



Wellesley Natural Resources Commission

March 2018 Insights from Outside

Join Us on April 29 and April 30 for
Special Programs on Trees!

Sunday, April 29, 2:00 to 4:00 pm

Walk into the Wellesley Woods

Starting in Longfellow Pond parking lot

The NRC will host a guided walk through the Wellesley Town Forest with forester Phil Benjamin, a consultant on the NRC's forest stewardship plan. Learn about our Town Forest and how we can best manage and provide stewardship of this critical woodland. Meet in the Longfellow Pond parking lot. Free and open to the public.



Monday, April 30, 7:00 pm

"Speaking for Our Trees: A Conversation About Wellesley's Leafy Infrastructure," featuring Dr. David Foster

Wellesley Free Library

The NRC and the Wellesley League of Women Voters invite you to hear Dr. David Foster discuss the importance of the urban tree canopy. Dr. Foster directs the Harvard Forest, a 4000-acre ecological laboratory and classroom in central Massachusetts. For more than 28 years, Dr. Foster has researched the history and future of New England forests and how they impact our public health. Free and open to the public.

Gas Leaks Update

There are more than 200 gas leaks in Wellesley

Gas Leaks and Our Schools

The NRC recently partnered with Wellesley Green Schools to examine the presence of gas leaks in school zones in Wellesley. In 2017, the NRC commissioned a survey of gas leaks in town

that revealed more extensive leaks than previously reported by National Grid. The Town GIS department has created maps of this data, including leaks near schools and preschools. Wellesley Green Schools volunteers have asked the Wellesley School Committee ([see letter](#)) to contact National Grid to report these leaks, many of which must be prioritized for repair under current state law.

[Click here for a map showing Town-wide gas leak data](#)
[Click here for NRC webpage with detail maps of school zones](#)



Gas Leaks and Our Health

NRC vice-chair Dr. Regina LaRocque recently organized a day-long conference at Boston University on "Natural Gas Infrastructure and Public Health." Speakers at the conference examined the health risks associated with natural gas infrastructure in the United States, including the risks associated with gas leaks and the pipelines that bring fracked gas to our homes and communities in New England.



Dr. Regina LaRocque, NRC vice chair

[Click here for video of the conference at Boston University](#)

Further information is now available in a 266-page report from the Concerned Health Professionals of New York and the Physicians for Social Responsibility, which provides evidence that drilling and fracking operations pose severe health threats to the public. The March 2018 report analyzes more than 1,300 scientific studies and determines that fracking increases the risk of asthma, low birth weight and cancer; contaminates water; contributes to climate change; and poisons air. The report is described in an easy-to-read March 13, 2018, article in Rolling Stone Magazine.

[Click here for the Rolling Stone Magazine article](#)
[Click here for the full 266-page report](#)

New NRC Board Members



Katie Griffith

Katie has Ph.D. in salt marsh ecology and is a Town Meeting Member for Precinct A. During her ten years in Wellesley, she has led hands-



Laura Robert

Laura Robert is a 27-year resident of Wellesley and now represents Precinct D at Town Meeting. She is an insurance account executive at Sun Life. Laura co-founded the

on workshops in plant science at the Wellesley College Botanic Gardens, several of the Wellesley elementary schools, and at the STEM Expo. She is interested in public education and in working on the NRC's plans for stewardship of the Town Forest. Katie has been appointed NRC liaison to the Playing Fields Task Force.

neighborhood association Friends of Brookside to raise awareness about the need to protect the underground wells that provide most of Wellesley's drinking water. She also has a strong interest in the impact of exterior lighting on human health and the environment. Laura has been appointed NRC liaison to the Trails Committee.

Many Thanks to Departing NRC Board Members



Heidi Kost-Gross

During 18 years as an NRC board member, Heidi has worked tirelessly on behalf of our town parks, conservation, and recreation areas. She has been deeply committed to assuring the health of town ponds, caring for the urban forest and street trees, and preserving Wellesley's crown jewel, Fuller Brook Park. She has focused on achieving balance between protecting open space and building new facilities and playing fields. Heidi has been a hands-on volunteer, particularly lending her expertise as a landscape designer and consulting on invasive plant identification and removal. In 2013, Heidi was recognized as one of the *Wellesley Townsman Ten* for giving so much of her time and energy to the community.



