

## **Connecticut Department of Transportation**

### **Mowing**

**April 20, 2022**

Roadside mowing for both limited access highways and secondary state routes is a core function of the Department of Transportation (Department). The primary purpose of mowing is to provide a stabilized turf area adjacent to the roadway. This stabilized area allows provision for errant vehicles, helps to mitigate erosion, allows for maintenance of proper sightlines, controls possible fire hazards, and maintains reasonable aesthetics. In addition, it supports activities needed to maintain accompanying roadside appurtenances including guiderail systems, signage, electrical cabinets, and drainage.

Mowing occurs as frequently as is necessary for safety purposes, which in general commences once grass areas reach a height of 8 to 10 inches. In areas generally over 60' in width the roadside shoulders and perimeters are mowed, while the interior is deferred until control of any encroaching invasive plants or woody vegetation becomes necessary. Other considerations and external factors can affect mowing operations and result in overgrowth of roadside vegetation.

In addition, the Department has established locations for warm season grasses and insect pollinator habitat within the state right of way. These locations are defined as "Conservation Areas." Mowing practices in these areas will include the travel-way shoulders and where appropriate, the conservation area perimeter. The mowing of the interior area will be delayed until late fall or early spring of the following season. In some cases, mowing may be deferred until the late fall of a second or third season depending on the presence and pressure of invasive plants within the conservation area.

The Department's ability to mow proactively will be a challenge this season compounded by aging equipment and staffing shortages, while tending to other necessary priorities such as pavement resurfacing projects, repairing guiderail, fixing potholes and removing compromised trees.

Based on all of the current conditions, Maintenance Supervisors responsible for specific geographical areas routinely patrol their respective sections and assign mowing activities to

address areas of most concern, including those reported by motorists. The Department will continue to effectively address the vegetation management needs of the state roadway network maximizing all available resources.