



# FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

Submitted to: Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation  
For enrollment in CH61/61A/61B and/or Forest Stewardship Program



### CHECK-OFFS

CH61 cert. <input type="checkbox"/> recert. <input type="checkbox"/> amend <input type="checkbox"/>	CH61A cert. <input type="checkbox"/> recert. <input type="checkbox"/> amend <input type="checkbox"/>	CH61B cert. <input type="checkbox"/> recert. <input type="checkbox"/> amend <input type="checkbox"/>	STWSHP new <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> renew <input type="checkbox"/>	C-S EEA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>
Plan Change: _____ to _____			Green Certification <input type="checkbox"/>	Conservation Restriction <input type="checkbox"/> CR Holder _____

### Administrative Box

Case No. _____	Orig. Case No. _____
Owner ID _____	Add. Case No. _____
Date Rec'd _____	Ecoregion _____
Plan Period _____	Topo Name <u>Holliston, MA</u>
Rare Sp. Hab. _____	River Basin <u>Charles River</u>

### OWNER, PROPERTY, and PREPARER INFORMATION

Property Owner(s) Town of Sherborn, Sherborn Conservation Commission

Mailing Address 19 Washington Street  
Sherborn, MA 01770 Phone 508-651-7863

Property Location: Town(s) Sherborn Road(s) Western Avenue / Bear Hill Road

Plan Preparer Philip B. Benjamin, CF Mass. Forester License # 15

Mailing Address 151 Depot Street, South Easton, MA 02375 Phone 508-238-0422

### RECORDS

Assessors' Map No.	Lot/Parcel Number	Deed Book	Deed Page	Total Acres	(non-Ch.61/61A) Excluded Acres	Ch. 61/61A Certified Acres	Stewardship Acres
<u>2</u>	<u>92</u>	<u>32888</u>	<u>392</u>	<u>41.50</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>          </u>	<u>41.50</u>
<b>TOTALS</b>				<u>41.50</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>          </u>	<u>41.50</u>

Excluded Area Description (if additional space is needed, continue on separate page)

### HISTORY

Year Acquired 2001 Year management began 2001

Are boundaries blazed/painted? yes no X partially           

Have forest products been cut within past 2 years? yes            no X

What treatments have been prescribed, but not carried out (last 10 years if plan is a recert)?

stand no.	treatment	reason
_____	_____	_____

(if additional space is needed, continue on a separate page)

### Previous Management Practices (last 10 years)

Stand(s)	Cutting Plan	Treatment	Yield	Value	Acres	Date
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Remarks: (if additional space needed, continue on separate page)

Since the purchase of the property, the conservation commission has concentrated on keeping the abandoned field periodically mowed. Trails have also been established through portions of the property.

## Landowner Goals

➤ Please **check** the column that best reflects the importance of the following goals:

Goal	Importance to Me			
	High	Medium	Low	Don't Know
Enhance the Quality/Quantity of Timber Products*				
Generate Immediate Income				
Generate Long Term Income				
Produce Firewood				
Defer or Defray Taxes				
Promote Biological Diversity				
Enhance Habitat for Birds				
Enhance Habitat for Small Animals				
Enhance Habitat for Large Animals				
Improve Access for Walking/Skiing/Recreation				
Maintain or Enhance Privacy				
Improve Hunting or Fishing				
Preserve or Improve Scenic Beauty				
Protect Water Quality				
Protect Unique/Special/Cultural Areas				
Attain Green Certification				
Other:				

\* This goal must be checked "HIGH" if you are interested in classifying your land under Chapter 61/61A.

1. In your own words please describe your goals for your property.

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### Stewardship Purpose

By enrolling in the Forest Stewardship Program and following a Stewardship Plan, I understand that I will be joining with many other landowners across the state in a program that promotes ecologically responsible resource management through the following actions and values:

1. Managing sustainably for long-term forest health, productivity, diversity, and quality.
2. Conserving or enhancing water quality, wetlands, soil productivity, carbon sequestration, biodiversity, cultural, historical, and aesthetic resources.
3. Following a strategy guided by well-founded silvicultural principles to improve timber quality and quantity when wood products are a goal.
4. Setting high standards for forester, loggers, and operators as practices are implemented; and minimizing negative impacts.
5. Learning how woodlands benefit and affect the surrounding community, and cooperation with neighboring owners to accomplish mutual goals when practical.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Owner(s) Town of Sherborn, Sherborn Conservation Commission



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## Property Overview, Regional Significance, and Management Summary

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The Hidden Meadow property lies in the northwest corner of the town of Sherborn in the southernmost portion of Middlesex County. The property lies approximately 1.6 miles west of the Sherborn Town Hall, 2.5 miles east southeast of downtown Ashland, 2.8 miles south southeast of Framingham's Memorial Building, and 3 miles northeast of the commercial center of Holliston. Although it is rural residential in the immediate area of the Hidden Meadow property, the region in general has experienced the challenging transition from rural residential to suburban residential. Horses dominate the agricultural endeavors remaining in the area, although there is one, long-established working farm and orchard approximately two miles to the east northeast as well as smaller farms sprinkled through the general area.

Until 2008, Sherborn, along with much of eastern Massachusetts, had been experiencing intensive development pressure. In spite of the intensive development pressure, Sherborn has enjoyed impressive land protection efforts in the past. Through the hard work of the Sherborn Conservation Commission and local and regional land trusts including the Sherborn Rural Land Foundation, the Upper Charles Conservation Land Trust, the Trustees of Reservations, and Mass Audubon, and countless private citizens, several thousands of acres have been permanently protected including the greater Barber Reservation, which lies approximately 0.6 miles north up Western Avenue, totals approximately 302 acres, and includes contiguous ownerships of the Sherborn Conservation Commission, the Sherborn Rural Land Foundation, Inc. and the Upper Charles Conservation Land Trust

The 41 plus acres of the Hidden Meadow property offer an excellent representation of what much of the Sherborn landscape was once and continues to be in areas. The past agricultural use of this property is quite evident. The abandoned fields are reminders of past efforts to settle and farm the land in some capacity. Stonewalls, some of which mark portions of the boundaries, are present throughout this property, indicating that additional land was cleared at some point in its past, most likely for the grazing of livestock. The well drained, generally flat upland portions of the properties support a typical mix of mixed hardwood and white pine poles and sawlogs that in all likelihood, became established once some of the open farmland was abandoned. There are a number of slightly lower, seasonally wet areas on the Hidden Meadow property that consist primarily of red maple pole poles and sawlogs.

The overall forest health appears to be good. However, nonnative invasive plant species may be the most significant threat to this property over the long term. Bittersweet, glossy buckthorn, honeysuckle, multiflora rose, barberry, and Japanese knotweed are either slowly becoming entrenched or are already a dominant component of some of the stands. Although the fruits and berries are eaten by many species of birds, these are not important sources of food for wildlife. At the same time, they are extremely destructive to the existing native vegetation by literally choking out the competition. This situation will warrant constant monitoring and potential control.

Habitat diversity is excellent on this property, favoring both upland and wooded wetland, interior-dwelling birds and animals. The abandoned fields provide unmatched grassland and early successional habitat for many species of birds and animals that use these areas for feeding and nesting.

