



Wellesley  
Natural  
Resources  
Commission

**Insights from Outside**  
A Monthly Update from the NRC

November 2016

**Happy Thanksgiving from the  
Wellesley Natural Resources Commission!**



Fall foliage at Pickle Point on Morses Pond. (Photo courtesy of Suzy Littlefield)

# Countdown for Bag Bylaw

## Great Response from Local Retailers

The NRC is grateful for the support of our business community as we work to reduce plastic waste in Wellesley with the new bag bylaw. In less than two months, Wellesley's bylaw restricting the distribution of plastic shopping bags will take effect, and local businesses are preparing for the transition to paper and reusable bags. NRC volunteers and staff have visited about 100 retailers in recent weeks, handing out a sheet of [frequently asked questions](#) and a [guide to paper bag labeling](#).

We've found that most business owners and managers are familiar with the new bylaw and are prepared for the implementation. We also appreciate the help of our volunteers who have been visiting retailers and spreading the word about the new bylaw!

Wellesley's bag bylaw goes into effect on **January 25, 2017**, for stores 3,500 square feet or larger and chain stores with more than one outlet in Wellesley. Stores that are smaller than 3,500 square feet will have until **April 12, 2017**, to comply.

[Learn more about the bag bylaw.](#)



## Buy Your Wellesley Reusable Bag in December

Need a holiday gift idea? Wellesley's student-designed reusable canvas tote bags will go on sale for just \$3.99 in early December! Buy yours at Roche Bros. and help support our students and our plastic bag bylaw. The bags were designed by **Caroline Green** and **Allison MacDougal**, who won the NRC's reusable bag challenge. Both students are part of the [Wellesley High School Evolutions](#) program. The reusable bag design challenge is a joint project with [Roche Bros. Wellesley, Linden Square](#), and the Evolutions program.



## Wellesley Board of Selectmen Designate January 2017 as "Bring Your Own Bag Month"

In recognition of the Wellesley's new bag bylaw, the Board of Selectmen have designated January 2017 as "Bring Your Own Bag Month" to encourage residents to bring reusable bags whenever they shop. You will see reminders to "BYO Bag" at the Wellesley Recycling and Disposal Facility and in front of stores around town. Bringing your own bag is the most environmentally friendly way to shop, and it saves money for local retailers as well!

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## Residents Adopt "Family Trees"



Morgan in front of her Sweet Gum tree.



NRC Commissioner Raina McManus with her River Birch tree.

Some lucky Wellesley trees are getting extra TLC for throughout the winter to help them recover from the after-effects of the drought. Residents have adopted about 20 at-risk trees in the past month through the NRC's "Adopt-a-Tree" program. Watering the trees once or twice a week will make them less vulnerable to disease and damage during the upcoming winter.

Please consider watering your own trees - and let us know if you would like to water a town tree. We will be happy to direct you to a tree in your neighborhood.

[Click here to let us know you can help!](#)



## Best Wishes to the NRC's Helen MacDonald

Helen MacDonald has some magic up her sleeve: She turned a temporary job into a 17-year career helping to keep the NRC office running smoothly. She manages the paperwork and filings for wetlands permits, submits legal ads, collects checks for the community gardens, answers questions about Wellesley's open spaces, and much more, all with a smile and a ready wit. For Helen, the interaction with visitors to the NRC office on the lower level of Town Hall is the best part of her job and the part she'll miss most when she retires in December.

Working part-time for the Town of Wellesley was Helen's first public sector job, and she's seen a lot of changes since she was hired in 1999. She's worked with different commissioners, directors, and staff; made the transition from wetlands maps marked in colored pencil to computer maps generated by GIS; and switched to working mostly by email and less by phone. "While the nature of the work remains similar, we are so much better prepared to respond to a variety of issues," she says.

In retirement, Helen plans to make trips to see family and friends, spend more time in Florida,

and finally complete some of her "to do" projects at home in Framingham. Our thanks to Helen for so many years of service to the NRC and the Town of Wellesley. We wish her the very best - and we'll miss her magic!

We are also saying goodbye to **Wetlands Administrator Linda Hansen!** Linda has accepted a new job in Wayland and we extend our thanks and best wishes to her.

[Click here to learn more about the important role of the Wetlands Administrator!](#)



## Make Your Voice Heard at the Community Visioning Forum

Share your thoughts on how to make Wellesley an even better place to live, work, and play at the

**Community Visioning Forum** on **Saturday, December 10, 9 am to 12 pm**, at the Wellesley High School cafeteria. The forum is a great opportunity for Wellesley residents to contribute to the Unified Plan - which is a comprehensive plan for the future development of our town.

[Click here to learn more about the Unified Plan!](#)

[Click here to make your comments online!](#)

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## Mark Your Calendar for Upcoming Events

- **December 1, 6:30 pm, [Wetlands Protection Committee](#) meeting, NRC office, Lower Level, Town Hall.**
- **December 1, 7 pm, [Peter Alden on Wellesley's Changing Wildlife](#), Wakelin Room, Wellesley Free Library.** Learn how changes in climate, habitat, hunting, trapping, and invasive species are affecting local birds and other animals. Presented by the [Wellesley Conservation Council](#) and [Wellesley Free Library](#).
- **December 10, 9 am to 12 pm, Community Visioning Forum, Wellesley High School Cafeteria.** Come help shape the future of Wellesley by providing input for the Unified Plan (a comprehensive plan for the future development of our town)!
- **December 15, 6:30 pm, [Wetland's Protection Committee](#) meeting, NRC office, Lower Level, Town Hall.**
- **December 23, noon, NRC office CLOSED for holiday weekend.**
- **January 11, 7 pm, "How to Run for Town Office," presented by [Wellesley League of Women Voters](#), location TBA.** Learn how you can become a member of an elected board or Town Meeting.

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Town of Wellesley  
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