

BAKER'S POND CONSERVATION AREA

■ Introduction

The Town of Orleans acquired several parcels, formerly part of the Corrigan property, on September 27, 1988 for \$1,456,165 for conservation, open space and/or recreation purposes. The property comprises two parcels with a total area of 16.5 acres – on the northern lobe of Bakers Pond, a 15.0-acre parcel on the eastern side and a 1.5-acre pond front parcel on the western side.

In accordance with Land Court Document #470858 (for Lots 4, 5 and 6 on Land Court Plan 21175C) recording of the Order of Taking by Eminent Domain, the May 10, 1988 Annual Town Meeting Article 73 for the Proposed Land Acquisition states: *Standing vote, For 456, Against 27, motion passes 2/3rd majority that the Board of Selectmen is hereby authorized to acquire by purchase, eminent domain or otherwise for conservation, open space and/or recreation purposes, the land situated in the Town of Orleans ... on Baker's Pond...*

In 1988, the Town applied for a Self-Help grant from the State Division of Conservation Services and in 1990 received \$839,500 to assist in the purchase of this property.

Management

The Orleans Conservation Commission is responsible for the overall management of the property, including periodically reviewing usage, issues and problems and recommending improvements.

The Orleans Parks and Beaches Department provides routine operational maintenance, such as seasonal pruning, cleanup and trash removal.

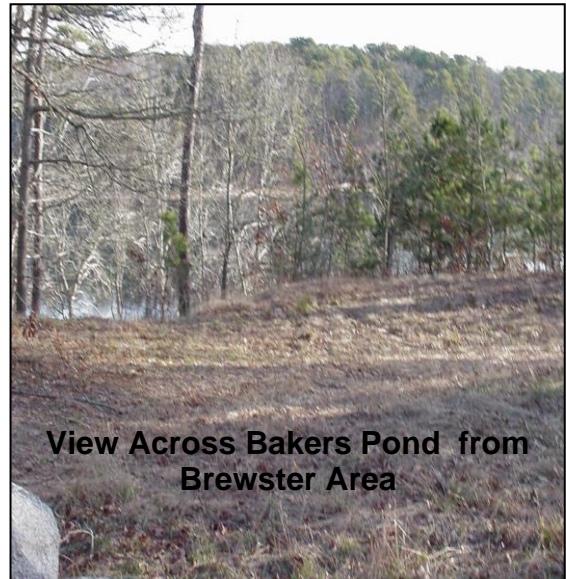
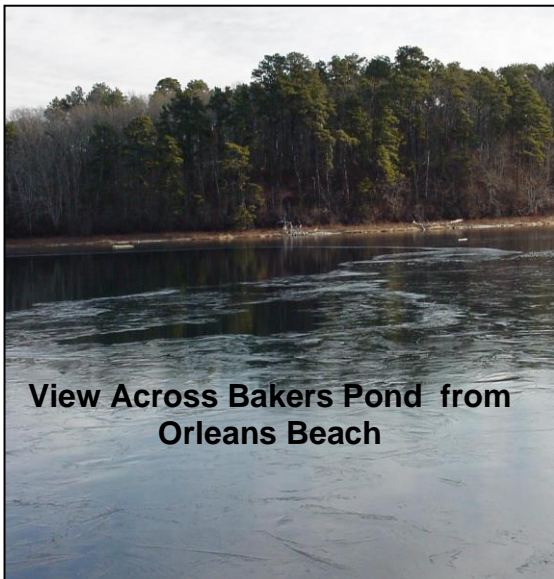
The Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services is the State agency that regulates the care and use of land purchased for conservation, open space, and recreational purposes.

■ Site Descriptions

The Bakers Pond Conservation Area is part of a contiguous naturalized area from Nickerson State Park in Brewster across Route 6 to the watershed in Orleans. The Bakers Pond Conservation Area and adjacent property in Brewster, 18.89 acres in Brewster and 15.6 acres in Orleans, together comprise 34 acres that were under the ownership of James Corrigan. In 1988, each of the towns bought the parcel within their township and then applied jointly for a Self Help grant to fund the purchase price and acquisition fees. These properties surround the western and eastern sides of the northern lobe of Bakers Pond except for 2 private holdings.

The parcel in Brewster has many large pitch pines and includes two small freshwater wetlands and part of the only white cedar swamp in Brewster. There is a flat area with lawn grasses where a dwelling was removed near the pond.

A section of the Orleans Conservation Area, totaling 1.5 acres is on the west or Brewster side of the pond where the border with Orleans encompasses part of the shoreline. There is a scenic view in both directions across the pond to the portion of the Conservation Area on the other side of the pond.



The site is under groundwater protection Zoning District 2 for contribution to the watershed. The 16.5 acres of wooded upland and pond shore that comprise the Bakers Pond Conservation area contribute to the groundwater entering Pleasant Bay.

Access To Bakers Pond

The entrance to the Conservation Area is located at 80 Bakers Pond Road Extension, just off Route 6A near the Orleans/Brewster town line. There is a white and green Conservation Commission sign denoting the entrance and another sign with rules and regulations in the parking area. The parking area is pervious and large enough for 10 cars. A bicycle rack has been placed near the entrance to the lot. There is a shoreline portion of the Orleans Conservation Area on the Brewster side of Bakers Pond that is accessible only through Brewster conservation land.

