

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The mission of the Concord Conservation Commission is to promote, protect, manage, and develop for public use, the natural resources of the City of Concord.

<u>SERVICE INDICATORS</u>	Actual <u>2011</u>	Actual <u>2012</u>	Estimated <u>2013</u>	Projected <u>2014</u>
1. Acres of protected open space by the City	5,894	6,025	6,316	6,586
2. Percent of total City area protected by the City	15.14%	15.48%	16.23%	16.92%
3. Wetland applications received	14	13	8	12
4. Miles of trails maintained	56	60	65	67

2014 GOALS

1. Continue to protect priority open space through acquisition of fee ownership or easements.
2. Continue to identify, evaluate, and utilize, as practicable, innovative financing techniques to leverage acquisition of open space and conservation easements.
3. Continue to monitor and provide stewardship for City-owned land and conservation easements and work with landowners to resolve identified issues.
4. Continue to use the City's GIS system, together with the wetlands mapping and regional conservation data, to evaluate properties that are of interest to the Commission for land acquisition.
5. Continue efforts to improve trail development and maintenance.
6. Continue to review proposed open space land within cluster subdivisions, and make recommendations to the Planning Board regarding the configuration of the open space areas and review the terms of the conservation easement.
7. Continue to work with the Planning Board to establish trails and trail linkages within new subdivisions.
8. Continue to conduct site walks and provide reports to the Planning Board, the NH Department of Environmental Services Wetlands Bureau, and developers on projects with proposed wetlands or other environmental impacts; especially those projects that involve applications for Dredge and Fill Permits and for Conditional Use Permits for disturbance of wetland buffers.
9. Continue to develop innovative mechanisms to expand the City's street tree planting program, with the intent of planting street trees annually in urban neighborhoods and achieving a maximum survival rate for trees planted in previous fiscal years.
10. Continue to improve the management of and public access to the City's conservation land and conduct an assessment of City-owned properties and trails to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
11. Update the City of Concord's Open Space Plan.

2013 GOALS STATUS

1. Continue to protect priority open space through acquisition of fee ownership or easements.
9-Month Status: The Commission closed on the purchase of the Triacca property off of Hopkinton Road in September and closed on the purchase of the conservation easement at Maplewood Farm in December. Both of these transactions took approximately two years to finalize, due to the complexity of the transactions and the federal grant funding involved.

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The donation of a 68-acre conservation easement from St. Paul's School to the City was also finalized in October. The Commission also anticipates closing on the 15-acre Butterworth easement within the next few months. The Commission is in the process of reviewing the possible protection of land in the Broken Ground area of East Concord and had an appraisal prepared to determine the value of the Whispering Heights subdivision. The Commission is currently in discussions with the owners of the subdivision.

2. Continue to identify, evaluate, and utilize, as practicable, innovative financing techniques to leverage acquisition of open space and conservation easements.
9-Month Status: The Commission partnered with the Five Rivers Conservation Trust on the protection of the Triacca, Maplewood Farm and Butterworth properties. Five Rivers Conservation Trust raised approximately \$35,000, which was used to offset the City's share of funds for the purchase of the Maplewood Farm conservation easement. The Commission also worked with St. Paul's School to negotiate the donation of a conservation easement on 68 acres of land adjacent to Marjory Swope Park. Five Rivers Conservation Trust has also raised approximately \$41,000 to be used towards the purchase of the Triacca property from the City, so that the agricultural land can be merged with Dimond Hill Farm. The money would then be used to replenish the City's Conservation Trust Fund. Both the Triacca and Maplewood Farm properties were partially funded by the federal Farm and Ranchland Protection grant program, leveraging \$451,000 towards the purchase of conservation easements on these properties.
3. Continue to monitor and provide stewardship for City-owned land and conservation easements and work with landowners to resolve identified issues.
9-Month Status: The Conservation Commission, together with the Planning Division, pursued corrective actions to resolve an easement violation on land within a City-held conservation easement off of Millstream Lane. The violation was discovered during the easement monitoring internship last summer and involved several properties including the installation of an in-ground swimming pool within the easement area. The pool has been removed from the easement and the Planning Division will continue to work with the landowner to have the land restored. The Conservation Commission also held an easement monitoring training workshop for Commission members. The group is now in the process of monitoring and completing reports for the remaining conservation easements.
4. Continue to use the City's GIS system, together with the wetlands mapping and regional conservation data, to evaluate properties that are of interest to the Commission for land acquisition.
9-Month Status: Ongoing.
5. Continue efforts to improve trail development and maintenance.
9-Month Status: The Concord Boys and Girls Club Youth Environmental Services (YES) Team completed routine trail maintenance this past summer with the assistance of the City's consultant forester. The Trails Committee (subcommittee of the Conservation Commission) has constructed a new trail system at Rossview Farm off of District #5 Road. The Committee secured trail access in the form of landowner agreements and has completed the construction of the "West End Farm Trail." The West End Farm Trail includes approximately seven miles of trail, connecting Dimond Hill Farm, Rossview Farm and Carter Hill Orchard. The Trails Committee hosted an inaugural thru-hike and dedication event on November 3rd. The event was well attended by Concord residents, with over 110 people walking the trail.

