

Westford's East Boston Camps Natural Resources Fact Sheet

The East Boston Camps site is a spectacular natural area. It is located at the confluence of Keyes Brook and Stony Brook—riparian corridors that facilitate the movement of wildlife. Its rolling topography, cloaked in a diverse forest, enclose Burge's Pond—so pure that it was used as an important source of ice from the 1850s to the 1930s.

Aside from its beauty and importance to the town's water supply (see Water Resources Fact Sheet), what are its natural resources?

Geology, Topography, & Soils

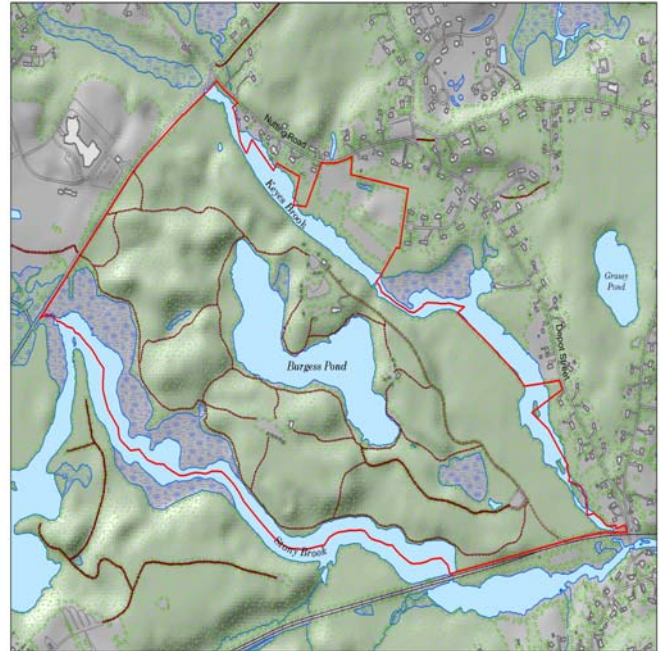
Most of the East Boston Camps lies to the north of the Clinton-Newbury fault line that runs through Westford. Granite predominates the underlying bedrock material to the north while metamorphic rocks predominate to the south. The granite in this area, known as Chelmsford Granite, is well formed and much sought after



for architectural and ornamental use.

The topography is visually interesting and lends much to the appeal of the area. It also creates portions of the site that are

suitable for activities, such as the camp areas, separated from each other by steep slopes that are unsuitable for any intensive use other than trails that are carefully designed in order to avoid erosion.



The majority of the soils found at the site are often associated with aquifer recharge areas and measures should be taken to protect the underlying water supply.

Ecological Resources & Natural Communities

The site is rich because of the combination and diversity of the resources and because of the corridors that link this site to much larger ecological areas both upstream and down.

The natural upland communities include the following:

- ◇ White Pine-Oak Forest
- ◇ White Pine Forest
- ◇ Successional Northern Hardwood Forest

The surface water communities include:

- ◇ Burge's Pond—28 acres, 1.4 mile perimeter

- ◇ Stony Brook and Keyes Brook
- Wetland communities include:
- ◇ Woodland Vernal Pools
 - ◇ Kettle-hole Bog—3.9 acres, 1,796 feet perimeter
 - ◇ Deep Marsh—17.4 acres
 - ◇ Shrub Swamp—10 acres
 - ◇ Red Maple Swamp—8.5 acres

The vernal pools and the kettle-hole bog are unusual features that provide important breeding habitat for some relatively rare animals like salamanders and spotted turtles. They are home to a variety of plants and animals that are not found anywhere else, like fairy shrimp.



Wildlife

Not only is the site home to a diverse collection of plants and animals, it is also a vital linkage between other natural areas and as such has a much greater diversity of wildlife than the variety of natural communities would suggest. For example observers have seen or found evidence of the following

- ◇ Birds—at least 88 species including northern pintail, peregrine falcon, common nighthawk, pileated woodpecker, bobolink, and woodthrush.
- ◇ Mammals—at least 11 species including coyote, beaver, and otter.



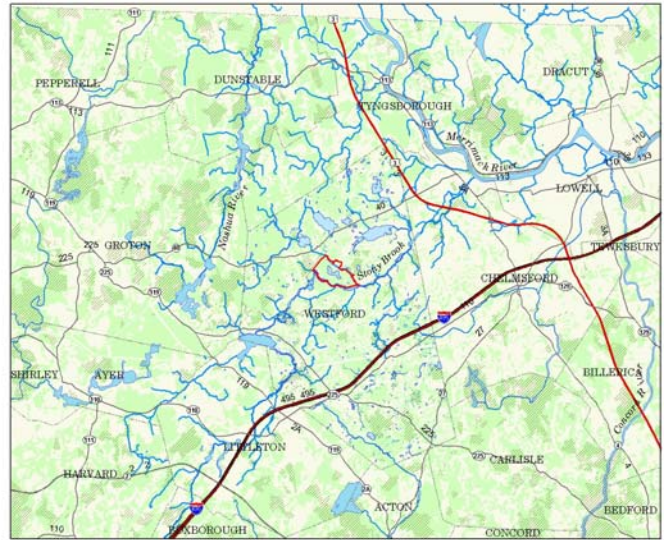
- ◇ Reptiles and amphibians—at least 9 species including northern water snake, spotted turtle,

yellow spotted salamander, and wood frog.



Connections

Keyes Brook and Stony Brook link the East Boston Camps site to other natural areas, as mentioned above. These connections allow animals and plants to move from area to area. Below the East Boston Camps site is outlined in



red. Green shows the surrounding forest, and the darker tone shows permanently protected land. Keyes Brook connects the site to the west and Stony Brook makes connections to the south and northeast. In many ways it is these connections that make the site unique and important. Protecting these connections will be a challenge for the future.



For Additional Information:

- ◇ Contact the Town Manager's Office at 978 692-5501
- ◇ Visit the Westford East Boston Camps Master Plan Website (www.ebcwestford.net/).