



Town of Bow

Conservation Commission

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Conservation Commission

Unapproved Minutes

Monday, February 9, 2026

The regular meeting of the Bow Conservation Commission was held on Monday, February 9, 2026 at 7:00 PM in Room C of the Municipal Office building at 10 Grandview Road. Chair Sandy Crystall called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Commissioners present: Sandy Crystall, Lisa Lindquist, Mary Farrell, and Tom O'Donovan (via telephone).

Excused: Dik Dagavarian

Other attendees: Ginger Iverson, Recording Secretary.

Mr. O'Donovan stated that he could not attend the meeting in person as he was out of town.

The Commission permitted Mr. O'Donovan to participate remotely, as he was out of town, in accordance with RSA 91-A:2, III.

A quorum was confirmed with members physically present.

1. Town Culvert – Bow Bog Brook/Bow Bog Road

Chris Albert, Wetland Scientist retained by the Town of Bow provided an informational overview of the proposed replacement of the existing culvert on Bow Bog Brook where it crosses South Bow Road. He noted that this was informational only; formal plans are not yet complete.

Mr. Albert described the existing structure is a 4-foot diameter corrugated metal pipe (CMP) that is undersized. Ms. Crystall noted that it is a 15-foot-wide stream. The CMP is deteriorating, with corrosion and failing rivets. The project was previously submitted for ARM Fund funding (2023), but funding was not secured at that time. A key challenge was confirmation of the roadway right-of-way (ROW); survey work confirmed a four-rod (66-foot) right-of-way, allowing the project to remain fully within the Town ROW.

The proposed design includes replacement with a precast concrete box culvert, approximately 8 feet wide by 6 feet deep (construction height) by 50 feet long. It will have 4 feet of hydraulic opening with 2 feet of streambed simulation. The new structure would triple hydraulic capacity compared to the existing CMP. Streambed simulation will mimic natural conditions and improve aquatic organism passage (AOP). Shelving will be incorporated to allow turtles and other wildlife to pass through the culvert above the water without crossing the road. The design addresses Blanding's turtle and wood turtle habitat concerns, identified in NHB data checks (DES Ecological review.) Guardrails (approximately 75 feet on each side) are included for public safety.

44 Mr. Albert stated that because the road was never overtopped by flooding and it had freeboard the
45 hope is that DES may waive certain requirements. The FEMA flood map displayed depicted that the
46 road is not overtopped during a 100-year flood.

47 Construction Considerations - Target construction window: August 2026, during low-flow conditions.
48 Road closure during construction is likely, similar to a previous culvert project in Town, hence
49 completing the construction when school is not in session is preferred. Bypass flow options were
50 discussed; a cofferdam and pump system may be required if the stream is not dry at the time of
51 construction.

52 Permitting and Schedule - A DES pre-application meeting is scheduled with Kara Villone, the
53 wetlands permitting specialist. The project will be included as a warrant article at Town Meeting. If
54 approved, bidding would occur in spring 2026, with construction later in the summer.

55 Cost Estimate - Total estimated project cost: approximately \$400,000, including ~\$65,000 for the
56 precast box culvert ~ \$150,000 for installation. Other costs include traffic control, guardrails,
57 engineering, permitting, and contingency. Ms. Crystall noted that the previous design described in
58 the ARM Fund application was significantly higher, \$900,000, so this is a significantly lower cost
59 project.

60 The Conservation Commission expressed strong support for the project. The Commission indicated
61 willingness to speak in favor of the warrant article if questions arise at Town Meeting. No formal
62 action was required at this time, as the presentation was informational only.

63 **2. S3AK Lot 27-3-30-I at South Bow Road; Weland CUP for 2,866 sq. ft. of wetlands and 11.797 sq.**
64 **ft. of wetland buffer impacts for a driveway.**

65 The Commission discussed concerns related to a Conditional Use Permit application previously
66 reviewed by the Planning Board and Conservation Commission. The applicant was not present at
67 this meeting.

68 The Key Issues Identified were:

69 **1. Applicant Absence**

- 70
 - o No representative was present to answer Commission questions, limiting the
71
 - Commission's ability to complete its review.

72 **2. Inaccuracies in the CUP Narrative Document**

- 73
 - o The narrative incorrectly states that the Conservation Commission had recommended
74
 - approval.
75
 - o Errors were noted regarding use of term wetland "functions" versus "values."
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 - o Statements regarding minimizing impacts were inconsistent with the data presented.

77 **3. Land Ownership Information**

- 78
 - o The site plan lists incorrect landowner name and must be corrected.

79 **4. Current Use Status**

- 80
 - o The application indicates the property is in current use/open space.
81
 - o A question was raised about the status I as it does not appear on the most recent
82
 - Current Use listing.

- Staff will verify the property's current use status.

5. **Wetland Buffer Impacts**

- The narrative references approximately 2,900 square feet of wetland impact but fails to adequately acknowledge over 11,000 square feet of wetland buffer impact (12.05 F).
- Members expressed concern that buffer impacts were minimized despite their ecological importance.

6. **NHB (Natural Heritage Bureau) /DES Ecological Review**

- The map included "notification points" (red dots) which represent areas where work will be undertaken. The Data check appears to be for the timber harvesting, not driveway construction.
- The Commission requested clarification from DES regarding the meaning of these points and whether additional ecological review is required.