This Forest Management Plan seeks to describe the current conditions of the Hidden Meadow property and recommend various actions to further enhance the vigor, productivity, aesthetics, and biological diversity of this property. The plan identifies the various forest stands based on species composition and age. Each stand is described in detail as far as the dominant vegetation is concerned. Past history, soils and

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Owner(s) Town of Sherborn  
Sherborn Conservation Commission. Town(s) Sherborn

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## Property Overview, Regional Significance, and Management Summary

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(Continued)

topography, general wildlife notes, and brief management recommendations are also included for each stand description as well as the results of the inventory work undertaken during the preparation of the management plan.

A separate section in this plan describes the various practices that can be considered to improve and enhance the property for aesthetics and passive recreational use, for tree and forest vigor, and for wildlife habitat maintenance and protection. In addition to extending, improving, and maintaining the current trail system and maintaining the abandoned field as mowed grasslands, some of the upland forest areas can be considered for commercial activities that will help accomplish some of the goals of the landowner as well as generate modest revenues that can be used to fund other improvement needs of the property. Although there a number of management alternatives available to consider for this property, the approach that favors the long term protection and maintenance of the forest is the most appropriate for the Hidden Meadow property. Developing and implementing an all-ages management program for the property will increase the diversity of tree sizes and species as the selection removal of individual and small groups of trees is considered. Although there is currently reasonable diversity through some of the upland forests on Hidden Meadow, it will be imperative over time to deliberately strive to increase the diversity of species and the balance of age and size classes through the property as a means to better prepare the forest to withstand potential natural disasters such as fire, hurricane, or pestilence damage.

The all-ages management approach will lead to the development of three distinct and important age classes, each with its own suite of wildlife species. By establishing and enhancing the development of seedlings and saplings in the understory, the forest will have a class of desired tree species that will continue to develop into the next forest component while ready to immediately fill the void in the case of catastrophic disturbance. The intermediate component of poles, those trees whose diameter at breast height (dbh - 4.5 feet above the ground) ranges from 4" to 9", provides strength for the forest and is very important by accumulating nutrients and preventing excessive runoff into the wetlands. The poles will also be the trees that develop into the third component, the larger, older sawlogs. The sawlog component provides many values to the forest and ultimately to the water quality. Not only do the mature sawlogs produce the seed and nuts for establishing the next generation of trees and for food for wildlife, the sawlogs strengthen the forest's ability to withstand strong winds. The high canopy provided by the bigger trees provides shade for the forest floor, slowing the organic decomposition of the litter and reducing the amount of leachable nutrients into the wetlands. The high canopy also softens the impact of falling rain, further reducing the chance for detrimental runoff. The sawlogs also enhance the aesthetics of the property while providing the best opportunity for revenue enhancement through the management of the property.

The all-ages management approach tends to mimic the natural development of the forest. Although many of our current forests are relatively even-age as the result of farm abandonment at the end of the last century, natural disturbances have resulted in the establishment of younger trees over time. The all-ages approach provides for the deliberate selection of trees to be removed based on the needs of the particular area of the property. The resulting forest will at all times consist of all three components, which will be aesthetically appealing to visitors to the property, will enhance the area for more species of wildlife, and protect water quality.

The Hidden Meadow property together with the nearby greater Barber Reservation provides unrivaled settings for environmental education for both the local schools and visitors in general, especially with their well established trail systems and the potential for information kiosks at strategic points through the properties.

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## Property Overview, Regional Significance, and Management Summary

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(Continued)

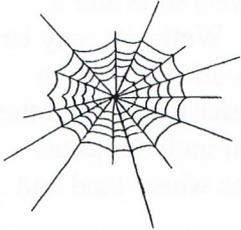
Land stewardship and forest management are very broad umbrellas under which many objectives can be served. The Forest Stewardship Plan, having incorporated the stakeholders' input, will provide a framework to guide the management work that may be carried out to further enhance the many facets of the Hidden Meadow property, now and for the future.

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Sherborn Conservation Commission. Town(s) Sherborn

## Stewardship Issues

Massachusetts is a small state, but it contains a tremendous variety of ecosystems, plant and animal species, management challenges, and opportunities. This section of your plan will provide background information about the Massachusetts forest landscape as well as issues that might affect your land. **The Stand Descriptions and Management Practices sections of your plan will give more detailed property specific information** on these subjects tailored to your management goals.



**Biodiversity:** Biological diversity is, in part, a measure of the variety of plants and animals, the communities they form, and the ecological processes (such as water and nutrient cycling) that sustain them. With the recognition that each species has value, individually and as part of its natural community, maintaining biodiversity has become an important resource management goal.

While the biggest threat to biodiversity in Massachusetts is the loss of habitat to development, another threat is the introduction and spread of invasive non-native plants. Non-native invasives like European Buckthorn, Asiatic Bittersweet, and Japanese Honeysuckle spread quickly, crowding out or smothering native species and upsetting and dramatically altering ecosystem structure and function. Once established, invasives are difficult to control and even harder to eradicate. Therefore, vigilance and early intervention are paramount.

Another factor influencing biodiversity in Massachusetts concerns the amount and distribution of forest growth stages. Wildlife biologists have recommended that, for optimal wildlife habitat on a landscape scale, 5-15% of the forest should be in the seedling stage (less than 1" in diameter). Yet we currently have no more than 2-3% early successional stage seedling forest across the state. There is also a shortage of forest with large diameter trees (greater than 20"). See more about how you can manage your land with biodiversity in mind in the "Wildlife" section below. (Also refer to *Managing Forests to Enhance Wildlife Diversity in Massachusetts* and *A Guide to Invasive Plants in Massachusetts* in the binder pockets.)



**Rare Species:** Rare species include those that are **threatened** (abundant in parts of its range but declining in total numbers, those of **special concern** (any species that has suffered a decline that could threaten the species if left unchecked), and **endangered** (at immediate risk of extinction and probably cannot survive without direct human intervention). Some species are threatened or endangered globally, while others are common globally but rare in Massachusetts.

Of the 2,040 plant and animal species (not including insects) in Massachusetts, 424 are considered rare. About 100 of these rare species are known to occur in woodlands. Most of these are found in wooded wetlands, especially vernal pools. These temporary shallow pools dry up by late summer, but provide crucial breeding habitat for rare salamanders and a host of other unusual forest dwelling invertebrates. Although many species in Massachusetts are adapted to and thrive in recently disturbed forests, rare species are often very sensitive to any changes in their habitat

Indispensable to rare species protection is a set of maps maintained by the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife's Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHESP) that show current and historic locations of rare species and their habitats. The maps of your property will be compared to these rare species maps and the result indicated on the upper right corner of the front page of the plan. Prior to any

regulated timber harvest, if an occurrence does show on the map, the NHESP will recommend protective measures. Possible measures include restricting logging operations to frozen periods of the year, or keeping logging equipment out of sensitive areas. You might also use information from NHESP to consider implementing management activities to improve the habitat for these special species.



