

Regulations for the Use of Conservation Land in Dracut (Approved 11/20/2024)

Adopted by the Dracut Conservation Commission

Welcome to the Town of Dracut's conservation land and trails! The Dracut Conservation Commission and Open Space Committee welcome public use and enjoyment of the lands under their care and custody. Please appreciate and respect these natural areas. If you have any questions or comments, please contact:

- In the case of an emergency, please call the Dracut Police at 911.
- For questions or non-emergency complaints, please contact the Conservation Agent.

Pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 40, s. 8c, the Conservation Commission has adopted these rules and regulations in order to preserve and protect in perpetuity the wildlife, aesthetic, ecological, environmental, and conservation values of these properties.

- A. The following rules and regulations shall apply to all Town land under the custody of the Conservation Commission, except as they may be modified in Special Rules and Regulations issued for specific parcels of land, and as waived for the Open Space Committee under Section C of these Regulations.
 1. Conservation land is open to the public from a half hour before sunrise to a half hour after sunset, unless otherwise permitted by the Conservation Commission. Hours may be extended for a specific event or use if prior written permission has been obtained from the Commission.
 2. Overnight camping is permitted only with the approval of the Conservation Commission.
 3. Any use by commercial or organized groups or commercial use by individuals requires prior written permission from the Conservation Commission.
 4. No cars, trucks, or other powered vehicles, including but not limited to motorcycles, dirt motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles, snow mobiles and motorized boats, but excepting motorized wheelchairs and mobility scooters, are permitted on the lands except where specifically allowed by the Conservation Commission. Department of Public Works vehicles may enter the properties for maintenance purposes. Public safety vehicles, including Police and Fire department vehicles may enter the properties for emergency purposes and for enforcement of these Rules.
 5. No work of any type is permitted without permission from the Conservation Commission. "Work" includes but is not limited to agricultural use, trail construction, maintenance, excavation, filling, building structures, and posting signs.
 6. Cutting, removing, or otherwise altering vegetation is prohibited without permission of the Conservation Commission.
 7. No hunting, trapping, or discharge of firearms is permitted, except in designated areas.
 8. Use of paint balls, pellet guns, bows and arrows, and slingshots is prohibited.
 9. Fishing is permitted in season, with a license, and in accord with applicable law.
 10. No fires or grilling are allowed without the approval of the Conservation Commission and a permit from the Chief of the Fire Department. All wood for fires must be brought onto the property by the permittee, and no trees may be cut or downed wood taken for use in any fire.
 11. Fireworks are prohibited.
 12. Dumping, littering, filling, or deposition of any kind of rubbish or yard waste, including but not limited to leaves, grass clippings or brush is prohibited. Said activities shall also be subject to enforcement per Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 270, Section 16.

13. Debris is to be placed in containers (if provided), otherwise removed from the premises (carry in, carry out).
14. Personal items left on the premises unattended may be discarded by the Town.
15. No consumption of alcoholic beverages is permitted on Conservation Land, without issuance of a one-day license from the Board of Selectmen. Individuals or groups receiving such permission shall have the permission document in their possession and available for inspection on request by an authorized enforcement officer.
16. Glass containers are prohibited.
17. Installation of memorials or displays is prohibited without the written permission of the Commission.
18. Dogs brought onto the property shall be leashed as required by Chapter 12 of the Town of Dracut's General Bylaw. All dog solid waste products shall be immediately removed. Removal of dog waste is the responsibility of the dog owner.
19. The Conservation Commission may arrange with others to undertake all necessary management actions notwithstanding any of the other provisions of this document.
20. A fine may be imposed for any violation of these regulations, according to the following schedule: \$50.00 for a first offense, \$100.00 for a second offense, \$200 for a third offense, and \$300.00 for a third or subsequent offense. These fines may be imposed under the provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 21D by the Conservation Agent.

B. Those seeking a permit from the Conservation shall follow the following procedure:

1. Fill out the Town of Dracut Conservation Land Use Permit form on the Conservation Commission webpage.
2. Submit the form to the Conservation Agent for review, along with a sketch of the area to be used.
3. Conservation Agent may grant or deny permission or may schedule a discussion with the Conservation Commission to allow the Commission to grant or deny permission.

C. The Open Space Committee and its designees are exempt from the regulations outlined in Section A for the following activities, for which the Open Space Committee does not need to apply for a permit from the Conservation Agent.

1. Trail development and maintenance, including but not limited to:
 - a. Identifying routes and locations for trails
 - b. Cutting and trimming trees as needed
 - c. Installing trail markers, including junction posts, trailhead signs and displays
 - d. Clearing obstacles such as rocks, twigs, and downed trees
 - e. Mowing grass as needed
2. Run public programs on Conservation Land, including but not limited to:
 - a. Trail walks
 - b. Bird watches
 - c. Other nature programs
3. Coordinate with local and town organizations for cleanup assistance and scout projects
4. Publish trail maps, directories, or pamphlets
5. Promote open space through educational seminars and landowner conferences
6. Identify town properties appropriate for recreational trails

Rules and regulations apply to the following conservation parcels:

- Dracut Historical Area (Off Brentwood Drive)
- East Richardson Preserve
- Arlington Street Conservation Area
- Beaver Brook Conservation Area
- Berube Farms Open Space
- Cedar Pond Conservation Area
- Colburn Conservation Land (Cross Rd)
- Dennis P. McNamara Way
- Evergreen Conservation Area
- Lakeview Conservation Area
- Long Pond Conservation Area
- Rifle Range Conservation Land
- Salem Road Conservation Area
- Sawmill Drive Conservation Area
- Scott Street Conservation Area
- Sunset Hill Open Space
- Tyngsboro Road Conservation Area
- Varnum's Landing Conservation Area ("Nickel Brook")
- Yapp Farm