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The Trails Committee is in the process of planning for the construction of a neighborhood trail connecting Rolinda Avenue to Russell Martin Park and is also planning trail improvements and a vista clearing at Oak Hill. The Commission continues to be an active partner with the Friends of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail to assist with the planning efforts for the proposed shared use path in Concord. The Commission and Trails Committee also completed the layout and construction of the trails and parking area at Marjory Swope Park off of Long Pond Road.

6. Continue to review proposed open space land within cluster subdivisions, and make recommendations to the Planning Board regarding the configuration of the open space areas and review the terms of the conservation easement.
9-Month Status: Ongoing.
7. Continue to work with the Planning Board to establish trails and trail linkages within new subdivisions.
9-Month Status: This is an ongoing effort. The Conservation Commission continues to make recommendations for the establishment of public trails within new cluster and conventional subdivisions.
8. Continue to conduct site walks and provide reports to the Planning Board, the NH Department of Environmental Services Wetland Bureau, and developers on projects with proposed wetlands or other environmental impacts; especially those projects that involve applications for Dredge and Fill Permits and for Conditional Use Permits for disturbance of wetland buffers.
9-Month Status: Ongoing.
9. Continue to develop innovative mechanisms to expand the City's street tree planting program with the intent of planting street trees annually in urban neighborhoods and achieving a maximum survival rate for trees planted in previous fiscal year.
9-Month Status: The Commission is reviewing a contract with Bartlett Tree Services for the fertilizing and care of the downtown street trees. Because of the anticipated improvements downtown, the scope of work will be limited to Bicentennial Square, Eagle Square and other areas not affected by the streetscape improvement project. The Planning Division also coordinated with the General Services Department to re-establish a "Sustainable Street Tree Planting Program" that will allow residents to share in the cost of planting street trees in front of their properties.
10. Continue to post information on the City of Concord's website.
9-Month Status: The Commission now has a webpage on which it publishes documents, meeting minutes, agendas and trail information, as well as member listings. This is updated monthly.
11. Continue to improve the management of and public access to the City's conservation land and conduct an assessment of City-owned properties and trails to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
9-Month Status: This work has not yet started.

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BUDGET DETAIL**CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

	2010 ACTUAL	2011 ACTUAL	2012 ACTUAL	2013 BUDGETED	2013 ESTIMATED	2014 BUDGET
REVENUE						
CONTRIB TO TREE PROGRAM	\$0	\$407	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$407	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
APPROPRIATIONS						
OUTSIDE SERVICES	\$1,500	\$2,640	\$2,362	\$2,675	\$2,100	\$2,550
STREET TREE PROGRAM	\$12,460	\$2,250	\$13,508	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$2,500
Total	\$13,960	\$4,890	\$15,870	\$8,675	\$8,100	\$5,050

CONSERVATION COMMISSION **FUNDING IMPACT**

This budget contains no significant funding changes.

FUNDING IMPACT

CONSERVATION COMMISSION
