

Conservation Commission's Discontinuance of Prime Wetlands Designation in Alstead

The Conservation Commission voted to discontinue the Prime Wetlands designation process on December 7, 2022.

According to input from landowners by comment or letter at the November 17, 2022, public hearing, it was very clear that continuing with the Prime Wetland designation process would not be workable for those landowners. Most of these landowners manage woodlots or larger stands of timber. The Prime-designated wetlands are within these managed forests, and the subsequent rules and structure of a Prime Wetland would be burdensome to the landowners.

The commissioners and their ecological consultant listened carefully to landowners' concerns, and we came to the conclusion that the Prime Wetland designation was excessively burdensome and difficult to enforce because of the location of these wetlands within a managed forest. Most importantly, following the guideline for a Prime Wetland designation of wetlands enclosed by forest would be a burden to the landowner.

We listened to concerns from two tree farms, three foresters, and the well-respected Timber Owners of New England, as well as several other landowners.

The Conservation Commission wishes to continue its work through education and land conservation through our already published "Alstead Wetlands Comparative Evaluation." (You can access this report online on the Alstead municipal website. See enclosed directions.) This report contains analysis of wetlands that exceed 2 acres in size and numerical values of 12 wetland characteristics (functions). These valuations give landowners a sense of the value of their wetlands to the ecological landscape in Alstead.

Alstead Conservation Commission
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December 9, 2022