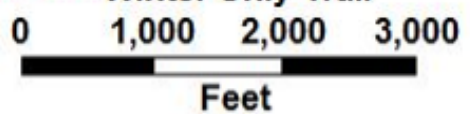


Cedar Swamp

- Town Lines
- ACEC Boundaries
- Roads
- Wetlands
- Water
- Trails
- Canoe Launch
- Town of Westborough
- DCR
- SVT
- Private Open Space
- Railroad
- Winter Only Trail



History of the Swamp

Formed as the glacial Lake Assabet, the shallow basin has slowly transformed into a vegetated wetland. Cedar Swamp Pond is the only vestige of the original lake. From this pond, the Sudbury River starts its journey to join the Assabet River in Concord. A number of old islands rise above the level of the swamp, providing the uplands access to the swamp.

As early as 7,000 B.C., prehistoric people in dugout canoes followed the Sudbury and Assabet Rivers to their headwaters in search of quartzite for tools and weapons. During the Late Woodland Period (1200-1600 A.D.), seasonal migrations brought Nipmuc Indians to hunt and fish near Cedar Swamp.

Cedar Swamp is named for the Atlantic white cedars (*Chamaecyparis thyoides*) that still grow in the swamp. Native Americans and colonists prized the wood for many uses.

Early settlers did not recognize the value of the swamp. In 1834 the railroad built through the swamp because the land was cheap. The policy of using the swamp for transportation continued with the Mass Pike and Interstate 495. In 1974, Connector Road was built to encourage economic development on the edge of the swamp.

Things started changing around the early 1970's when people began to recognize the importance of the swamp. Cedar Swamp was the first Area of Critical Environmental Concern being designated in July 1975. Unfortunately, the town responded that the state should have made the swamp an *Area of Critical Economic Concern* where development had occurred.

Since that time, the swamp has been recognized as needing protection, but continues to face challenges. The Town passed, then removed, a zoning bylaw to protect the swamp in 1990. People talk about the importance of the swamp, but then lobby for a bypass around the Rotary and an access road to Interstate 495 through the middle of the swamp.

Exploring the Swamp

Cedar Swamp is an integral part of Westborough but many people never notice it. Drive down South Street, Hopkinton Road, East Main Street or Flanders Road, and you can catch glimpses of the swamp. When you go into the Rogers ball fields and Pine Grove or St. Luke's Cemeteries, you are in Cedar Swamp.

To explore the swamp on foot, you have two major public access points: St. Luke's Cemetery and the Town of Westborough Rogers Property.

There is trail at the back of St. Luke's Cemetery that loops around the Heirloom Harvest Community Farm. The side trails can lead you deep into the swamp, including in a cold winter to Cedar Swamp pond across the frozen swamp.

From the Rogers ball fields parking lot, you can walk the road and find a trail onto SVT property on the left. Additionally, there are trails leading to Hastings School as well as into the swamp from the back of the ball fields.

Be advised all the trails mentioned can be wet and at times overgrown.

Another alternative is put a canoe in at Fruit Street in Hopkinton in April and paddle up stream to Cedar Swamp Pond.

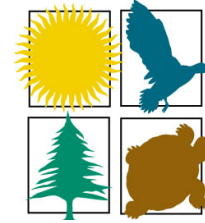
Westborough Community Land Trust

The Westborough Community Land Trust (WCLT) is a private, nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization created to protect Westborough's essential natural resources and to preserve open space for future generations. Membership is open to anyone committed to protecting open space in Westborough. Help preserve Westborough's valuable open space and trails by joining WCLT.



<http://www.westboroughlandtrust.org>

Cedar Swamp Exploration Guide



Organizations Protecting the Swamp



<http://www.mass.gov/dcr>

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation State Parks Division is a major land owner in the swamp. In 2011 DCR made Cedar Swamp a Reserve as part of their Landscape Designation efforts.



<http://www.oars3rivers.org>

OARS is the watershed organization for the Assabet, Sudbury, and Concord Rivers. Its mission is to protect, preserve, and enhance the natural and recreational features of the Assabet, Sudbury, and Concord Rivers, their tributaries and watersheds.



<http://www.sudburyvalleytrustees.org>

Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT) is a regional land trust, founded in 1953. For over 50 years, SVT has been dedicated to conserving land and protecting wildlife habitat in the Concord, Assabet and Sudbury river basin. This is one of the most scenic, culturally rich, and historically significant regions in the United States. Today, over 3,300 members support SVT's work in 36 different towns in the watershed.

Help preserve Cedar Swamp and the watershed by joining OARS and SVT.