
What are Wetlands?

“Wetland resource areas” include more than just areas around our lakes. They include *cattail marsh* and open water *pond*, also *rivers* that generally flow throughout the year, 200-foot *riverfront areas* which border rivers on both sides, *intermittent streams* that dry up during part of the year, low-lying *flood plains* and *vernal (springtime) pools*. These areas (except riverfront areas) are surrounded by “*buffer zones*” – 100 foot wide protective zones around wetlands that protect wetlands from human impacts and provide valuable wildlife habitat.

Why are Wetlands Important?

Wetland resource areas provide critical habitat to wildlife and help maintain the aesthetic beauty of our town. They also provide priceless services including:

- Drinking water purification
- Groundwater recharge
- Flood control
- Pollution prevention

All Holland residents benefit from these services because of our reliance on natural settings for property values, wells for drinking water, and septic systems for waste disposal. The Conservation Commission is responsible for protecting these areas, by enforcing state and local wetlands protection laws and regulations.

Wetland “Do’s and Don’ts”

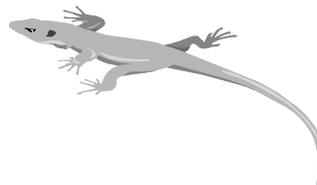
Some activities that do not require Commission approval, include:

- Mowing an existing lawn
- Working in an existing garden
- Pruning and maintaining existing landscaping
- Planting native vegetation
- Cleaning out culverts

Other activities are prohibited in wetland resource areas and/or buffer zones and are subject to application fees or fines (some may be allowed, but only with a permit):

- Dumping yard waste such as leaves, grass, etc, or other waste products, including manure
- Constructing animal paddocks
- Dumping dirt or other fill
- Draining or pumping water from a wetland, pond or stream
- Building dams or removing beaver dams

Wetlands function best in a natural state. Do not clear them or “clean them up.” Wildlife often thrives in areas with brush piles, rotting logs, and other things some people might consider “untidy.”



BEFORE Starting a Project Contact the Commission

A large percentage of Holland home owners have wetland resource areas on or near their property. If you plan to do any work in a wetland resource area, within the 100 foot buffer zone of a wetland, or within 200 feet of a river, such as:

- Tree removal or other vegetation clearing
- Retaining walls
- Grading or excavation
- New landscaping
- Construction, additions, etc.

or any other activity that might alter wetlands or their buffer zones, you must contact the Commission. **Do not assume your contractor will automatically pull all necessary permits.**

The complexity of the approval process is commensurate with the type and scale of the activity proposed. Minor projects such as removing a few trees may be handled by a simple approval letter, while a large project may require a detailed application and evaluation during one or more public hearings.

The Commission wants to see Holland landowners proceed with their projects while simultaneously protecting our valuable wetland resources which benefit EVERYONE!

Limiting Chemical Use and Conserving Water: A few Words about Lawn Care



What's in your water? Do you know what comes out of your weed killer bottle or the lawn care spray truck often ends up in your drinking water? These chemicals can be very harmful to humans, pets, wildlife and plants.

The Commission *recommends* that you avoid using chemicals anywhere on your property due to the potential hazards that they pose to your drinking water, your children, and your pets. If you live next to a pond, fertilizer use can also cause excessive plant growth in the water, harming both the environment and aesthetics. Many natural lawn care alternatives are readily available – and they work.

The Commission also recommends you use water responsibly when maintaining your lawn or other landscaping. Excessive lawn watering contributes to severe low-flow conditions in streams and rivers in all but the wettest years.



THANK YOU FOR HELPING TO PROTECT HOLLAND'S NATURAL RESOURCES

The Holland Conservation Commission (HCC) meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm. The HCC is located on the 2nd Floor of the Town Hall. You may also contact us by email or leave us a message by calling Town Hall at 413-245 7108. Thank you!

Useful websites:
Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection:
www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/

Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions:
<https://www.maccweb.org>

Massachusetts Horticultural Society:
<https://www.masshort.org/>

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT WETLANDS PROTECTION IN HOLLAND, MA



HOLLAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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