

Acworth Conservation Commission Draft Conservation Plan Review

October 12, 2024
1pm at Town Hall



Acworth's conservation commission studies and protects the natural resources within Acworth. It is the responsibility of the conservation commission to develop long-term plans and strategies for the protection of natural resources.

Town of Acworth

Conservation Commission



P.O. Box 37
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<https://www.acworthnh.net/conservation-commission>

Administration

Location : Town Hall

Date: October 12th

Time: 1pm

Virtual Zoom Meeting Information

- Link join.zoom.us on your desktop or laptop using a web browser, or the Zoom application.
- Meeting ID: 843 9615 0332 Passcode: Acworth

Meeting Materials

- Printed copies will be available in the Town Hall. Additional printed copies can be requested through the town office.
- Electronic copies will be provided after the meeting on the town webpage.

Questionnaire

- Attendees will be invited to provide feedback using a questionnaire
- Questionnaires will be collected in person after the presentation or can be dropped off at the town hall. The questionnaire will also be accessible on the Conservation Commissions webpage and can be e-mailed to the commission.
- ***Please return all questionnaires by October 31st.***

Commission contact information is on the last page of this presentation.

Topics

- What the Conservation Plan is and why do we have one
- How it's used and how it works with the towns Master Plan
- How to access this draft Plan
- How the plan can be changed and how often it will be published
- How the Plan is organized
- How folks can provide feedback and input.



The meeting provides an overview of the plan to familiarize folks with its content.



Plan Contents & Purpose

Conservation Plan contains information on our towns natural resources. It includes:

- Wildlife habitats
- Geology and soils
- Forests and wetlands
- Conservation, state and town properties
- Hydrology – watersheds, Crescent Lake, ponds, Cold River and it's tributary streams
- Invasive species, rare and endangered species

The Plan contains a description, relevant monitoring, supporting agencies and references for the most important natural resources.

The Plan also addresses hot topics such as Water Quality and Climate Change.

Creates one source that describes focus topics, focus areas and high value areas to focus our efforts.

It contains a brief history of Conservation Commission and the Conservation Plan

The plan is technical and intended to assist conservation commission members or environmentally trained personnel.

The plan is in DRAFT and therefore still being written. It is also expected to be continuously updated as we engage different personnel, incur new natural events, or as knowledge changes.

How it's used and works with the towns Master Plan

- It leverages data collected in the 2004 & 2009 Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) and leveraged examples from other towns and known conservation topics
- Every year we review our focus areas, focus topics, high value areas, recommendations and our projects.
- Determine if any changes are recommended.
- Each year we highlight and recommended changes and solicit input.
- Each year we publish a new plan with any changes

Conservation Commission welcomes folks to attend our monthly meetings, bring questions, concerns or recommended changes to our attention.

Each year with the draft publication of the plan the Commission will also solicit feedback.

Highlights from the Conservation Plan will be utilized for updates to the Master Plan and this process will be used for every Master Plan update.

How is the Plan Organized & Where Can I Access It

- 1. Introduction
 - The Conservation Plan and the Town’s Master Plan
 - Summary of the Current 2024 Plan
 - Four Topics of Special Concern
 - Focus Areas
 - High Value Areas & Co-occurrences
 - High Value Area Goals.....
- 2. Current Conservation Status.....
- 3. Natural Resources
 - Wildlife Habitats
 - Geology and Soils.....
 - Forests, Wetland and Land Management.....
 - State Owned Lands
 - Conservation Easements & Monitoring.....
 - Complaints and Violations
 - Hydrology.....
 - 1. Watershed #1: Headwaters Cold River (010801070201) includes Crescent Lake
 - 2. Watershed #2: Vilas Pool-Cold River (010801070202)
 - 3. Watershed #3: Cold River – 010801070203
 - 4. Watershed #4: Little Sugar River – 010801060701
- 4. Climate Change
- 5. Education & Community Out-Reach.....

*The plan is a draft.
Some sections are in-progress and not complete.*

- Appendix Items
 - Co-Occurrences and High Value Area Process.....
 - Goal and Objective Creation Process <IN-PROGRESS>
 - Education and Outreach <IN-PROGRESS>
 - Maps and references <IN-PROGRESS>
 - Invasive species (plant, insect, animal, disease).....
 - Rare and endangered species.....
 - Acworth Conservation Commission Bylaws.....
 - Commission responsibilities and procedures <TBD -
 - Natural Resource Index
 - Resources and Agencies

This draft plan will be located on our Conservation Commission Town webpage (see last page)
Hardcopies can be requested via town office, Conservation Commission e-mail or at any of our meetings.

Highlights

Understanding the current state of those resources, the influences and impacts to those resources, and the new impacts from climate change is a monumental undertaking. Our plan includes an effort to group and prioritize those resources to focus our efforts.

3 Key Steps

1. Defined focus areas
 - Improve water quality
 - Improve forests and wetland wildlife habitats
 - Increase wildlife habitats
 - Address climate change
 - Engage the community
2. Defined high value areas in town. Leveraged state and University of New Hampshire Cooperative Education (UNH Coop) data and a process called Co-Occurrences to assess our town using the following traits:
 - Habitats of local and statewide significance (provided by NH Fish and Game)
 - Rare and endangered species (Heritage Bureau)
 - Conserved lands (DES and town maps)
 - Water and wetland priority resource areas (PRA) (DES)
3. We defined 12 high value areas and took the top 5 to be our focus. (1) Crescent Lake Watershed, (2) Keyes Hollow Wetland, (3) Honey Brook Cold River (including Dodge Brook), (4) Bowers Brook/Mitchell Pond, (5) Five Points Area (including Crane Brook)

Final Notes

- The plan is highly technical and intended to primarily assist conservation commission members, conservation or environmentally trained personnel and future commissions in managing the town's natural resources
- The plan is in DRAFT and therefore still being written and accepting of feedback and input
- The plan is expected to be continuously updated as we engage different skilled personnel, incur new or changing natural events, or as knowledge changes.



Contact and References



Conservation Commission Members:

- Jennifer Bland (co-chair)
- Gregg Thibodeau (co-chair)
- Ryanne Schoonover, (Select Board rep.)
- Mark Girard
- Scott Travers
- Janet Slocum
- Rob Traver
- Robin Ungeheuer (alt)
- Lisa Hyatt (alt)
- Other contributors: Kathi Bradt

Contact information:

- Webpage <https://www.acworthnh.net/conservation-commission>
- E-mail acworthconservation@gmail.com
- Meeting 7:00 p.m. every 2nd Wednesday of month at the Town Hall
- Mail 13 Town Hall Rd., P.O. Box 37, Acworth, NH 03601, Attention: Conservation Commission
- Phone 603-835-6879 (town office)

Thank You!



Any Questions



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