

NHMA Perambulation Survey: Total-Sample Data Summary

7/28/2010

1. Are you familiar with the New Hampshire statutes (RSA 51) which describe the perambulation (walking) of municipal boundary lines?

Answer	Responses	% of 119 Respondents
Yes	104	87%
No	7	6%
Don't Know/Not Sure	8	7%

2. Among your municipality's employees, officials, departments, boards and commissions, which of these is charged with overseeing the perambulation of your boundary lines? [More than one choice allowed]

Perambulation Official/Department	Responses	% of 118 Respondents
Board of Selectmen	89	75%
Town/City Manager or Administrator	28	24%
Public Works Department	9	8%
Conservation Commission	7	6%
Planning Board/Planning Director	6	5%
Administrative Assistant	5	4%
Other (see table below)	13	11%
None of the above/No one is in charge	8	7%

Other Q.2 Responses

Appointed Representative
Assessing Clerk
Assessor
Contracted out
Engineering Department
Fence Viewers
GIS Coordinator and Environmental Planner

GIS Manager

Or anyone who is interested in helping
Or as designated
Selectman representative
There is no official delegation
Town Historian

4. Are the whereabouts of your municipality's perambulation records known?

#	Answer	Responses	% of 111 Respondents
1	Yes	91	82%
2	No	2	2%
3	Don't Know/Not Sure	18	16%

5. Where are these records kept?

SUMMARY TABLE		
WHERE RECORDS ARE KEPT	Responses	% of 91 "YES"
Town/City Hall/Office vault/safe/fire-proof box/ filing cabinet	40	44
Board of Selectmen Office	21	23
Town/City Administrator/Manager Office	10	11
Clerk Office	10	11
DPW/Engineering/Road Agent	7	8
Misc: Planning/Legal/Town Archives/Conservation Commission/Assessor	11	12

Verbatim Responses to Where Records Are Kept
Town Administrator's Office
Board of Selectmen Office and Town Engineer Office
Selectmen's Office
Fire proof vault
Current: File cabinet in Town Administrator's Office...Older: Archive files at Town Clerk's
We have a Town Perambulation file in our legal files
Vault
Dublin Archives Building
Town Manager's Secretary
Safe in the Selectmen's Office
Town vault and in the Town Administrator's Office
Selectmen's Office
In the Town Office and in the Archives
Town Clerk
In the Selectmen's office
Vault in Town Office
Town Clerk office
In the Town Office (Selectmen's Office)

Reports are kept in a binder, by abutting Town, with pictures and most recently GPS data; also filed with the Secretary of State's Office in Concord
Town Administrator's Office
Town Administrator's Office
Administrative Office Files
Selectmen's Office
Town Clerk and Assessor's Office
Vault at Town Hall
The Office of the Town Manager, the Office of the Town Clerk, and the Office of the Secretary of State
Town Hall Secretary
Official records in Town clerk's office, and copies in the Selectmen's Office
Town Hall
Town Office
In the vault room at the Town Office
Town Clerk's vault
In the Administration office
Selectmen's Office
In digital archive
Town hall records cabinet
The Town Clerk records and retains a copy; a copy is retained by the Road Agent; a copy is retained by the Board of Selectmen; and a copy is forwarded to the State
Town Administrator's file
In the Selectmen's files.
In the safe
City Hall and Municipal Services department
Town Office
Town office safe, in a separate folder for each abutting town
The Engineering office has a copy
Town office and Department of Public Works
Town Office and Conservation Commission
City of Keene Dept. of public works engineering division and NH Secretary of State office
Most of them are kept in individual file folders by town line name in the town files
In the Selectmen's Office in the Town of Hampstead
In a safe at town hall
Town Hall
Town Hall – Selectmen's Office
Planning Department
The records are kept in the Town Hall's main vault, filed by name of abutting town
Assessor's Office

Both at the Town Hall and at the State Archives
Some of the records are kept in the town offices, but others are with a local surveyor, and still others with previous members of the Select board. We are trying to consolidate the records into a single place.
City Clerk
Fire proof cabinet
Community Development Department records
In a file cabinet in our walk-in safe
Selectmen's Office, fireproof file cabinet
In our Town Hall Office and some copies of everything at my home from surveillance done on my own time of the boundary lines with other townships
In a safe in the town office
Town Clerk's record books
Town Office
In the town vault
Selectmen's Office
Town Clerk's office
Selectmen's Office
Selectmen's Office and Secretary of State's Office
Selectmen's Office
In a file cabinet in the Selectmen's Office
In the Selectmen's Office
Town Offices
In the safe
In locked file cabinets in Selectmen's Office
Town Hall
Fireproof safe
TA Office
In a file drawer
Last perambulation is in Engineering Dept
Selectmen's Office
In the Office of the Select Board
Legal Department and Public Works
Selectmen's files
In the town office
In the vault at Town Hall
Conservation Commission files
Town safe at Town Office
Town office vault

6. Are the records available to the public?

Answer	Responses	% of 91 Respondents
Yes	86	95%
No	1	1%
Don't Know/Not Sure	4	4%

7. Within the last 7 years, have ALL, SOME, or NONE of your municipal boundary lines been walked?

Answer	Responses	% of 110 Respondents
All	15	14%
Some	60	55%
None	21	19%
Don't Know/Not Sure	14	13%

8. Have the details of your most recent perambulation(s) been filed with the New Hampshire Secretary of State or the State Archives?

