

PRESERVING DRACUT'S CONSERVATION LAND

Dracut has several properties that are protected as Town Conservation Land to provide wildlife habitat, stormwater control, public enjoyment, and other benefits. Many of these parcels are managed by volunteers, including the Open Space Committee and Scouts. Stewardship of these public resources will help protect their values for future generations.

Encroachments on Town Land

The Dracut Conservation Commission is working to address encroachments on Town Conservation Land, as part of its legal obligation to protect the land it holds for the citizens of Dracut under Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution. Encroachments include extension of lawns onto town land, clearing of brush or trees, construction of sheds or other structures, and dumping of yard waste and debris onto Conservation Land. These violations can result in degraded water resources, reduced wildlife habitat value, and less public access.

The Conservation Commission is working to inform abutting landowners of suspected encroachments and invite them to discuss the concerns with the Commission. If the encroachment is confirmed, the Commission will require removal of structures and possibly restoration or renaturalization to remove signs of intrusion. Encroachments which are also wetland violations will be required to comply with the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and Dracut Wetland Bylaw.

Stewardship of Conservation Land

You can help protect Dracut's natural resources by enjoying these conservation areas while refraining from dumping waste or storing items on town property. Please contact the Conservation Agent before doing any work near wetlands.



DRACUT CONSERVATION

62 Arlington St
Dracut, MA 01826
978-770-2587
conservation@dracutma.gov

M/W/Th 8:30-4:30
Tu 8:30-7:00
F 8:30-1:00

PROTECTING DRACUT'S WETLANDS

Dracut's wetlands are valuable because they provide wildlife habitat, reduce flooding, filter polluted water, and protect the water supply. While they often appear dry in the summer, they can be identified by their soils and plants. The Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and Dracut Wetland Bylaw protect wetlands and their buffer zones from work that could alter the wetlands. Lawfully existing and permitted structures and lawns can be maintained, but most alterations require a permit from the Conservation Commission.

Regulated Activities

Activities that will alter wetlands or their buffer zones, including dumping yard waste or debris, cutting shrubs or trees, paving over lawns, building structures including sheds and decks, installing septic systems, and grading, excavating, or filling, will likely require a permit from the Conservation Commission. Docks require permits from the Conservation Commission and often from the State. The Conservation Commission may take enforcement action for work done without a permit, and may require the illegally altered land to be returned to its original condition.

Steps to Obtain a Wetland Permit

1. Determine whether the project will occur in a wetland or buffer zone. The Conservation Agent or an Environmental Firm can help you identify the wetland boundary.
2. Complete the required application.
3. Attend a public hearing.
4. Get a permit before starting work.

Certain minor activities, such as removal of a few hazardous trees, can be permitted with an administrative approval form from the Conservation Agent.



Protected Areas:

Permits are required for work within 100 ft of a:

- Marsh or swamp
- Intermittent stream
- Pond or lake
- Forested wetland
- Vernal pool

Permits are also required for work within 200 ft of a perennial (year-round) stream, or within the 100-year floodplain.

Best Practices:

- Properly dispose of dog waste
- Plant native vegetation between your yard and wetlands
- Avoid using fertilizers, herbicides, insecticides, or deicers near wetlands



Town of *Dracut*
MASSACHUSETTS