

CAMPTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2006

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 5 member commission completed the year with no changes to membership. Two seats on the commission remain open to residents interested in conservation. Those interested in consideration for appointment should contact a commission member, the Selectmen or attend a meeting. The commission meets at the town office at 7:30 PM, each second Wednesday of the month.

The Campton Conservation Fund is a trust held by the town for the purpose of conservation projects or acquisitions. When Land Use Change Tax monies are collected, 50% of the tax is deposited into the fund. In 2006, the fund grew by \$ 55,041.50 deposits and \$ 4,736.73 interest, for a total balance of \$ 158,965.81. There were no expenditures made in 2006. The power of the fund will come when important lands benefiting the community can be permanently protected. Property owners interested in considering conservation of their property can contact the commission for support or names of other conservation professionals to guide families with estate planning. This year the commission worked on writing guidelines for use of the fund which went through several revisions and review by Selectmen and others before adoption in September.

Blair Woodland Natural Area was visited by many this year. The kiosk visitors' notebook shows entries by appreciative locals as well as visitors to the region. Commissioners Melissa Greenwalt-Yelle and Jessica Halm led nature walks in various seasons. In May, Mr. Bowie's and Mrs. Ely's sixth grade classes from Campton Elementary School visited BWNA to supplement their science studies throughout the year. There, they worked with their teachers, CCC members, parents, and other community members on a "hands-on" exploration of the various ecosystems found at BWNA. Additionally, the CCC partnered with Plymouth State University professor Kerry Yurewicz to present a "Bug Walk" in August, during which attendees learned to identify several types of aquatic insects. A second printing of the trail guide was made after some minor changes. Winter use of the parking lot has been determined to be problematic due to its upward slope when re-entering Rt. 3 and visibility due to snow banks. The trails are open in winter, but parking is up at the Country Cow Restaurant or at the Blair Covered Bridge.

A focus for the commission this year also included community outreach. On the town's website, the link to the CCC posts meeting minutes, notices, and various information about conservation. In June, residents with land in current use were invited to an informational workshop titled "Estate Planning and Conservation Easements". The CCC arranged to invite presenters Phil Auger (UNH Cooperative Extension) and attorney Alexandra Breed. A new educational poster on the benefits of conservation was created by Melissa Greenawalt-Yelle. It can be viewed near the CCC bookshelf in the town office. Jessica Halm compiled a useful list of resources (printed material, people,

organizations) for people interested in conservation topics or initiatives. Commission members continued to participate in collaboration with other groups in the community such as the Planning Board, the Campton Historical Society, the Pemigewasset River Local Advisory Committee, The North Country Council, Conservation Commissions and groups from other towns, and the Rumney Ecological Systems (Quincy Bog) which is now acting as a local land trust. Commission members also attended workshops and seminars on various topics. The commission reviews Wetland and Forestry applications and may comment to the state bureaus or make site visits. Residents are reminded that when planning work such as driveways or logging operations over or near wetlands or surface waters a permit is needed. NHDES applications for wetland permits can be obtained from the Town Clerk's office

The Natural Resources Inventory completed in 2005 was the basis for work started this year on a conservation plan. The commission has begun using the GIS maps and data to focus on particular areas of town for conservation efforts. Generally, the higher and steeper western and eastern areas of town, furthest from the interstate highway and river lowlands, are where there is greatest conservation potential and benefit. There are some "irons in the fire" which may lead to future protection efforts. Work on the conservation plan or informal discussion with property owners generally takes place at work sessions held when necessary. As we move forward on these projects, we welcome input from the community.

Sincerely,

Jane Kellogg, Chair

Jim Blake, Jules Doner, Jessica Halm, Melissa Greenawalt-Yelle,

Jon Homer, ex-officio