

CAMPTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION: ANNUAL REPORT 2011

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.*

We welcomed Lea Stewart to the Commission, which now stands at 7 members. Those interested in becoming involved should contact the CCC or the Select Board, or attend a meeting. Meetings are generally held at the town office on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm (Nov. - Apr.), or at 7:30pm (May – Oct.). The topic of the April meeting each year is management of the town's conservation lands. Public involvement is welcome.

The Conservation Fund is a trust held by the town for the purpose of conservation projects or acquisitions. 50% of Land Use Change Tax monies are deposited into the fund. In 2011, the fund gained \$ 1,650 in LUCT deposits and \$ 86.60 interest. An expenditure of \$ 425.00 for mowing of the Pattee property field was made from the fund. The total balance of the Fund at the end of the year is \$174,636.13. At this year's town meeting there will be a warrant that, if passed, will allow the conservation fund to be used to help owners of conservation lands with stewardship fees. This is necessary as a result of a new state law.

We continued in 2011 to work toward protecting our groundwater resources by creating a display for Old Home Day and voting days and a brochure for tips and reminders about what you can do to protect our valuable aquifer. At year's end, we had a second printing done since the brochures seemed to be picked up from their locations around town.

You may have noticed more activity at the Pattee Conservation Park this year! At the parking area, we installed a split rail fence to delineate for parking and posted our guidelines for use of the property. The field was mowed in the fall and trails in the woods were improved and blazed. After research and discussion, we decided our options for controlling the poison ivy problem along Blair Road were limited. We made a careful herbicide treatment and signs later in the season showed poison ivy to be under control. Caution is still recommended when walking in that area of the field. The CCC worked with abutters to solve a complicated property boundary problem. Figures given above show that some conservation funds were used to assist in bringing this to a conclusion. We welcome walkers, skiers, and snowshoers, and remind visitors that snowmobiling in the open field is permitted, but motorized wheeled vehicles are prohibited.

Blair Woodland Natural Area (BWNA), located on Route 3, continues to draw visitors from near and far. We remind visitors that the trails are open year-round; however, the parking lot is closed in winter. Winter parking is available on Blair Road at the Country Cow Restaurant or the Blair Covered Bridge. Note cards depicting scenes at BWNA, made possible through a donation from Leah Gray, are available for a suggested donation of \$10. They are currently available at the CCC display at the Town Office with proceeds going to support conservation projects. There were a few large trees along the property boundaries which needed attention this year, by CCC members and Ian Halm. After Hurricane Irene, the second bridge on the property showed signs of potential problems; a small stream redirection solved the problem. Invasive Japanese Knotweed is a growing problem along Rt 3. Discussions have begun about potential solutions to this daunting issue. Look for future family programs on the property.

The CCC adopted a 2-mile section of state roadway from Exit 27 up Blair Road, then south along Route 175. We conducted a road cleanup in spring and fall of 2011. Contact us if you wish to assist us, or watch for our dates and come out to help!

CCC members attend informational meetings and workshops in an attempt to stay current with conservation topics, changing CSPA rules, river management planning, etc. The commission sent letters of opposition to the Northern Pass project this year and joined the NH Association of Natural Scientists.

Residents are reminded that a permit is needed when planning work such as driveways, logging operations over or near wetlands or surface waters, or shoreland development along the Pemi and Mad Rivers. NHDES information and applications for wetland or shoreland permits can be obtained from the Town Clerk's office or on the DES website. Property owners interested in considering conservation of their property can contact the commission for financial support, advice or for referrals to other conservation professionals. The CCC encourages use of our lending resource library, which is located in the town office. If you would like to receive periodic updates via email, please join our email list by signing up at the Town Office. The CCC also works hard to keep info on our website (<http://www.camptonnh.org/conservation.htm>) useful.

Sincerely;

Jessica Halm, Melissa Greenawalt-Yelle, Co-Chairs

Jules Doner, Jane Kellogg, Bryon Middlekauff, Lea Stewart, and Tammy Wooster