

CAMPTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2004

The commission's mission statement (adopted in 2001): *The Campton Conservation Commission (CCC) believes the community is sustained by its natural landscapes, clean water, forest and agricultural products, and varied habitats for plants and animals. The CCC sees its mission as working to preserve, protect, and properly utilize these resources for current and future residents of the town.*

The commission welcomed 2 new members this year: Melissa Greenawalt-Yelle and Jessica Tabolt-Halm. Both are interested in the community and have extensive knowledge of the natural environment. Jon Homer continues to serve as Select Board liaison as ex-officio member to the commission.

The commission worked on more projects on Blair Woodland Natural Area. The second year of the "Moose Plate" grant was completed with less visible work accomplished than planned. A busy year for excavators on area real estate projects meant that the parking lot and driveway completion was delayed and visitors to the property needed to continue to park on private property. However, boundary markers were mounted on trees along the property borders and Melissa Greenawalt-Yelle (new CCC member and PSU environmental studies student) worked countless hours throughout the summer and fall to inventory natural species on the 17 acre property. She compiled an extensive list of trees(25), saplings/shrubs(68), herbaceous plants(140), birds(37), and amphibians(5) found so far. She is writing an informative brochure/guide and it will be made available for visitors to the property using moose plate grant money. In spring, volunteer Pat Barker labeled many wildflower species visible along the trails. Trail blazes were added to the Schuyler Mathews Trail and continued work was done to maintain all trails. Trash dumped in a ravine between the Red Sleigh property and Blair Woodland was cleaned up by CCC members and Red Sleigh management. In early winter, 2 rustic benches were built by volunteers (Ian Halm, Ron Reynolds, and commissioners Jessica Halm and Jane Kellogg). The grant is funded for a total of \$2,757. So far the town has received \$378.68 in 2003 and \$312.77 in 2004. The remainder of the grant work will be completed at the end of the grant cycle in June of 2005.

In March, at voting and Town Meeting, a display was available to show residents about Blair Woodland Natural Area and information about conservation lands in Campton and opportunities for voluntary conservation by private property owners. It continues to hang in the Town Office near the CCC bookshelf of books and written materials for loan.

In May, the commission sponsored a "Walk with Foresters" on Blair State Forest on Blair Road for interested persons. Grafton County forester, Nory Parr and 2 state foresters from the NH Division of Forests and Lands led participants over the recently logged property and discussed how and why various decisions are made when managing state forests for timber harvesting and wildlife habitat improvement.

Commission members continued to participate in collaboration with other groups in the community such as the Planning Board; the Master Planning Committee on the Master Plan revision; the Campton Historical Society; the Pemigewasset River Local Advisory Committee, Conservation Commissions from other towns, and the Rumney

Ecological Systems (Quincy Bog) which is acting as a local land trust. Commission members also attended workshops and seminars on various topics.

This is the fourth year since the establishment of the Conservation Fund from 50% of the monies collected from the Land Use Change Tax with a yearly cap of \$5,000, as voted at Town Meeting 2001. The cap was reached again this year. There were no expenditures from the fund in 2004. The current balance of the fund is about \$16,750. The Conservation Commission believes this fund will be important for helping preserve important natural areas in our rural community. With increasing development pressures, the commission will be looking for ways to increase the rate of growth for this fund in the coming year by removal of the \$5,000 yearly cap.

The commission reviews Wetland and Forestry applications and may comment to the state bureaus. Residents are reminded that when planning work such as driveways or logging operation over or near wetlands or surface waters a permit is needed. Wetlands include marshes, bogs, swamps, and vernal pools. Surface waters include ponds, brooks, and seasonal streams. NHDES applications for wetland permits can be obtained from the Town Clerk's office.

The commission meets the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 PM at the Town Office. We welcome any and all interested in our work to attend meetings or contact us about involvement in our projects. In 2005, we will be completing the initial work on Blair Woodland Natural Area and (if funded) working in collaboration on a Natural Resources Inventory as recommended by the Master Plan.

Sincerely,

Jane Kellogg, Chair

Jim Blake, Ron Crowe, Jules Doner, Jessica Halm, Melissa Greenawalt-Yelle, James McGarr

Jon Homer, ex-officio