

Report of the
Conservation Commission
& Town Forest Committee

Purpose of Conservation Commission

The Rochester Conservation Commission & Town Forest Committee was formed in 1963 as a broad based committee responsible for protecting open space and promoting land conservation. The Commission is a seven-member all volunteer board appointed by the Board of Selectmen for renewable three-year terms, and is supported by a full-time Conservation Agent and part-time Administrative Assistant. The Commission is responsible for administering the interests of the *Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act*, MGL Chapter 131, Section 40 and the *Rochester Wetlands Protection By-Law*. The Rochester Conservation Commission manages all Town-owned Conservation land in order to protect and sustain these natural ecosystems for current and future generations to use and enjoy.

The Rochester Conservation Commission office is located at the Town Hall Annex at 37 Marion Road; office hours are 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The office can be reached by calling 508-763-5421 extension 206. The Commission holds public meetings on the first and third Tuesday of each month. Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. at the Rochester Town Hall Conference Room. All hearings are advertised in *The Wanderer* at least five (5) calendar days in advance of the meeting. Public hearing notices may be viewed on-line at www.wanderer.com.

2010 Filings Under the Wetlands Protection Act and Rochester Wetlands By-law

The Conservation Commission held 18 meetings in the year 2010. The following is a summary of the number of applications received and formal actions by the Commission in 2010:

<u>PERMITS</u>	
Notice of Intent Applications	7
Requests for Determination of Applicability	14
Notice of Resource Area Delineation	1
Amended Orders of Conditions	0
Extension Permits	4
Certificates of Compliance	9
Enforcement Orders	1

2010 Conservation Commission Accomplishments

- Conservation Commission staff coordinated the submittal and acquisition of a \$45,000.00 Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program Municipal Mini Grant for the Carr Family Bogs Land Acquisition Project. Acquisition of the Carr Family Bogs property will result in protection of more than 1500 linear feet of Hales Brook, two potential vernal pools, diverse upland, wooded swamp, and beautiful stonewalls along an ancient way. The entire site is within an area classified by the Natural Heritage & Endangered species program as BioMap Supporting Natural Landscape.
- Conservation Commission staff coordinated the submittal and acquisition of a \$20,506.00 Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program Municipal Mini Grant for the Mahoney Wolf Island North Land Preservation Project. The property is 10.7-Acres in size and includes over 600 feet of direct frontage on the Mattapoissett River and a variety of important riparian wetland habitats. Acquisition of the Mahoney property will ensure permanent protection of wetlands, floodplain, wetland buffers and critical NHESP Priority Habitat for Rare Species, BioMap Core Habitat and Living Waters Supporting Watershed.
- Conservation Commission staff coordinated the submittal and acquisition of two DCR Working Forest Initiative Program grants totaling \$2,700.00 under the Massachusetts Forest Stewardship Program. Separate applications were submitted for the 17.6-acre Town Forest property owned by the Town of Rochester, and the 45-acre Old Colony Regional Technical Vocational High School property. Forest stewardship plans will be prepared for both properties as a result of the above grant.
- Prepared wetlands educational display materials and manned a table at the Green Fair held at Old Colony Technical Regional Vocational High School on March 20, 2010.
- Provided technical support to the Rochester Memorial School expansion project by flagging wetlands on the RMS property, preparing the Eastern Box Turtle Mitigation Plan, obtaining the necessary Scientific Collection Permit and Conservation Permit from the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, and conducting eastern box turtle field sweeps during the construction phase of the RMS expansion project.

- Conservation Commission staff serves as Rochester's representative on the Buzzards Bay Action Committee, Mattapoisett River Valley Water Supply Protection Advisory Committee, Mattapoisett River Valley Water District Commission, Watershed Protection Committee of The Coalition for Buzzards Bay and Massachusetts Pesticide Board.

The Rochester Conservation Commission accepted with regret notice of the retirement of Board Administrator Shirley Darcy. Shirley served as a dedicated employee of both the Rochester Conservation Commission and Planning Board for many years, and she will be greatly missed.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary T. Smith, Chairperson 2011

Dr. John Teal, Vice-Chairman, 2010

Kevin Cassidy, 2011

Chris Post, 2010

Judy Schaaf, 2010

Christopher York, 2011

Laurene Gerrior, 2011

Patrice LaForest, Board Administrator

Laurell J. Farinon, Conservation Agent