

## Save West Harbor Pond (Robert Mitchell, *Boothbay Register*, July 25, 2018)

Everyone knows West Harbor Pond. On the way to Southport, just beyond the Boothbay Harbor Yacht Club and Oak Grove condominiums, it's the beautiful stretch of water lined with trees and blanketed with open sky opposite the salt water cove of West Boothbay Harbor. One would never suspect any problems with such a beautiful place but ...

West Harbor Pond used to be an inlet from the ocean until 1880 when it was cut off from the sea water during what I call "The Ice Age" of the Boothbay region.

Before refrigeration, food was kept cold with large chunks of ice and the fresh waters of Boothbay were a big source. The Knickerbocker Ice Works come to mind. Ice was harvested from Knickerbocker Lake and sluiced over to packing facilities on Back River, then loaded aboard ships for distribution.

In 1880, a dam was created which is now the causeway for Route 27 and the remaining saltwater was drained allowing fresh water from springs and rivulets to flow in from the north creating a new source of fresh water for the high demand refrigerant.

The ocean water and the natural intrusion needed to be dealt with, so a siphon device was installed to help pull out the denser brackish waters that occupied the lower depths of what is now the Pond. It worked fine as long as it worked, but the siphon is broken and saltwater intrusion has created a dead zone below the fresh surface water.

A local group is trying to raise the money to fix the problem. They have raised \$38,400 and need \$14,600 more to cover the costs of a new siphon that will help to remove the stagnant saltwater.

There is extensive information about this effort, and you can learn more about the history of West Harbor Pond and contribute to help this emergency on the website, [www.westharborpond.org/](http://www.westharborpond.org/) and on the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/WestHarborPond/>

It's not likely that ice harvesting will ever return to West Harbor Pond, but with help, the hope is that the lifeblood of this living organism can be restored and sustained for years to come. Please help.

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