of the (left).
An intermittent stream flowing downhill toward Wilson Pond (right).

483



484

485

486

487

488

489

490

491

Old farmstead .



492

493

494

495

496

The Wood in Winter

497
498

499 **Selected Letters of Support**

500

501 Hunter, M. W. Jr. Libra Professor of Conservation Biology. University of Maine.
502 Letter to Wayne Conservation Commission on the broad natural values of the
503 Wilson Pond Lot. August 2018.

504

505 Hurley, Fred. Wildlife Biologist, retired. Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and
506 Wildlife. Letter to Wayne Select Board concerning wildlife values of the Wilson
507 Pond Lot. August 2018.

508

509 Monagle, Bill. Executive Director. Cobbossee Watershed District. Letter to Wayne
510 Conservation Commission. August 2018.

511

512 Pakulski, Stefan. Former Town Manager, Readfield Maine. Letter to Wayne Select
513 Board. The value of a Town Forest: Readfield's Experience. 2015.

514

515 Wells, Jeff. Research Associate. Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. Letter to Wayne
516 Conservation Commission: The bird community of the Wilson Pond Lot. Aug.
517 2018.

518

519

520

521

522

523

524

525

526

527

528

529

530

531

532

533

534
535
536
537
538
539
540
541
542
543
544
545
546
547
548
549
550
551
552
553
554
555
556
557
558
559
560
561
562
563
564
565
566
567
568
569
570
571
572
573
574
575
576

To: Members of the Wayne Conservation Commission
Re: Notes on Broad Ecological Values of the Wilson Pond Lot

I am writing to add my “two cents” to discussions about the Wilson Pond Lot. Although I have not visited the property I have reviewed descriptive material and maps and can comment on general issues that would apply to land like this in central Maine. I do this based on a nearly 50-year career addressing ecology and conservation issues in Maine, including writing many books and articles on these issues in a global context. Obviously, land use decisions like those regarding this property will compel the Town of Wayne to weigh a number of considerations. I will focus on what I know best -- wildlife and ecological matters.

Size

Being adjacent to an undeveloped tract that is already reserved in trust, this tract offers a special opportunity to create a sizable area of undeveloped open land, which is increasingly uncommon in central Maine. As ownerships fragment further in the future, opportunities like this will only become scarcer. Many bird and mammal species require large tracts of habitat to meet their needs for cover, breeding sites, and food sources.

Shorelines and High Ground to Water Continuity

Another key principle of land conservation is that it is particularly valuable to protect shorelines because in these areas a wide variety of species find habitat. Upland species come to the shores for food and water, aquatic species come for food and cover, and some species are particularly tied to these interfaces. This site is unusual in that it connects all the way from the shore up to a fairly significant ridge, thus providing substantial connectivity for species that move widely. Even small species like frogs move across the landscape to a degree that is often underappreciated, and it is important to have places where they can make these movements without encountering development along the way.

577
578
579
580
581
582
583
584
585
586
587
588

589
590
591
592
593

Brooks and wetlands

This property holds some minor brooks with seasonal tributaries and these are flanked by wet, marshy areas. Small aquatic features like these are far more important ecologically than you would ever guess from their footprint on the landscape and retaining this land as open space is the best way to protect them from roads or driveways that, almost inevitably, lead to erosion and sedimentation issues. In this case the consequences of sedimentation would be experienced on both the specific site and potentially throughout Wilson Pond.

Good luck with your deliberations and please let me know if you have questions I might address.

Sincerely yours



Malcolm L. Hunter, Jr.
Libra Professor of Conservation Biology

August 16, 2018

To: Town of Wayne
Wayne Open Space Committee
Conservation Commission
Town Select Board
Subject: Wilson Pond Lot

My name is Fred Hurley. I have been a resident of Wayne for nearly fifty years and have traversed much of the town's forest and wetlands, and became very familiar with the lay of the land, its fish and wildlife, and the habitat upon which they depend. I am a certified wildlife biologist and retired from the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife after 33 years of service.

I was made aware of the Conservation Commission's interim draft report to the Wayne Open Space Committee regarding the Natural Values of the Wilson Pond Lot on August 14 at the public meeting to consider options for town owned property on the House Road and Wilson Pond. Unfortunately, the Commission's findings were not presented to the public along with the Committee's presentation of options, and I have since had the opportunity to review the report. There is little I can add and strongly agree with the assessment of the areas physical characteristics, natural values, recreational potentials, and associated vulnerabilities. The below findings, some of which may be overshadowed by the public input at the meeting, deserve your strong consideration in these deliberations.

