

Management Plan
for the
Davis Corridor



April, 2008

Prepared by the
Land Stewardship Committee

A subcommittee of the
Carlisle Conservation Commission

Management Plan for the Davis Corridor

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1. INTRODUCTION

This management plan for the Davis Corridor follows a baseline assessment, prepared by the Land Stewardship Committee, and approved by the Conservation Commission in February, 2007. The background information presented below and in Section 1 and 2 is more fully discussed in the Davis Corridor Baseline Assessment, available online in the Land Stewardship Committee section of the official town of Carlisle website: <http://www.carlislema.gov/>

The Carlisle Trails Committee and the Trustees of Reservations have reviewed a draft of this plan and provided excellent comments, most of which have been incorporated in this plan.

The Davis Corridor is the name given to a 156-acre parcel that was acquired over a 22-year period (1973 to 1995) and is a combination of 17 individual parcels previously owned by six families and two churches. As shown below, the Town paid a total of \$344,730 for the land and

received a total of \$147,841 in State Self Help funds. Thus, the net cost to the Town was \$196,899 (or, \$1,255 per acre).

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF ACQUISITION

Year	Number of Parcels	Acres	Purchase Cost (\$)	MA Self Help Funds (\$)
1973	9 (1 a gift)	117.34	128,000	62,116
1977	3	5.75	5,130	2,565
1979	1	10.68	11,600	0
1995	4	23.099	200,000	83,160
Total:	17	156.86	344,730	147,841

In two separate actions (one in 1994 – 1997, a second in 2002 – 2004) all of the Davis Corridor land was placed under permanent conservation restrictions to help protect the abutting ecological research lands of Harvard University, referred to as Estabrook Woods. Now, the combined lands of the Davis Corridor, Harvard’s land, and other abutting conservation land are generally referred to as the Greater Estabrook Woods. Details of the conservation restrictions on the Davis Corridor are presented in Section 3, Site History and Use.

Overall, the management objectives, presented in Section 4, are to:

- Maintain clear entrances
- Facilitate passage on the trail network
- Foster awareness of historical uses
- Preserve biodiversity in this ecosystem
- Protect water resources

This plan defines the following management units in Section 5:

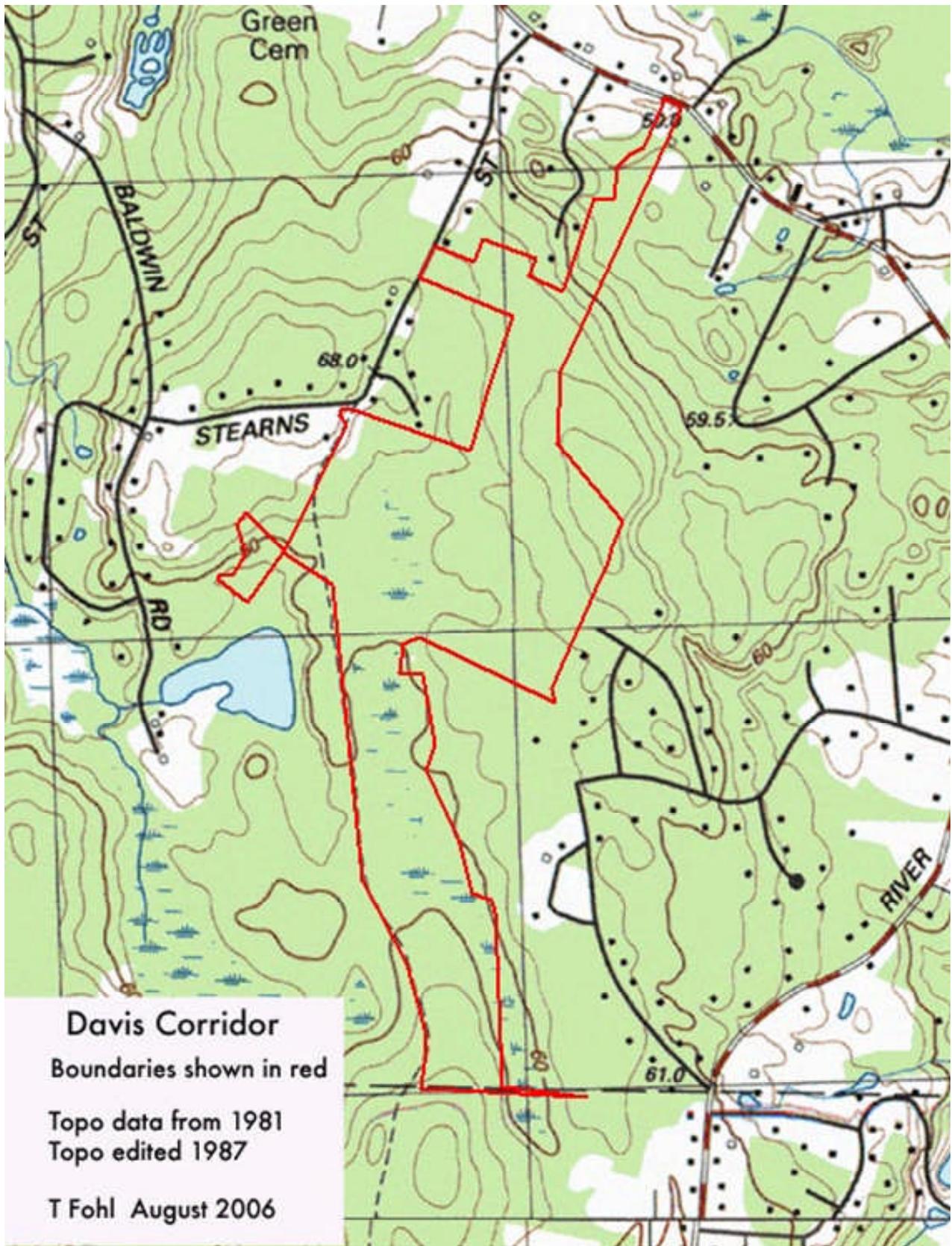
- Entrances
- Trail network
- Historical features
- Forest ecosystems
- Water resources

Section 6 presents a management plan based on these units. This plan is a mixture of broad ideas, specific routine maintenance activities, and suggestions for additional action and objectives in the plan.

