

Stewardship Handbook for Arlington Conservation Land

**STEWARDSHIP
HANDBOOK
FOR
ARLINGTON CONSERVATION LAND**



Owl at the Mt. Gilboa Conservation Land

Arlington Conservation Commission (ACC)
Version 2.1

Stewardship Handbook for Arlington Conservation Land

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Arlington Town Hall
730 Massachusetts Avenue
Arlington, MA 02476
Tel: 781-316-3012

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Stewardship Handbook for Arlington Conservation Land

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

Arlington has approximately 30 acres of Conservation Land. Most of this land is in small parcels scattered throughout the town. But who takes care of this land? The resources of Town government are limited and the responsibility is spread throughout many departments. Many of these parcels are not visible from roadways and are never subject to police patrol. Under these conditions, a sustained involvement on the part of concerned Town residents is essential to proper care of the land. For this reason, the Arlington Conservation Commission (ACC) is sponsoring the Arlington Conservation Land Stewards (ACLS) group to provide support and guidance for citizen volunteers who will take an active role in the protection of public land. By working with this group, the effectiveness of individual actions will be multiplied several fold and the long-term continuity of stewardship efforts will be assured.

1.2 What is Land Stewardship?

The primary thrust of the stewardship program is protection of: soil from erosion, plants and animals from destruction, ponds and streams from pollution, and the beauty of the land from litter and vandalism. Stewards may contribute to this protection by reporting issues and problems to the appropriate Town officials and, when safe and appropriate, speaking directly to known offenders.

A second important objective of the program is education of the public concerning the value of the land and their responsibilities toward it. Unfortunately abuses of public land often occur through ignorance or thoughtlessness. Yet, typically, many offenders become enthusiastic and responsible users of conservation land when provided with proper guidance. However land stewards *should not* consider themselves as enforcers, but rather as educators.

Finally, land stewards may undertake actions in order to correct a situation (upon consultation and approval of the Conservation Commission or other Town department). Such action may involve clean-up campaigns, signs, posting of regulations, and similar efforts. Larger efforts such as erosion control projects, trail maintenance, planting projects, invasive species control or tree care must have approval from the Conservation Commission prior to implementation.

The Arlington Land Trust (an independent partnering organization) accepts donations to the ACC Stewardship Fund to assist in these projects. More information can be found at www.arlingtonlandtrust.org. If you wish to make a tax-deductible donation to help our Conservation lands, please indicate if you would like your donation used for a specific property or activity.

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2. Land Steward Responsibilities

2.1 Basic Activities

Arlington Conservation Land Stewards (ACLS) do the following...

- ❖ Walk their chosen site on a regular basis (e.g. daily, weekly or monthly).
- ❖ Act as site liaisons to the Town entities which hold management responsibility for the site.
- ❖ Report problems/issues and suggest ideas for improvements and maintenance. It is important to emphasize that land stewards are citizen volunteers and *should not* act as enforcers.
- ❖ Assist in producing detailed site maps, outlines of management plans, and/or plant and wildlife inventories.
- ❖ Organize site clean-ups.

In addition, land stewards...

- ❖ Attend annual meetings with the stewards from other properties, to share ideas and solve problems.
- ❖ Work with various Town commissions and departments (such as Conservation Commission, Park and Recreation Commission, Department of Public Works).

Note in regards to cleanups: Removal of trash and dumped materials is always appropriate. However natural **debris such as fallen branches, trees and leaves should remain** outside of pathways to provide habitats for creatures such as chipmunks and woodpeckers.

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2.2 Monitoring a Site

Obtain a map of the site. The Town website has an online Geographic Information System (GIS) where information about the site can be obtained and printed. Walk the site and make sure you are familiar with it. Pay particular attention to ownership boundaries, streams, wetlands, adjacent land uses, and any recent changes which may not be shown on older maps. A photographic record can be especially useful.

Periodic walks through the site should be conducted in order to inspect for issues/problems which might require attention. Areas of previous concern may be visited more frequently than other areas. A Site may have multiple Stewards who may wish to divide monitoring responsibility among themselves. Applicable Town regulations can be found in Section 3. An observation of certain problems may require special action on the part of the land steward or the Town. See the Problem Management Table below to determine if such special action is required. Remember that land stewards are *not enforcers* and should never place themselves at risk.

| Problem/Situation Management Table | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------|--------------------|----------|-------------------|-------------|
| Problem/Situation | Action to Take | | | | | |
| | Call Police | Call Fire Dept. | Call Conser. Comm. | Call DPW | Obtain Auto Lic # | Mark on Map |
| Destruction or removal of plants or animals | Y | | Y | | Y | Y |
| Dumping | Y | | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Fire | Y | Y | Y | | Y | Y |
| Firearms | Y | | Y | | Y | |
| Hunting or trapping | Y | | Y | | Y | |
| Rowdiness/drinking | Y | | | | Y | |
| Tree cutting | Y | | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Unauthorized motor vehicles | Y | | Y | | Y | |
| Trash removal | | | | Y | | |

| Contact Information | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|
| Department | Phone | Email |
| Conservation Commission | 781-316-3012 | CBeckwith@town.arlington.ma.us |
| Planning Department | 781-316-3090 | |
| Park and Recreation | 781-316-3880 | |
| Dept. of Public Works (DPW) | 781-316-3108 | |
| Fire | 781-316-3800 | |
| Police | 781-643-1212 | |

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3. Regulations

Conservation Land Regulations (Revised 2009)

Conservation lands provide a place for people to get away from the urban environment, but they are also home to the animals and plants that live there. As you enjoy conservation land be aware of these native inhabitants and treat them with care.

