Tuesday March 21, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Members in attendance: Jon Swan, Miriam Caldwell, Ruth Duval, Nancy Comeau, BOS Liaison Carol Sheltry

#### Absent: Ernie Hannaford, Mike Carrier

Members of the public: Gina Damiano, Tom Banit, Vic StCyr, Tom Dubreuil, Warren Green

#### Call to order: 6:30PM

- 1. Housekeeping note from Jon, questions from the public going forward should be submitted to the DCC email addresses so as to ensure content accuracy in response and to save time.
- 2. Per bylaws, election of officers conducted. Motion to retain current officers was made by Miriam, seconded by Ruth, motion passed unanimously.
- 3. Review of minutes of February 21, 2023 meeting, motion to approve by Miriam, seconded by Jon, motion approved unanimously.
- 4. Discussion of invoice from NHACC (NH Assoc. of Conservation Commissions). Benefits of membership discussed, motion made by Miriam to approve payment of invoice from DCC budget out of the General Fund for NHACC annual dues in the amount of \$250, seconded by Ruth, motion approved unanimously.
- Educational opportunities thru NHACC discussed, YouTube videos of past trainings are available online. NHACC handouts were distributed relative to a series of wetlands training videos. General discussion ensued, as well as an upcoming April 27<sup>th</sup> "North of the Notch" conservation commission roundtable event, via Zoom. Jon to attend, will report back if no one else attends.
- 6. Discussion of details regarding the upcoming Dalton Roadside Cleanup, scheduled for Saturday, April 29th, from 8:30AM-11:30AM. Fire Dept member Warren Green will provide roadside pickup with his trailer of blue bags and larger debris collected along the town roads. Sign-up sheet with road assignments will be made available to the public at the Municipal Building, Jeanette to be the point of contact for volunteers wishing to sign up for a particular road assignment. Free, blue trash bags provided by NRRA are available for pickup from Town Clerk ahead of event. Several residents have already signed up for Mountain Road and Simonds Road. FD Chief Ron Sheltry to be contacted if drug needles are found as he can provide collection during cleanup to ensure public safety. Miriam to bring box of gloves, if needed, public encouraged to bring their own for safe roadside collection of trash and recyclables. BBQ at Fire Dept after end of cleanup, 11:30AM. Waste generated to be kept at a minimum by utilizing reusable dinnerware.

### **Dalton Conservation Commission**

- 7. BioBlitz 2023 general discussion, motion made by Miriam to hold the event on Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, seconded by Ruth, motion approved unanimously. Short presentation by Tom Banit, trail maintenance volunteer at 300-acre David Dana Forest in Dalton, one of the venues for the event. Discussion about a few spots within the forest where participants can use the app iNaturalist to capture pictures of the various species within the forest, including mushrooms. The data collected from the event can be incorporated into the town NRI.
- 8. NRI Update email from Elisa Lawson of Watershed to Wildlife was read by Nancy Comeau, included as an attachment. There was a general discussion about this important catalog of Dalton's landscape and natural resources.
- 9. A letter of interest in the vacant 2<sup>nd</sup> Alternate position was received by the DCC, attached. Gina Damiano of Dalton addressed the board and shared her interest and background. Miriam moved that the DCC forward a letter of approval to the Selectboard so they can appoint her to fill the position, seconded by Nancy. Motion was approved unanimously. Jon will forward her letter and our recommendation that she be appointed to the DCC as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Alternate.
- 10. Public comment: None
- 11. Motion to adjourn by Miriam, seconded by Ruth, meeting adjourned at 7:30PM.

Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 18, 2023

sproved 4-0 Keng Comean

#### **Dalton Conservation Commission**

756 Dalton Road

#### Dalton, NH 03598

Date: March 21, 2023

To: Treasurer, Town of Dalton

The Dalton Conservation Commission requests a check be issued as follows:

Pay to:
NHACC
Payment for:
\$250 Membership
Dues
Invoice #:
1605
Payment due no later than:
ASAP
Requested by:
Jon Swan, Chairman,
DCC
Please pay out of the DCC budget, General Fund

Sincerely,

Dalton Conservation Commission

### **INVOICE**

New Hampshire Association of admin@nhacc.org Conservation Commissions 54 Portsmouth St Concord, NH 03301

603-224-7867 www.nhacc.org



#### **Dalton Conservation Commission**

Bill to
Dalton Conservation Commission
Dalton Town Office
756 Rd
Dalton, NH 03598

Invoice details Invoice no.: 1605 Invoice date: 09/29/2022 Terms: Net 30

	Total	\$250.00
2023 Membership Dues	1 unit × \$250.00	\$250.00
Product or service		Amount

#### Note to customer

1.

Thank you for your support. We look forward to working with you in the coming year.

#### **GUIDANCE ON WETLANDS**

# DEFINITIONS – What is a Wetland?

Wetlands include those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted to life in saturated soil conditions.



# D TECHNICAL CRITERIA – Federal & State

Vegetation

Prevalence indicated by 50% dominance measure (usually areal cover) Adaptations include buttressing, stooling, multiple trunks, inflated root cells

Soils

Hydrology

Saturation typically creates a thick surface organic layer Subsurface often grayish, or with mottles that reflect oxidation/reduction of Fe

Water at or near the surface for ≥12.5% of the growing season Usually two weeks or more



# CLASSIFICATION – the Cowardin System







#### How do I find a good wetlands map for my town?

Wetlands maps are easily available from various federal or state agencies. A good starting point is the **National Wetlands Inventory (NWI)**, a branch of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service that is responsible for classifying and mapping all wetlands in the United States. There are over 200 quad sheets – equivalent in size to the USGS topographic quads – of nearly all areas of the state. These are available on-line at <a href="http://www.fws.gov/nwi/">http://www.fws.gov/nwi/</a> or as hard copy maps (for a small copying fee) through the N.H. Office of Energy and Planning.

The second most-often used source for wetland maps on a local or regional scale is the **Natural Resource Conservation Service or NRCS** (formerly the Soil Conservation Service). They have the responsibility of maintaining and updating soil maps for every county in the United States, including the depiction of *hydric soils*, which are roughly equivalent to areas of wetland. These maps can be obtained through the Soil Data Mart at <u>http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/</u>.



Figure 1 1998 Aerial photo base map



Figure 2 Aerial Photo with NRCS hydric soils ad and NWI wetlands data

#### How accurate are these maps?

Both of the above sources of wetlands information were largely derived from remote data sources – i.e. from high altitude aerial photographs. These were interpreted by mapping specialists using very large-scale maps. It is a stated fact by the agencies that publish these maps that there are certain levels of error in these maps, for instance, up to 3 - 5 acres of upland within a hydric soil map unit. As a general rule, NWI maps *underestimate* the actual amount of wetlands on the ground and NRCS hydric soil maps *overestimate* the amount of wetlands on the ground.

# How can I improve the accuracy of these maps?

Perhaps the best (and least expensive) way to check the accuracy of the NWI and NRCS wetland maps is to have a mapping professional utilize existing, high altitude photography to re-interpret the location of wetlands on the ground. The advantages of doing this are 3-fold: 1) there are already several sources of high-altitude photography available for review; 2) the most recent aerial photography is likely much more up-to-date than that used for the initial



Figure 3 Aerial photo interpretation map - final

mapping by the NWI or NRCS; and 3) by using a combination of black-and-white, color infrared and/or stereoscopic (3-D) images of the ground, much greater resolution and accuracy can be effected. There are several sources of high-altitude aerial photographs for download and review – perhaps the most complete source is the New Hampshire Geographically Referenced Analysis and Information Transfer System (NH GRANIT), which is located on-line at <a href="http://www.granit.sr.unh.edu/cgi-bin/load\_file?PATH=/about">http://www.granit.sr.unh.edu/cgi-bin/load\_file?PATH=/about</a>.



