

CAMPTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION (CCC) 2013 ANNUAL REPORT

2013 was a busy year for the CCC with some exciting new projects! In January we held our first Frozen Bog Walk, where residents and CCC members explored Campton Bog in search of wildlife tracks. The walk was led by CCC member Lea Stewart who also belongs to the Newfound Tracking Team. Tracks of deer, coyote, mink and mice were observed and folks enjoyed some post-walk hot refreshments. We plan to make this an annual event in an effort to share and promote the rich and diverse wildlife habitats of our beautiful bog.

Also new this year was the launching by the CCC of "Conservation Matters", a monthly column in the Record Enterprise submitted on a rotating schedule by local conservation groups. We hope that this column serves to inform the public about local and relevant conservation topics.

Late winter and early spring was a time to get organized, with the move into our new Town Office space. We did some housecleaning of outdated materials and put out some brochures for public use in the lobby area. With the help of town webmaster Beverly Chappell, we completed our Friends of the CCC database and began sending occasional electronic newsletters to those interested in our work. If you wish to be added to this list sign up on the town webpage!

In April we said goodbye to Lea Stewart, who resigned from the commission. Thank you Lea for your many contributions to the CCC.

On Earth Day we held our spring Adopt-a Highway roadside cleanup along Rte 175 and Blair Rd, where we filled 10 trash bags. Thank you to Randy and Emily Kelley for their help! The month of April is always designated as our land management meeting, where we focus on reviewing and planning the management and events relative to the Pattee Conservation Park (PCP) and Blair Woodland Natural Area (BWNA). A few residents as well as representatives from the Margaret and H.A. Rey center attended and planning began for the 2nd annual Nature Nights program at the BWNA. The program was held on Thursday evenings from June 27th -August 22nd, where Rey Center naturalists led families in exploring the varied habitats of the BWNA. Be sure to stop by the parking area kiosk and see the beautiful artwork the kids created for display. We hope to continue this summer program in 2014 and that participation continues to grow.

This was a mowing year for the PCP field, as we continue to manage the property as grassland bird habitat. The field was mowed in late summer to avoid any impact to butterflies and nesting birds. In the meantime a mowed perimeter walking path was maintained.

We continue to maintain the trails at both the PCP and BWNA throughout the year and always welcome volunteer help.

We would like to update you on the ongoing work of the Friends of the Pemi-Livermore Falls Chapter. This group continues to grow and work towards the goal of revitalizing the scenic and historic Livermore Falls area, both on the Campton and Holderness sides of the river. The CCC has been regularly attending meetings with the various local and State agency representatives and interested citizens, and great progress is being made! Potential improvements in the planning

include parking area upgrades, trash containers, signage, picnic tables, bike racks, grills and a walking bridge. The Plymouth Rotary has applied for a \$4,000 grant from Rotary International to help fund these improvements and matching dollars are needed to secure the grant. If you would like to contribute to this fund contact us!

Throughout 2013, we continued to express our opposition to the proposed Northern Pass project. We attended meetings, and wrote letters to the Dept of Energy as part of the public scoping process. We also filed as a consulting party to the project which will allow us to stay informed throughout the environmental review permitting process. We would like to thank Ron Reynolds, who volunteered his GIS mapping expertise helped to inform our letter writing. Ron created a map for us by superimposing the proposed Northern Pass route over the Fish & Game Wildlife Action Plan habitat maps for Campton. Ron's work enabled us to visualize the potential impacts the transmission lines would have on the natural features of our town.

In the fall we held two new outreach events. In October as part of the Campton Historical Society's Halloween History walk event, we partnered with the Rey Center in hosting a walk at the Pattee Conservation Park. Two Rey Center naturalists led a group across the field and trails in search of wildlife sign at dusk.

Another Campton Historical Society/CCC hosted event held in October was a History of NH Wildlife slide presentation given by Grafton County Forester Dave Falkenham. This was a well attended event and the speaker was provided free of charge by the Cooperative Extension as part of their Speaking for Wildlife program.

CCC members continue to stay current in conservation related topics and attended various events including the NH Assoc. of Conservation Commissions and DES Groundwater Source Protection conferences, and meetings of the Lakes Region Planning Commission, North Country Council, and Pemi River Local Advisory Committee.

Other ongoing work includes the review of wetland permit applications, outreach to landowners interested in conserving their land, and Wildlife Action Plan (WAP) work. In 2014 we plan to update our Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) using the Wildlife Action Plan, and also to revise the Natural Resource Chapters of the Town Master Plan. We welcome your involvement in these projects!

The Conservation Fund balance as of Dec 31, 2013 was \$187,843.72. The amount appropriated for 2013 was \$10,140, interest earned was \$88.23, and \$1,325.00 was the amount expended.

In December we welcomed new CCC member Rebecca Steeves, a Campton resident and Linwood Middle School science teacher with great talent and enthusiasm.

We said goodbye on two sad occasions to our friend and decade long CCC member Jules Doner. Jules resigned from the CCC in January 2013 due to declining health, but graciously continued to help with small tasks when called upon. Jules passed on January 11 2014 at his Campton home. He was a gentle and kind man with a great sense of humor who gave generously of his time to not only the CCC but also to many other community groups and individuals in need. We will miss him so much!

The 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 protect and properly utilize these resources for current and future residents of the town.

Residents are reminded that a permit is needed when planning work such as driveways, logging operations over or near wetlands or surface waters, or shore land development along the Pemi and Mad Rivers. NHDES permit applications can be obtained from the Town Clerk's office or the DES website. Property owners interested in conservation of their land can contact the CCC for financial support, advice, or for referrals to conservation professionals. We always welcome new members. Come sit in on a meeting held on the second Wednesday of each month at the Town Office. Contact us at conservationcommission@camptonnh.org

Respectfully submitted,
Tammy Wooster

On behalf of the Campton Conservation Commission
Jess Halm, Alisoun Hodges, Jane Kellogg, Rebecca Steeves