**Riparian and Wetlands Areas:** Riparian and wetland areas are transition areas between open water features (lakes, ponds, streams, and rivers) and the drier terrestrial ecosystems. More specifically, a **wetland** is an area that has hydric (wet) soils and a unique community of plants that are adapted to live in these wet soils. Wetlands may be adjacent to streams or ponds, or a wetland may be found isolated in an otherwise drier landscape. A **riparian area** is the transition zone between an open water feature and the uplands (see Figure 1). A riparian zone may contain wetlands, but also includes areas

with somewhat better drained soils. It is easiest to think of riparian areas as the places where land and water meet.

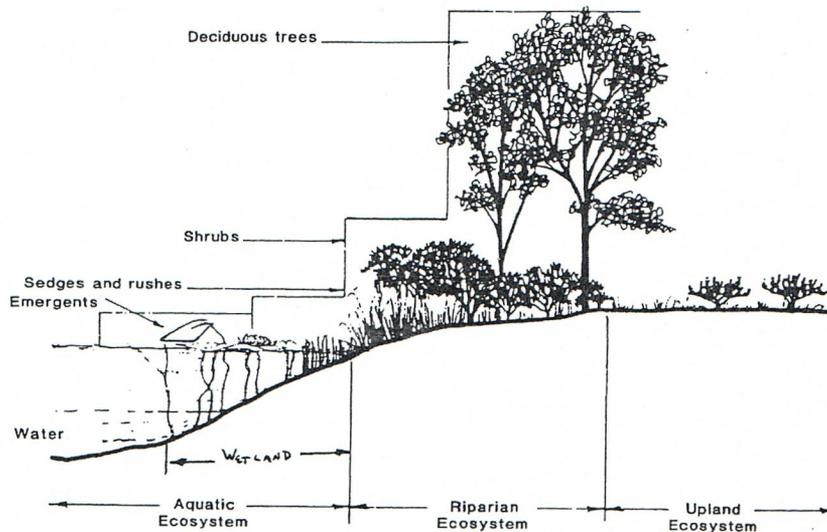


Figure 1: Example of a riparian zone.

The presence of water in riparian and wetland areas make these special places very important. Some of the functions and values that these areas provide are described below:

**Filtration:** Riparian zones capture and filter out sediment, chemicals and debris before they reach streams, rivers, lakes and drinking water supplies. This helps to keep our drinking water cleaner, and saves communities money by making the need for costly filtration much less likely.

**Flood control:** By storing water after rainstorms, these areas reduce downstream flooding. Like a sponge, wetland and riparian areas absorb stormwater, then release it slowly over time instead of in one flush.

**Critical wildlife habitat:** Many birds and mammals need riparian and wetland areas for all or part of their life cycles. These areas provide food and water, cover, and travel corridors. They are often the most important habitat feature in Massachusetts' forests.

**Recreational opportunities:** Our lakes, rivers, streams, and ponds are often focal points for recreation. We enjoy them when we boat, fish, swim, or just sit and enjoy the view.

In order to protect wetlands and riparian areas and to prevent soil erosion during timber harvesting activities, Massachusetts promotes the use of “Best Management Practices” or BMPs. Maintaining or reestablishing the protective vegetative layer and protecting critical areas are the two rules that underlie these common sense measures. DEM’s Massachusetts Forestry Best Practices Manual (included with this plan) details both the legally required and voluntary specifications for log landings, skid trails, water bars, buffer strips, filter strips, harvest timing, and much more.

The two Massachusetts laws that regulate timber harvesting in and around wetlands and riparian areas are the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (CH 131), and the Forest Cutting Practices Act (CH132). Among other things, CH132 requires the filing of a cutting plan and on-site inspection of a harvest operation by a DEM Service Forester to ensure that required BMPs are being followed when a commercial harvest exceeds 25,000 board feet or 50 cords (or combination thereof).



**Soil and Water Quality:** Forests provide a very effective natural buffer that holds soil in place and protects the purity of our water. The trees, understory vegetation, and the organic material on the forest floor reduce the impact of falling rain, and help to insure that soil will not be carried into our streams and waterways.

To maintain a supply of clean water, forests must be kept as healthy as possible. Forests with a diverse mixture of vigorous trees of different ages and species can better cope with periodic and unpredictable stress such as insect attacks or windstorms.

Timber harvesting must be conducted with the utmost care to ensure that erosion is minimized and that sediment does not enter streams or wetlands. Sediment causes turbidity which degrades water quality and can harm fish and other aquatic life. As long as Best Management Practices (BMPs) are implemented correctly, it is possible to undertake active forest management without harming water quality.



**Forest Health:** Like individual organisms, forests vary in their overall health. The health of a forest is affected by many factors including weather, soil, insects, diseases, air quality, and human activity. Forest owners do not usually focus on the health of a single tree, but are concerned about catastrophic events such as insect or disease outbreaks that affect so many individual trees that the whole forest community is impacted.

Like our own health, it is easier to prevent forest health problems than to cure them. This preventative approach usually involves two steps. First, it is desirable to maintain or encourage a wide diversity of tree species and age classes within the forest. This diversity makes a forest less susceptible to a single devastating health threat. Second, by thinning out weaker and less desirable trees, well-spaced healthy individual trees are assured enough water and light to thrive. These two steps will result in a forest of vigorously growing trees that is more resistant to environmental stress.



**Fire:** Most forests in Massachusetts are relatively resistant to catastrophic fire. Historically, Native Americans commonly burned certain forests to improve hunting grounds. In modern times, fires most often result from careless human actions. The risk of an unintentional and damaging fire in your woods could increase as a result of logging activity if the slash (tree tops, branches, and debris) is not treated correctly.

Adherence to the Massachusetts slash law minimizes this risk. Under the law, slash is to be removed from buffer areas near roads, boundaries, and critical areas and lopped close to the ground to speed decay. Well-maintained woods roads are always desirable to provide access should a fire occur.

Depending on the type of fire and the goals of the landowner, fire can also be considered as a management tool to favor certain species of plants and animals. Today the use of prescribed burning is largely restricted to the coast and islands, where it is used to maintain unique natural communities such as sandplain grasslands and pitch pine/scrub oak barrens. However, state land managers are also attempting to bring fire back to many of the fire-adapted communities found elsewhere around the state.



**Wildlife Management:** Enhancing the wildlife potential of a forested property is a common and important goal for many woodland owners. Sometimes actions can be taken to benefit a particular species of interest (e.g., put up Wood Duck nest boxes). In most cases, recommended management practices can benefit many species, and fall into

one of three broad strategies. These are **managing for diversity, protecting existing habitat, and enhancing existing habitat.**

**Managing for Diversity** – Many species of wildlife need a variety of plant communities to meet their lifecycle requirements. In general, a property that contains a diversity of habitats will support a more varied wildlife population. A thick area of brush and young trees might provide food and cover for grouse and cedar waxwing; a mature stand of oaks provides acorns for foraging deer and turkey; while an open field provides the right food and cover for cottontail rabbits and red fox. It is often possible to create these different habitats on your property through active management. The appropriate mix of habitat types will primarily depend on the composition of the surrounding landscape and your objectives. It may be a good idea to create a brushy area where early successional habitats are rare, but the same practice may be inappropriate in the area's last block of mature forest.

