

2015 Conservation Commission & Town Forest Committee Annual Report

Members & Purpose

Rochester has a long history of preserving important ecological, agricultural, cultural and water supply related lands for future generations. The Town of Rochester established the Conservation Commission & Town Forest Committee ("Commission") in 1963 under the Conservation Commission Act.

The Commission is responsible for protecting Rochester's natural resources, managing the Town Forest and conservation lands, administering the Massachusetts and Town Wetland Protection statutes, and advising other municipal officials and boards on conservation and environmental matters.

The Commission meets the first and third Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. in the Rochester Town Hall Conference Room. The Rochester Conservation Commission office is located at the Town Hall Annex at 37 Marion Road; office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 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 beginning at 7:00 p.m. at the Rochester Town Hall Conference Room.

2015 Wetland Protection Act and Rochester Wetlands By-law Filings

The Conservation Commission held 19 meetings in the year 2015. The following is a summary of the number of applications received and formal actions by the Commission in 2015:

<u>Permits/Actions</u>	
Notice of Intent Applications	6
Requests for Determination of Applicability	15
Abbreviated Notice of Resource	
Area Delineation (ANRAD)	3
Amended Order of Conditions	2
Certificates of Compliance	4
Emergency Certifications	1
Enforcement Orders	2

2015 Conservation Commission Accomplishments

- Created and went live with a new Rochester Conservation Commission website – www.rochestermaconservation.com which includes the following pages:
 1. Wetlands Protection & Permitting
 2. Public Lands Trails & Maps
 3. Open Space Planning

4. Rochester Plants, Animals & Natural Communities

- Updated digital version of Explore Rochester trail guide by adding two new trails (Kirby Preserve and Doggett's Brook). The digital version of the guide can be found on the Conservation Commission website.
- Began updating Rochester's 2008 Open Space & Recreation Plan (Rochester's sixth since 1977) to provide a landscape guide into the future. The Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs, Division of Conservation Services (DCS) requires municipalities to update their plans every seven years to remain eligible for state and federal money sources.
- Applied for and received a \$42,000 Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program grant to permanently protect 11.5-acres of the Spieldenner property off Smith Lane
- Coordinated public education workshop on the Chapter 61 tax reduction program for residents in Rochester, Marion and Mattapoisett held on March 19, 2015
- Applied for and received Makepeace Neighborhood Fund Application for \$2,000 for expansion and second printing of Explore Rochester Trail Guide.
- Updated MapGeo Browser – web mapping interface located on Town's website for use by residents and staff.
- Co-ordinated update of Rochester's GIS parcel layer for use by the Commission, all Town departments and boards, SRPEDD, and state agencies.
- Staff served 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.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary T. Smith, Chairperson
Dr. John Teal, Vice-Chairman
Kevin Cassidy
Michael Conway

Laurene Gerrior
Chris Post
Christopher York
Dan Gagne, Associate Member

Margaret Gonneville, Board Administrator
Laurell J. Farinon, Conservation Agent