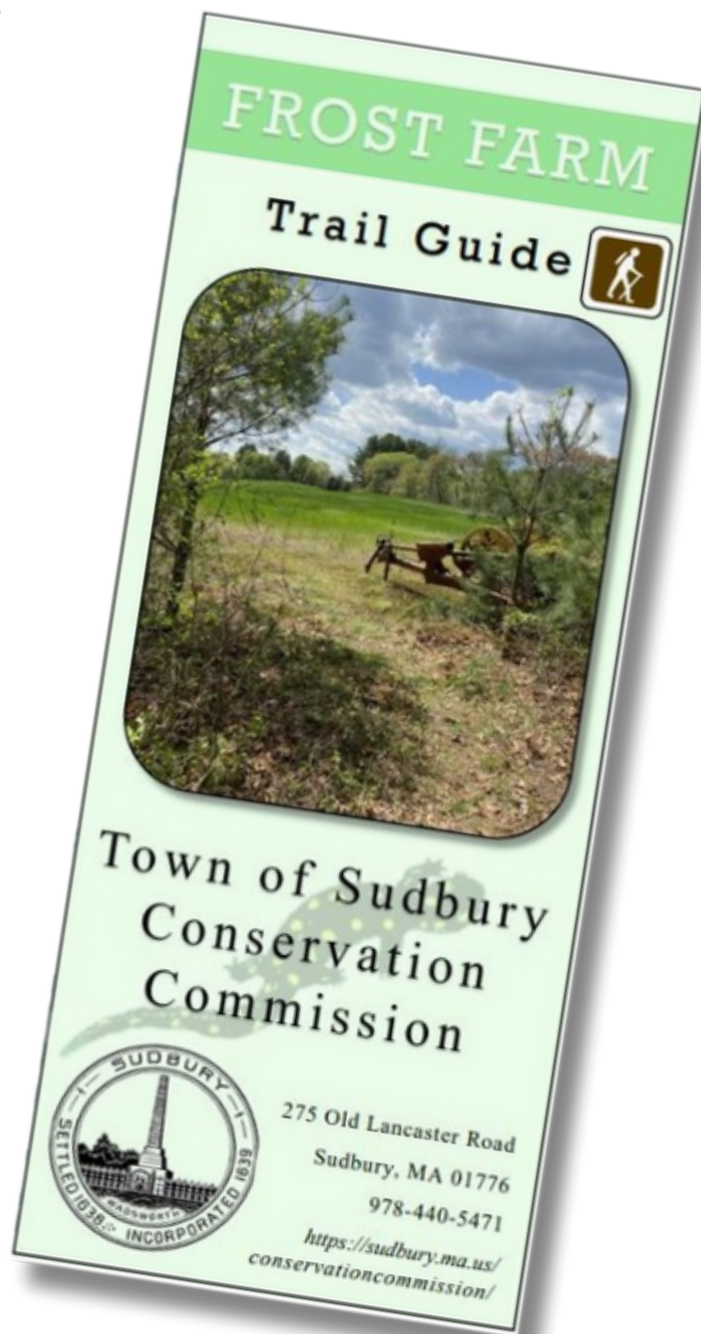


A Walk at Frost Farm

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A short distance past Davis Farm and the adjoining Davis Field, the sign for the Frost Farm Conservation Land comes into view as you drive along North Road heading towards Concord. Sporting a fresh coat of brown paint and standing modestly on the small expanse of lawn to your left, it is located well away from the trailhead. To get there, turn left on Northwood Drive, then left again. Across from the office park is a gravel parking lot with some picnic benches. About 50 feet further along the drive, just past a row of pines and before the private entrance to Frost Farm Village, stands the kiosk at the start of the trailhead. Take a moment to pause and read the postings, and while you are at it, pick up a newly-published trail guide.



Frost Farm, Continued

Stepping onto the orange-blazed trail begins a journey that immediately takes you down a narrow alley of sorts, lined on the one side by the now familiar pines, and the other by low shrubs. Momentarily, you step out from under the cover of a stately pin oak looming over the end of the alley, and enter into the upper meadow. Of the Town's portfolio of Conservation Lands, Frost Farm is distinguished by its three sizeable meadows. Certain species thrive in this kind of environment, such as wildflowers and butterflies, and of course, grassland-nesting birds like meadowlarks and vesper sparrows. Still other species prefer the edge habitat that forms in the transitional zone between meadow and forest. A diverse landscape, comprised of different types of habitat, is essential to sustaining a rich panoply of living things.

Continuing along the path, you arrive at a junction inhabited by a lonesome white ash. Bearing to the right takes you towards the old Framingham and Lowell Railroad corridor (which is in the process of being replaced by the [Bruce Freeman Rail Trail](#)), and onwards across the town line to points beyond. If instead you proceed to the left, you enter onto a loop trail that takes you to the lower meadows and, between them, a broad forest. For many years, this area was harder to access, being unmarked and overgrown, but that has begun to change. Starting this year, dedicated volunteers, Eagle Scouts, senior workers, and municipal staff have been hard at work making improvements. They have mapped, cleared, and marked old trails. Paths have been mowed through the high meadow grass.

The trailhead kiosk has been upgraded. Invasive plant species, such as glossy buckthorn and Japanese barberry, have been identified and cut back or removed (for the time being!).

Workers have also improved two ancient footbridges recently rediscovered in the forest. The shorter of them was still in reasonably good condition, and only required some minor tweaking. This involved the replacement of a few boards, and where a tree had started to encroach upon the structure, strategic sawing to give it more room to grow.

The other footbridge, being higher, longer, and more dilapidated, required considerably more effort to make safe again. This involved the complete replacement of the treads, and the addition of railings and two ramps where none had existed previously. Thus, re-fortified against the ravages of time, it will continue its vigil in the woods at Frost Farm, still spanning the 30-odd feet between opposing banks, waiting to convey hikers over the confluence of two streams to an isolated hayfield. Doing its job well.

Nature abhors a vacuum. No sooner is a trail corridor cleared than plants start growing back. The [Conservation Commission needs your help](#) to maintain the delicate balance between conservation and recreation on our properties. [Contact us](#) to volunteer your time.