**Protecting Existing Habitat** – This strategy is commonly associated with managing for rare species or those species that require unique habitat features. These habitat features include vernal pools, springs and seeps, forested wetlands, rock outcrops, snags, den trees, and large blocks of unbroken forest. Some of these features are rare, and they provide the right mix of food, water, and shelter for a particular species or specialized community of wildlife. It is important to recognize their value and protect their function. This usually means not altering the feature and buffering the resource area from potential impacts.

**Enhancing Existing Habitat** – This strategy falls somewhere between the previous two. One way the wildlife value of a forest can be enhanced is by modifying its structure (number of canopy layers, average tree size, density). Thinning out undesirable trees from around large crowned mast (nut and fruit) trees will allow these trees to grow faster and produce more food. The faster growth will also accelerate the development of a more mature forest structure, which is important for some species. Creating small gaps or forest openings generates groups of seedlings and saplings that provide an additional layer of cover, food, and perch sites.

Each of these three strategies can be applied on a single property. For example, a landowner might want to increase the habitat diversity by reclaiming an old abandoned field. Elsewhere on the property, a stand of young hardwoods might be thinned to reduce competition, while a “no cut” buffer is set up around a vernal pool or other habitat feature. The overview, stand description and management practice sections of this plan will help you understand your woodland within the context of the surrounding landscape and the potential to diversify, protect or enhance wildlife habitat.



**Wood Products:** If managed wisely, forests can produce a periodic flow of wood products on a sustained basis. Stewardship encompasses finding ways to meet your current needs while protecting the forest’s ecological integrity. In this way, you can harvest timber and generate income without compromising the opportunities of future generations.

Massachusetts forests grow many highly valued species (white pine, red oak, sugar maple, white ash, and black cherry) whose lumber is sold throughout the world. Other lower valued species (hemlock, birch, beech, red maple) are marketed locally or regionally, and become products like pallets, pulpwood, firewood, and lumber. These products and their associated value-added industries contribute between 200 and 300 million dollars annually to the Massachusetts economy.

By growing and selling wood products in a responsible way you are helping to our society’s demand for these goods. Harvesting from sustainably managed woodlands – rather than from unmanaged or poorly managed forest – benefits the public in a multitude of ways. The sale of timber, pulpwood, and firewood also provides periodic income that you can reinvest in the property, increasing its value and helping you meet your long-term goals. Producing wood products helps defray the costs of owning woodland, and helps private landowners keep their forestland undeveloped.



**Cultural Resources:** Cultural resources are the places containing evidence of people who once lived in the area. Whether a Native American village from 1,700 years ago, or the remains of a farmstead from the 1800’s, these features all tell important and interesting stories about the landscape, and should be protected from damage or loss.

Massachusetts has a long and diverse history of human habitation and use. Native American tribes first took advantage of the natural bounty of this area over 10,000 years ago. Many of these villages were located along the coasts and rivers of the state. The interior woodlands were also used for hunting, traveling, and temporary camps. Signs of these activities are difficult to find in today’s forests. They were obscured by the dramatic landscape impacts brought by European settlers as they swept over the area in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

By the middle 1800’s, more than 70% of the forests of Massachusetts had been cleared for crops and pastureland. Houses, barns, wells, fences, mills, and roads were all constructed as woodlands were converted for agricultural production. But when the Erie Canal connected the Midwest with the eastern cities, New England farms were abandoned for the more productive land in the Ohio River valley, and the landscape began to revert to forest. Many of the abandoned buildings were disassembled and moved, but the supporting stonework and other changes to the landscape can be easily seen today.

One particularly ubiquitous legacy of this period is stone walls. Most were constructed between 1810 and 1840 as stone fences (wooden fence rails had become scarce) to enclose sheep within pastures, or to

exclude them from croplands and hayfields. Clues to their purpose are found in their construction. Walls that surrounded pasture areas were comprised mostly of large stones, while walls abutting former cropland accumulated many small stones as farmers cleared rocks turned up by their plows. Other cultural features to look for include cellar holes, wells, old roads and even old trash dumps.



**Recreation and Aesthetic Considerations:** Recreational opportunities and aesthetic quality are the most important values for many forest landowners, and represent valid goals in and of themselves. Removing interfering vegetation can open a vista or highlight a beautiful tree, for example. When a landowner's goals include timber, thoughtful forest management can be used to accomplish silvicultural objectives while also reaching recreational and/or aesthetic objectives. For example, logging trails might be designed to provide a network of cross-country ski trails that lead through a variety of habitats and reveal points of interest.

If aesthetics is a concern and you are planning a timber harvest, obtain a copy of this excellent booklet: *A Guide to Logging Aesthetics: Practical Tips for Loggers, Foresters & Landowners*, by Geoffrey T. Jones, 1993. (Available from the Northeast Regional Agricultural Engineering Service, (607) 255-7654, for \$7). Work closely with your consultant to make sure the aesthetic standards you want are included in the contract and that the logger selected to do the job executes it properly. The time you take to plan ahead of the job will reward you and your family many times over with a fuller enjoyment of your forest, now and well into the future.

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**This is your Stewardship Plan.** It is based on the goals that you have identified. The final success of your Stewardship Plan will be determined first, by how well you are able to identify and define your goals, and second, by the support you find and the resources you commit to implement each step.

It can be helpful and enjoyable to visit other properties to sample the range of management activities and see the accomplishments of others. This may help you visualize the outcome of alternative management decisions and can either stimulate new ideas or confirm your own personal philosophies. Don't hesitate to express your thoughts, concerns, and ideas. Keep asking questions! Please be involved and enjoy the fact that you are the steward of a very special place.



**STAND DESCRIPTIONS**

OBJ	STAND NO	TYPE	ACRES	MSD or SIZE-CLASS	BA/AC	VOLUME/ACRE	SITE INDEX
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STEW	1	AF	6.55	saplings	-	-	62 - 74 (WP)
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This periodically mowed abandoned field consists mostly of grasses, sedges, goldenrod, wild chive, and spireas. Individual and small thickets of arrowwood, autumn olive, glossy buckthorn, highbush blueberry, silky dogwood, pussy willow, blackberry, multiflora rose, bittersweet, grapes, and poison ivy are also present in this very sparsely stocked stand as well as infrequent pockets of white ash, apple, elm, red maple, sugar maple, mixed oak, and planted Douglas fir saplings, poles, and small sawlogs. The area is a flat to gently sloped, generally dry abandoned field with soils ranging from very deep, well drained (Paxton) to very deep, moderately well drained (Woodbridge). The southeastern portion of this field is slightly lower and tends to be seasonally wet with very deep, poorly drained soils (Ridgebury).

This stand provides excellent abandoned field and early successional habitat for the wildlife in the area. The desired future condition of this stand is essentially the same as it is currently. It will be prudent to continue the periodic mowing to maintain this very valuable habitat.

STEW	2	OH	4.32	11.2"	173	7,915 bf & 30.3 cds	67 (WP)
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Mixed oaks and mixed hardwoods are the primary species being in the sawtimber class. Red maple saplings, poles, and sawlogs are present through much of this overstocked stand as well as infrequent tupelo, sassafras, and white ash saplings, poles, and sawlogs. Individual and small pockets of white pine saplings, poles, and sawlogs are also present. The understory is light to moderate and includes highbush and lowbush blueberry, huckleberry, witch hazel, arrowwood, sheep laurel, spicebush, chestnut stump sprouts, ferns, grasses, princess pine, ground cedar, striped wintergreen, and partridgeberry. The area is flat to slightly variably sloped, generally dry upland with a fair amount of pit and mound topography and very deep, moderately well drained soils (Woodbridge). There are several slightly lower areas that can be seasonally wet.