A goal of the Land Stewardship Committee is to recruit interested abutters or other citizens to become land stewards for the Davis Corridor. Their activities and responsibilities are listed in Section 7.

The review and approval process includes a public hearing by the Conservation Commission, preceded by reviews by the Trails Committee and The Trustees of Reservations, whose comments are incorporated in this plan.

FIGURE 1: DAVIS CORRIDOR BOUNDARIES ON USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP



2. DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The Davis Corridor is approximately one mile east of the center of Carlisle, across from the intersection of Brook Street with Bedford Road. The corridor extends south to the Concord border. (See Figure 1.)

Major direct roadside trail entrances exist at Bedford Road and at Stearns Street. Secondary trail entrances from Suffolk Lane, Long Ridge Road, Nowell Farme Road, Prospect Street, Two Rod Road from Concord, the Sachs Greenway and the Malcolm Preserve join the Davis Corridor trails. The Davis Corridor also has frontage on Stearns Street across from Rodgers Road. This area is very wet most of the year and has no entrance trail. (See Figure 3 for a map of entrances.)

A parking lot on Stearns Street accommodates six to eight cars. The parking lot entrance is off the Malcolm Meadows driveway.

The Davis Corridor trails connect several Carlisle neighborhoods. Going south, the trail on Two Rod Road passes the entrance to the Sachs Greenway, then the border of Harvard's Estabrook Woods and enters Concord. This trail continues south to Concord's Hutchins Pond and Punkatasset Hill conservation land off Monument Street. At Punkatasset Hill, trails connect west to Concord's Estabrook Road and to Lowell Road near Bateman's Pond, as well as north to Carlisle's Estabrook Road and to other Carlisle Conservation Commission land: the Carr and Rockstrom parcels. (See Figures 2, 4 and 5 for trail maps.)

Several signs inform the public about this land. A name sign ("Davis Corridor") on Bedford Road shows the trail entrance, a large red sign on Stearns Street lists the rules of use and indicates the location of parking, and numerous interior trail signs maintained by Trails Committee name the roads at the end of the trails. Also at the Bedford Road entrance is a sign about entering greater Estabrook Woods. A kiosk at the parking lot on Stearns Street is blank.

The Carlisle Trails Committee maintains the trails and trail signs. Two trails run along the east and west borders, and three interior trails connect them. One unofficial trail leads to an abutter's backyard or driveway on Stearns Street, and a few other abutters have short links to the trails. On two muddy sections of the trails are boardwalks, one in excellent repair installed by Boy Scouts in 2001 and a new boardwalk installed by the Trails Committee in 2007. There are several ad-hoc log walkways to help hikers in mud season. A high water bypass trail is on the north end of Two Rod Road.

Beautiful old stonewalls run along parts of the east and west borders, often lining both sides of the old roads. Within the corridor, stonewalls mark old boundaries of fields and property. An old, rusted disk harrow and part of a portable sawmill decorate the edge of Two Rod Road, two historic town border granite posts are visible along trails, and Native American stone piles exist throughout the land, particularly near wet areas.

Abutters are private residences, the Malcolm Meadows senior housing complex, Malcolm Preserve (owned by the Trustees of Reservations and the Carlisle Conservation Foundation), the Sachs Greenway (town of Carlisle conservation land) and Harvard University's Estabrook Woods. The private residences are on Bedford Road, Red Pine Drive, Stearns Street, Patten

Lane, Baldwin Road, Prospect Street, Nowell Farme Road, Garnet Rock Lane, Long Ridge Road, Suffolk Lane and Canterbury Court.

Most of the Davis Corridor is a mature upland forest, with several oak species (mostly northern red oak), red maple, black birch, white pine, and a few hemlocks dominating the upper story. In the under story are huckleberry, swamp azalea, American chestnut, sweet pepper bush, sassafras, etc. Hayscented ferns abound, as well as other ferns, two species of club moss, partridge berry, wintergreen, lowbush blueberry, starflower, wild sarsaparilla, medeola, asters, violets and skunk cabbage. An old cranberry bog, about three-quarters of an acre in area, with swamp oak filling in and bordered on its north side by a dug drainage ditch, nearly abuts the east side of Two Rod Road south of the Sachs Greenway entrance. Abundant wildlife, including deer, owls, hawks and flying squirrels, thrives here. The Massachusetts Natural Heritage program has identified core habitat BM592 which includes most of the Davis Corridor. This core habitat contains endangered violet wood-sorrel (*Oxalis violacea*), and three animals of special concern: elderberry long-horned beetle, blue-spotted salamander and spotted turtle.

Two possible vernal pools have been located, a small stream runs approximately parallel to Red Pine Drive north to Bedford Road and eventually into Page Brook, and another stream runs south from the wetland east of Patten Lane to the old cranberry bog and eventually west to Spencer Brook. Wetlands occur in pockets throughout the Davis Corridor.

