

SPERRY'S POND



Located in West Boxford at the intersection of Main Street and Route 133, Sperry's Pond is a 15.5 acre impoundment. Originally called "Rush Pond", Sperry's has had a succession of names over the past 200 years including "Chadwick", "Hovey's" and "Fowler's" Pond. The name "Sperry" was assigned after the passing of Herbert V. Sperry in 1985, who served as the Boxford town electrician for 32 years. A man of great dedication, Sperry was retired by the Town at the age of 88 when there were fears that he might fall from a ladder. When his young replacement quit after several months, Mr. Sperry returned to duty because he "knew how to do the job."

Sperry's Pond, like many local waterways, played a role in the history of mills and industry. In 1840 Jonathan James Porter placed a dam on what was then called Porter's Brook, raising the level of the Pond three feet. Mr. Porter then installed a saw and grist mill which he operated until 1880. Throughout this period Mr. Porter remained active in local politics, fire-fighting and the local militia, becoming very visible community leader.

Access to Sperry's Pond can be found along Main Street just south of the Boxford Fire Station. Watercraft can be carefully lowered along the bank between the two prominent red water withdrawal stations. Parking is very limited so it is best to drop your watercraft and find parking at a safer location. Canoes and kayaks are frequently seen on Sperry's where a moderate amount of fishing takes place, although the Pond is not stocked.

Sperry's Pond serves as the headwaters of the Parker River. The Parker, which meanders through the Towns of Boxford, Georgetown, West Newbury, and Newbury before discharging into the Plum Island Sound, constitutes one of the two major watersheds on the North Shore along with the Ipswich River. In pre-colonial days it is likely that anadromous fish such as herring, smelt, shad and even Atlantic salmon

navigated their way up the Parker River to Georgetown and Boxford during seasonal spawning runs. With the advent of mills, dams, road crossing and culverts, such passage was impaired or blocked. It is only in recent years that serious efforts are being made to restore passage through dam removals and culvert replacements that facilitate fish and wildlife movements along this river corridor. Fish ladders, which have been in place in several locations along the Parker River, have been nurtured for many years by local groups hoping to preserve at least partial fish migrations. Efforts to restore Atlantic salmon in the Parker in the 1950's failed, while efforts have continued to bolster native populations of sea run brown and brook trout with marginal success.



Box Culvert installed August 2013 on Main Street, Boxford on the Parker River, downstream of Sperry's Pond