The stand is ready for a very light individual selection harvest to both stimulate the natural regeneration of the mixed oaks and white pine and to improve the growing conditions of the remaining trees. A light improvement thinning will also enhance the growing conditions of the desired trees. The desired future condition of this stand is an aesthetically appealing mix of well spaced, better formed mixed oak and occasional white pine poles and sawlogs with a developing component of better formed white pine and mixed oak saplings and small poles. The value of the mixed oaks and white pine in this stand is based both on their aesthetic appeal and their long term commercial importance. In addition, the tall pines provide excellent nesting opportunities for owls, hawks, and crows while the oaks are invaluable to the wildlife in the area due to the acorns they produce.

STEW	3	RM	6.09	10.1"	154	4,535 bf & 31.9 cds	50 - 65 (RM)
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Red maple is the primary species being in the small sawtimber class. Occasional mixed oak saplings, poles, and sawlogs are also present in this overstocked stand, primarily along the slightly higher, drier fringes. Individual and small pockets of white pine saplings, poles, and sawlogs are also present as well as infrequent white ash, elm, and grey birch saplings, poles, and sawlogs. The understory is light to moderate and includes highbush blueberry, sweet pepperbush, winterberry, spicebush, honeysuckle, very infrequent yews, barberry, multiflora rose, bittersweet, ferns, skunk cabbage, marsh marigold, sedges, grasses, violets, and sphagnum moss. The area is flat to very gently sloped and seasonally wet with a moderate amount of pit and mound topography and soils ranging from deep, very poorly drained (Scarboro) to deep, poorly drained (Wareham).

OBJECTIVE CODE: CH61 = stands classified under CH61/61A/61B      STEW = stands not classified under CH61/61A/61B  
 STD = stand    AC = acre    MSD = mean stand diameter    BA = basal area    VOL = volume    MBF = thousand board feet    cds = cords

Owner(s) Town of Sherborn  
Sherborn Conservation Commission      Town(s) Sherborn

**STAND DESCRIPTIONS**

OBJ	STAND NO	TYPE	ACRES	MSD or SIZE-CLASS	BA/AC	VOLUME/ACRE	SITE INDEX
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Some of the fringes of the stand are slightly higher and dryer.

Due to both sensitive operating conditions and the higher management priorities of other stands on this property, improvement work is not recommended at this point in time. The desired future condition of this stand is essentially an older and larger version of what it is now. This stand will be allowed to develop naturally over the next ten year period at which point its management needs will be reassessed. The undisturbed, seasonally wet nature of this stand contributes to the excellent habitat diversity of the property.

STEW	4	OH	10.75	11.2"	173	7,915 bf & 30.3 cds	67 (WP)
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Please see Narrative - Stand 2.

STEW	5	CT	0.57	5.9"	190	43.1 cds	62 (WP)
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Balsam firs are the primary species being in the pole class. Infrequent Scotch pine, white ash, black cherry, mixed oak, and apple saplings and poles are also present in this overstocked, abandoned Christmas tree planting. The understory is light and includes glossy buckthorn, bittersweet, goldenrod, and grasses. The area is a flat to very gently sloped, dry upland abandoned field with very deep, well drained soils (Paxton).

Although the firs are in desperate need of thinning, it may be easier to allow the stand to continue growing without management attention at this point in time. If that is the decision, then the desired future condition of this stand is essentially an older and larger version of what it is now. The undisturbed, dense cover provided by the firs will provide a very small yarding area for deer in the winter.

STEW	6	SP	0.20	5.4"	140	31.7 cds	62 (WP)
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Scotch pine is the primary species being in the pole class. Infrequent Scotch pine sawlogs are also present in this adequately stocked, abandoned Christmas tree planting, as well as small pockets of white ash and apple saplings and poles. The smaller, suppressed Scotch pines are beginning to die out. The understory is moderate to dense and includes glossy buckthorn, bittersweet, multiflora rose, and grasses. The area is a flat to very gently sloped, dry upland abandoned field with very deep, well drained soils (Paxton).

Although the Scotch pine is in desperate need of thinning, it may be easier to allow the stand to continue growing without management attention at this point in time. If that is the decision, then the desired future condition of this stand is essentially an older and larger version of what it is now. The undisturbed, dense cover provided by the Scotch pine will provide a very small yarding area for deer in the winter.

STEW	7	AW	0.25	5.4"	120	28.5 cds	62 (WP)
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White ash, present both as single stems and as stump sprouts, is the primary species being in the pole class. Infrequent mixed oak saplings and poles are also present in this overstocked stand. The understory is moderate and includes glossy buckthorn,

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Owner(s) Town of Sherborn  
Sherborn Conservation Commission      Town(s) Sherborn

**STAND DESCRIPTIONS**

OBJ	STAND NO	TYPE	ACRES	MSD or SIZE-CLASS	BA/AC	VOLUME/ACRE	SITE INDEX
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multiflora rose, bittersweet, grapes, ferns, grasses and violets. The area is a flat to very gently sloped, dry upland, long abandoned field with very deep, well drained soils (Paxton).

It is unclear whether the white ash stump sprouts resulted from past thinning work or possible mowing at the time the adjoining Christmas trees were planted.

Due to the higher management priorities of other stands on this property, improvement work is not recommended at this point in time. The desired future condition of this stand is essentially an older and larger version of what it is now. This stand will be allowed to develop naturally over the next ten year period at which point its management needs will be reassessed. The undisturbed nature of this stand contributes to the excellent habitat diversity of the property.

STEW	8	RM	6.03	10.9"	170	7,885 bf & 28.6 cds	62 - 67 (WP)
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Red maple is the primary species being in the sawtimber class. Individual and small pockets of white pine saplings, pole, and sawlogs are also present in this overstocked stand as well as occasional mixed oak and white ash saplings, poles, and sawlogs. Infrequent black cherry and tupelo saplings, poles, and sawlogs are also present. There is a fair amount of recent storm damage to trees in the overstory. The understory is light to moderate and includes glossy buckthorn, honeysuckle, winterberry, barberry, multiflora rose, bittersweet, Japanese knotweed, ferns, princess pine, grasses, and creeping dewberry. The area is flat to very gently sloped, generally dry upland with a fair amount of surface stones and soils ranging from very deep, well drained (Paxton) to very deep, moderately well drained (Woodbridge), although the lowest portions along the eastern fringe of this stand can be seasonally wet.

Portions of this are ready for a light improvement thinning to favor both the white pine and better formed mixed hardwood saplings, poles, and sawlogs. The desired future condition of this stand is a mix of well spaced, red maple and occasional mixed oak poles and sawlogs with a developing component of better formed, faster growing white pine saplings and small poles that will provide aesthetic, structural, and species diversity to the property. The value of the mixed oaks and white pine in this stand is based both on their aesthetic appeal and their long term commercial importance. In addition, the oaks are invaluable to the wildlife in the area due to the acorns they produce.