3. SITE HISTORY AND USE

The historical information summarized below is discussed in greater detail in the Davis Corridor Baseline Assessment, available online in the Land Stewardship Committee section of the official town of Carlisle website: <http://www.carlislema.gov/>.

The Davis Corridor lands were of historic importance in colonial days and were purchased about 1683 by the first settlers on the east side of Carlisle, two brothers John and Robert Blood. Their descendants farmed in this area for generations. Two Rod Road and the Blood Farm trails were important transportation links connecting Billerica, Carlisle and Concord, prior to the construction of the Bedford Road bridge in 1795. Early accounts record pastures, woodlots and fields in this area. However, by the mid 1800's, agricultural use was in decline, as Thoreau recorded in his journals, where he wrote about his walks on these trails. A portion of the Davis Corridor near Bedford Road was used as a cow pasture into the mid 1900's, and the Malcolm land was in agricultural use into the late 1900's.

Today, the property is used for: walking, jogging, horseback-riding, bicycling, cross-country skiing and nature study on its trails. The Davis Corridor's elongated form is unique among Carlisle's larger conservation parcels, connecting to neighborhoods and other trail networks.

All of the Davis Corridor land is under permanent conservation restrictions #36 and #52, which are shown in Figure 2. The Carlisle Conservation Commission is the grantor, and the grantee is the Trustees of Reservations (TTOR). Conservation restrictions provide an additional layer of protection, registered on the deed and authorized by Sections 31-33 of Chapter 184 of Massachusetts General Laws.

These conservation restrictions are recorded in the North Middlesex Registry of Deeds in Lowell and may be viewed on their website:

<http://www.masslandrecords.com/malr/controller>

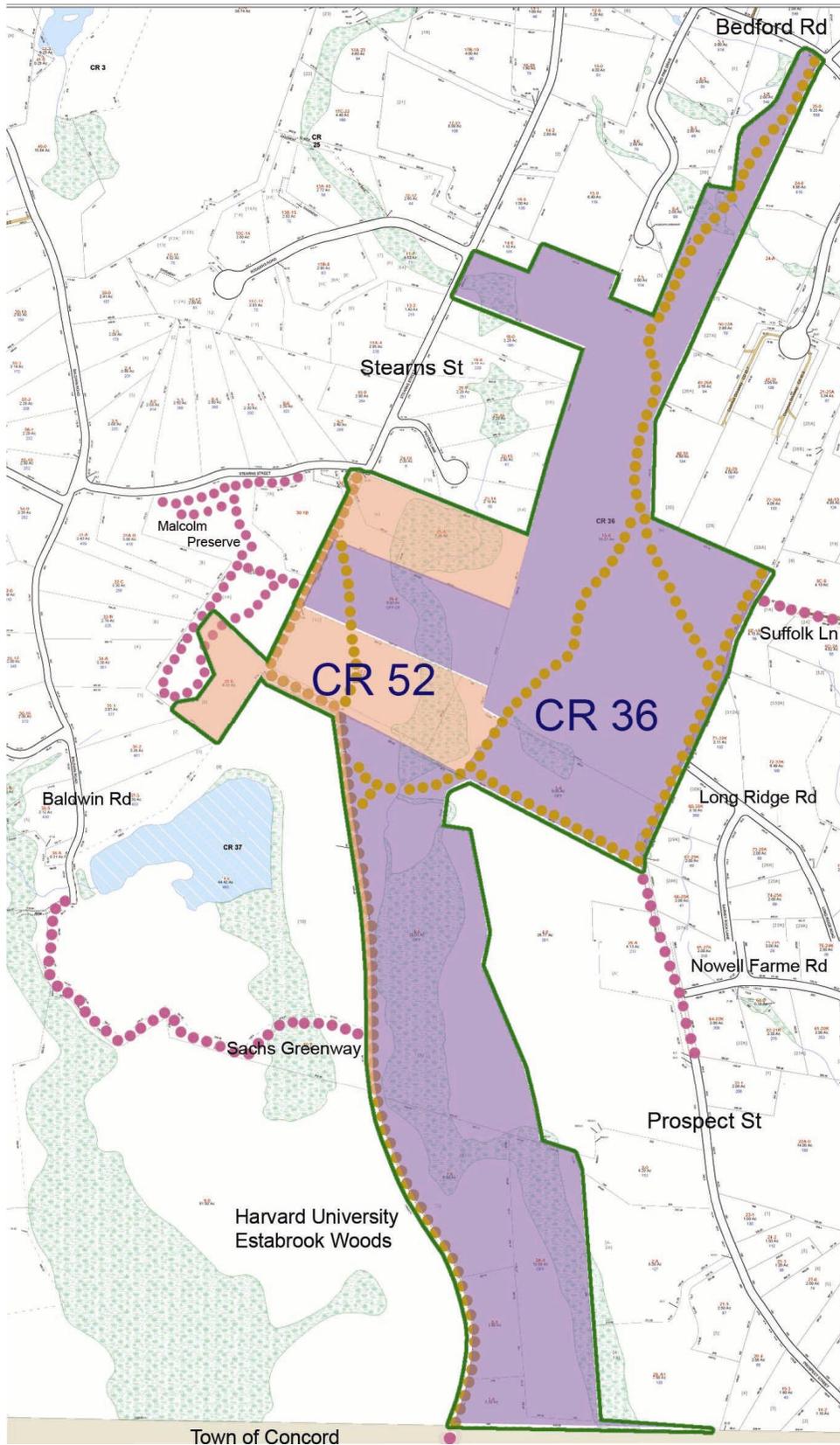
- Conservation restriction #36 is document number 1135 in Book 08387, page 234. It was filed on January 10, 1997.
- Conservation restriction #52 is document number 74348 in Book 17918, page 30. It was filed on October 4, 2004. It also covers the Sachs Greenway, the Carr land, the Deacon land, the Rockstrom open-space parcel, and Buttrick Woods open-space parcel.

