**2013 Annual Conservation Commission Report**

The mission of the Norwell Conservation Commission is to protect the Town’s natural resources; by educating and involving the public on environmental issues, managing and protecting Open Space Lands, and administering the State Wetland Protection Act. Established in 1961, the Norwell Conservation Commission is one of 351 Conservation Commissions, serving the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

**CONSERVATION LAND STEWARDSHIP**

The Commission promoted many land management projects and programs.

* Commissioners Bob Woodill, David Osborne and Ron Mott permitted and oversaw installation of the new Jacobs Dock, a year round passive recreational asset to the community that allows kayak and canoe access for residents of all abilities. They also constructed and installed the retaining wall for the new handicap accessible parking area and opened up the newly accessible Jacobs Island for camping and fishing. This project was made possible through Community Preservation Funds and the support of the Community Preservation Committee, and valuable assistance of the Norwell Highway Department.
* The Town of Norwell and the Conservation Commission with support and funding from the Community Preservation Committee acquired the Masthead property. The Water Department and the Commission also acquired the Bordewieck land off the end of Simon Hill. This key parcel connects Water Department land with the Burnt Plain Swamp and Hatch Lots.
* The Commission restored and improved, after the 2012-2013 winter storm damages, miles of walking trails, mostly using the senior work program. Our special thanks to Ed Cox, Charles Dirk, Stephen Gilmartin, Ralph Knowles, Mark Mederos, Wes Osborne, John Suurhans, Alfred Svelnis and Stephen Young.
* In addition, stone walls were cleared of brush and debris at Jacobs Fields, Stetson Meadows and Donovan Fields by Mark Mederos, Stephen Young, David Osborne, Ron Mott and Bob Woodill. Again, a special thanks to the Norwell Tree and Grounds Department for their assistance.
* The Commission added a six-car parking lot adjacent to the Cuffee Lane entrance off Mount Blue Street for the CPC with valuable assistance from the Norwell Highway Department.

**OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION COMMITTEE**

The Open Space and Recreation Committee initiated the 2012-2019 Open Space and Recreation Plan Implementation Program as follow up to the completion of the plan and acceptance by the Division of Conservation and Recreation. The final document is available on the Commission’s webpage within the Town website at [www.townofnorwell.net](http://www.townofnorwell.net). We hope the plan will help inspire and guide Norwell Citizens to take actions and make decisions necessary to preserve Norwell’s unique character by protecting and enhancing the Town’s conservation, open space and recreational resources for many generations to enjoy. The Commission would like to express appreciation to the Open Space Implementation Committee and to its Chairperson, Marynel Wahl Halatsis. Residents wishing to volunteer are needed and welcome for this committee.

**REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS**

The seven member board is comprised of volunteers who supervise the Conservation Agent and Administrative staff to assist the citizens of Norwell to ensure their projects comply with the Wetlands Protection Act, the Rivers Protection Act, the Stormwater Management Policy and the Town of Norwell Wetlands Protection Bylaw Article XVI-a, while protecting natural resources and open space. Recent work consists of 35 Notices of Intent and 18 Requests for Determination along with the necessary meetings, site visits and discussions related to those projects. The Commission and Staff invest a significant amount of time and effort to both serve the residents and protect the resources of the Town. In 2013, the Commission continued to work on ongoing regulatory projects including three 40B projects, four multi-lot projects and subdivisions, one major commercial project, one dam removal and two infrastructure projects. Ninety-one reviews for Building Inspection sign-offs were completed. Forty-three other reviews including Letter Permits, Violation Issues and Certificates of Compliance were addressed. This is in addition to the significant amount of time spent assisting residents with smaller single-family home projects, questions and information gathering. Additional information is available by contacting the Agent and on the Commission webpage found within the Town website noted above.

**CONSERVATION MEMBERS AND STAFF**

The Commission welcomed one new member in 2013, Ron Mott. One member resigned, David Magee. The Commission appreciates his time and contributions to the Town of Norwell. The Conservation Commission appreciates the continued hard work of support staff Meredith Schmid, Jeanne Cianciola, and Wesley Osborne, and Nancy Hemingway, Agent. Their dedicated service to the citizens of Norwell and to the Commission makes the work we do possible.

Respectfully submitted, The Norwell Conservation Commission

David Osborne, Chairman

Robert Woodill, Vice-Chairman

William Grafton

Marynel Wahl Halatsis

Lori Hillstrand

Bruce Humphrey

Ron Mott