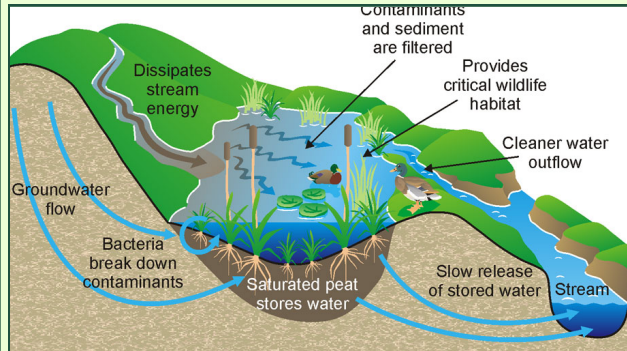


## WHY DO WETLANDS MATTER?

Wetlands provide a variety of important functions that benefit humans and the environment. Some of these functions are shown in the diagram below.



The Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act presumes that all wetlands provide the following eight interests to the public:

1. Protection of public & private water supply
2. Protection of groundwater supply
3. Flood control
4. Storm damage prevention
5. Prevention of pollution
6. Protection of land containing shellfish
7. Protection of fisheries
8. Protection of wildlife habitat



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

The WNCC webpage is continuously updated with information. On the webpage you can access the following:

- Instructions to file for a permit for work proposed in wetlands or buffer zones;
- Town and state GIS maps that show approximate wetlands locations for informational purposes;
- WNCC meeting minutes and agendas;
- Links to the online text of the state Wetlands Protection Act and Regulations;
- And much more!

Scan the QR code to be taken to the WNCC webpage



## HELP PROTECT WETLANDS!

You can do more than just obey the law:

- Do not use fertilizers, herbicides, insecticides, or deicers near wetlands;
- Choose native plants for landscaping, especially in the buffer zone;
- Pick up & properly dispose of dog waste;
- Leave non-hazardous, standing dead trees, fallen leaves, and rotting logs to provide habitat & regulate temperature;
- Consider volunteering to serve on the Conservation Commission.

# LIVING WITH WETLANDS

## A Guide to Wetlands Protection in West Newbury

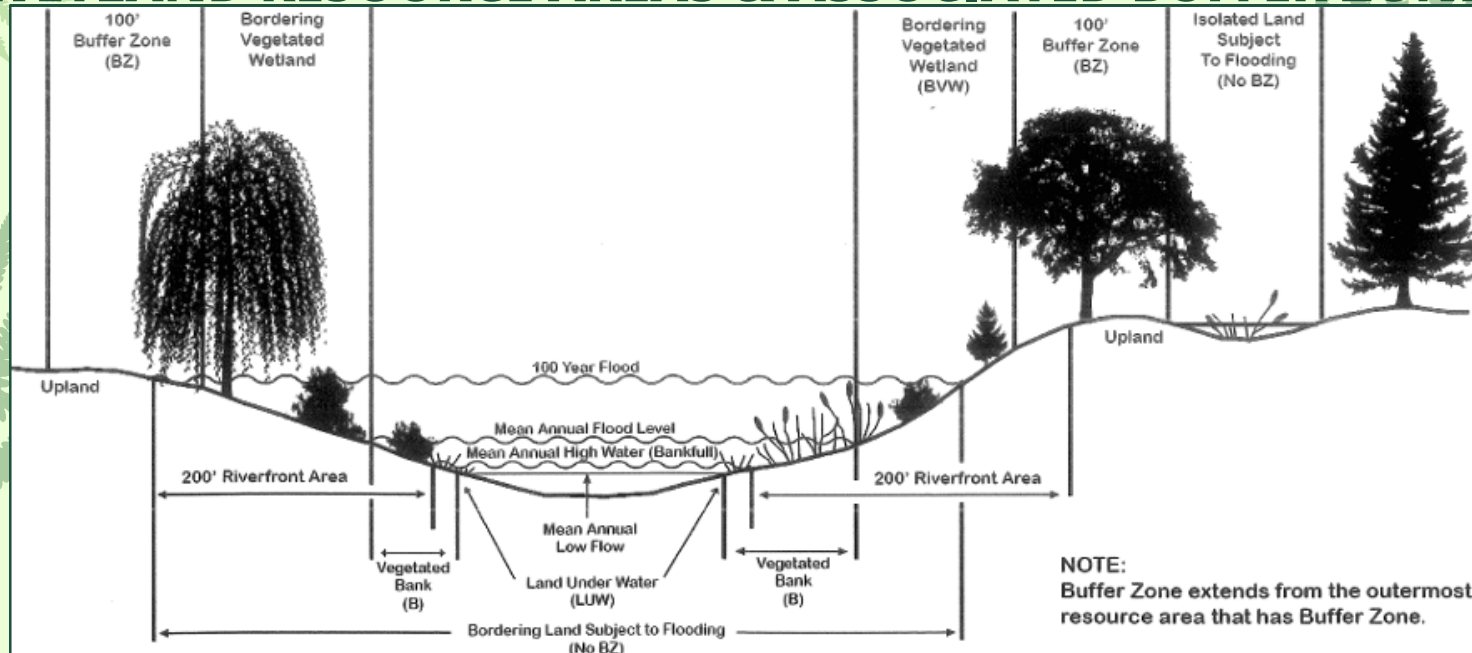
Read this before you build, cut, dump, or grade near water or wetlands. You may need a permit.



## West Newbury Conservation Commission

978-363-1100 x126  
conservation@wnewbury.org  
www.wnewbury.org/  
conservation-commission

# WETLAND RESOURCE AREAS & ASSOCIATED BUFFER ZONES



## WHAT IS A WETLAND?

Wetlands are areas where water covers the soil, or is present either at or near the surface of the soil all year or for varying periods of time during the year, including during the growing season. Wetlands are determined by examining hydrology, plants, and soils. The Conservation Agent or a wetlands specialist can help you determine whether you live near a wetland.

## WHAT WETLAND LAWS APPLY?

The Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (the Act) protects wetlands and buffer zones shown in the above diagram. The protections apply to wetlands on both public and private property. The WNCC is working on a Wetlands Protection Bylaw which will provide additional protections to wetlands beyond those in the Act.

## WHAT ACTIVITIES ARE REGULATED IN WETLANDS AND BUFFER ZONES?

The Act states that *"no person shall remove, dredge, fill, or alter"* any area subject to protection under the Act without first filing for a permit with the Commission. Examples of activities that require a permit before they can commence include, but are not limited to:

- Construction including houses, additions, barns, sheds, or other structures;
- Grading, filling or excavating;
- Installing a new driveway;
- Installing a new dock or boardwalk;
- Cutting down trees, including dead trees;
- Land clearing;
- Installing a pool;
- Replacing a septic system.

**If you are unsure if a filing is needed, contact the Conservation Agent!**

## WHAT IF I'M CONSIDERING A PROJECT IN A WETLAND OR BUFFER ZONE?

Contact the Conservation Agent with any questions about wetlands or your project, complete the filing application, attend the public meeting or hearing, then proceed with your project once you receive your permit. Full instructions are on the WNCC webpage.

## WHAT HAPPENS TO VIOLATORS?

Under the Act, the WNCC can require illegally altered land to be returned to its original condition. Violations may include the following:

- Dumping grass, leaves, brush, trash, or debris in wetlands or buffer zones;
- Clearing land or cutting trees, shrubs, or vegetation without a permit;
- Construction, grading, filling, or excavation without a permit.