Both conservation restrictions address trail maintenance as a reserved right. CR #36 does not specifically mention bridges or boardwalks, but grants a reserved right for construction and maintenance of unpaved paths for outdoor recreational activities such as walking, skiing and horseback riding. Any construction shall not materially impair conservation interests. Also, any new entrances shall be approved by Harvard acting through the director of the Concord Field Station. Conservation Restriction #52 specifically mentions the construction of bridges and boardwalks as a reserved right but only with the written approval of the Grantee (the TTOR). The bridges and boardwalks shall be to provide safe passage and prevent damage to wetland resources. The table below summarizes the prohibited and permitted uses specified in the conservation restrictions.

TABLE 2: SUMMARY OF PROHIBITED AND PERMITTED USES IN CONSERVATION RESTRICTIONS #36 AND #52

Prohibited acts	CR #36	CR #52
construction of any kind	x	x
mining or excavation	x	x
dumping or storage of materials	x	x
destruction of vegetation	x	x
conveyance of a portion of the property	x	x
use of motorized vehicles	x	x
activities detrimental to drainage, flood & erosion control, water & soil conservation quality	x	x
uses that may impair conservation interests	x	x
hunting or trapping		x
recreational use for profit or commercial recreational use		x
Permitted uses	CR #36	CR #52
use of motorized vehicles as required by police, firemen or other governmental agents	x	x
use of motorized vehicles for exercise of reserved rights	x	x
construction and maintenance of unpaved trails	x	x
erection of regulatory signs	x	x
archaeological research approved by grantee and state archaeologist	x	x
research by or approved by Museum of Comparative Zoology of Harvard University	x	x
recreational activities: hiking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing		x
forest management		x
field maintenance		x
minor educational and recreational structures		x
plant and wildlife habitat improvement (removal of invasives, protection of endangered)		x

FIGURE 2: CONSERVATION RESTRICTIONS #36 (IN PURPLE) AND #52 (IN PINK) IN RELATION TO TRAILS (IN PLUM AND TAN)



In September, 2006, TTOR submitted to the Carlisle Conservation Commission a baseline assessment of the original parcels (126.45 acres) of the Davis Corridor, comprising the land in CR #36.¹ It contains copies of the agreements of the conservation restriction, deeds, deed maps, and a large number of photos taken on August 24, 2006 along the trails, borders and at the entrances. TTOR intends to create a management plan for the Davis Corridor; the coordination with this plan is unknown.

4. OVERALL MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

The town of Carlisle purchased the parcels in the Davis Corridor for conservation purposes and protection of water resources. Any recreational use of these lands should be consistent with good conservation practices and would therefore be limited to activities with minimal impact, such as walking, jogging, cross-country skiing, horseback riding, bicycling and nature study on the trails. The Conservation Restrictions stipulate that the premises will be retained, in perpetuity, predominantly in their natural scenic open and wooded condition to preserve the conservation value of the land.

The overall management objectives are, thus, to:

- Maintain clear entrances. Clearly marking the entrances to the trails on this land and the trails themselves, as well as providing maps and rules, will inform the public about the location of this resource and the appropriate uses of the land.
- Facilitate passage on the trail network. Keeping the trails cleared will facilitate passage and limit encroachment on the forest.
- Foster awareness of historical uses. This area has a rich and interesting history. Providing historical information will heighten the users' appreciation of the land.
- Preserve biodiversity in this ecosystem. Maintaining the land for biodiversity includes monitoring the health of the ecosystem and controlling invasive species. Include a discussion of the value of maintaining the two small old fields, near Bedford Road and Stearns Street, which are reverting to forest species.
- Protect water resources. We should monitor the health of the streams, wetlands and vernal pools. Currently lacking expertise for measurement, we must rely on observation.

5. DAVIS CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT UNITS

For purposes of this management plan, the Davis Corridor contains the following management units:

1. Entrances
 - 1.1. Bedford Road entrance and grassy path.
 - 1.2. Stearns Street entrance, grassy path and parking lot.
 - 1.3. Signs at all entrances: Bedford Rd., Stearns St., Concord line, Prospect St. / Nowell Farme Rd., Long Ridge Rd., Suffolk Lane, Malcolm Preserve. The sign for entrance from Sachs Greenway (a Conservation Commission property) is on Baldwin Road.

¹ Town of Carlisle: Conservation Restriction Baseline Documentation Report. Nicholas Holland ; Trustees of Reservations. [August, 2006]. Available in Conservation Commission office, Town Hall, Carlisle, MA.

