



## **Merrill Pond Rehabilitation Partnership Project**

Merrill Pond, a man-made pond in Merrill Park, East Concord has been a valuable recreational resource for generations of Concord residents. For well over 30 years, the Basil Woods, Jr. chapter of Trout Unlimited has held an annual Youth Fishing Day on a Saturday in April at Merrill Pond. Partnering with NH Fish and Game, trout are stocked in the pond and Basil Woods' volunteers provide equipment, instruction, and food - all for free.



This past April saw well over 150 kids (under 15) along with their parents wetting their lines and catching fish. Kids were outdoors having a great time, smiling, laughing, and holding worms and fish for the family's photo memories. Parents could not have been happier and expressed many positive appreciative comments. Saying the day was a success is an understatement!

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Prior to the Mother's Day flood of 2006, the water level in the pond was comparatively stable. Unfortunately, the flood created a gap in the earthen berm on the north end of the pond draining much of the pond and leaving the old concrete outflow pipe stranded two to three feet above the new channel.

Had it not been for the volunteer efforts of Basil Woods's members, Youth Fishing Day would have ended at that point. Instead, for over a decade our members have placed sandbags in the new outflow temporarily raising the water level to the point where the pond could support fish and, using hand tools, have cleared part of the pond's periphery, along with the inlet area, of silt and vegetation allowing easier access to open water for the kids.

The efforts of our members, while commendable, are simply not sustainable.

For many years, Merrill Pond provided a valuable recreational resource for the citizens of Concord. In past years the pond provided fishing opportunities throughout the year as well as a serene area for family picnics. Today those opportunities are all but gone.

The Basil Woods Chapter of TU strongly urges the City of Concord to consider rehabilitating Merrill Pond to its original engineering standards and would be interested in partnering with the City to help develop plans to restore Merrill Park Pond.

If such a partnership is of interest to the City, we would appreciate your advice on next steps.

Sincerely,

Your Friends at the Basil W. Woods Jr. Chapter of Trout Unlimited

