

LINCOLN CONSERVATION COMMISSION
NATIVE PLANT INSTALLATION POLICY FOR LANDOWNERS
UNDER THE LINCOLN WETLANDS PROTECTION BYLAW
Adopted November 16,2022

Purpose of this Policy: This policy was developed to encourage homeowners to replace lawn or otherwise restore parts of their property with native vegetation.

Native Plant Installation Policy: No plants may be installed within Wetland Resource Areas and/or Buffer Zones (Jurisdictional Areas) unless permission has been granted by the Conservation Commission. Jurisdictional Areas include the following:

- Wetland Resource Areas (wetland, marsh, pond, stream, or 100-year flood zone),
- Buffer Zones to a Resource Area (land within 100 'of a stream, wetland, vernal pool, bank, pond), and
- Riverfront Areas (land within 200 feet of the bank of a stream or river).

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. The Conservation Commission has jurisdiction over any work proposed within a Wetland Resource Area, the 100-ft Buffer Zone to a wetland resource area or the 200-ft buffer zone applicable in a Riverfront Area.

Ecological Value of Native Plants: Native plants provide habitat for wildlife, stabilize soil, assist with nutrient uptake that improves water quality, and provide shade that contributes to healthy vegetation and cool water.

I. Guiding Principles: The Commission generally requires that ground disturbance be minimized when plants are installed. Existing vegetation should not be removed during the installation process unless it is an invasive plant, a non-native species or a lawn, and individual plants should be installed by hand to limit soil disturbance. If invasive plants are proposed to be removed, please also submit an Invasive Species Removal Request.* In certain cases, the Commission and/or staff may exercise their discretion in the application of this policy. Plantings proposed within Wetland Resource Areas may require a more formal filing with the Conservation Commission.

II. Native Plant Installation Application

A. Application Form. A landowner proposing to install native plants in a Jurisdictional Area must file a "Native Plant Installation" application form which includes the following information: (1) number and species of plants, (2) location of plants and (3) scope of work and equipment to be used. See our Buffer Zone Restoration Guidelines for recommended species and plant density.

B. Informal Map. The landowner must include an informal map showing:

1. Existing Wetland Resource Areas (including the 200-ft Riverfront Area) and the 100-foot buffer zone, house, trees, and other relevant features; and
2. Proposed planting locations (showing species in a way that can be cross-referenced with application).

III. Review and Approval Process

A. Conservation Staff will conduct a site visit with the landowner to review the site and proposed planting areas. If the proposed project scope appears unlikely to negatively impact the Wetland Resource Area or Riverfront Area, Conservation staff are authorized to issue a planting permit, which will generally be issued within a week of the site visit.

- a. If the proposed scope has potential to negatively impact the Wetland Resource Area or Riverfront Area (examples - removal of large area of vegetation or soil for installation of native seed mixes, proposed plantings within the resource area, etc), the landowner may need to file a formal wetlands permit.

Please note: Landowners must obtain prior permission from the Conservation Commission before work of any kind (*e.g.*, tree or brush removal, vegetation removal or cutting, lawn expansion, soil grading, and construction) is conducted in a Jurisdictional Area. Wetland Resource Areas and Riverfront Areas may sometimes appear to be 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.

*The Invasive Species Removal Request form [can be found here.](#)