2. Trails network and trail signs (Trails Committee)
3. Historical features
 - 3.1. Boundaries, including stonewalls and town border posts (current and former)
 - 3.2. Presumed Native American structures
 - 3.3. Sawmill and disc harrow relics
 - 3.4. Historic pastures
4. Forest ecosystem, including successive stage old fields at Stearns Street and Bedford Road
5. Water resources: vernal pools, streams and wetlands

6. MANAGEMENT PLAN (BY MANAGEMENT UNIT)

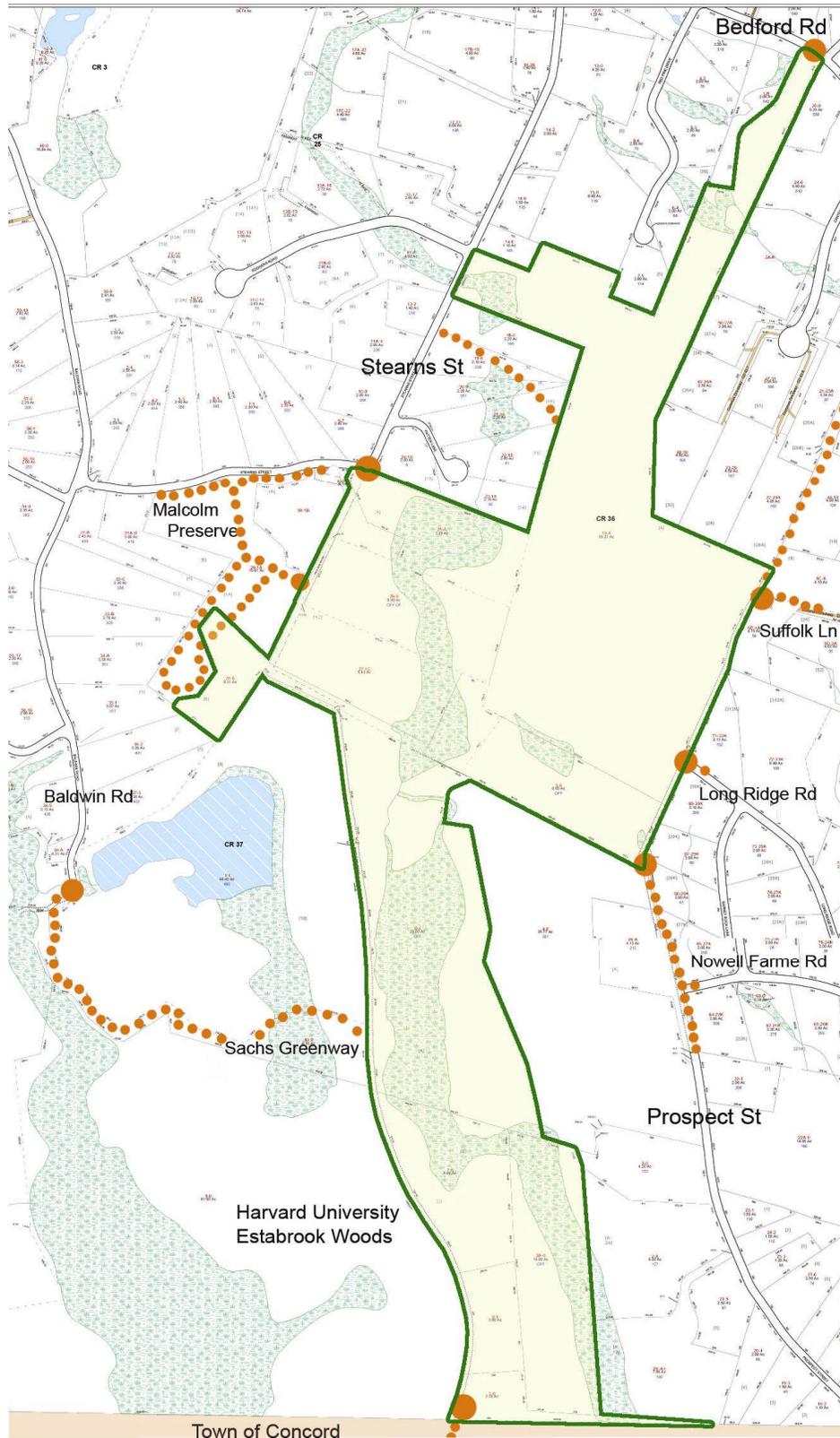
Entrances (see Figure 3)

- Bedford Road entrance and grassy path.
 - Clear roadside brush to maintain visibility of entrance.
 - Maintain mowed path up to forest trail (Trails Committee). Options for poison ivy control should be considered.
 - Discuss advisability of re-creating a few parking spaces, abandoned in the 1980's.
- Stearns Street entrance and associated parking lot.
 - Consider relocating parking lot entrance to the opening in the stonewall on Stearns Street, west of Two Rod Road, or to Two Rod Road. This solves ice, erosion and visibility problems with current entrance. Evaluate costs, sight lines, future maintenance of the three options.
 - Prune vegetation so red conservation property sign with rules on Stearns Street is visible and remove invasive *Euonymus elata* at entrance. Consider poison ivy control.
 - Utilize kiosk for trail maps and habitat, historical and LSC information.
 - Ensure that parking lot is plowed in winter by Carlisle's DPW and re-leveled as necessary in the spring. Ensure that TTOR continues to implement its mowing maintenance agreement.
- Post signs with conservation property rules at all entrances: Bedford Road, Stearns Street, Malcolm Preserve, Concord line, Prospect St./Nowell Farme Rd., Long Ridge Rd., Suffolk Lane (on property, not on trail easement).