The land is currently owned by the Town,

The land is over 100 acres, and contains over 1000 ft. of Wilson Pond shoreline,

The land is only one of 13 remaining parcels over 100 acres in Wayne,

The town has adopted a goal of the retention of 15% of developable land as open space.

Future opportunities to protect a large track of land such as this is highly unlikely,

Many of the large tracks of private land in Wayne are not available for public use,

This land is surrounded by large tracks of privately owned open space,

Large unbroken blocks of open space are very important wildlife habitat,

The shore front has high value as wildlife habitat, and the uplands support a wide variety of wildlife species,

Much of the area is very steep and rocky,

The land has a variety of recreational opportunities currently lacking in Wayne,

This is a unique opportunity to protect a major property which meets many criteria in the Comp Plan,

There is no single track of property of similar size in Wayne that combines the environmental, potential habitat, and potential for recreational activities as this one does.

In my estimation, this all boils down to the fact that this town owned land has an unusual array of natural and potential recreation values, many of which, simply do not exist in Wayne. It currently provides a significant contribution to the towns open space goal, and is an important part of a much larger corridor of privately owned lands that together provide a major contribution to Wayne open spaces and associated natural values.

Large unbroken blocks of forest and wetland habitats protect water quality, and are vital, and in many cases, essential to many species of wildlife and provide both habitat, and important wildlife travel corridors. Wildlife simply does not fair well in isolated blocks of fragmented habitat, and Wilson Pond is not fairing well because of the development that has occurred in its shore land. At the same time, this land has many potential recreational opportunities not currently available on other large tracks of privately owned land in Wayne (most of which are posted against trespass).

To sell or otherwise fragment this land will jeopardize the linkage it provides to these other lands, its significant natural values, including its diverse wildlife habitats, and its recreational potentials. To relinquish any or all of it for short term financial gain, en lieu of its importance as open space, will be something the future citizens of Wayne will quickly come to regret.

**Fred Hurley
Resident of the Town of Wayne**

596
597
598
599

600
601
602

May 18, 2015

To the Wayne Select Board:

The value of a Town Forest: Readfield's Experience

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Board through this public hearing on a ballot question. I would like to request that my letter be entered into the record for the hearing. As the former Town Manager in Readfield, I would like to share my thoughts about the value of a Town Forest there, and why I would urge the Select Board and voters here to consider the current opportunity to create a Wayne Town Forest.

Readfield has managed about 100 acres of Town Forest for many years. The parcel originally was part of the old Town Farm, designated in the 1800's as the location for destitute residents to live and support themselves. In the past 100 years, the farm went out of existence and most of the land reverted to mixed forest. Eventually the Town voted to retain this parcel for historic and conservation purposes, and appointed the Conservation Commission as steward. The Commission developed a management plan that included periodic logging, preserving wildlife habitat, and making the forest available for a variety of recreational purposes such as hiking and running on trails, bird watching, hunting, cross-country skiing, biking and snowmobiling. Later, a professional forester refined the management plan. This included identifying, scheduling, and managing three 20-acre sections for logging - one section to be harvested every seven years. The Town uses all funds received from these timber sales to support the management costs of all conservation properties in Readfield. In the past ten years, there have been two harvests and the most recent one netted the Town about \$19,000 in timber sales revenue.

Readfield's Town Forest is a great wildlife habitat and abuts another large KLT conservation property, the MacDonald Woods, making a total of over 200 contiguous conservation acres. A goshawk has nested in the forest for many years. Deer and turkey are plentiful, and the area is open for hunting. The Town's Trail Committee maintains a network of trails through the forest which is well-used by residents and many out-of-town visitors. The terrain includes varying grades, a stream and boggy areas with good trail bridges. The Conservation Commission also has worked to preserve historical evidence of the original Town Farm, and to remove invasive plant species from the property. The Town Forest trails are featured on the Maine Trail Finder website (www.mainetrailfinder.com), along with the rest of Readfield's public recreation trails. Access to the Town Forest is by a public road and an easement on private property with a gated entrance to prevent unauthorized vehicles from entering. Some parking is available at the trailhead and gated entrance. A small portion of Readfield's Town Forest is in the Town of Wayne, and Readfield annually pays a bit over a \$100 in property taxes to Wayne. The majority of the forest is tax-exempt as a Town-owned property.

In addition to providing direct on-site conservation and recreational opportunities, through timber sales the Town Forest supports all of Readfield's conservation efforts and has contributed significantly to recreational trail development throughout the town. This network of conservation properties and trails has become a much-loved and valuable asset, frequently noted as one of the reasons people come to Readfield to live and visit. The Trails Committee continues to expand and improve the trails network, creating more recreational opportunities for more people, and recognizing the economic development impact of this as well. Readfield's trails are now a destination for many people who also visit local

603
604

stores, restaurants, cafes, and shops; and who may seek to develop their own homes and vacation properties in this desirable community.