STEW	9	RM	6.39	7.4"	147	1,250 bf & 37.3 cds	67 (WP)
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Red maple, present both as single stems and as stump sprouts, is the primary species being in the pole class. Occasional white ash saplings, poles, and sawlogs are also present in this over stocked stand as well as infrequent black cherry, mixed oak, elm, big tooth aspen, crabapple, eastern red cedar, and white pine saplings, poles, and sawlogs. There is a fair amount of recent storm damage to trees in the overstory. This is also quite a bit of coarse woody debris on the forest floor. The understory is light to moderate and includes glossy buckthorn, honeysuckle, Japanese knotweed, multiflora rose, bittersweet, grapes, ferns, and grasses. The area is flat to very gently sloped, generally dry upland with a fair amount of pit and mound topography and very deep, moderately well drained soils (Woodbridge).

This stand is laced with many stonewalls.

Portions of this are ready for a light improvement thinning to favor both the better formed red maples and infrequent white pines saplings, poles, and sawlogs. The desired future condition of this stand is a mix of well spaced, red maple poles and

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Owner(s) Town of Sherborn  
Sherborn Conservation Commission      Town(s) Sherborn

**STAND DESCRIPTIONS**

OBJ	STAND NO	TYPE	ACRES	MSD or SIZE-CLASS	BA/AC	VOLUME/ACRE	SITE INDEX
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sawlogs with a developing component of better formed, faster growing white pine saplings and small poles that will provide aesthetic, structural, and species diversity to the property. The value of the white pine in this stand is based both on its aesthetic appeal and its long term commercial importance.

STEW	10	RM	0.15	15.2"	80	2,000 bf & 24.9 cds	65 (RM)
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Red maple is the primary species being in the sawtimber class. Infrequent white pine saplings and sawlogs are also present in this just barely adequately stocked stand. The understory is light to moderate and includes highbush blueberry, winterberry, sweet pepperbush, spicebush, poison sumac, ferns, sedges, and grasses. The area is a generally flat, seasonally wet depression with a moderate amount of pit and mound topography and deep, poorly drained soils (Wareham).

Due to both sensitive operating conditions and the higher management priorities of other stands on this property, improvement work is not recommended at this point in time. The desired future condition of this stand is essentially an older and larger version of what it is now. This stand will be allowed to develop naturally over the next ten year period at which point its management needs will be reassessed. The undisturbed, seasonally wet nature of this stand contributes to the excellent habitat diversity of the property.

STEW	11	RM	0.20	10.8"	90	29.9 cds	50 (RM)
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Red maple is the primary species being in the sawtimber class. Red maple saplings and poles are also present in this adequately stocked stand. The understory is moderate and includes sweet pepperbush, highbush blueberry, winterberry, spicebush, ferns, and grasses. The area is a generally flat, seasonally wet depression with a moderate amount of pit and mound topography and deep, very poorly drained soils (Scarboro).

Due to both sensitive operating conditions and the higher management priorities of other stands on this property, improvement work is not recommended at this point in time. The desired future condition of this stand is essentially an older and larger version of what it is now. This stand will be allowed to develop naturally over the next ten year period at which point its management needs will be reassessed. The undisturbed, seasonally wet nature of this stand contributes to the excellent habitat diversity of the property.

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Owner(s) Town of Sherborn  
Sherborn Conservation Commission      Town(s) Sherborn

**MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**  
*to be carried out within the next 10 years*

OBJ	STD NO	TYPE	SILVICULTURAL PRESCRIPTION	AC	TO BE REMOVED		TIMING
					BA/AC	TOT VOL	
STEW	1	AF	habitat enhancement	4 - 6	NA	NA	as needed
STEW	2	OH	individual selection harvest improvement thin	2 - 4 2 - 4	31 31	3,100 bf/ac 8.5 cds/ac	by fall 2022 by fall 2022
STEW	4	OH	individual selection harvest improvement thin	5 - 8 5 - 8	31 31	3,100 bf/ac 8.5 cds/ac	by fall 2022 by fall 2022
STEW	8	RM	improvement thin	3 - 6	30	8.3 cds/ac	by fall 2017
STEW	9	RM	improvement thin	3 - 6	27	7.4 cds/ac	by fall 2017

The habitat enhancement recommended for the above stand is designed to ensure the property remains attractive for a greater variety of wildlife. Annual mowing at the end of the summer long after the ground-nesting birds have fledged and moved on will maintain this invaluable grassland and early successional habitat. Many birds and animals such as eastern box turtle, northern black racer, various hawks, northern bobwhite, horned lark, eastern meadowlark, bluebirds, various sparrows and swallows, bobolinks, redpolls, ring-necked pheasant, least shrews, voles, meadow jumping mice, eastern cottontail rabbits, and red foxes prefer these habitats for nesting and feeding. In addition, efforts should be made to maintain the integrity of the shrub layer marking the transition from grassland to woodland. This shrub layer provides additional cover and feeding opportunities for wildlife.

The individual selection harvest recommended for the appropriate above stands is designed to both stimulate the natural regeneration of the white pine and mixed oaks and to improve the growing conditions of the remaining trees. This management work will be achieved by removing selected mixed oak and very infrequent white pine sawlogs, thereby creating openings in the canopy and improving the spacings between the trees in the residual stand. This management recommendation will help to enhance and maintain a vigorous and productive, aesthetically appealing, all-ages stand. The harvest should be timed to coincide with a good white pine cone and/or acorn crop in order to maximize the opportunity for the natural regeneration of the desired species.

The improvement thinning recommended for the above stands is an intermediate cut designed to improve the growing conditions of the better formed and faster growing white pine and mixed hardwood saplings, poles, and sawlogs by reducing the overall competition within the stand. This will be achieved by removing the competing, poor quality hardwoods. Good fuelwood utilization. Efforts will be made at the same time to salvage the storm damaged trees as the stands are worked before the trees lose their fuelwood value.

These improvement practices will be carried out in strict accordance with the Massachusetts Best Management Practices (BMPs) in order to protect and maintain the quality of the water resource on and near this property. Any potential forest

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**MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**  
*to be carried out within the next 10 years*

OBJ	STD NO	TYPE	SILVICULTURAL PRESCRIPTION	AC	TO BE REMOVED		TIMING
					BA/AC	TOT VOL	

cutting projects will be subject to the limitations described by the Natural Heritage Program following submission of a Chapter 132 Forest Cutting Plan to DCR and the Sherborn Conservation Commission. In addition, efforts will be made to minimize the aesthetic impact of the recommended improvement work. The harvesting itself should be carried out only when market interest in either chips or tree length pulp is strong. This will facilitate the selection and removal of poor quality and suppressed poles and sawlogs in addition to the commercially valuable white pine and mixed oak sawlogs, further enhancing the aesthetics of the stands. If chipping the slash is not an economically viable option to incorporate into the projects, then the logging and thinning debris will be left to lie as close to the ground as possible. This coarse woody debris creates a "microhabitat" so to speak that is utilized by salamanders, snakes, eastern box turtles, shrews, wrens, and song sparrows. The creation of several brush piles per acre with some of the slash will enhance the area for wildlife. Many birds and small animals utilize brush piles for roosting, nesting, and feeding. Leaving a number of significant cavity trees and dead trees, referred to as snags, per acre will also enhance the area for wildlife. Many species of birds and animals such as wood ducks, barred owls, chickadees, titmice, nuthatches, squirrels, and raccoons utilize these trees for roosting, nesting, and feeding.