TABLE 3: PERIMETER SIGNS: LOCATION AND TYPE

New (N) or Replace-ment (R)	Wood (W), Metal (M)	Approxi-mate Dims.	Type of Sign	# Posts	Location on Property
O.K.	W	2'x4'	Property Name Only	2P	Bedford Rd. entrance (current sign lacks state funding symbol)
N	M	1'x1.5'	Conservation Sign w/uses	1P	Bedford Rd. entrance, on trail
O.K.	W	2'x4'	big red, no parcel name, with uses	2P	Stearns St. entrance
N	M	1'x1.5'	Conservation Sign w/uses	1P	Prospect St./Nowell Farme Rd. entrance, Blood Farm Trail
N	M	1'x1.5'	Conservation Sign w/uses	1P	Long Ridge Rd. entrance, Blood Farm Trail
N	M	1'x1.5'	Conservation Sign w/uses	1P	Suffolk Ln. trail link, Blood Farm Trail
N	M	1'x1.5'	Conservation Sign w/uses	1P	Concord line, Two Rod Rd.
N	M	1'x1.5'	Conservation Sign w/uses	1P	trail junction of Malcolm Preserve and Two Rod Road

FIGURE 3: DAVIS CORRIDOR ENTRANCES. OFFICIAL ENTRANCES AT LARGE ORANGE DOTS. SMALLER ORANGE DOTS SHOW ENTRANCE TRAILS. (FROM STEARNS ST. AND STONEY GATE [OFF THE RIGHT EDGE] ARE UNOFFICIAL ENTRANCE TRAILS, USED BY ABUTTERS, WITH NO SIGNS.)



Trail Network (see Figures 3 and 4) (Trails Committee)

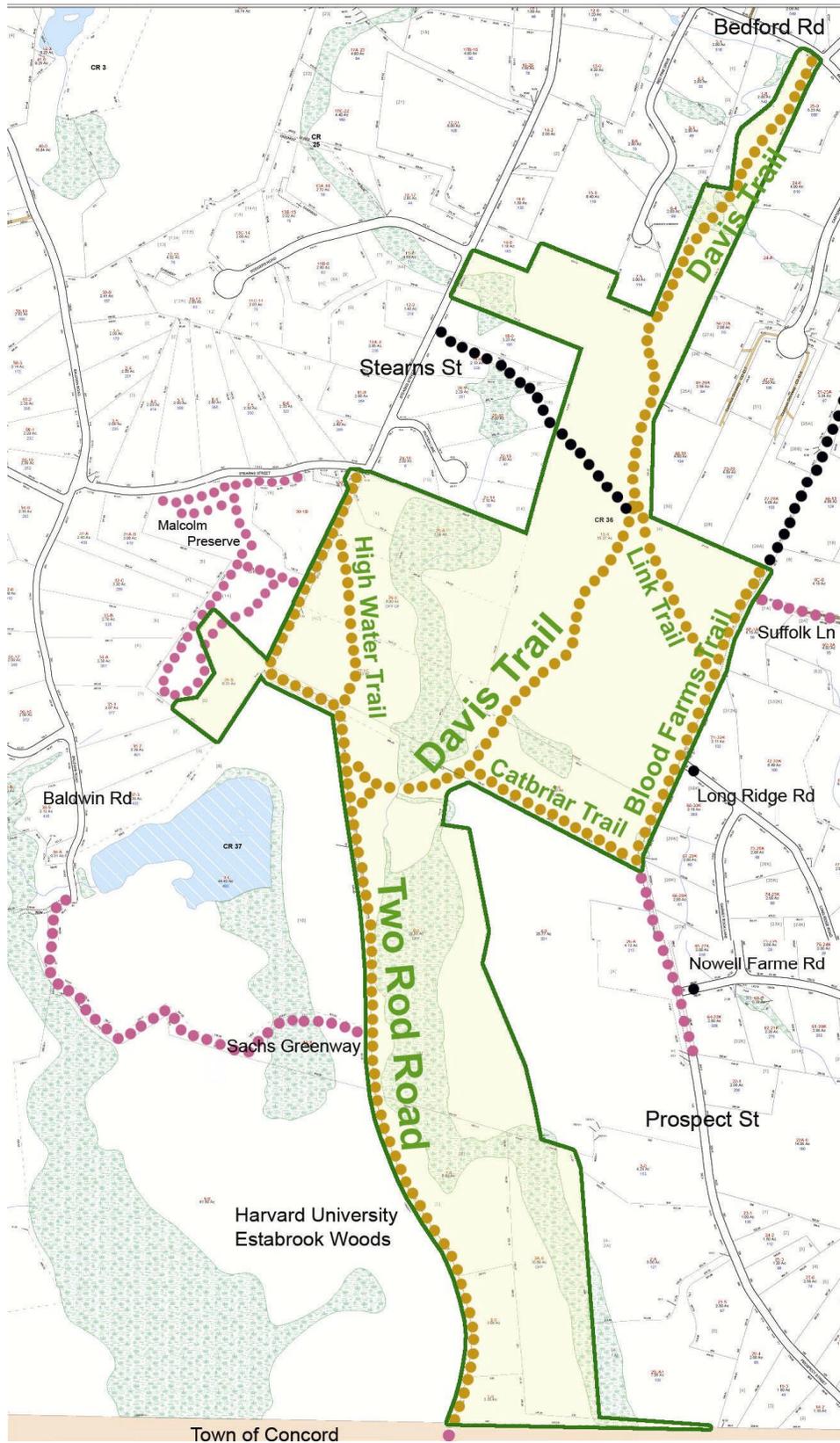
- Trails maintenance
 - Support the excellent work of the Trails Committee efforts to maintain trails, both on Davis Corridor and leading to Davis Corridor.
 - Address trails made by abutters leading to trails in Davis Corridor.
 1. Consult with abutters to determine if the trail from Stearns Street should be an official trail.
 2. Consult with abutters to determine if conservation land signs visible at the end of Long Ridge Road and Nowell Farme Road are desirable.
 3. Encourage Trails Committee to make the Blood Farm Trail link to Stoney Gate part of their official network.
 - New boardwalks to facilitate passage – add boardwalks on interior. These areas are numbered in blue 1, 2, 3 and 4 on Figure 4.
 - Other muddy trail solutions. Consider solutions to muddy sections on Two Rod Road (blue number 5 in Figure 4). Consider solution to muddy section on Blood Farm Trail near end of Long Ridge Road (blue number 6).

