



## About This Property

This 80-acre parcel of wetland, floodplain, meadow, and forest was purchased by the Town of Sudbury from the Sudbury Rod and Gun Club in 1967. It offers a varied habitat for a wide variety of plant and animal life. The site features multiple trails and a scenic pond. In addition, the parcel contains beautiful wildflowers, interesting mushrooms, and forest groundcovers. Due to the varied habitat types, the property is vibrant with both aquatic and terrestrial life. Numerous bird species such as blue heron, osprey, owls, and hawks may be seen fishing in the marsh and pond. Many other bird species dwell in the oak-pine forest.

There are indications that the Native American population used fishing weirs at numerous places on Hop Brook before white settlers arrived. As a tributary of the much larger Sudbury River, the brook played a crucial role in the development of the Town of Sudbury from its very early settlement. From that time and into the 18th century, Sudbury was on the perimeter of the western expansion of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The area was wilderness, isolated from civilization because of the slowness of horse-drawn travel, and also because of the formidable spring flooding of the Sudbury River. The inhabitants had to become self-sufficient to survive, develop, and prosper.

The supply of waterpower for mill operation was a major function of Hop Brook for several centuries.

Local establishment of mills was essential for the grinding of grains, sawing and planing of wood, and processing of cloth. The Sudbury River was not suitable for the siting of mills because of the broad wet meadows that surround it. A major tributary, Hop Brook, was chosen instead. At least seven mill sites, under numerous proprietors, were established along the 9.4 miles of Hop Brook. The last of the mills operated until the middle of the 20th century. All the mill buildings on Hop Brook are gone. However, if one looks carefully, the old mill sites may be found by their remaining dams, spillways, and stonework. Old photographs, deeds, and written records still survive.

Another indispensable function of the brook was the supply of water to the farming population, their stock, and their crops. This contributed to making Sudbury one of the largest towns in the area before and during the Revolutionary War.

Winter sports enthusiasts may snowshoe and cross-country ski on the trails that connect to other open space areas. The main trails at Hop Brook Marsh are wide, flat, and well established. There are some tree roots on the minor trails. A slightly slope exists on the end of the trail past the Duck Pond near Hop Brook.

## Land Use Regulations

- Conservation Land is open to the public ½ hour before sunrise until ½ hour after sunset.
  - No trails shall be cut or marked, nor dams built, nor any structure such as lean-tos, bridges, towers or handrails constructed.
  - No person shall cut, break, remove, deface, defile, or ill-use any rock, building, fence, bench, bog bridge, sign or other structure or property, or have possession of any part thereof.
  - Depositing or leaving rubbish, litter, demolition or yard debris, garbage, excavated fill or any hazardous waste is prohibited.
  - No person shall engage in business, sell, or expose for sale, post, place, or give away any goods, wares or circulars.
  - Fishing, trapping, catching, injuring, destroying or interfering in any way with birds, reptiles, amphibians, mammals or any other wild animals is prohibited.
  - Hunting prohibited except as permitted by the Conservation Commission.
  - Horse riding is allowed on designated trails. The Conservation Commission reserves the right to close any trails to horses at any time should trail conditions warrant closure. Riders are expected to remove any horse waste from the trails and not dispose of it in any wetland area. Groups of more than five riders or organized horseback activities require a permit from the Commission.
  - Dogs shall be restrained in accordance with the General Bylaws (Chapter 117 – Article II). More than 4 dogs per person shall require written permission from the Conservation Commission. Dog owners/walkers are expected to remove any dog waste from the property. Dog owners/walkers shall yield to horse riders and other trail users. All dog waste must be removed from the property and properly disposed of.
  - Possessing or consuming any alcoholic beverage is prohibited.
  - Possession of weapons or the discharge of firearms, firecrackers, rockets, sparklers, or fireworks is prohibited, except as permitted by the Conservation Commission.
  - No motorized vehicles of any kind are allowed except for government emergency vehicles or vehicles authorized, in writing, by the Conservation Commission.
  - Bicycles are permitted on designated trails only. The Conservation Commission reserves the right to close any trails to bicycles at any time should trail conditions warrant closure.
  - Public nudity is prohibited.
  - Swimming and wading is prohibited.
  - All trash, litter, cans, refuse, bottles etc. shall be removed from the land by the user and disposed of or recycled properly.
  - No glass bottles or containers or any kind are permitted on conservation land.
  - Please park to maximize the space available. Please do not block the emergency entrance gate.
  - Camping permitted by permit. Open fires are prohibited.
- A fine of not more than \$100.00 per day shall be imposed for any violation of these regulations, or of a permit issued under these regulations, according to the following schedule: \$150 for a second offense, and \$200.00 for a third or subsequent offense. These fines may be imposed, under the provisions of MGL Chapter 40 Section 21D, by the Police or by Commission members or staff. Each day shall constitute a new offense.*

# HOP BROOK MARSH

## Trail Guide



# Town of Sudbury Conservation Commission



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<https://sudbury.ma.us/conservationcommission/>



