

Conservation Administrator's Report

Jo-Anne Crystoff, Conservation Administrator

August 2019

The Conservation Office continues to be busy with policy work, applications, permits, inspections, enforcement, and oversight.

Stormwater public outreach for the NPDES permit (the federal stormwater permit) compliance has been taken on by the Conservation Office.

Ayer's Local Wetlands Protection Bylaw has been reviewed by Town Counsel. 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 17 months after the spill occurred.

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 nearly complete. The Order of Conditions for the infrastructure has been extended for three years by the Commission.

Ponds' Weed Control: The first treatment was done earlier in the summer and the second treatment was completed this month. We continue treatment in a maintenance mode to stay ahead of out-of-control invasive and nuisance plant growth.

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.

Open Space Residential Development subdivisions are being reviewed with consultants from BSC Group by both the Commission and the Planning board for compliance with this new bylaw and the Wetlands Protection Act. The bylaw sets aside open space in the subdivision in exchange for smaller lots than would be allowed in the underlying zoning.

Social media posts to the Town Facebook page from the Conservation office include natural history and stormwater items of interest to keep us all connected to, and help us protect, our wetland resources here in Ayer.

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. Please contact the Conservation office at 978-772-8249, by email at concom@ayer.ma.us, or drop by with any questions or concerns. Thank you!