#### Wetland Delineation

The best way to derive an accurate map for a given area is to have a certified wetlands professional conduct an on-the-ground wetland delineation of the area in question. There are over 200 Certified Wetland Scientists (CWS) in the state of New Hampshire and their contact information is provided by the certifying body, the N.H. Joint Board of Natural Scientists at <u>http://www.nh.gov/jtboard/ns.htm</u>. Wetland delineators are required to follow state and federal wetland guidelines as defined above, yet map standards depend upon the intended use of the map. For small-scale development projects involving wetlands, the state mapping standards of +/- 10 feet must be adhered to, that is, the wetland line depicted on any map sheet

must be within 10 feet of the actual line of the ground. For larger scale mapping projects, such as a townwide map, the map standards can be relaxed as long as they are clearly stated on the map.

Wetland delineations are never 100% accurate! Owing to varying environmental conditions over time, as well as the professional judgment of the delineator, wetland lines as flagged in the field may vary. [Note that it is within the powers of the Planning Board to contract an independent review of any wetland delineation performed by a developer.] While this may cause some consternation among town officials and concerned citizens, the important thing to note is that **wetland functions do not stop at the wetland line!** Whenever a development project is being planned that impacts wetlands, it is essential for all reviewers of the proposed project to consider what



essential functions – those invaluable services that promote the public good – are being lost or otherwise irreparably impaired. Only then can adequate mitigation for wetland impacts be crafted and adhered to. A comprehensive set of wetland **regulations** at the federal, state, and local level typically offer guidelines for understanding and minimizing the effects of human impact on wetland functions and values.





# A FEDERAL

Federal regulations arise from several laws that have been passed over the past 110 years. The 1899 Rivers and Harbors Act established the United States governmental authority over navigable rivers and interstate commerce on them, and created the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as the lead agency to oversee such activities. Since then, several laws have modified the jurisdiction over "waters of the United States," but no act has had such a sweeping effect as the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1974 and its subsequent amendment in 1977 known as the Clean Water Act.

These laws defined wetlands and included them under the regulation of surface waters, as well as certain lands that are adjacent. They provided a permitting mechanism for filling and dredging waterways and wetlands, which included oversight of permit approvals by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and classification and mapping authority of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Agricultural impacts to wetlands and surface waters were to be administered by the Soil Conservation Service (now Natural Resource Conservation Service), as set out by subsequent legislation such as the **Food and Security Act of 1985**.

#### For Further Information: http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/; http://www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands



The state of New Hampshire adheres to the regulatory authority of the United States Government, yet has actually protected wetlands on its own



since 1969. Under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers known as the **Statewide Programmatic General Permit** or SPGP, the state handles all permitting activity for impacts to wetlands yet shares permit applications for larger projects with the Army Corps for their review and consideration. Unless the project is a large one (generally > 1 acre of impact), permits need only be applied for to the state Wetlands Bureau. The jurisdictional authority of the state of New Hampshire is slightly different, however, since it includes all lands within 100 feet of the highest observable tide line *and* intermittent streams. Statewide jurisdiction also includes certain isolated wetlands that, based on a recent Supreme Court decision, currently fall outside of federal regulatory authority. The state administers their wetlands program through the **Department of Environmental Services Wetlands Bureau**, with permitting approval oversight by the governor-appointed **Wetlands Council**.

