

**TOWN OF TUFTONBORO
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
ANNUAL REPORT
2013**

In addition to advisory duties concerning permit applications, the Tuftonboro Conservation Commission responded to environmental concerns and worked to protect and preserve the natural resources within the Town of Tuftonboro. The Commission continues to facilitate the placement of conservation easements, the attendance of professional presentations and conferences that support conservation and preservation efforts in New Hampshire, and monitoring the environmental health of lakes and waterways. The Commission conducted its annual monitoring of the Bentley Parkhurst and Cheney Conservation Easements and revised and adopted its Rules of Procedure and Mission Statement.

An important part of the Commission's work is monitoring water quality in Lake Winnepesaukee and Mirror Lake. We fully appreciate the work of all the volunteers that take water samples and deliver such to a UNH laboratory for testing. The number of samples taken in Mirror Lake in 2013 is continuing to show a pristine water quality.

Through the generosity of Catherine Nesbit, a conservation easement was gifted to the Town of Tuftonboro Conservation Commission and executed on July 22, 2013. The 32.27 acre parcel, located on Tuftonboro Neck Road, boasts thirty-one acres of undeveloped forest land consisting mostly of stands of white pine. The property provides a woodland habitat and includes features of historic interest, trails, streams, wetlands and abuts other open space. As a result of Ms. Nesbit's generous act, another parcel of land will be preserved and protected.

In 2011 the Town voted to place a conservation easement on Town owned land known as the Great Meadow. The Great Meadow consists of 176 acres of a 512.8 acre wetland complex which is ranked the highest for ecological integrity in the region, provides recharge for the area aquifers and includes 22 different natural communities, some rare in the State. Located at the headwaters of the Melvin River, the Great Meadow helps protect Melvin Bay and the upper part of Lake Winnepesaukee by intercepting floodwaters and capturing sediments and nutrients from upstream sources prior to reaching the lake. The Commission continues its effort to ensure permanent protection of this wetland complex. Lakes Region Conservation Trust has agreed to be the easement holder and the Commission continues to work through the process of securing this conservation easement.

This past year the Commission held its second Well Water Testing Initiative for Tuftonboro residents. The Commission feels strongly that it is critical to the health and well being of New Hampshire private well owners to become better informed of the health effects of common well water contaminants and the importance of having well water tested regularly. Steve Wingate along with Pierce Rigrod, NH DES, presented the results and methods used in the 2012 initiative at the 2013 NH Water & Watershed Conference on March 22, 2013.

Regular recurring activities include the preliminary review and processing of numerous New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) Wetlands Bureau applications from Tuftonboro residents. These applications include docks and dock repair, breakwaters, beaches, retaining walls, culverts, and the dredging and filling of wetlands among other issues. The Commission reviews each application by conducting a site visit and, when necessary, prepares and submits field notes and recommendations to the NHDES. The 2013 workload for NHDES applications for Tuftonboro residents included review of the following applications; 16 Standard Dredge & Fill, 6 Permit By Notification, 4 Minimum Impact Expedited and 1 Land Resources Complaint to multiple requests for additional information, wetlands complaints and receipt of Complete Forestry Notification.

It was another active year dealing with the Wolfeboro Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Rapid Infiltration Disposal System (RWIDS). In July 2012 the five-year Ground Water Permit issued to the Town of Wolfeboro expired and the new five year Ground Water permit was issued in September of 2012 with included the reduction and frequency of monitoring requirements in areas of concern. The RWIDS continues to degrade the waterways outside the Ground Water Discharge Area and to what level will this be allowed to continue until something is done is unknown. An annual update of the violations will continue to be monitored at the RWIDS.

The Tuftonboro's consulting engineer reviewed the data from the water testing and provided a synopsis of violations occurring at the site. The engineer's report, in addition to the Commission's letter of concern, were forwarded to NH DES in July 2012.

Contact any of the members of the Conservation Commission at the Town Offices or refer to the NHDES web site www.des.nh.gov/wetlands regulatory assistance regarding wetland permits.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mike Phelps, Chairman

Lloyd Wood, BOS Representative

Nancy Piper, Steve Wingate, Nancy Byrd, Mark Howard, Kate Nesbit, Members

Bill Stockman, Jerry Light, Kate Albaugh, Alternates