

CAMPTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2005

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 new members joining. Jon Homer continued as Select Board liaison. The commission meets the second Wednesday of each month at the Town Office. New members or people willing to help out with projects are welcome.

Work was completed on Blair Woodland Natural Area by summer. The parking lot, off Rt. 3, was usable and the log booklet at the kiosk gathered many interesting entries from regular and one-time visitors. CCC member, Melissa Greenawalt-Yelle, completed a terrific trail guide as part of a graduate project at PSU. Visitors can follow the guide by stopping at 42 numbered stops on the trails and read about things of natural and historic interest. A bench was placed a short walk from the parking lot where visitors can sit in the quiet woods overlooking a small stream and wetland. The commission had applied for and received a grant from "Moose Plate" monies totaling \$2,757 for the 3 year project.

Commission members led several walks on the trails at Blair Woodland Natural Area. In June, 2 nature walks were held. There were 2 PSU classes that came to the trails for part of their study, and several local recreational groups came to walk and enjoy the scenery. Snowshoe walks are also planned for winter months early in 2006.

Early in 2005, the commission worked on a warrant article petition that would remove the \$5,000 yearly cap on the 50% of Land Use Change Tax funds going to the town's Conservation Fund. Information on the proposal was circulated and a display was made for voters. At Town Meeting the warrant passed.

The Campton Conservation Fund had been growing in previous years by a maximum of \$5,000 per year. With the change voted at Town Meeting, that cap was removed, allowing for more contributions to the fund in years when there is a lot of land taken out of Current Use. This was the case in 2005. With development and land prices continuing at a steady rate, LUCT monies being paid were also high. The Conservation Fund grew by \$ 81,890 deposits and \$ 497.60 interest this year, for a total balance of \$ 99,187.58. No expenditures were made in 2005. The commission has been working on guidelines for use of the fund and expects to begin making expenditures in 2006.

With the town's website now up and running, a link to the CCC was added where meeting minutes are posted and various information about conservation can be seen. 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, Conservation Commissions 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. Residents are reminded that when planning work such as driveways or logging operation 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 remainder of the commission's work this year is leading to a stronger position for completing conservation efforts. A Graphic Information System (GIS) digitized mapping project with written report, often called a Natural Resources Inventory, was being conducted for the town by Stephanie Elson from Brown University. The Conservation Commission, Planning Board, and Select Board held meetings and community input sessions where she continued to gather quality data. Her project will be completed in early 2006. The CC will be using it to work on writing a conservation plan for the town. This will then guide the commission with its work to preserve important open spaces in town and work with property owners interested in land preservation. Using Conservation Fund money will help reach these goals.

Sincerely,
Jane Kellogg, Chair
Jim Blake, Jules Doner, Jessica Halm, Melissa Greenawalt-Yelle,
Jon Homer, ex-officio