Mr. O'Donovan made a motion to forward the Commission's concerns to the Planning Board. The motion was seconded by Lisa Lindquist. The motion was approved by 3:0:1 roll call vote.

Lisa Lindquist – Yes; Tom O'Donovan – Yes; Mary Farrell – Yes; Sandy Crystall – Abstained

3. **Master Plan Update**

Members discussed the recent Master Plan meeting that focused on transportation. Survey results indicated strong public concern for protection of natural resources, salt contamination of groundwater and preservation of rural and open-space character. Members noted these results may indicate support for future conservation and buffer-related policies. The next Master Plan meeting is scheduled for February 17, 2026. The Commission anticipates reviewing the Natural Resources chapter later in the year and may begin internal discussions in advance.

4. **Land Conservation Work – Non-Public Session – RSA 91-A:3, II**

Mr. O'Donovan made a motion, seconded by Ms. Farrell, to enter non-public session per RSA 91-A:3, II (d) Consideration of the acquisition, sale or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community. 4:0 Roll Call Vote: Lisa Lindquist – Yes; Tom O'Donovan – Yes; Mary Farrell – Yes; Sandy Crystall – Yes

Recording was turned off at 8:12 p.m. and entered into non-public session.

Public Session was reconvened at 8:26 p.m.

Ms. Lindquist made a motion to seal the non-public minutes per RSA 91-A:3, II. Motion was seconded by Ms. Farrell. 4:0 Roll Call Vote: Lisa Lindquist – Yes; Tom O'Donovan – Yes; Mary Farrell – Yes; Sandy Crystall – Yes

5. **Website Review and Updates**

The Commission reviewed its website and associated documents.

121 Several broken links were identified, largely due to changes to the Bow Open Spaces website.
122 Documents reviewed included trail maps, conservation documents, the Bow Master Plan (Natural
123 Resources chapter), and open space materials. The Open Space Trails Plan (dated 2000) was noted
124 as outdated and in need of review due to changes in trail use, and land management practices. The
125 Prime Wetlands Map was discussed; members noted it is difficult to read and that the location of
126 the original hard copy map is unknown. The Timber Cruise / Forest Management Plan (last updated
127 in 2011) was discussed, with consensus that it needs updating and may require a new approach
128 reflecting current forest management philosophies. The State Wildlife Action Plan link was noted as
129 needing an update, as the 2025 plan was just released. The Town Forest Map (2011) was reviewed;
130 members noted that while conservation land has been added, not all parcels are designated as town
131 forest. The "View All" button on the website was discussed; members agreed to review design
132 limitations at a future meeting. Ginger will coordinate with Karri to update broken links and images
133 on the website. The Commission will review options for updating forest management and
134 stewardship planning. Website graphics and the Commission group photo will be updated.

135 The Commission discussed the need to explore forest management plans that are not strictly timber
136 focused. They recognize that the existing plan was developed under assumptions of more frequent
137 logging, which may no longer align with current goals. Town conservation lands need stewardship
138 plans. The Westover easement was noted as having an existing stewardship plan due to state
139 permitting requirements.

140 **6. Project Review Table**

141 The project review table was discussed. Members agreed it is helpful but should be improved to
142 allow sorting by priorities and dates. The table is serving as a useful tool for identifying ongoing and
143 future Commission work.

144 **Robinson Trail Project**

145 The functional assessment for the Robinson Trail was received today, within the required 30-day
146 period. Next steps include preparing and submitting the DES application and associated plans. The
147 need for potential waiver requests was discussed due to unstamped plan elements, among other
148 requirements. Sandy will continue plan development and coordinate as needed.

149 Mr. O'Donovan departed the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

150 **Legislative Update**

151 Commissioners discussed pending legislation related to land placed in Current Use. House Bill 1691
152 was described as highly restrictive and problematic. Commissioners were encouraged to submit
153 comments before the deadline.

154 **Prime Wetlands Map Update**

155 Sandy reported discussions with a wetland scientist regarding updating the Prime Wetlands Map, as
156 he has updated prime wetlands maps for two other communities. Preliminary cost estimates
157 indicate the update could be completed for under \$10,000, potentially avoiding the need for an RFP.

158 The process for submitting updated maps and a report to meet DES requirements remains unclear;
159 additional clarification is pending. The Commission should request a formal proposal for Prime
160 Wetlands Map update for review at a future meeting.

161 **7. Other**

162 **Water Quality Monitoring (Turee Pond)**

163 The DES contract for milfoil removal by diver-assisted suction harvesting has been signed and will be
164 provided to DES for Executive Council approval. Volunteers may be needed to assist with monthly
165 summer sampling (June, July and August). Sampling requires two people; having volunteers with
166 their own canoe or kayak is preferred.

167 **Conferences, Training, and Outreach**

168 Commissioners were invited to suggest topics for the NHACC Conference or future lunch-and-learn
169 sessions. The Merrimack River Watershed Conservation Plan and DES Ecological Review process
170 were suggested as potential presentation topics. The UNH Coverts Program is seeking applicants.

171 **Unapproved Minutes: January 12, 2026**

172 *Mr. Lindquist made a motion to approve the January 12, 2026 minutes as amended. The motion was*
173 *seconded by Ms. Farrell. 3:0 Vote.*

174 **Adjournment**

175 Ms. Lindquist made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Farrell.
176 *3:0 Vote.*

177 The meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m.

178 Respectfully submitted,
179 Ginger Iverson
180 Recording Secretary
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