

## **Conservation Administrator's Report**

**Jo-Anne Crystoff, Conservation Administrator**

July 2019

The Conservation Office continues to be busy with policy work, applications, permits, inspections, and oversight. **Stormwater public outreach** for the NPDES permit compliance has been taken on by the Conservation Office.

**Ayer's Local Wetlands Protection Bylaw** has been sent to Town Counsel for review. The current draft of the bylaw is available on the Commission's website. We are hopeful that the bylaw will be voted in at Fall Town Meeting.

**The Heating Oil Spill Cleanup and wetland replication** across the street from Page Hilltop continues in a post-remediation inspection phase 16 months after the spill occurred. The replication of the contaminated wetland entailed soil replacement and replanting dozens of woody wetland plants as well as seeding with a wetland seed mix. The replacement wetland soil is becoming stable and the seed mix has sprouted. The woody wetland plants are struggling somewhat to adapt but I remain optimistic that they will begin to thrive soon.

**The Pingry Hill subdivision** requires continual monitoring for compliance with the Wetland Protection Act. With constant oversight, the site has responded well to implementing multiple small erosion control measures. Construction of the last stormwater structures is underway. The Order of Conditions for the infrastructure has been extended for three years by the Commission.

**Ponds' Weed Control:** The Commission has assessed the success of last summer's weed treatment and has signed a contract with Solitude Lake Management, the contractor for Ayer's pond treatments in the past. The first treatment has been done and the second treatment will be scheduled for August. Town Meeting voted to fund the weed control program for FY 2020, for which the Commission is grateful.

**Land Use Team:** The Land Use Team continues to meet weekly. Staff keeps current with each other's projects and offers insight, information, and advice.

**A Conservation Restriction (CR)** on land at the end of Kohler Place needs one more round of review before being sent back to the State for final approval.

As a way to keep up with Commission projects, the Conservation Commission hears applications for permits on the first meeting of the month, and reserves the second monthly meeting for Commission business. Work has begun on creating a local wetlands protection bylaw, and a large land conservation project is underway. Please contact the Conservation office at 978-772-8249, by email at [concom@ayer.ma.us](mailto:concom@ayer.ma.us), or drop by with any questions or concerns. Thank you!