Answer	Responses	% of 75 Respondents
Yes	34	45%
No	14	19%
Don't Know/Not Sure	27	36%

11. Are you aware of any conflicts or problems with your town's municipal boundaries? [For example, an abutting city/town may disagree on the precise location of a boundary; or, abutting municipalities may be issuing tax bills for the same parcel due to a boundary line dispute.]

Answer	Responses	% of 103 Respondents
Yes	5	5%
No	87	84%
Don't Know/Not Sure	11	11%

12. Specifically, what boundary line conflicts or problems are you aware of?

Verbatim Responses from N = 5 "Yes" to Previous Q
<p>Dunbarton: 1. boundary marker between Dunbarton/Goffstown(Tibbetts Hill Rd.)has been knocked over. It has been removed and stored in the basement of the Dunbarton town hall until it can be replaced.(6/3/10) 2. boundary marker between Dunbarton/Goffstown (Stark Highway South (rte. 13). I was told by a now deceased selectman that it was removed by D.O.T. years ago when 13 was widened and never replaced. 3. Boundary marker between Dunbarton/Hopkinton (Jewett Rd.)In a 1988 perambulation it was listed as missing. 4. Boundary marker between Dunbarton/Weare (Concord Stage Rd.Rte77))new marker was installed by D.O.T. in the 1960s when route 77 was relocated. The granite marker is installed backwards (W is on the Dunbarton side and D is on the Weare side). 5. Boundary marker S.E. corner (Dunbarton/Hooksett)(located in the 20th rifle and skeet club). D is engraved on the South side, it should be engraved on the West side.</p>
<p>Somersworth-Rollinsford boundaries are a bit off. When NHDOT constructed Weeks Crossing, the monuments were removed.</p>
<p>Milford's western-most boundary marker between Milford and Lyndeborough at the Wilton town line (all three towns meet at this junction). We believe this bound was moved in the process of the field it is in being plowed. We are investigating the matter with the town of Lyndeborough.</p>
<p>Portsmouth: The Northern Boundary with Maine is in dispute as to the location of the state boundary which is coincident with the City of Portsmouth Northern Boundary.</p>
<p>The Meredith-New Hampton municipal boundary dispute between abutting landowners in the two different towns was a court case.</p>

13. Historically, what have been the impediments or difficulties, if any, related to conducting regular perambulations of your municipal boundary lines?

TOP 10 IMPEDIMENTS	% of 78 Respondents
1. Difficulty of coordinating with abutting municipalities	37%
2. Terrain/topography: swamp/ocean/river/water/slopes/mountains/woods	27%
3. Time/Scheduling constraints	23%
4. Lack of knowledge/lack of previous perambulation records	22%
5. Low priority/lack of interest	22%
6. Lack of volunteers/personnel	21%
7. Prefer GPS technology/methodology	17%
8. Costs/Budgetary constraints	14%
9. Weather	14%
10. Boundary markers old/difficult to locate/missing	12%

Verbatim Responses to Impediments (N = 78)
Some of the boundaries are in salt marshes or swamps.
Heavily wooded areas, markers old and difficult to find.
Swamp land!!!!
Finding a time when everyone involved can get together
I would guess time and availability of the Selectmen.
1. raising money; 2. arranging with abutting town to go out to bid; 3. coming to terms with abutting town and bidder; 4. obtaining report (some do it easily); 5. agreement with county on perambulating town-county line
The territory that you have to cross to perambulate our boundaries is very primeval and difficult to walk. Much of it on the southern border includes the flanks of Mount Monadnock.
Have steep terrain and swamps. We have an individual that does the perambulation for the Board of Selectmen
With Kensington, it's been the knowledge of where the bounds are located. One is under water.
1) Time 2) Coordination with other Towns 3) Lack of Monumentation in the Field
Indifference; budgetary constraints
Lack of cooperation with other towns.
Funding, and getting one town to agree to the cost of the surveyor.
Scheduling with representatives from other towns seems to be the biggest problem in getting this process completed.
Finding volunteers willing to participate; coordinating the volunteers; weather and time of year; if GPS equipment is available to use from one town or another
Points get lost; Volunteers find it more effort to do than worth to them
Time. It is very time consuming with little if any changes noted. There have not been any disputes during my 22 year tenure.
Most of the property boundaries are within the White Mountain National Forest. Much of this terrain is very mountainous and cannot be perambulated easily.