The Trails Committee maintains a well-established and adequate network of trails, both on Davis Corridor and leading to Davis Corridor. These are shown in Figure 4 (from the Trails Committee website and handbook) and are generally in good condition. The main problems are the wet sections, which are long, wide and very muddy most of the year. The Trails Committee builds boardwalks on trails throughout town and added their first boardwalk in the Davis Corridor in the fall of 2007. The purple A in Figure 4 locates this new boardwalk, and the purple B is the location of the 2001 Boy Scout boardwalk. The sections of trail with current water problems are shown with blue numbers 1-6 in Figure 4. Blue 4 is actually two small stream crossings. Blue 5 on Two Rod Road is extensive and may require improved drainage through the old culvert under Two Rod Road and fill. TTOR cautions that, if we must use fill, it should be crushed stone to reduce the likelihood of introducing unwanted species. Blue 6 is probably the result of an abutter's nearby pump effluent and could be corrected by the abutter.

The Trails Committee also checks trailheads and mows the entrances, if necessary. The Bedford Road and the Stearns Street entrance trails are both grassy paths requiring a mower.

The unofficial trails in and leading to Davis Corridor need discussion. In two places, short unmarked entrance trails connect from the ends of town roads, Nowell Farme Road and Long Ridge Road. Do the abutters prefer the status quo? From a Stearns Street driveway or backyard is another unofficial trail to the central fork in the trail from Bedford Road. Do the abutters feel this is suitable, or would they prefer to have the Trails Committee adopt the trail, which provides a link to a nearby trail that connects Rodgers Road to the Banta-Davis fields? The trail linking the Blood Farms Trail to Stoney Gate would be a very desirable addition to the Trails Committee list of official trails. These unofficial trails are shown in Figure 5 in black dots; official Davis Corridor trails are shown in brown and official trails on other parcels are shown in purple dots. Additionally, some residences have short link trails joining their property to official trails. These minor trails seem acceptable, but a discussion and consensus would be helpful.

FIGURE 5: UNOFFICIAL DAVIS CORRIDOR TRAILS, SHOWN WITH BLACK DOTS. BROWN DOTS ARE TRAILS COMMITTEE'S INTERIOR TRAILS. PURPLE DOTS ARE OFFICIAL ENTRANCE TRAILS.



- Trail signs. Use consistent naming on interior trail signs (provided by Trails Committee), maps and in literature. Two Rod Road is the only well-established trail name in the Davis Corridor. Suggested names for other trails are shown in green in Figure 5.

Trails signs are in excellent condition and well located. The Trails Committee takes responsibility for placing and maintaining the signs. On Two Rod Road, signs mentioning “Estabrook Woods” may be confusing, because the Davis Corridor is considered part of greater Estabrook Woods. The Trails Committee agrees that “Estabrook Woods” should be replaced by “Concord ” on these signs.

Historical Features (noted in Figure 6)

- Boundaries – locate these accurately so trails stay within them; check for encroachment.
- Stonewalls, presumed Native American structures and agricultural relics (part of portable sawmill and disc harrow on Two Rod Road) – educate public as to their significance, monitor condition.
- Kiosk presentation of historical uses and features (shown in Figure 6), as well as trail map. Explain the reason for the various historic granite town boundary posts.
- Consider clearing some saplings on Two Rod Road to feature the stone walls and recreate the old road appearance.
- “Blood Farms Trail” is an interesting historic name, not officially in use currently, except on a sign at the Prospect Street entrance. Perhaps a sign about this family of early settlers would be an appropriate volunteer project.
- Wilson’s Ox Pasture: a letter 6/12/1978 from the town counsel to the ConsCom contains a suggestion to place a sign or plaque to commemorate the area. The Ox Pasture was within Parcel B of the heirs of Henry N. Clark – need to research where this actually was.
- Old cranberry bog: a relic of previous agricultural activity? A possible research project.

