



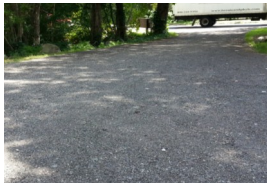
New Pond Management Area is one of Easton's Conservation Land management areas easily accessible to most residents. However a few years back after the town completed repairs to the dam at New Pond a locking chain and pole gate was installed to keep motorists from driving onto the dam. New Pond is a favorite fishing spot for many locals and others in the know. The gate has helped prevented vehicular damage to the dam but it has also effectively prevented anyone using a walker or wheelchair from getting on the dam to enjoy nature, a picnic or little fishing.

Most people who don't use some type of device to get around don't think about how accessible a recreational area is to someone with limited mobility. This became very obvious when a father called the Conservation office recently to tell his story. "I was excited to discover a place I thought I could bring my son to go fishing," he said. "The top of the dam is relatively flat and I knew I could roll the wheelchair over the surface."

The problem came when he discovered there was no way to get the wheelchair around the gate. The disappointment was palpable. The caller didn't even complain about the condition of the parking lot which was in pretty poor shape after the winter.



A quick call to the DPW Buildings & Operations and the Highway departments yielded immediate satisfaction. Highway Supervisor Jay Conceison had already noticed the condition of the parking lot and dumped a lot of mix which was to be graded out the next day. Todd Teixeira came up with an immediate temporary solution to the gate by putting a combination lock on the chain. The combination to the lock was provided to the father and will be made available to those contacting the Conservation office. This fall the locked



chain gate will be shortened so that a wheelchair, walker or mobility scooter can readily get through to enjoy the fishing at New Pond.

*call the Conservation office at 508.230.0641 for the lock combination*

*Visit [www.easton.ma.us](http://www.easton.ma.us) or subscribe to Town Crier to hear when the gate has "opened to the public" (i.e. shortened to allow mobility devices)*