I am not aware of any. Ossipee was re-mapped this year and there are questions there that is one of the reasons the perambulation is currently being done.

Getting the Town Officials from other towns to meet with the Town Officials in Newton. Also, trouble finding the markers.

Availability of personnel, difficulty locating boundaries

Finding time between the towns and also trying to get in done in decent weather conditions as some of our boundaries go through swamps and other water sources

Finding the time and interest to accomplish the task. Coordinating with multiple schedules to accomplish the task.

Available volunteers. Funds not available to pay salary for a perambulator.

Webster is the youngest Town of all those abutting us and typically await a request by the other towns to do the perambulations. Sometimes Webster contacts the other municipalities, but have not done so since 1997. Also have a problem with people with the knowledge of how to complete a perambulation. Sometimes boundaries under water are an issue.

Turnover of personnel on the board of selectmen and no knowledge of the RSA. No records and no one knowledgeable of where such records would be.

Very low priority; extremely wooded & remote locations

We have had great difficulty finding volunteers to perambulate. We would like to include the taking of GPS points in our next perambulation, which requires a trained volunteer who is competent with the technology

Time, location and water

Coordination of schedules

Rugged terrain, lack of expertise, no lines on the ground, and cost associated with hiring a professional to assist (money spent more wisely elsewhere mentality)

Time conflicts and personnel demands

Finding a convenient time

Getting the towns together to do the perambulations

Cost associated with survey work.

Time available for volunteers to meet has been the biggest hurdle

Funding and access within Corbin Park

No impediments...has been low on the priority list, but realizing how important it really is, this is being talked about at the present time

Finding personnel willing and with the time available. Coordinating schedules between representatives from each town.

The scheduling of both towns to be available at the same time.

There doesn't appear to be any difficulties other than scheduling the time which works for all involved.

Most of our boundaries are in Great Bay, Little Bay, and the Piscataqua River.

So many other things take precedent in a small town

As the number of topics our town needs to stay on top of has grown the time and willingness available to do this manually has decreased. Also, there has been heightened interest in doing the perambulation if the GPS units that were able to handle the required level of detail were available to use for this purpose. Some of the sentiment has been that the Selectmen might be more willing to do it if the technology were available to us to do the most technically accurate job that was possible when it is done. Without the equipment though, it seems a waste of time and expense to provide a technically deficient final product.

We have no records indicating why perambulations were not done

Coordinating a date and time when our Selectmen and other municipalities can meet and scheduling past Selectmen (who have walked the boundaries) to accompany them. We are gathering GPS coordinates etc. and this year we have some interested citizens / past Selectmen who will help with the perambulations.

Difficulty in locating landmarks hidden by brush and other overgrowth, as well as areas of very difficult terrain, i.e. very steep slopes, marshes, thickets.

Lack of interest. Basically we have set monuments throughout the city for surveyors to use as benchmarks, which have proven more useful than perambulation

Difficulty of locating stones in wetlands or remote/inaccessible areas.

Weather. Getting the other towns to find good "dates" that correlate to our availability as far as times go, then weather permitting. Also, being able to find documentation from previous perambulations to guide us on our way.

Staff turnover

Having a Selectman that has the time & ability that can coordinate with the other town's Selectman. 3 of the 5 abutting towns were perambulated by a hired surveyor with the cost split between the two towns in 2007 & 2009. The 2 town lines not done by the surveyor are considered to be the easiest & least amount of distance however there has been a scheduling conflict.

Remembering to do them timely -- coordinating between the Town's -- topography and weather.

Coordinating with both our town and others to perform perambulations

Getting the Selectmen to get together

Not sure - perhaps lack of information on part of selectmen (some in the past have not been aware it is required).

Most of the town is encompassed by the White Mt. National Forest

The hardest part is getting the officials together to do the perambulation.

Lack of knowledge

We have contacted the abutting towns to try and do a joint perambulation and have not had any success. Recent discussions with the Town of Lisbon in the past year. Since the Town was established in 1962 to our knowledge only one line has been done.

I'm new in this position and have just completed my first boundary walk. I've heard some towns have been not been anxious to participate in the past, but have no personal experience with impediments to the process.

Time and ability to get together with the other town

We have kept up with boundary paint, flagging, and tagging with no difficulties except one area of swamp.

Minor difficulties with coordination of meeting times with adjacent municipal officials

At times, lack of interest by the Board of Selectmen. Selectmen may not know it must be done. Not having records of when it was last completed. Budgetary issues, finding someone to do it, coordinating with other towns.

Committing to have it done, and coordinating with abutting towns.

It was always the understanding that the older incorporated town would contact Surry (as it is the younger town in the area). Those contacts were no initiated recently. Surry abuts Gilsum mostly along the top of Surry mountain very difficult terrain. Crossing the Ashuelot river in places and times of the year can be difficult.