

## **Cambridge-Lincoln Land Protection Partnership: A Model of Regional Collaboration**

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The City of Cambridge has proven to be an exceptional partner in preserving Lincoln's open space, demonstrating that effective conservation transcends municipal boundaries. Through strategic investments totaling millions of dollars, Cambridge has protected 518 acres (~5.6% of total land mass) of critical forests and wetlands within Lincoln's borders—land that serves as vital watershed protection for their city.

This partnership represents conservation at its finest: results-driven collaboration that prioritizes environmental protection over ownership concerns. Lincoln residents enjoy the direct benefits of preserved open space, protected wildlife habitat, and safeguarded water resources, while Cambridge fulfills its watershed protection mission. The arrangement creates a win-win scenario where conservation goals align with practical municipal needs.

Importantly, Cambridge's ownership of these protected lands relieves Lincoln of a financial burden and resource allocation typically required for land management. This allows Lincoln Conservation staff to focus its resources on the 80 miles of trails and over 1,500 acres of deeded conservation land under their control.

The true measure of successful land protection lies not in who holds the deed, but in whether the land remains permanently preserved for future generations. By this standard, the Cambridge-Lincoln partnership stands as a model of how regional cooperation can achieve conservation outcomes that benefit entire communities while demonstrating fiscal responsibility and environmental stewardship.

Below are a few examples of collaborative land protection projects that the City of Cambridge played a critical funding role. In addition, all of these projects were made possible by the cooperative initiative between Lincoln landowners, the Conservation Commission, Rural Land Foundation, Lincoln Land Conservation Trust, and the City of Cambridge.

- **Lincoln's Quiet Places, Tower Road (2005)**: Protected 54 acres for conservation and watershed purposes. (15.5 acres is owned by City of Cambridge)
- **DeNormandie Property, Route 2 (2012)**: Protected 53 acres for conservation and watershed purposes. The property is owned by the City of Cambridge and a Conservation Restriction (CR) is held by the Lincoln Conservation Commission.
- **Jerodel Realty Trust property, Winter Street (2015)**: Protected 54 acres for conservation and watershed purposes. The property is owned by the City of Cambridge and a CR is held by the Lincoln Conservation Commission.

- **Twin Pond Conservation Project, Twin Pond Lane (2022)**: Protected 7.8 acres for conservation and watershed purposes. The property is owned by the City of Cambridge and a CR is held by the Lincoln Conservation Commission.

In summary, from the 2017 Open Space and Recreation Plan: “Lincoln’s conservation efforts could not have been realized without the commitment of its citizens and the collaboration of local and regional conservation organizations including: the Lincoln Land Conservation Trust, Rural Land Foundation, Minute Man National Historical Park, Walden Woods Project, Walden Pond State Reservation, Massachusetts Audubon Society, and the Cambridge Water Department. Together, with these organizations and funding sources, Lincoln provides residents of the Greater Boston region with an extensive network of roadside paths and trails that are available for walking, biking, horseback riding, and cross-country skiing. These recreational activities are available on permanently protected, public and private conservation lands, which concurrently provide large corridors of undisturbed habitat for wildlife and resource protection. Lincoln will forever be a “green sanctuary” for the Greater Boston region.”