

# LINCOLN CONSERVATION COMMISSION

TELEPHONE: 781-259-2612

[CONSERVATION@LINCOLNMA.GOV](mailto:CONSERVATION@LINCOLNMA.GOV)

REVISED 11/6/2024

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## TREE REMOVAL ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL APPLICATION

Property owners often approach the Conservation Commission for approval to remove trees in a Wetland Resource Area or Buffer Zones on their property because they either pose a safety threat or interfere substantially with the use of property. Therefore, the Conservation Commission has developed a Tree Removal Policy.

The Commission has jurisdiction over the following Jurisdictional Areas:

- Wetland Resource Areas: defined as 100-year flood zones, wetlands, streams, ponds, & marshes.
- Buffer Zones: land within 100 feet of a Wetland Resource Area
- Riverfront Areas: land within 200 feet of a perennial stream.

Policy: In summary, no trees may be cut in Jurisdictional Areas unless permission has been granted by the Conservation Commission. This policy applies to all Jurisdictional Areas, whether natural or landscaped. Landscaped areas are those locations comprised predominantly of lawn or landscaping shrubs. Natural areas are those areas comprised predominantly of naturally occurring vegetation.

Landowners must obtain prior permission from the Commission before work of any kind (e.g., tree or brush removal or trimming, vegetation removal or cutting, lawn expansion, soil grading, and construction) is conducted in a Jurisdictional Area. Wetlands, Buffer Zones and Riverfront Areas often appear dry and thus difficult to identify, so all landowners are encouraged to contact the Conservation Office at 781-259-2612 to discuss any proposed work.

Ecological Value of Trees: Trees in Jurisdictional Areas perform ecological functions by providing habitat for wildlife, reducing flood elevations, stabilizing soil, assisting nutrient uptake that improves water quality, and providing shade that contributes to healthy vegetation and cool water. Even dead trees provide habitat for cavity nesters and organic nutrients for soil.

### **Review and Approval Process:**

- Conservation Staff Administrative Review/Approval - Conservation Staff may administratively approve the removal of up to five (5) trees within Jurisdictional Areas on single-family properties as described in this policy. Properties that are not single-family: Conservation staff may administratively approve the removal of up to 10 hazard trees with Jurisdictional Areas from any such property.
- Formal Conservation Commission Review/Approval - If tree removal in a Jurisdictional Area is proposed beyond what Conservation staff are authorized to approve pursuant to this policy, such removal may be permitted by the Conservation Commission, provided that the owner receives Conservation Commission permission (via administrative approval, RDA, or NOI).

### **What is the process of getting approval to remove a hazard tree near wetlands?**

- Please fill out and submit the Tree Removal Application Form on Page 2 and submit this application form.
- Please submit the informal map or sketch that shows the location (if known) of existing Wetland Resource Areas (including Riverfront Area) and the 100-foot buffer zone, house, trees, and other relevant features; and the location of proposed trees to be cut (numbered in a way that can be cross-referenced with application). Conservation Staff can help prepare a map from our website: <https://www.axisgis.com/LincolnMA/>
- Conservation Staff will perform a site visit.
- If your request complies with the Tree Removal Policy, staff will generally approve your request within 5 business days.

**Tree Removal Request**  
[CONSERVATION@LINCOLNMA.GOV](mailto:CONSERVATION@LINCOLNMA.GOV)

A. **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Project Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Property Owner:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Email Address** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

B. **According to our maps, at least a portion of your property is within wetland or buffer zone protected by the MA Wetlands Protection Act (310CMR 10.00) and/or Lincoln’s Wetland Protection Bylaw. Specifically, all or a portion of our property is:**  
 In Riverfront Area (land within 200 feet of the bank of a stream or river)  
 In a Wetland Resource Area (wetland, marsh, pond, stream, or 100-year flood zone)  
 In the Buffer Zone to a Resource Area (land within 100’ of a wetland, vernal pool, bank, lake).

C. **Tree Cutting Request**

Tree (species if known)	DBH	Tree in <u>Natural, Landscaped, or Lawn</u> area	Closest distance b/w tree & wetlands (in feet)	Will stump grinding occur? *	Will trunk/branches be removed from the site
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

\*(Note: Stump grinding only permitted beyond 50-feet from the wetland edge.)

<b>General Work Questions (Check “yes” or “no”)</b>	Yes	No	Comments
Will all equipment remain on existing lawn/driveway?			
Will there be any expansion of lawn?			
Is there any other type of work proposed in this area?			
Do the trees constitute a threat/hazard? Describe			

Is there anything else you wish to add about your removal request? Provide information in the space below.

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D. **Tree Replacement Requirements**– Tree(s) proposed to be cut in a Wetland Resource Area or Buffer Zone shall be mitigated as follows:

- Large trees (>12” DBH): the owner shall plant 1 native tree sapling or 2 native shrubs for each large tree cut.
  - Small trees (<12” DBH): the owner shall plant 1 native tree sapling or one native shrub for each sm. tree cut.
- Number of Mitigation Trees Proposed: \_\_\_\_\_. Number of Mitigation Shrubs Proposed \_\_\_\_\_  
 If requesting a waiver from the tree replacement requirement (Section VC), please explain why: \_\_\_\_\_

Please include the Mitigation planting locations on your sketch (See Step E). A list of native trees/shrubs can be obtained by contacting the Conservation Office.

E. **Informal Map (sketch).** The landowner must include an informal map with this Tree-Cutting Request Form. You may use a plot plan printed from the Town of Lincoln’s GIS system <https://www.axisgis.com/LincolnMA/> . The map must show the following:

- Approx. location of existing Wetlands and the buffer zone, house, trees, & other relevant features.
- Location of proposed trees to be cut (numbered in a way that can be cross-referenced with the Tree Cutting Request Form); and
- Location where proposed mitigation trees or shrubs (if required) will be planted.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_