The following regulations are established in 2009 by the Arlington Conservation Commission under its authority (Chapter 40, Section 8C) to make regulations for Town conservation lands. A fine up to \$100 shall be imposed on any person or persons violating these regulations. In addition any violations may also require remediation for any damages.

1. Conservation areas are open daily from dawn until dusk.
2. Removal, cutting or damage of trees, shrubs, plants, flowers or wildlife is not allowed.
3. Defacing of any natural or human made objects is not allowed.
4. Dumping of litter or garbage is not allowed. Carry out what you carry in.
5. Fires are not allowed.
6. Feeding of waterfowl is not allowed.
7. Alcoholic beverages are not allowed.
8. Hunting, shooting or trapping are not allowed. Fishing is allowed only where posted.
9. Camping is not allowed.
10. Bicycles are not allowed except on designated bike trails.
11. Dogs are not allowed off-leash except as posted by the Commission.
12. Vehicles are not allowed except for authorized maintenance activities.
13. Cutting of trails, erection of signs, building of structures, digging of holes, or damming of streams is not allowed except by written authorization of the Commission.
14. The use of conservation lands for commercial purposes is not allowed except by written authorization of the Commission.
15. Additional restrictions may be established in some areas for wildlife and habitat protection.
16. All public safety bylaws of the Town apply to conservation lands.

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4. Arlington Stewardship Areas

Below are the Arlington Conservation Land areas which are in the Stewardship program. In addition some other areas such as Hills Hill and the Crusher Lot which are under the jurisdiction of other departments are also under stewardship. These areas need regular attention, and we always welcome help from the public. Please join us for our cleanup activities which are advertised in the Arlington Advocate and at the Town website www.arlingtonma.gov. Also feel free to contact us with any particular concerns.

Deleted: all part of

| Arlington Conservation Land | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| Name of Area | Location | Size (acres) |
| Mt. Gilboa | North of Mass Ave (parking at Park Place, off Crescent Hill Ave) | 10.7 |
| Turkey Hill (ConCom & Park and Rec) | Above Forest and Washington streets in northwest Arlington. | 10.7 |
| Meadowbrook Park | At the mouth of Mill Brook surrounded by Mt. Pleasant Cemetery. | 3.3 |
| Window on the Mystic Lake | East of Mystic Street near Beverly Road. | 3.0 |
| Forest Street | Opposite intersection with Dunster Lane, Winchester Town line. | 1.0 |
| Cookes Hollow Park | Off Mystic Street south of the Community Safety building. | 0.75 |
| Ridge Street | North end of Ridge St. | 0.60 |
| Woodside Lane | Across from 26, 30, 34 Woodside Ln | 0.60 |
| Brattle Street | Surrounding 54 Brattle St. | 0.54 |
| Madison Avenue | Adjacent to Mt. Gilboa lands. | 0.46 |
| Brand Street | 2 parcels, left of 72 Brand and right of 36 Brand | 0.20 |
| Stone Rd. | Across from 24 Stone Rd | 0.19 |
| Philemon Street | South side of 32 Philemon St. Access to Whipple Hill lands in Lexington. | 0.13 |
| Concord Turnpike (Arlmont) | Between Scituate and Newport , Concord Turnpike and Arlmont Sts. | 0.13 |
| Mohawk Road | 2 parcels, intersection of Washington and Mohawk Streets | 0.13 |
| Hemlock Street | Uphill from 5 Hemlock, near Symmes | 0.12 |
| Short Street | Between 8 Short and 11 West Streets | 0.11 |
| Inverness Road | Next to 36 Inverness | 0.10 |
| Rublee Street | Intersection of Rublee and Udine, entrance to Sutherland Woods, Lex. | 0.10 |
| Kilsythe Road | Landlocked behind 44 and 48 Kilsythe | 0.09 |
| Water Street | Area with two benches north of Bikepath next to Buzzell Field | 0.08 |
| Spring Street | Across from 120 Spring St. | 0.04 |
| Central St. | Adamian property, end of Central St. | 0.02 |
| 53 Park Ave. Rear | Access through left side of 53 Park | 0.02 |

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5. How to become a Conservation Land Steward.

Email : contact our Land Stewards Coordinator, Cheryl Miller at Landstewardcoord@gmail.com or the Conservation Administrator, Cori Beckwith at cbeckwith@town.arlington.ma.us.

Phone: Call the Conservation Office at 781-316-3012

Mail: send the following information to
Arlington Conservation Commission, Arlington Town Hall, 730 Massachusetts Avenue,
Arlington, MA 02476.

Name: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Conservation Area(s) of Interest:

More information about creating and preserving conservation land can be obtained from the
Arlington Land Trust (an independent non-profit organization) at www.arlingtonlandtrust.org.