

REGULATIONS FOR USE OF CONSERVATION LAND

Adopted by the Easton Conservation Commission, 2007

DEFINITIONS

"Commission": shall mean the Easton Conservation Commission.

"Conservation Lands": for the purpose of this ordinance, "Conservation lands" shall mean all properties with public access under the jurisdiction of the Easton Conservation Commission by means of deed, conservation restriction, or vote of the Board of Selectmen, including the Town Forest, and other land owned by or under easement or restriction with the Town of Easton.

"Enforcing agent": shall include Easton Police Department, Massachusetts Environmental Police, or Easton Land Use Agent.

"Motorized vehicle": means any mechanically propelled vehicle running on rubber tires, belts, cleats, tracks, skis or cushion of air and dependent on the ground or surface for travel, or other unimproved terrain whether covered by ice or snow or not, where the operator sits in or on the vehicle. Motorized vehicles include, but are not limited to, cars, trucks, jeeps, SUVs, all-terrain vehicles, off-road vehicles, snowmobiles, motorbikes, mini-bikes, motorized scooters, motorcycles, or skidoos. Motorized vehicles also include motorized boats.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

PREFACE

The Conservation Commission invites everyone to enjoy the conservation lands in Easton for passive recreation. The Commission has adopted these regulations under its authority (M.G.L. Chapter 40, §8C) to make regulations for Town conservation lands in order to protect wildlife habitat, prevent erosion, and provide an enjoyable experience for all persons using the trails. A list of conservation lands is available at the Commission office.

BASIC REGULATIONS

1. Conservation lands and associated parking are open from dawn to dusk. Parking after dusk is prohibited.
2. The Conservation Commission and the Town of Easton are not liable for injuries, damage to property, theft of personal property or other losses incurred while using the conservation lands. Persons using the conservation lands assume all and any risks involved with use of the land.

3. These regulations may be made more restrictive for specific parcels as deemed necessary by the Conservation Commission. In emergencies or for the public safety, the Commission may make exceptions to these regulations.
4. All public safety bylaws of the Town apply to conservation lands.
5. All cans bottles, litter, and garbage or other any materials brought onto the property are to taken away by the user.
6. All persons using the Town's conservation lands are strongly urged to respect the boundaries of adjacent private properties and not to trespass thereon without the express consent of the landowner.

ALLOWED ACTIVITIES AND USES

1. Conservation land may be used for passive recreation, including hiking, jogging, canoeing, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, picnicking, education and nature study.
2. Pets must be leashed at all times and owners shall immediately remove and properly dispose of all pet waste. Pets shall not be allowed to dig holes or otherwise damage the land. Pets shall not be allowed to endanger wildlife or the natural vegetation.
3. Horses are permitted except on restricted trails. Horseback riding may be limited during wet seasons or when the ground is soft as such use damages the trails. All horse waste shall be removed immediately and properly disposed.
4. Non-motorized bicycle riding is permitted except on restricted trails. The bike rider shall not damage the trail or endanger other trail users. Neither shall the bike rider endanger wildlife or vegetation. The bike rider shall stay on the trails.
5. Use of the Town's conservation lands by groups is permitted with prior notification and approval of the Conservation Commission.

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

1. For night use, such as vernal pool studies or other nature studies, advance written permission from the Conservation Commission is necessary.
2. Fires are prohibited.
3. No motorized vehicles are permitted outside of specified parking areas. Note that motorized vehicles are also prohibited outside of specified parking areas in Borderland State Park and on Division of Fisheries and Wildlife land in the Hockomock Swamp.
4. No person shall cut, break, remove, deface, or defile any structure, fence, sign, growing trees, bushes, rocks, soil, plants or flowers. No trails shall be cut or marked, no dams built, nor any structure such as a lean-to, bridge etc. be constructed.
5. The disposal of trash, yard waste, or the dumping of any other material on conservation land is prohibited.

6. Alcoholic beverages are prohibited..
7. Camping is prohibited.
8. Target shooting is prohibited.
9. The use of conservation lands for commercial purposes is not allowed except by written authorization of the Commission.
10. The making of loud or disturbing noise is prohibited.
11. Public nudity is prohibited.
12. Feeding wildlife is prohibited.

ENFORCEMENT

Violations of these regulations may be punishable by fine.

Any enforcing agent taking cognizance of a violation of these rules may require the violator to provide his or her name and address. No person shall refuse or fail to provide his or her name and address upon the request of an enforcing agent.

Any enforcing agent taking cognizance of a violation of these rules, or having cause to believe any crime has been committed, may order the violator to leave the conservation land immediately and remain off the conservation land for a period of 24 hours. No person upon receiving such order shall refuse or fail immediately to leave the conservation land or, having left, no person shall enter the conservation land before the 24 hours period has expired. Persons who fail to comply with this regulation may be subject to a criminal charge of trespass.

A violation of these regulations shall be punished by a fine of \$100. If a violator has had three offenses, they shall be banned from Easton Conservation Commission land for one year following the third offense. Assessment of fines under this section shall not restrict the Conservation Commission from issuing additional penalties for violations under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and/or Easton Wetlands By-law and for requiring remediation for any damages.

The foregoing Regulations shall be prominently posted on all Conservation Lands, published periodically in the Town's newspaper, shall be available to the public, and shall be given to all individuals seeking use permits.

For maps, clarification, and/or additional information, please contact:

Department of Planning and Community Development at 508-230-0630.