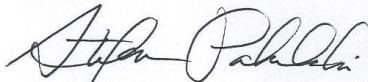
Wayne probably could create a similarly valuable Town Forest. Although the proposed property in Wayne differs in some respects from Readfield's forest, a Wayne forest could serve many of the same purposes. Creating access to the forest over a network of trails through beautifully varying terrain with great habitat would add to Wayne's attraction for residents, visitors, and people who want to move to or stay in the community. The forest would be an important asset for conservation, environmental education, local quality of life and economic development. It appears that creating a Town Forest also would be consistent with Wayne's recently updated Comprehensive Plan.

There are important questions about costs for the proposed Wayne Town Forest. Although the Town already has acquired the property through a foreclosed tax lien, the Town would have to pay to settle the title, and the property would no longer provide any property tax – creating an effective annual tax. There also would be initial development costs and on-going maintenance costs to a Town Forest. A Wayne Town Forest at this site would not have the same level of self-funding as Readfield's forest through timber sales, although perhaps a fifth of the proposed Wayne parcel could be managed for timber. The value of having a Town Forest has to be compared realistically to what it will cost taxpayers to develop and manage the site from now on. Members of the Conservation Commission have started to define the costs in more detail.

Readfield's example and the experiences of many other Maine towns show that there are plenty of long-term benefits (economic, environmental, educational, and quality of life) to having a Town Forest that more than balance the costs. The chance to designate such a significant property as a Town Forest in Wayne might not occur again soon, if ever. It really is an historic opportunity to create a conservation legacy for many future Wayne generations.

I therefore urge the Select Board and Town voters to consider settling the title on the tax-acquired property and retaining the property as a Town Forest for wildlife and habitat conservation, limited timber production, and varied recreational uses.

Thank you,



Stefan Pakulski
139 Morrison Height Road
Wayne, ME. 04284

605
606
607

608 **Bird Community of Wilson Pond Lot**

609 Based on my recent visit to the site and the week-long deployment of an automated recording
610 unit at the site, I can say unequivocally that the bird community of the parcel formerly known
611 as the "Wilson Pond Lot" is an excellent example of a characteristic temperate mixed
612 deciduous-coniferous forest with a well-developed understory. Species detected during the
613 summer breeding season or expected to breed at the site include Black-throated Blue Warbler,
614 Black-throated Green Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Pine
615 Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Northern Parula, Blue-headed Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Hermit
616 Thrush, Veery, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Pileated Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy
617 Woodpecker, Brown Creeper, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Least Flycatcher, Great Crested Flycatcher,
618 Scarlet Tanager, Winter Wren, Broad-winged Hawk, Barred Owl, Ruffed Grouse, Wood Duck,
619 White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, White-breasted Nuthatch, and Black-
620 capped Chickadee among others. The 118-acre site is expected to support hundreds of
621 individual breeding birds each summer of at least 40 species. Throughout the fall and spring
622 migration and winter seasons there are undoubtedly thousands of birds that use the site for
623 finding food and shelter. On an annual basis approximately 100 bird species could be expected
624 to be tallied from the site.

625 Partners In Flight regional Bird Conservation Plans highlight the importance of protecting large,
626 intact areas of this type of intact mixed wood forest in this region in order to ensure the long-
627 term health of the suite of bird species associated with this type of forest (BCR 14- Atlantic
628 Northern Forest Plan - <http://acjv.org/planning/bird-conservation-regions/bcr-14/>). The list of
629 Focal Species identified in the Bird Conservation Plan for this region includes many of the
630 species that are known or expected to breed on this site including American Redstart, Black-
631 throated Blue Warbler, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Veery, and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. All of these
632 species except Black-throated Blue Warbler are experiencing significant declines in our region
633 and all efforts to retain and protect habitats for them will be important in stabilizing these
634 population declines.

635 At the broadest levels of bird conservation planning, identifying and protecting the last and
636 largest remaining habitat blocks within any region is considered a top priority for conservation
637 (see attached). This habitat parcel is a core of one of the largest mixed wood habitat blocks in
638 the town and its protection should be a high priority in terms of contributing to the
639 conservation of our region's bird populations.

640 -----

641 Jeff Wells, Ph.D., Research Associate, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology
642 Author, Birder's Conservation Handbook (Princeton 2007); Maine's Favorite Birds (Tilbury
643 House 2012)
644

645
646
647
648