

**STEWARDSHIP  
HANDBOOK  
for  
Arlington Conservation Lands**



**Arlington Conservation Commission (ACC)**

Version 1.0

# Stewardship Handbook for Arlington Conservation Land

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Produced and Sponsored by the Arlington Conservation Commission (ACC).

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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. 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. This is especially true with regard to young people. 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. Such action may involve erosion control projects, clean-up campaigns, posting of regulations, and similar efforts.

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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 cleanup: Removal of trash and dumped materials is always appropriate. However natural debris such as fallen branches and trees should remain 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 Planning Department has very complete maps of most areas. Contact them or the Conservation Commission office for a current map. 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 Subcommittee may wish to divide monitoring responsibility among the subcommittee members. 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. 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.

<b>Problem/Situation Management Table</b>						
<b>Problem/Situation</b>	<b>Action to Take</b>					
	Call Police	Call Fire Dept.	Call Conser. Comis.	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		

<b>Contact Information</b>		
<b>Department</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
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 (approved – 3/21/02)***

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 on March 21, 2002 by the Arlington Conservation Commission (ACC) 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. Do not remove, cut, or damage trees, shrubs, plants, flowers, or wildlife.
3. Do not deface any natural or human-made objects.
4. Do not dump or leave litter or garbage. Carry out what you carry in.
5. Do not build fires.
6. Do not feed waterfowl.
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. Horses are not allowed.
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 Conservation Lands

The following is a list of open space parcels currently under the jurisdiction of the ACC. Conservation 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.town.arlington.ma.us](http://www.town.arlington.ma.us). Also feel free to contact us with any particular concerns.

<b>Arlington Conservation Lands</b>		
<b>Name of Conservation Area</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Size (acres)</b>
Meadowbrook Park	At the mouth of Mill Brook surrounded by Mt. Pleasant Cemetery.	17.5
Mt. Gilboa	North of Mass Ave (parking at Park Place, off Crescent Hill Ave)	10.2
Turkey Hill (ConCom & Park and Rec)	Above Forest and Washington streets in northwest Arlington.	12.0
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.	0.80
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.	0.50
Stone Rd.	Across from 24 Stone Rd	0.36
Madison Avenue	Adjacent to Mt. Gilboa lands.	0.30
Philemon Street	South side of 32 Philemon St.	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	0.13
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	0.05
Brand Street	2 parcels, left of 72 Brand and right of 36 Brand	0.05
Spring Street	Across from 120 Spring St.	0.04
53 Park Ave. Rear	Access through left side of 53 Park	0.02
Central St.	Adamian property, end of Central St.	0.02

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### 5. How to become a Conservation Land Steward.

Just fill out the following information and send it to the Arlington Conservation Commission (ACC) at Arlington Town Hall, 730 Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington, MA 02476.

Or email the information to [CBeckwith@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:CBeckwith@town.arlington.ma.us)

Or call the office at 781-316-3012.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Conservation Area(s) of Interest:

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A good guide to the open spaces in Arlington (which is available for \$10 from the ACC) is: *Walking the Open Spaces of Arlington, Massachusetts*, by Adaela McLaughlin, illustrations by Laura Rallis, 1994.

More information about creating and preserving conservation lands can be obtained from the Arlington Land Trust (an independent non-profit organization) at 54 Brantwood Road, Arlington, Massachusetts 02476.