The stumps that remain following the forest improvement work will take many years to break down and decay. During that time, the stumps will provide ideal cover and foraging possibilities for salamanders, snakes, shrews, voles, chipmunks, foxes, raccoons, skunks, weasels, and fishers.

It should also be noted that the creation of small openings in the forest canopy through harvesting and thinning will stimulate a flush of herbaceous growth on the forest floor. Although only temporary, these small openings serve to attract a greater variety of animals that are drawn by the insects, seeds, and soft mast such as raspberry, blackberry, huckleberry, and lowbush blueberry that result from the forest cuttings.

STEW	3	RM	none - allow to develop	6.09	NA	NA	NA
STEW	5	CT	none - allow to develop	0.57	NA	NA	NA
STEW	6	SP	none - allow to develop	0.20	NA	NA	NA
STEW	7	AW	none - allow to develop	0.25	NA	NA	NA
STEW	10	RM	none - allow to develop	0.15	NA	NA	NA
STEW	11	RM	none - allow to develop	0.20	NA	NA	NA

The recommendation to allow the above stands to develop without any treatment for the next ten years is designed primarily to

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**MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**  
*to be carried out within the next 10 years*

OBJ	STD NO	TYPE	SILVICULTURAL PRESCRIPTION	AC	TO BE REMOVED		TIMING
					BA/AC	TOT VOL	

enhance the property for wildlife. All of or portions of Stands 3, 10, and 11 tend to be seasonally wet and as a result, rate a low priority in terms of conventional forest management. Species such as marbled salamanders, northern redbelly and ribbon snakes, eastern screech and barred owls, many species of woodpeckers, vireos, and wrens, raccoons, Virginia opossums, and mink are known to prefer seasonally wet, red maple stands such as these. The forest management priorities in Stands 5, 6, and 7 are simply too low in comparison to other stands through the property to warrant management attention at this point in their development. Leaving all of these stands and the various habitats they represent relatively undisturbed for a ten year period is an excellent means of attracting various bird and animal species which use these areas for feeding, breeding, and nesting.

**INVASIVES:** As mentioned previously, there is a growing component of invasive plant species throughout portions of the Hidden Meadow property including bittersweet, glossy buckthorn, honeysuckle, barberry, and multiflora rose. Although it is a daunting and somewhat overwhelming task, it may be prudent to begin to address some of these species in order to slow their spread. One strategy to consider is to focus initially on the small, isolated pockets. Using various combinations of physical removal, repeated cuttings, and/or the prudent use of herbicides such as Round-Up should bear positive results, although it will be a never-ending endeavor.

When nonnative invasives are present in stands that are being considered for improvement work, the work should only be timed when there is a moderate to heavy white pine cone or acorn crop evident and ready to mature. Maximizing the opportunity for the natural regeneration of the desired tree species should help to overwhelm, or at least help to minimize the impact of the invasives.

It will be important to note that a number of state and federal agencies periodically offer financial assistance towards the expense of invasive species control. Monitoring the availability of these possible programs should also be continued.

**BOUNDARIES:** As the above recommendations are carried out, the appropriate property boundaries will be blazed and painted as needed.

**ACCESS:** During the course of the ten year management period, the current trail system will be extended, improved, and maintained to facilitate the implementation of the forest management / forest stewardship program, enhance the potential for passive recreational enjoyment of the property, and provide increased accessibility for fire protection equipment.

It should be noted that the recommendation for improvement thinning in Stand 9 will plan to incorporate the development of a small parking area off Western Avenue once the project is completed. A landing area will be needed to process and load the trees marked for removal from Stands 8 and 9. The location will be determined in part to most easily and safely allow cars to enter from and exit onto Western Avenue. Some of the skid trails will be designed to connect to the existing trail system through the property.

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Owner(s) Town of Sherborn  
Sherborn Conservation Commission      Town(s) Sherborn

Hidden Meadow  
Sherborn, Massachusetts

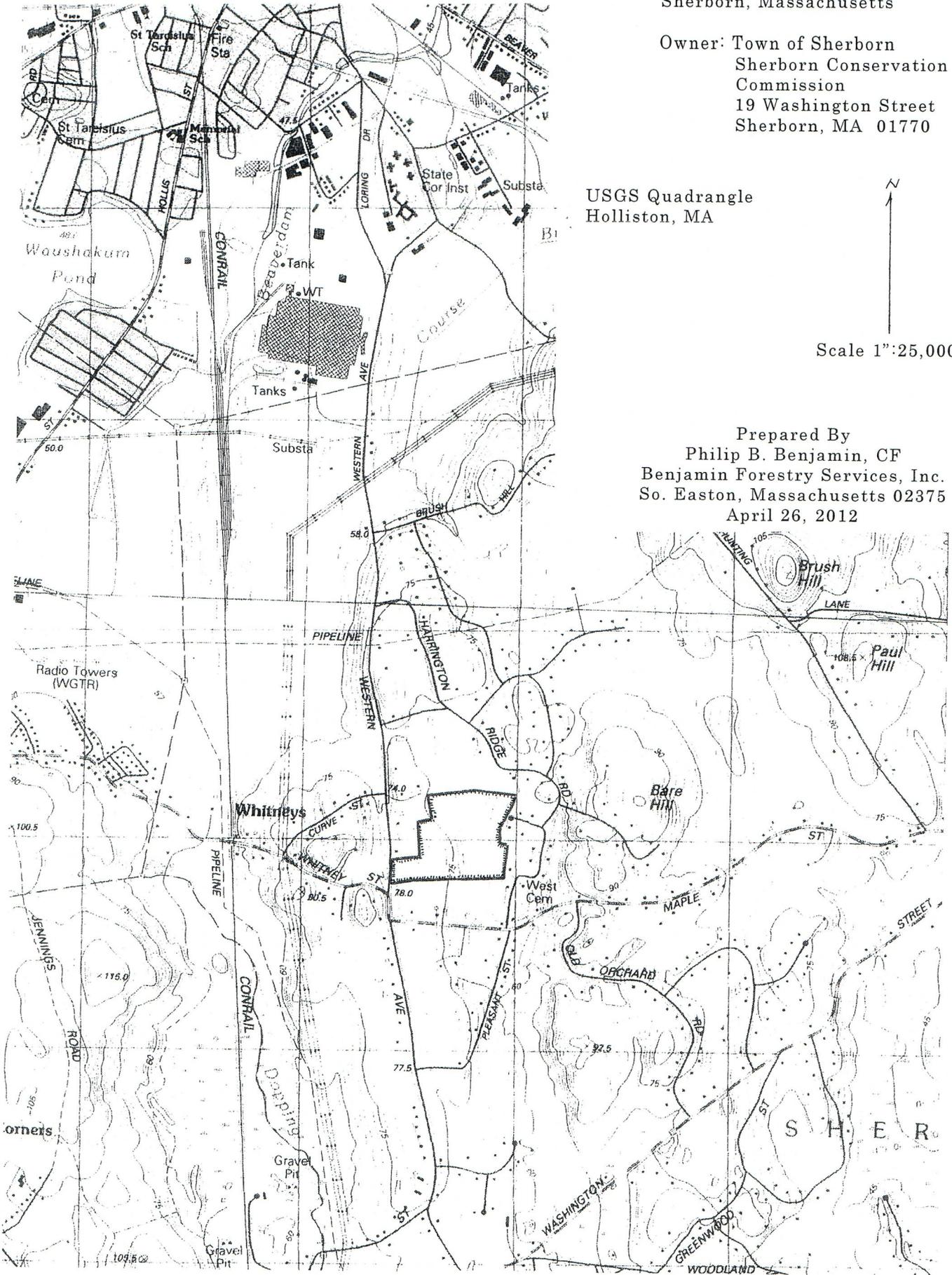
Owner: Town of Sherborn  
Sherborn Conservation  
Commission  
19 Washington Street  
Sherborn, MA 01770

