

Rye Conservation Commission — Management Considerations

System-wide policy and infrastructure decisions · 2026 trail inventory report

Decision	Context	Recommended approach	Properties
[Policy] Property tiering	Adopt NH Fish and Game framework varying trail intensity by ecological sensitivity.	Ambassador: Brown Lane, Rand Forest, Town Forest (west). Low-impact: Cedar Run/Raynes, Town Forest (east).	All nine
[Use] Bikes and e-bikes	NH treats e-bikes (under 750W) as non-motorized. Town may still restrict on conservation land.	Limit to properties/trails suited to heavier use — primarily Brown Lane and Airfield sections. Reflect NH Fish and Game policy of bikes on access roads only unless posted.	All; mainly Airfield, Brown Lane
[Use] Horseback riding	Requires wider, cleared trails. Greater ecological impact than foot traffic — erosion, invasive seed spread.	Guide to wider hardpack trails only. Integrate with accessible trail decisions as both require similar surfaces.	Airfield, Brown Lane; restricted elsewhere
[Use] Dog leash policy	Off-leash dogs disturb nesting birds, rupture vernal pool egg masses, and enter abutting private land. Current rules change frequently and are widely ignored.	Simplify and standardize rules per property. Consider mandatory leashing within 100–200 ft of boundaries. Prioritize near vernal pools and sensitive trails.	All; especially Town Forest, Seavey
[Seasonal] Seasonal closures	Wildlife most vulnerable during spring breeding season. Mud season overlaps and causes significant trail erosion, especially from bikes.	Close or restrict low-impact properties and high-impact (warm-colored) trail sections during breeding and mud seasons.	Cedar Run/Raynes, Town Forest (east); high-impact trails elsewhere
[Access] Accessible trails	No designated accessible trails currently exist. Several flat, wide, hardpack trails are already compatible with OPDMDs.	Explore accessible trail designation on best-suited properties. Coordinate with bike and horse routing decisions.	Brown Lane, Marden, Rand, Town Forest (west)
[Infra] Trail color-coding	Current colors identify routes only. Opportunity to shift to difficulty/accessibility encoding as markers are replaced.	Transition gradually to difficulty-based color coding as trails are re-marked, helping users of all abilities identify suitable routes.	All
[Policy] Trail Finder listing	Trail Finder (UNH Cooperative Extension) is vetted and accurate. Currently some properties appear only on unvetted crowd-sourced platforms.	List ambassador properties on Trail Finder to direct public use appropriately. Do not list low-impact properties.	Brown Lane, Rand, Town Forest (west)
[Infra] Vernal pool reroutes	Multiple properties have trails within 50 ft of vernal pools — sensitive during amphibian breeding season and prone to erosion.	Reroute trail sections away from vernal pool buffers where feasible. Prioritize highest-risk locations.	Airfield, Cedar Run, Marden, Rand
[Infra] Wet area infrastructure	Bog bridges and culverts on wet-area trails are in disrepair on multiple properties. NH Trails Bureau: "Keep trails out of the water."	Assess long-term maintenance capacity before committing to repairs. Fewer well-maintained trails preferable to a larger network in poor condition.	Town Forest, Seavey, Airfield

Policy: framework decisions · **Use:** allowable activities by property · **Seasonal:** time-based restrictions · **Access:** universal accessibility · **Infra:** physical infrastructure and trail configuration