In addition, there are 2 other public access points to the shoreline of Bakers Pond. One, owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, is on 110 Bakers Pond Road Extension and is used as a boating access and a recreational beach. The other access, owned by the Town of Orleans, is a 1.3-acre lot on 20 Hinkle Lane and consists of a bordering vegetated wetland and shoreline on Bakers Pond. This area has not currently been developed for public use.



Trails and Dirt Roads

The Bakers Pond Conservation Area has been developed for public use with a main trail loop and a short spur trail over to the dirt road coming from Bakers Pond Road Extension. Dirt roads in this area serve as access and rights of way to other parcels in Brewster and interconnect to Nickerson State Park.

The main loop trail leaves the parking area to the south, turns to the right and follows along the top of the steep slope that goes down to Bakers Pond. There is currently no access from the trail to the shoreline on this side of the pond. There are several scenic overlooks to Bakers Pond and a number of benches distributed around this portion of the trail. The trail then circles back to the parking area.

A short spur trail off to the north continues over to a dirt road that travels west into Brewster. It goes up and over a hill where it connects to another well-traveled dirt road. Turn left and continue west on this dirt road until the Brewster Conservation signs are on the left. The Brewster Conservation Area has an old house site with a flat grassy area and a path leading down to the shoreline. The area to the south of this path is part of the Orleans Conservation Area.



Bakers Pond

Bakers Pond encompasses a total of 32 acres (28 acres in Orleans and 4 acres in Brewster) with a depth of up to 60'. The State designates ponds over 10 acres as Great Ponds. The shore of the pond on the Orleans side is divided into small single-family lots except for conservation land to the northeast. In Brewster there are several large lots to the southwest and conservation area to the northwest. There are some private holdings among the conservation areas. The Bakers Pond Conservation Area in Orleans has 1,250' of shoreline on Bakers Pond.

The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program of Massachusetts has issued a classification of Natural Communities of Massachusetts, which describes sand plain ponds as highly acidic groundwater ponds in glacial outwash usually without an inlet or outlet. Bakers Pond is a classic sand plain pond with an exceptionally wide sandy shoreline, which is inundated seasonally when the water table is high. This wide beach supports a substantial community including the grass (*Agrostis hyemalis* var. *hyemalis*), the **rare** spatulate leaved sun-dew (*Drosera intermedia*), the **rare** Plymouth gentian (*Sabatia kennedyana*) and plants commonly associated with the gentian such as golden pert (*Gratiola aurea*), slender leaved goldenrod (*Euthamia tenuifolia*), pink tickseed (*Coreopsis rosea*), beaksedge (*Rhynchospora* spp.) spike rush (*Eleocharis* spp.) and lance-leaf violet (*Viola lanceolata*). On the shoreline grow wetland species such as red maple (*Acer rubrum*) and tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*) with a fringe of grass, blue-

joint (*Calamagrostis canadensis*). Submerged species are not as apparent in Bakers Pond as in other ponds in Orleans but water lobelia (*Lobelia dortmanna*), Canada rush (*Juncus canadensis*), pipewort (*Eriocaulon aquaticum*) and the **rare** terete arrowhead (*Sagittaria teres*), among others, were found. Bakers Pond has a small shallow connected pond with a profusion of bladderwort (*Utricularia radiata*), which was not found in the rest of the pond. (Some of this information also printed in Bakers Pond Water Quality Assessment 2000)

Wildlife generally associated with these ponds include over 45 species of dragonflies and damselflies. Two of the four species of turtles listed under sand plain ponds are found on this site, painted and snapping turtles. Large ponds such as Bakers Pond are often used by migrating and wintering waterfowl including mergansers, golden eye and bufflehead. The pond is currently stocked with brown and rainbow trout by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife.



Woodland

The 15-acre parcel varies from flat wooded areas to rolling terrain. The land drops sharply down to the shore of Bakers Pond in most locations. In the classification of Natural Communities of Massachusetts the predominant forest type on this property is Black Oak Complex – White Oak forest with scattered Pitch Pines and occasional Sassafras. There are some very large Pitch Pines with a Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) of over a foot. This parcel and the other adjacent conservation areas provide a wide wildlife corridor for deer and other animals between Nickerson State Park in Brewster and the Orleans Watershed across Route 6. Incidental sightings include deer, red squirrels, gray squirrels and a red-tailed hawk. It is highly likely that forest interior birds, such as ovenbirds, warblers, whippoorwills, and other species sensitive to habitat fragmentation, occur and breed in this area.



■ **Land Uses, Limitations and Prohibitions**

Conservation-managed lands are purchased for a variety of active and passive **recreational uses**.

This area features:

- Trail walking
- Bird watching
- Scenic viewing

There are **limitations** on hours of use of the property, and use by groups as follows:

- The area is closed from sunset to sunrise.
- Groups of more than 10 people require a permit from the Conservation Department

In addition, certain activities **are prohibited** at all areas under the management of the Conservation Commission, including:

- Alcoholic beverages
- Littering
- Domestic trash disposal
- Unrestrained dogs
- Open fires and cooking
- Storing of boats*
- Erection of tents or camping
- Use of soaps, detergents or shampoo
- Discharge of firearms
- Damaging any structure or landscape
- Harassing wildlife

*Boats utilizing Bakers Pond may not have 2-cycle engines greater than 10 horsepower (in accordance with the Orleans Waterways Regulations for great ponds, Section 159-7. Operation. A. (4)).

Implementation Actions

Action Required:

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- Maintenance of parking and walking areas
- Information to Brewster ConsCom for any action on the west side of the pond.
 - Town budget funding for routine maintenance

Party Responsible:

Parks Dept.
ConsCom
TA/BOS