USGS Quadrangle  
Holliston, MA



Scale 1"=25,000"

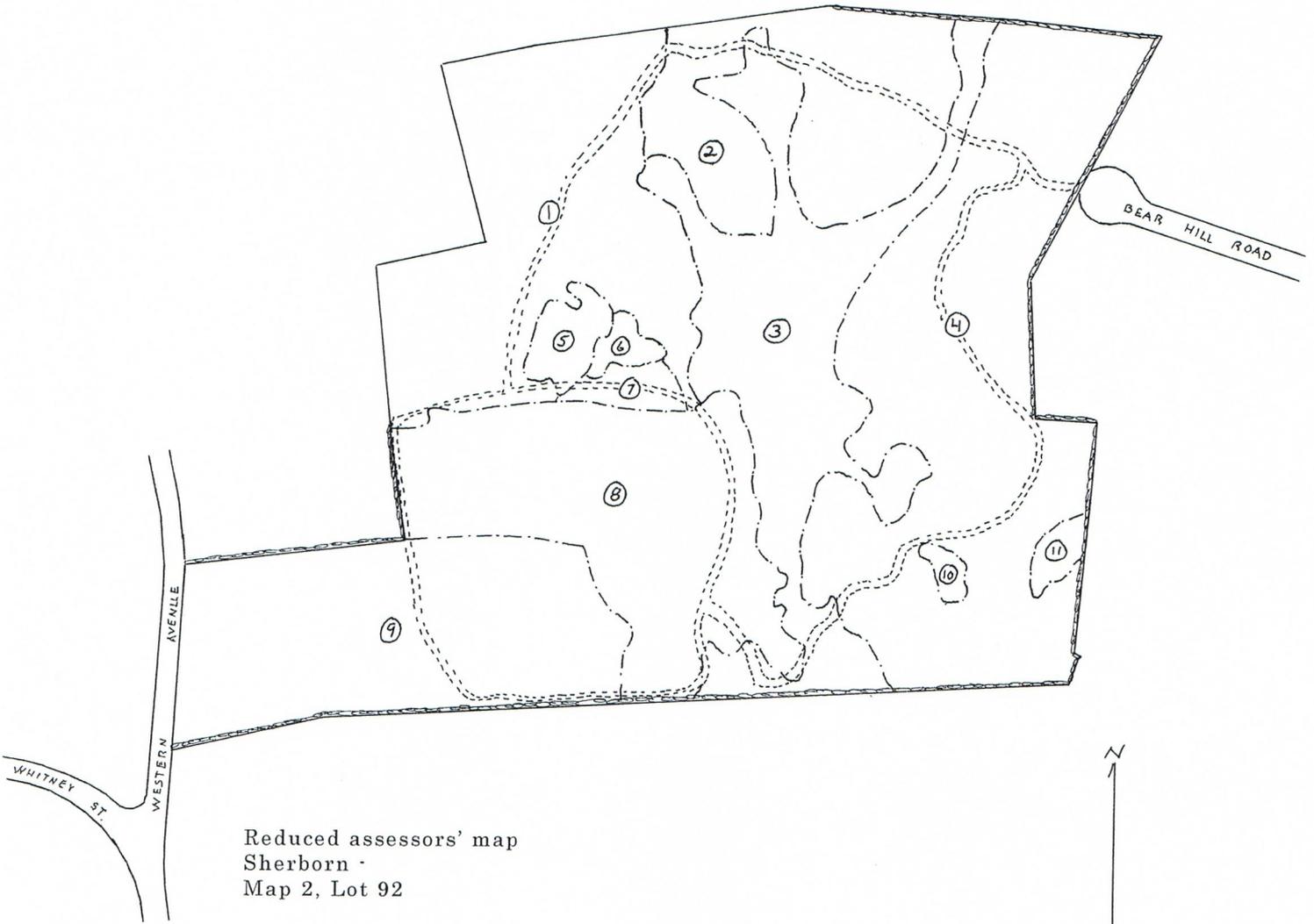
Prepared By  
Philip B. Benjamin, CF  
Benjamin Forestry Services, Inc.  
So. Easton, Massachusetts 02375  
April 26, 2012



Assessors' Map  
and  
Forest Stand Map

Hidden Meadow  
Sherborn, Massachusetts

Owner: Town of Sherborn  
Sherborn Conservation Commission  
19 Washington Street  
Sherborn, MA 01770



Reduced assessors' map  
Sherborn  
Map 2, Lot 92

↑  
Scale 1"=330'

Legend

- Forest Stand Boundary
- ..... Trail
- ~~~~~ Stonewall Boundary

Prepared By  
Philip B. Benjamin, CF and Thomas P. Farrell  
Benjamin Forestry Services, Inc.  
So. Easton, Massachusetts 02375  
April 26, 2012

# Signature Page

Please check each box that applies.

**CH. 61/61A Management Plan** I attest that I am familiar with and will be bound by all applicable Federal, State, and Local environmental laws and /or rules and regulations of the Department of Conservation and Recreation. I further understand that in the event that I convey all or any portion of this land during the period of classification, I am under obligation to notify the grantee(s) of all obligations of this plan which become his/hers to perform and will notify the Department of Conservation and Recreation of said change of ownership.

→  **Forest Stewardship Plan.** I pledge to abide by the management provisions of this Stewardship Management Plan for a period of at least ten years, following approval. I understand that in the event that I convey all or a portion of the land described in this plan during the period of the plan, I will notify the Department of Conservation and Recreation of this change in ownership.

Signed under the pains of perjury:

Owner(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I attest that I have prepared this plan in good faith to reflect the landowner's interest.

Plan Preparer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Philip B. Benjamin, CF, Benjamin Forestry Services, Inc.

151 Depot Street, South Easton, MA 02375

I attest that the plan satisfactorily meets the requirements of CH61/61A and/or the Forest Stewardship Program.

Approved, Service Forester \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Approved, Regional Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

In the event of a change of ownership of all or part of the property, the new owner must file an amended Ch. 61/61A plan within 90 days from the transfer of title to insure continuation of Ch. 61/61A classification.

Owner(s) Town of Sherborn  
Sherborn Conservation Commission Town(s) Sherborn