

CAMPTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION (CCC) 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

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.*

New work this year was a start on revising the town's 2005 Natural Resources Inventory (NRI). Late in 2013, the CCC had met with professionals from NH Cooperative Extension and NH Fish and Game/ Wildlife Action Plan to begin organizing resources for the work. Most NRI work was done at separately scheduled monthly work sessions. As the year ended, much of the written work is drafted and maps and charts to accompany the document are under way. Ron Reynolds is putting his GIS mapping expertise to work to help on maps. At the same time, the Planning Board is revising the town's Master Plan. The CCC offered to assist them with the chapters on Natural Resources and Conservation. Drafts of suggested changes to those chapters (8 and 10) were made by the CCC and given to the PB for review. Former CC member, Bryon Middlekauf and Hubbard Brook scientist, Amey Bailey, assisted with writing on geology and soils respectively.

In 2014, an exciting new regional conservation effort within Campton and Sandwich began. The 5,435 acre Beebe Tract in the northeast corner of town (with about 4,000 acres in Campton) is now permanently protected. The national, non-profit Conservation Fund has purchased the tract from Yankee Forest LLC. Plans are to place a conservation easement on the property which protects the high quality ecosystems, and ensures connectivity with the WMNF and other open spaces, while maintaining recreational opportunities. In April, The Conservation Fund and the local Squam Lakes Conservation Society held 3 community forums for the purpose of learning more from local residents about the property and to brainstorm visions for its future. The Campton forum had about 40 participants. At Town Meeting, look for display materials about this project.

The commission continues to manage the 2 town-owned conservation properties: Blair Woodland Natural Area and Pattee Conservation Park. Both bridges at BWNA got maintenance this year. The second bridge became an Eagle Scout project for Roy Hines. He revamped the decking with pressure treated wood and added a handrail. Sherry Holmes of the Rey Center held 8 Nature Night sessions for families at BWNA during July and August. Sessions had between 6-15 participants. This was an off-year for mowing of the entire PCP field. Trails from parking to wooded trails and the Liberty Tree were mowed 3 times. In its third year on the property, the

Liberty Tree's condition was evaluated by an arborist. Some fertilizing and prudent pruning was done. The CCC shares these costs with the Garden Club.

The town's Conservation Trust Fund shows \$ 955.00 added from Land Use Change Tax, and \$ 91.54 of interest. One withdrawal of \$ 400.00 to The Rey Center was made for funding of the educational Nature Nights at Bwana. Balance on 12/31/14 is \$ 188,490.26.

We continue to follow and oppose the proposed Northern Pass Project. In February we worked with the Historical Society in securing consulting party status for the Dept. of Energy (DOE) Section 106 review. This gives our town a seat at the table when the DOE considers the effects the project may have on historic properties in town. In May, we attended a Site Evaluation Committee (SEC) informational meeting along with members from surrounding towns along the proposed route. Early 2015 is the expected time frame for the release of the DOE Draft Environmental Impact Statement, followed by Northern Pass's application to the State SEC.

Other continuing activities this year included managing submission of "Conservation Matters" articles to The Record Enterprise. 7 other conservation/natural resource groups are presently taking turns writing articles on a variety of topics. Commissioner Jess Halm was asked to be a presenter at the annual meeting of the NHACC based on our media outreach efforts. Our roadside clean-up took place once this year, in May. We welcome residents' help, particularly those living along the route where we pick up trash: Blair Road and 175 south of Blair Road to Pulsifer Hill Rd. We held our second annual frozen Bog walk in February, lead by Lea Stewart, and about 16 participants found a nice variety of animal tracks.

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, and Pemi River Local Advisory Committee. Commissioners attended visioning sessions for the Beebe Tract conservation effort and for Livermore Falls work. This year we also attended meetings with representatives from The Pemi Baker Land Trust and Protection of NH Forests, the NH Timberlands Association, Grafton County Conservation District, The Natural Resource Conservation Service to work toward conservation outreach efforts. Other ongoing work includes the review of wetland permit applications, and outreach to landowners interested in conserving their land.

The Friends of the Pemi-Livermore Falls Chapter continues to grow and push towards the goal of revitalizing the scenic and historic Livermore Falls area, both on the Campton(West) and Holderness(East) sides of the river. The effort is now a Plymouth Rotary project and also involves PSU and others. The CCC continues to regularly attend visioning sessions and meetings with the various local and State agency representatives and interested citizens. Some progress is being made! Most improvements are on the Holderness side so far. The Campton side continues to be unsafe around the old mill, erosion from high water events make the river difficult to access, and legal parking along Rt 3 is limited and confusing. We have been pushing for the state

to close the west side until positive changes can be made. More can be learned by reading the Friends of the Pemi annual report. There are Historic and Environmental subcommittees working on various projects. Those interested in helping improve this important resource, can contact us about how to become involved.

This year, we welcomed Shannon Garnsey to the Commission, which now stands at 6 members. Those interested in becoming involved should contact the CCC or Select Board, or attend a meeting. CC meetings are open to the public and are held at the town office, generally on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm. (Feb. & March meetings: first Wed.) The topic of the April meeting each year is management of the town's two conservation lands. Public involvement is welcome. Several times a year, we send out a newsletter to those signed up to receive it. Those interested should sign up at conservationcommission@camptonnh.org.

Respectively submitted; *Jan Kellag, Jess Halim, Jimmy Foster, Alisa Hodges, Rebecca Steeves, Shannon Garnsey*