

Boxborough Conservation Trails Maintenance Guidelines

These guidelines are intended to apply to typical conditions and locations. Occasionally, site specific conditions may require different treatment and/or methods to achieve the desired results. Any deviations from these guidelines should be reviewed and approved by the Conservation Commission prior to implementation.

Width/Height: 3' x 8'

Trail widths and height clearances vary by parcel and type of trail. The objective is to create a clear corridor for trail users (walkers, mountain bikers, horseback riders) so that branches and ground vegetation do not interfere with passage or sight lines. A helpful visual is to imagine walking the trail holding a standard door in front of you without hitting overhanging vegetation.

Some of our trails will be narrower and some wider than the “norm” due to topography, ease of maintenance, or former life (as a utility easement or farm road, for example).

Routine Maintenance

The Conservation Commission has purchased hand saws, loppers, hand clippers and manual weed whackers for use in maintaining the trails.

Remove any vegetation in trail or overhanging the trail. This includes saplings up to 3" in diameter. Larger trees would require permission of the Conservation Commission. Sticks and branches that have fallen onto the trail should also be removed. Beware of poison ivy!

Fallen Trees

Fallen trees should be removed using a chain saw or bow saw. Advise Liz Markiewicz or the ConsCom of any fallen trees before removing, or if help is needed to remove. With some very large trees, the DPW can be contacted for safe removal. Large trees that have been broken off but have not fallen completely should be left in place. These trees should be left until they fall to the ground from their own weight. (There is a reason this type of tree is called a “widow maker”.) If the tree is blocking the trail provide a temporary path around the obstruction.

Tree branches from an abutter can be removed if the branch or tree extends over the property line onto or above Town land. (Theory of verticality.)

Wet Areas

Many of our trails have wet areas some or all of the year. Identify problem areas. The installation of board walks or the addition of wood chips can be arranged.

Trail Markings

The trail system is marked using 2" x 2" colored plastic markers. Each marker has an arrow in the center. Trails leading in from a trail head/parking area are marked with red arrows. The main trail is marked in yellow. Side trails are marked in blue. Markers are placed on tree trunks alongside the trail with sufficient frequency to make the trail easy to follow. The markers should be installed at eye-level (5ft. above ground or so).

Maps

Maps are located at kiosks at most trail heads. Maps should be monitored to see that they are current and readable. Replacement, laminated maps can be obtained from Liz Markiewicz.