

BEFORE Starting a Project Contact the Commission

A large percentage of Dalton homeowners have wetland resource areas on or near their property. If you plan to do any work in or near a wetland resource area, such as:

- Tree removal or other vegetation clearing
- 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.** If you have any questions, please contact the Commission.

The complexity of the approval process varies 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 construction project may require a detailed application and evaluation during a site visit and one or more public hearings. The Commission wants to help you keep the process as simple as possible.

The Commission wants to see Dalton landowners proceed with their projects while simultaneously protecting the valuable wetland resources that benefit
>> EVERYONE <<

Wetland Dos and Don'ts

Some activities near wetland resource areas are allowed and do not require Commission approval, including:

- Mowing an existing lawn
- Maintaining existing landscaping or garden
- Planting native vegetation (not turf)
- Conversion of lawn to uses accessory to residential structures such as decks, sheds, patios, and pools, provided the activity is > 50 feet from the river's edge or bordering vegetated wetland, whichever is farther, and erosion controls are implemented during construction

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

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

Wetlands provide protection of public and private water supplies and ground water supplies, fisheries and wildlife habitat. They also aid in flood control and storm damage prevention. Wetlands function best in a natural state. Do not clear them or "clean them up." Wildlife often thrive in areas with brush piles, rotting logs, and other things some people might consider "untidy."

What are the Protected, Regulated Areas?

- **Bordering Vegetated Wetlands** – Wet Meadows, Marshes, Swamps and/or Bogs that border rivers and streams, ponds and lakes
- **Land Under Water Bodies and Waterways** – land under any Creek, River, Stream, Pond or Lake
- **Land Subject to Flooding** – floodplains such as those mapped by FEMA
- **Bank** – of any Creek, River, Stream, Pond and/or Lake
- **Riverfront Area** – all the land between a river's mean annual high water line and a parallel line measured 200 feet out, horizontally
- **100 Foot Buffer Zone** - both Bank and Bordering Vegetated Wetlands have a 100 foot area known as the buffer zone

The Conservation Commission ensures that proposed activities will not alter resource areas and the public interests they provide by reviewing projects on a case-by-case basis according to regulations [310 Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR) 10.00]. The regulations describe how each type of resource area provides one or more of the public interests. The regulations also spell out the type and extent of work allowed in resource areas. Proposed work must meet these standards. This information helps landowners and developers plan their work and helps commissions apply the law to specific projects.

Limiting Chemical Use and Conserving Water: A Few Words About Lawn Care



Do you know what comes out of your weed killer bottle or the lawn care spray truck? Chemicals – many of which can be harmful to humans, pets, wildlife and plants. They do a lot more than make your lawn green.

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. Natural lawn care alternatives are readily available – and they work. Contact the Commission for more information.

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. Contact the Commission for resources that will help you reduce your water use while still maintaining a beautiful yard.

THANK YOU FOR HELPING TO
PROTECT DALTON'S NATURAL
RESOURCES

... *AND*

Dalton Scenic Mountain Act

Review by the Commission is also required for any work proposed to be performed **above 1500 feet elevation** per the Town of Dalton Berkshire Scenic Mountain Act Regulations.

**For Wetlands Protection Act *or*
Scenic Mountain Act filing,
please contact the Commission
for a site visit first.**

**Visit our webpage on the Dalton
town website**

Dalton-ma.gov/conservation-commission
**to learn more about forms and
online filing.**

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT WETLANDS PROTECTION IN DALTON



DALTON CONSERVATION
COMMISSION

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