

Downing's Landing Access Site — Lake Winnepesaukee, Alton, N.H.

At the southern tip of Alton Bay at the mouth of the Merrymeeting River, Downing's Landing is N.H. Fish and Game's first no-fee trailered-boat launch facility on Lake Winnepesaukee. It continues a legacy of gateway access to the "Big Lake" from this property that began in the late 1800s.

According to historical research completed as part of Fish and Game's permitting process to refurbish and improve the facility, Samuel Downing moved from the Seacoast to New Durham in the 1830s and became a prosperous farmer. He and his children purchased property along Alton Bay between 1845 and 1870 to establish the J.H. Downing Store (now the Amelyne Corner Market), the Winnepesaukee House Hotel (493 Main) and, as a co-developer, the Cocheco Railroad Depot (later the Boston and Maine) terminus near Bay Street.

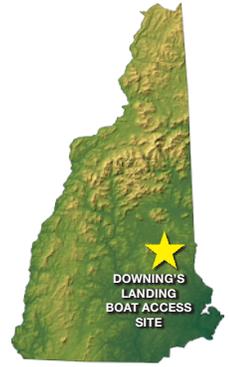
In 1892, the Downing family purchased the Downing's Landing property from the Winnepesaukee Lake Cotton and Woolen Manufacturing Company. The facility served as a boat launch and the base for a lake property delivery-boat service, speed boat tours, boat sales and a water recreation business until the family sold the property to Fish and Game in November of 2012.

Downing's Landing has an asphalt ramp and passenger access dock. Its parking area can accommodate 25 trailered boats and offers several cartop spaces. Access is open to all on a first-come-first-served basis. Launch early, as high demand fills the lot quickly on summer holidays and weekends. The fishing pier and snack bar are closed to the public, pending repairs.

Lake Winnepesaukee offers an exciting range of fishing opportunities across its



Fish and Game's Downing's Landing boat access site in Alton Bay offers no-fee access to Lake Winnepesaukee. Plan to arrive early, as the lot fills quickly in the summer and on weekends.



NHFG STAFF PHOTOS

72-square-mile expanse, encompassed by 178 miles of shoreline. Every year, Fish and Game stocks nearly 40,000 fish into the lake, including about 30,000 landlocked salmon and 9,000 rainbow trout. These stocked fish

Boating on the "Big Lake" is one of the crown jewels in New Hampshire's treasure chest of outdoor recreation opportunities.

complement the native lake trout, perch and small and largemouth bass populations. With a maximum depth of 213 feet, the lake has many warm and cold water fisheries.

In its current configuration and condition, Downing's Landing offers an important access to Lake Winnepesaukee. Over the next few years, as funding allows, Fish and Game will be upgrading the facility. Currently, the site is in the evaluation and planning stages required for state and federal permit applications to

construct shoreline projects. A new double ramp with an industry state-of-the-art precast concrete plank system is planned, along with a new parking layout affording cartop spaces and room for about 30 trailered-boat slots.

Visit Downing's Landing and enjoy boating on the "Big Lake," one of the crown jewels in New Hampshire's treasure chest of outdoor recreational opportunities. 

Public Boat Access

New Hampshire Fish and Game's Statewide Public Boat Access Program maintains more than 140 boat ramps around the state. It is funded through boat registration fees and federal Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration funds, a true user-pay, user-benefit program. wildnh.com/access

