

Annual Report for Kensington Conservation Commission 2020

Throughout 2019 the Commission met and discussed the following issues:

Hodges Conservation Land

Haying contracted signed for the cutting the fields at Hodges. The Commission discussed a second forests cutting at Hodges. Forester, Charlie Moreno was contacted. Projects are backlogged due to wet weather in 2019, but we are on his schedule, project date to be determined. The construction of the foot bridge from Moulton Ridge onto the Hodges property is on hold due to beaver activity. The Commission is investigating beaver control throughout the area. Rockingham County Conservation District (RCCD) applied a third application to control invasive species at Hodges. The Commission pursued reimbursement from the Society for Protection of New Hampshire Forests (SPNHF) half the cost of the invasive species control at Hodges.

The Commission met with Brandon Kernan from NH DES to discuss the town of Seabrook wells. The impact of the drawdown of water does not extend beyond a mile from the well head. Mr. Kernan also discussed testing of water at private wells. Be Well Informed section of the NH DES website provides information regarding private wells and water testing. The shooting range located at the Seabrook well site is a concern. It is best to keep the well head area in a natural state. Historically there was no supervision of the gun range, there has been shooting of monitor wells, ATVs driving over monitor wells. In addition there was no control of access to the site and concern of gravel removal. Seabrook is looking to make improvements in the property. Issues of concern are expansion of use, expansion of gravel excavation.

The Commission discussed pond reclamation for the pond on Drinkwater Road. NH Department of Environmental Services and UNH Cooperative Extension Service was contacted. Neither agency provides assistance in pond reclamation. Gregg Jordan, County Forester visited site. Vegetation growing in pond is a native species. With no state agency to provide assistance with pond reclamation, funding to dredge pond will need to be further investigated.

The Commission reviewed monitoring reports from South East Land Trust (SELT) for private lands that are protected with a conservation easement. The Commission met with land owners interested in placing a conservation easement on their property. The Commission met with Paul White who was interested in donating land he owns to the town. The Commission drafted a Warrant Article to accept the gift of Paul and Mary White to accept two gifts of land, a 5 acre piece within the Great Meadows and a 4 acre piece, backland abutting the Hodges Conservation Area.

The Commission discussed with Barbara Richter from the NH Association of Conservation Commissions the land owned by the town off of Route 108, that as of 2019, this town owned land was not protected. Having a conservation easement on the land would provide the greatest protection in perpetuity. SELT was contacted regarding the cost associated with placing a conservation easement on the property. The Commission walked the perimeter of the 40+ acre property and then again with County Forester, Greg Jordan. The property is a diverse

hardwood forest which abuts adjacent land, the Bodwell property that is now protected with a conservation easement and monitored by SELT. The Commission obtained an estimate from SELT for costs associated with placing land in conservation, such as survey, drafting legal documents and contribution to the monitoring fund. The Commission drafted warrant article requesting 50% of the funding from the town. The other 50% of the necessary funding would come from the Conservation Fund.

The Commission attended Planning Board meeting to expresses concerns over wetland violations at 152 Drinkwater Road. The Commission walked the property with the land owner's representatives and provided a letter of recommendations to the Planning Board regarding the violations and ongoing activity.

The Commission reviewed the Trails Committee Policies and met with the Trails Committee to work collaboratively on projects.

The Commission received a grant to control invasive species at town sheds to prevent the further spreading of invasive species. The Commission intends on having a meeting with RCCS to discuss best management practices in order for the town to obtain additional funding.