Stephen Murphy

A Wellesley native, Stephen has generously given back to the town by serving two terms as an NRC board member. Before that, he served on the Advisory Committee, the Wellesley Housing Authority, the Community Preservation Committee, and the Playing Fields Task Force, all while serving as a Town Meeting member. On the NRC, Stephen contributed his lawyerly expertise to deliberations and was a thoughtful advocate for active recreation as the NRC liaison to the Playing Fields Task Force.

NRC Project Updates & Announcements

Earth Day Charles River Cleanup: Saturday, April 28, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Spend a morning picking up litter, removing invasive plants and enjoy time near the water. Join the NRC in the annual Earth Day Charles River Cleanup on Saturday, April 28 from 9 am - 12 noon. Sponsored by the Charles River Watershed Association,



this event brings together more than 3,000 local volunteers from Wellesley and neighboring communities and is a perfect activity for families, friends, Scout groups and more. Supplies and snacks are provided by the NRC.

[Click here to sign up by email](#)

Join the Team to Help Care for Fuller Brook Park

The NRC is recruiting a team to perform occasional clean up work around Fuller Brook Park, assisting the DPW staff who are managing the park year-round. The newly restored linear park is Wellesley's crown jewel and an important watershed area. Let's pitch in to help maintain this extraordinary resource for our town!



[Click here to join the team](#)



Spring Guided Walks with the Trails Committee

The Wellesley Trails Committee kicks off its 2018 spring walks in early May (hopefully the snow will be gone by then)! Come enjoy beautiful open spaces and hidden trails. All walks are free and no registration is required. The first walk is planned for Sunday, May 6, at 10 am along Morses Pond.

[Click here for Spring Trails Walks schedule](#)

Have Your Say on Wellesley's Future: Comment on the Town Unified Plan by May 1

The final draft of Wellesley's Unified Plan is ready for your feedback and the deadline for comments has been extended to May 1. The plan is intended to identify and set goals for the visions and priorities of Wellesley residents for issues ranging from land use planning, economic development, housing, transportation, and education, to town government operations, and finance. We recommend paying special attention to the chapters on "Natural Resources and Conservation," "Parks, Trails, and Recreation," "Public Health and Wellness," "Sustainability Resilience and Green Practices," and "Mobility and Circulation."

[Click here to comment on the draft Unified Plan](#)

Upcoming Events

NRC events and those of NRC committees appear in **bold green**.

- **April 4: Joint NRC & Planning Scenic Road Tree Hearing**, 6:30 pm, Great Hall, Town Hall.
- **April 5: Wetlands Protection Committee Meeting**, 6:30 pm, NRC Office, Town Hall.
- **April 7:** Wellesley Rotary Repair Cafe, 9:00 am - noon, Wellesley Recreation Department.
- **April 8:** Sustainable Wellesley Action Meeting, 3:30 - 5:30 pm, 161 Oakland Street.
- **April 11: "A Plastic Ocean,"** free movie and dinner, 6:15 pm, Wellesley Free Library. Co-sponsored by Sustainable Wellesley and the NRC. Registration required.
- **April 17:** Wellesley Rotary Arbor Day - volunteers needed to bag tree saplings for Wellesley 4th graders, 4:30 - 6 pm, DPW parking lot.
- **April 23:** "Gas Leaks and Our Health," expert panel discussion featuring Newton Director of Sustainability Ann Berwick, 7 pm, Newton Free Library (330 Homer St.). Sponsored by Green Newton.
- **April 25:** Former Vice President Al Gore Delivers 2018 Wilson Lecture at Wellesley College, 5:30 pm. Free and open to the public but tickets are required.
- **April 26: Wetlands Protection Committee Meeting**, 6:30 pm, NRC Office, Town Hall.
- **April 29: Walk Into the Wellesley Woods**, with forester Phil Benjamin, 2 - 4 pm, Wellesley Town Forest. Meet at Longfellow Pond parking lot.
- **April 30: "Speaking for Our Trees,"** featuring Dr. David Foster, 7 - 9 pm, Wellesley Free Library. Co-sponsored by the NRC and the Wellesley League of Women Voters.
- **May 3:** Wellesley Green Collaborative Meeting, gathering of local organizations and individuals interested in environmental issues, 9 - 11:30 am, Wellesley Free Library.
- **May 6: Trails Committee Guided Walk at Morses Pond**, 10 - 11:30 am, Crosstown Trail at Russell Road.

[Web Site](#)

[NRC Meeting Agendas](#)

[Permit Applications](#)

[Community Gardens](#)



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The Natural Resources Commission for the Town of Wellesley

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