

ATTACHMENT A - Shared Conservation Commission Agent Job Description

Municipalities:	Ashfield*, Buckland, Hawley, Whately, Williamsburg
Date:	
Board/Department:	Conservation Commission
Class/Position:	Shared Municipal Conservation Commission Agent
Salary:	\$45,000-\$50,000 Commensurate with Experience
Benefits:	Health insurance (70%), public pension, access to various insurances (dental, accident, LTD/STD, life insurance, etc.)
Hours:	40/week on average, though schedule will vary throughout the year

**Note: Ashfield is the legal employing authority, but an individual hired for this position will work with all five communities.*

GENERAL DEFINITION

Provides professional support, coordination, and project management for the Conservation Commission in carrying out its mandate and mission to meet the requirements of the MA Wetlands Protection Act and to protect the community's natural resources including its biodiversity, unique natural areas, wetlands, open space, and other environmental resources.

Works under the general direction of the Chair of the Conservation Commission in each town and under the clear policy direction of the Conservation Commission, and in accordance with all pertinent state and local laws and regulations. Provides professional support for the Conservation Commission's work and projects. Occasionally supervises consultants hired by the Commission. Assists Commission members working on conservation land projects. Serves as the Conservation Commission liaison to, and prepares accessible briefing materials and reports for, other boards and municipal departments as directed by the Commission.

DISCLAIMER: Each town will have its own particular needs and time constraints, and not all items listed under duties and responsibilities will be applicable for each community.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Wetlands Protection**
 - Assists the Conservation Commission with the administration of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and any associated municipal bylaws including submissions to MA DEP.
 - Responds to inquiries from the public, commission members, elected officials, professional consultants, and municipal staff.
 - Prepares legal and public hearing notices and assures all legal requirements are met with regard to postings, project timeframes, meeting minutes, and appropriate abutters notifications.
 - Schedules and conducts, along with Commissioners, site visits related to filings, permit compliance monitoring and violations.
 - Attends Conservation Commission meetings as requested by the Commission.

- Assists Commission members with meetings including preparation of agendas and minutes as requested.
 - Schedules meetings/hearings and distributing necessary forms.
 - Prepares reports and technical information for Commission members, municipal staff and the public.
 - Monitors compliance with Orders of Conditions and Determinations.
 - Responds to complaints and investigates potential violations of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (and local Wetland Protection Bylaws if applicable)
 - Works with the SCC and Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) to address violations, and, in some cases, makes plans for remediation.
- **Open Space & Environmental Resource Protection**
 - Support the work of the Commissions and coordinate with municipal departments, including but not limited to, the Conservation Commission, Highway Department, Parks Department or Open Space & Recreation Committee to help advance and maintain the municipality's Open Space & Recreation Plan, as time permits.
 - Participates in pertinent municipal staff meetings and presents relevant materials on the Wetlands Protection Act, Rivers Protection Act or other local Environmental laws.
 - Analyzes and interprets environmental regulations and/or laws which might apply to and/or impact municipal, public, or private construction projects.
 - Works closely with municipality and conservation partners to identify land parcels for protection – including the identification of priority areas.
 - Identify resources and sources of funding to address conservation issues within each community.
 - Assist the commission in being proactive in identifying and addressing persistent natural resource problems in each community.
- **Additional Municipal Responsibilities**
 - Drafts, with Conservation Commission input, annual budget report.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

- While some work is completed in an office environment - some work is required in the undeveloped areas outdoors, including woods and brush, steep slopes, and wet areas. There may be exposure to difficult weather conditions including extreme heat or cold, high winds, rain, and ice. In addition, there can be exposure to potential health hazards including but not limited to: Lyme disease, West Nile virus, poison ivy, and various hazards associated with site work and construction including loud noise and the presence of heavy equipment.
- Work schedule is largely during regular, workday hours, but will also include evening meetings, some early morning, evening, and weekend site visits and fieldwork. Attendance at relevant training sessions and professional meetings is expected.
- May have access to confidential information – most information is publicly available. Errors in judgement could result in delay, have monetary and/or legal repercussions, and cause adverse public relations.

RECOMMENDED QUALIFICATIONS

Disclaimer: While the following qualifications are characteristics being sought by the five communities, not all items are minimum requirements. We encourage people to apply even if they do not meet all these criteria.

- **Education and Experience**
 - Bachelor's degree in environmental science or related field
 - Coursework or experience in local wetlands protection, land conservation, environmental management or related field; or equivalent combination of education and experience.
 - Experience serving on or working for a Conservation Commission is an asset.

- **Special Requirements**
 - Valid Massachusetts Class D Motor Vehicle Operator's License and a readily available car.

- **Preferred Knowledge, Ability, and Skills**
 - Communicates clearly in oral, written, and visual form.
 - Works independently, show initiative, advance projects, and solve problems.
 - Interpret technical data, read engineering maps and plans, critically analyze information.
 - Works cooperatively with the Conservation Commission and organize and advance Commission activities effectively.
 - Deals professionally and tactfully with municipal officials, municipal employees, government agencies, the general public, attorneys, engineers, consultants, and project applicants.
 - Understands the importance of wetlands, biodiversity, environmental protection, water resources and open space protection.
 - Able to work well with the public, in person, on the phone, and by email. Knows how to use office equipment, including computer programs such as email, Microsoft Office, GIS, PowerPoint, online permitting platforms, and webpage maintenance. Should have very good organizational and writing skills. Able to read and understand engineering, survey, architect, and landscape plans.

- **Desired Assets/Knowledge:**
 - The Massachusetts Wetlands Protection and associated regulations and policies, and any local wetlands bylaws.
 - Other statutes and regulations applicable to the jurisdiction of the municipal Conservation Commission.
 - Relevant areas of wetlands science such as vegetation communities, functions and values, replication, and restoration.
 - Wetlands boundary identification/verification based on plant species and indicator status identification of hydric soils.
 - Vernal pool identification and the appropriate certification process.
 - Erosion and sediment control techniques, stormwater management plans.