

## ***Conservation Matters***

A monthly column focused on conservation education, as the result of collaboration among several area conservation commissions and organizations. If your town's commission or conservation organization would like to contribute articles, please contact Jessica Tabolt Halm [jesshalm78@gmail.com](mailto:jesshalm78@gmail.com)

**Title:** Conservation Lands: More Than Just Conservation

**Written by:** Shannon Garnsey, Campton Conservation Commission

Stepping outside this time of year, how can one not feel at peace with the breath-taking landscape so many of us call home? The mountains, forests, waterways, flora and fauna that surround us are truly a gift to the soul. A gift worth conserving for generations to come. Often this is accomplished by placing parcels of land into conservation. Historically, conservation lands are parcels placed under easements, with a specific conservation objective, such as protecting natural resources and wildlife habitats. As reported in the recently released Natural Resources Inventory for the Town of Campton, over 22 percent of the land in Campton is placed in conservation. Included in those conserved lands are two special properties that the Campton Conservation Commission (CCC) has the privilege of managing: Blair Woodland Natural Area and the Pattee Conservation Park. These amazing properties are kept as natural areas, but are open to the public for recreation, wildlife viewing and exploration. This year however, the CCC will be using both properties for so much more.

Located off NH Rt. 3 just south of the Blair Road intersection, the Blair Woodlands Natural Area is a 17 acres forested parcel with access to the Pemigewasset River. During the summer months, the CCC teams with a Rey Center naturalist to provide a weekly exploration of the property. The program is held Tuesday evenings from 6-7pm. Each week a different theme is presented and over the course of the summer, participants will explore nearly every inch of the property while learning about the flora and fauna that inhabit this conserved woodland. In years past topics have included: vernal pool exploration, tree identification, aquatic invertebrate study, shelter building and habitat discovery.

The Pattee Conservation Park (PCP), comprised of field and forest, is situated at the corner of NH Rt. 175 and Blair Road. It also abuts the Blair State Forest, providing easy public access to this State-owned parcel. There are trails through the forested portion of the property, suitable for family walks and/or picnicking. The field is maintained as a meadow, and is a great place for viewing wildlife. Present in the field is disease-resistant elm tree, cared for by the CCC and the Campton Garden Club. This year the PCP will also be home of Campton's 250th grand celebration, on September 30th. Events for the afternoon will include children's games, historical reenactments, crafts and exhibits. Evening entertainment and dancing will follow a barbecue dinner and end with a grand fireworks display. More information can be found at [www.camptonnh.org/nh/campton-250-celebration](http://www.camptonnh.org/nh/campton-250-celebration).

**Photo caption:** Blair Woodland Natural Area and Pattee Conservation Park are town-owned conservation properties in Campton, managed by the Conservation Commission. Beyond their

conservation values, they are open to the public for activities such as hiking, fishing, blueberry picking and swimming, to name a few. In addition, they are great locales for celebratory community events and educational programming.

