



Rochester Conservation Commission & Town Forest Committee

Town Hall Annex, 37 Marion Road, Rochester MA 02770
Phone: 508-763-5421 Fax: 508-763-5379

2017 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 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.

Commission Staff

The Environmental Planner/Conservation Agent and Board Administrator work under the direction of the Conservation Commission and provide support, coordination, and professional management for the Conservation Commission in carrying out its mission to protect Rochester's natural resources. Commission staff assists landowners, developers, applicants, engineers and the general public to provide due diligence information and professional advice on the Wetlands Protection Act and Rochester Wetlands Protection Bylaw. Commission staff assists the Commission in planning, acquisition, administration and management of municipal conservation land conservation restrictions.

2017 Conservation Commission Accomplishments

- Applied for and received a \$35,000 Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program grant to permanently protect the 78.6-acre Walnut Plain Cedar Swamp Land Preservation Project property off Walnut Plain Road
- Applied for and received a \$35,000 Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program grant to permanently protect the 164-acres Branch Brook Land Preservation Project property off Wolf Island Road.
- Applied for and received a \$1,300 DCR Working Forest Initiative Grant for Preparation of a Forest Stewardship Plan for two Conservation Commission parcels off New Bedford Road Adjacent to the Shoolman Preserve

- Applied for and received Makepeace Neighborhood Fund Application for \$10,000 of in kind materials/services for Dexter Lane Recreational Area paved path
- Co-ordinated update of MapGeo Browser and Rochester's GIS parcel layer for use by the Commission, all Town departments and boards, SRPEDD, and state agencies.
- Adopted the provisions of MGL Chapter 44, Section 53G allowing for hiring of outside consultants when necessary for Commission review of projects.
- Commission Members and Staff attended the Annual MACC Environmental Conference held on March 4, 2017.
- Communication and coordination with Plymouth County Mosquito Control on projects involving Rochester properties.
- Continued work on 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.

2017 Wetland Protection Act and Rochester Wetlands By-law Filings

The Conservation Commission held 21 meetings in the year 2017. The following is a summary of the applications received and formal actions by the Commission in 2017:

<u>Permits/Actions</u>	
Building Permit Interdepartmental Review	109
Board of Health Percolation Review	61
Notice of Intent Applications	22
RDA Applications	18
ANRAD Wetland Delineation Review	3
Amended Order of Conditions	1
Certificates of Compliance	12
Emergency Certifications	1
Enforcement Orders	3
Extension Permits	3

The Commission wishes to recognize longstanding members Kevin Cassidy and John Teal for their many years of dedicated service to the Rochester Conservation Commission. Both members stepped down from the Commission in 2017 and will be sorely missed.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Conway, Chairperson
Dan Gagne, Vice-Chairman
Christopher Gerrior
Laurene Gerrior
Maggie Payne
Chris Post
Rosemary T. Smith