

Conservation Area Signs

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Chapter 1. Introduction to Northampton Concervation Area Signs

A brief description of the official wooden signs for marking Northampton conservation areas.

The Northampton conservation areas has wooden signs to help hikers know what area they are on. The signs are wooden boards with grooved letters usually mounted on two wooden posts. In some cases, the signs are mounted on trail fences. Commons features on signs include grooved letters that are wear-resistant and circular indentations for logo plates representing sponsoring organizations.

As of January 2019, the signs have had two major versions. The very first version used pressure-treated boards usually painted in red. After about a decade of wear-and-tear, the paint on many of the signs started to peel, and some of the pressure-treated lumber started to rot.

To reduce future maintenance costs, the planning office started replacing severely damaged version one signs with version two signs made of locust boards with more durable absorbent finish on them.

Version one and version two signs has two choices of hardware for mounting them onto posts. The simpler and more common choice involves drilling holes directly through the sign face to mount the sign onto supporting ports using stainless nuts and bolts. While simple, this choice is not very aesthetically pleasing and can interfere with the placement of letters and logo plates.

The more complex choice of hardware uses two metal brackets that are bent at both ends. The brackets are vertically mounted first to the posts with bolts. The brackets then surround the edges of the sign and then mounted with bolts. Since the bolts are drilled into the edges of the sign rather than the face, it does not obstruct the face. The better appearance comes with the cost of a significantly longer installtion time.

Chapter 2. Recording the Conditions of Trail Signs

Steps for safely checking the conditions of trail signs for the City of Northampton.

About every two years, city employees and volunteers visit each of the 40 trail signs to record their conditions. Here are the steps for performing the task safely.

Recording the condition of a sign

1. Enter the GPS coordinates of the sign, which is be on the official document, into your GPS device.
2. Drive or walk to the sign location. Make sure your park your vehicle safely off the road. Turn on blinkers if necessary.
3. Locate the sign. Check for letter visibility, paint wear, rot, moss in the front and back of the sign. Also check that the posts are securely in the ground.
4. Note any issues in the area surrounding the signs such as flooding and trash.
5. Write down the condition of the sign in the provided sheet.
6. Take a picture of the sign from the front. If your camera allows for it, write the sign's ID number on the photo.
7. Walk back to your vehicle while making sure you are safely away from moving vehicles.

Related concepts

- [Introduction to Northampton Concervation Area Signs \(page 1\)](#)

Related reference

- [Table of Conservation Area Signs \(page 3\)](#)

Chapter 3. Table of Conservation Area Signs

Has a table containing the ID number, location, and other information about conservation area signs.

Using Sign Data

Please be aware of the instructions before using the sign data.

1. Do not publicize the sign data to control the number of visitors.
2. Note that the GPS coordinates refer to the trailhead, not the parking area. You may have to park some distance away from the trailhead.
3. Please update any incorrect information.

Table 1. Conservation Area Signs

Sign ID number	GPS Coordinates	Street location	Description
22	xxx.xxx,yyy.yyy	Sylvester Rd	A popular and lengthy trail spanning 2 miles.
13	xxx.xxx,yyy.yyy	777 Maple Farm Rd.	A small trail next to a private house.