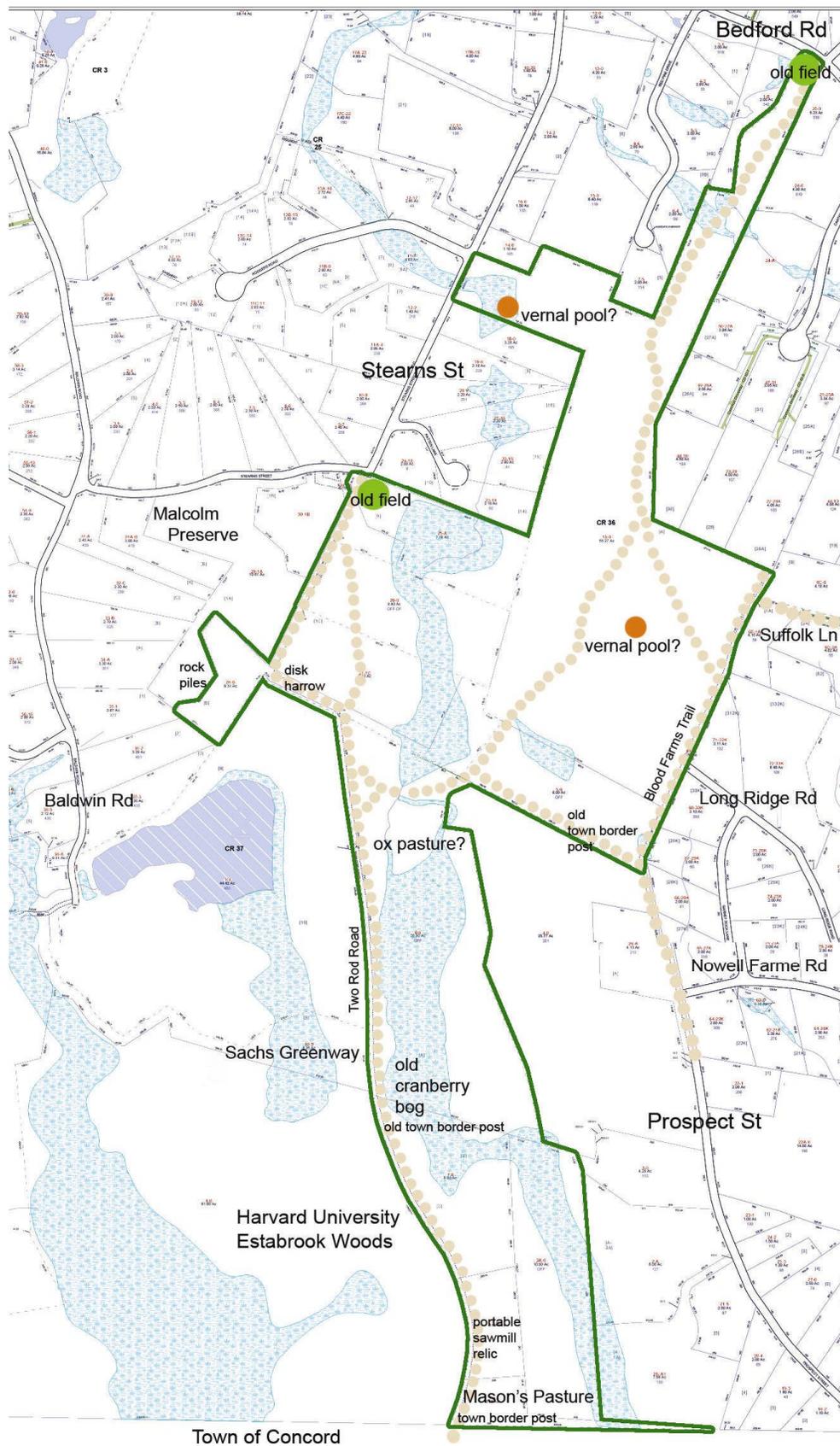
Forest Ecosystem

- Document the flora and fauna, to the extent possible with limited funds and staffing. Seek advice about indicator species to monitor for the health of the ecosystem
- Successive reforestation stage of old fields at Stearns St. and Bedford Rd. – would habitat management here be significant in the context of the greater Estabrook Woods?
- Monitor and control threats to the forest ecosystem, such as invasive species, off-road vehicle use, encroachment, poor trail conditions.

Water Resources

- Vernal pools: two identified as probable in TTOR Baseline Assessment, August, 2006. See Figure 6. We should certify them.
- Streams – monitor for health and change, to the extent possible with limited funds and staffing.
- Wetlands – monitor for health and change, to the extent possible with limited funds and staffing.

FIGURE 6: HISTORICAL AND NATURAL FEATURES ON THE DAVIS CORRIDOR



7. DAVIS CORRIDOR STEWARDS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Davis Corridor Stewards

For a current list of the stewards, contact the Conservation Commission administrator (978-369-0336), or check the LSC website: http://www.carlislema.gov/Pages/CarlisleMA_Steward/index

Frequency of Inspection by Stewards, with Trails Committee when appropriate

- Annually: boundaries (encroachment), water bodies, boardwalks, invasive species
- Semi-annually: signs at entrances and on trails; ecosystem health
- Monthly: trail conditions (blow-downs, branches), kiosk material, parking lot
- As needed: organize work parties to carry out aspects of management plan

8. POTENTIAL VOLUNTEER TASKS FOR SPECIFIC PROJECTS

1. Conduct – on some portion of the land - an inventory of any of the following: (1) invasive plants; (2) wildflowers (by season); (3) native trees and shrubs; (4) other plant life; or (5) fauna in the seasonal pools which may be vernal pools.
2. Design and build boardwalks for muddy sections of trail.
3. Design and build bridges for stream crossings on trail.
4. Research location of historic Wilson Ox Pasture in Parcel B of heirs of Henry N. Clark land and make a commemorative sign.
5. Create and install a trail sign explaining the historic importance of the name Blood Farms Trail.
6. Establish benchmark conditions for streams and wetlands. Conduct annual inspection and assessment against benchmark.

9. FINANCIAL PLAN

Funding available: town meeting 2007 voted funds for entrance signs on the town conservation lands from the Community Preservation Act.

Trails Committee has funding for boardwalks. They completed one boardwalk in the fall of 2007 and plan to build the boardwalk on muddy section 3 (Figure 4) in 2008.

Seek funding for a professional to evaluate ecosystem and make management suggestions.

10. REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS

The Trails Committee and TTOR reviewed this plan in November, 2007 and provided comments that were incorporated in the plan. The plan was presented for discussion and approval at a public hearing at the April 24, 2008 Conservation Commission meeting. The Conservation Commission accepted this plan unanimously.