

Arlington Conservation Commission
Policy on Volunteer Projects on Conservation Lands

The Arlington Conservation Commission manages over two dozen parcels of conservation land that vary widely in size and total approximately 54 acres. The Park and Recreation Department owns 41% of this land. The Commission is interested in maintaining and enhancing the environmental quality of these lands, and in encouraging and enhancing appropriate public use. In keeping with those goals, the Commission welcomes and encourages volunteer projects to enhance and improve these lands.

The following is a list of goals and parameters the Commission will apply in evaluating and approving proposed projects:

1. The project must be consistent with the goals and plans for each parcel of conservation land. (See Appendix)
2. The project should enhance the public benefits of the conservation land.
3. The project shall be consistent with environmental sustainability principles.¹
4. When the project is within the jurisdiction of the Wetlands Protection Act or Arlington Wetlands Protection Bylaw, the project needs to meet those requirements. The Arlington Wetlands Protection Bylaw is available here: <https://www.arlingtonma.gov/town-governance/all-boards-and-committees/conservation-commission>. The Arlington Conservation Commission can assist volunteers to understand these requirements.
5. Projects on conservation land should conform to other town and state regulations, including but not limited to ADA, Zoning, and the Building Code. The Arlington Town Engineer may provide assistance with knowing when and how to apply these regulations.
6. The Commission encourages volunteers to propose and undertake projects that require as few approvals as possible from other regulatory entities.
7. Trail projects shall comply with current good standards such as specified in “AMC’s Complete Guide to Trail Building & Maintenance”.
8. All projects should describe in detail to the satisfaction of the Commission, and reviewed/approved by appropriate experts as determined by the Commission.
9. Projects involving major construction such as bridges should have detailed construction plans that are approved by an appropriate professional such as the Town Engineer.
10. If youth are doing the work, there needs to be an appropriate adult present to oversee that it is done properly and safely, for example a scout leader or parent.
11. Where individual volunteers’ planning horizons may be shorter than the permit or approval process, such as may happen with Boy Scout Eagle projects, the Commission recommends that the organization such as the troop apply for permits and approvals for likely projects and then hold the permits and approvals until a suitable volunteer is identified.

¹

See for example guidelines at the Massachusetts Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs:
<http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dfg/dfw/natural-heritage/land-protection-and-management/>

Appendix - Conservation Land Goals

General

1. Maintain and enhance the wildlife habitat.
2. Encourage native plants.
3. Manage invasive plants.
4. Enable public access for passive recreation where it does not conflict with the previous goals.
5. Provide appropriate signage to identify the area and encourage appreciation and appropriate use.

Specific Area Needs:

Conservation Area	Size (acres)	Specific Needs
Mt. Gilboa	10.7	Tree maintenance over trails.
Turkey Hill (ConCom & Park and Rec)	10.7	Invasive plant removal.
Meadowbrook Park	3.3	Trail construction & trash removal.
Window on the Mystic Lake	3.0	Tree maintenance and leaf litter removal.
Forest Street	1.0	Inspection for illegal dumping.
Cookes Hollow Park	0.75	Tree maintenance, erosion control.
Ridge Street	0.60	Removal of debris and fallen trees.
Woodside Lane	0.60	Removal of debris and fallen trees.
Brattle Street	0.54	Tree maintenance and leaf litter removal.
Madison Avenue	0.46	Inspection for illegal dumping.
Brand Street	0.20	Inspection for illegal dumping.
Stone Rd.	0.19	Tree maintenance, no dumping signs, removal of debris.
Philemon Street	0.13	Inspection for illegal dumping.
Concord Turnpike (Arlmont)	0.13	Inspection for illegal dumping.
Mohawk Road	0.13	Inspection for illegal dumping.
Hemlock Street	0.12	Inspection for illegal dumping.
Short Street	0.11	Inspection for illegal dumping.
Inverness Road	0.10	Inspection for illegal dumping.
Ruble Street	0.10	Inspection for illegal dumping.
Kilsythe Road	0.09	Inspection for illegal dumping.
Water Street	0.08	Inspection for illegal dumping.
Spring Street	0.04	Inspection for illegal dumping.
Central St.	0.02	Inspection for illegal dumping.
53 Park Ave. Rear	0.02	Inspection for illegal dumping.
Spy Pond Route 2 Path (Park & Rec)	2.0	Trash removal, inspection for illegal dumping.
Crusher Lot (Park & Rec)	6.0	Trash removal, inspection for illegal dumping.
Hills Hill (Park & Rec)	4.0	Trash removal, inspection for illegal dumping.
Symmes CR	8.713	Tree maintenance, leaf and trash removal.

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