For Further Information: http://www.des.state.nh.us/wetlands/ ; http://www2.des.state.nh.us/OneStop/



Local wetlands authority is usually derived from a local ordinance or zoning provision that regulates projects that impact wetlands within the municipal boundary. There are at least 65 towns in the state that have some type of local restrictions that address wetland impacts. Most of these are standalone ordinances that were passed by a majority of town voters as a part of an annual warrant article. In the early 1980's there was a considerable effort on behalf of the state and regional planning agencies to get local wetland ordinances passed and adopted in New Hampshire. Many of these earlier ordinances look the same and have "boiler-plate" provisions that include a purpose



section, a definitions section, a permitted uses section, a section on special exceptions, and a special provisions section that addresses specific setbacks. Utilizing the fairly well-known section A:15 of RSA 482-A, many towns have added **prime wetland** language to their original wetland ordinance. While there are many different versions of these sections, as well as a number of unique special provisions dealing with subdivisions and site plan review, it is important to note that since 1980, a large number of **court cases have upheld the rights of municipalities to regulate**, **protect and conserve wetlands at a more rigorous standard than either the state or the federal government**.

For Further Information: See above document inset, available through the Local Government Center at <a href="http://www.nhlgc.org/">http://www.nhlgc.org/</a>

http://www.nh.gov/government/laws.html; http://www.nh.gov/htdig/;

http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/ie/billstatus/billstatuspwr.asp;

http://des.state.nh.us/wetlands/Guidebook/primewet.htm

Barbara Richter

#### North of the Notches CC Roundtable Zoom Meeting Thursday, April 27 at 5 pm

The New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commission would like your input on conservation priorities for the North Country. We are planning to host a conservation commission roundtable on Zoom for commissions who would like to meet and discuss conservation issues you are facing on your commission. We are interested in hearing about how you have overcome obstacles, how you have been successful and what questions you have for other towns. Please share this initiation with the rest of your commission.

#### Topic: North of the Notches CC Roundtable

Time: Apr 27, 2023 05:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83507049118?pwd=UTlhTVNjNUp2empmNDc3NUlqQ2Zkdz09

Meeting ID: 835 0704 9118 Passcode: 372350 One tap mobile +13092053325,,83507049118#,,,,\*372350# US +13126266799,,83507049118#,,,,\*372350# US (Chicago)

We encourage you to send us suggestions on topics to discuss at the meeting in advance so we can prepare the agenda. The program will be developed to reflect your interests and needs based on your response. Please let us know what challenges you have faced in the past few years and what questions you would like to ask other towns. We hope to find answers from each other during this roundtable discussion.

Let me know if you can attend on Thursday, April 27. We plan on starting the meeting at 5 pm and it should run for an hour and a half. Submit your questions and topics for discussion to Barbara Richter at <u>Barbara@NHACC.org</u> no later than Wednesday, April 19.

We look forward to hearing from you and learning what is going on in your town.

Regards, Barbara

Barbara Richter, Executive Director NH Association of Conservation Commissions 54 Portsmouth Street Concord, NH 03301 <u>603.224.7867</u> Barbara@nhacc.org www.nhacc.org

# NH BIOBLITZ GUIDE: Participant Guide to Using iNaturalist for a BioBlitz

iNaturalist is a tool you can use to record observations of wild organisms and is often used to collect data during a BioBlitz. iNaturalist allows you to use your smartphone or tablet in the field (or computer once you get home) to record what you see in nature at a specific time and location. You can learn more about iNaturalist at *www.inaturalist.org.* 

Making observations on the iNaturalist mobile app is convenient if you would like to take photos and record your data while in the field. The app can be used offline and synced once you get back into internet range or cellular reception. You need to be logged into the app prior to heading into the field in order to work offline. You can download the app for free in the App Store (iPhone) or Google Play (Android).

### Below are instructions for getting started with iNaturalist, joining a BioBlitz Project, and entering observations.



## SIGN UP FOR INATURALIST

(If you already have an iNaturalist account, skip to Join a BioBlitz Project below).

### FROM A PHONE:

- 1. Download the iNaturalist mobile app from the App Store (iPhone) or Google Play (Android).
- 2. Open the iNaturalist app and swipe to left to get to the *Log In* screen. Create an account.
- 3. Once you are logged in, click on the *Me* icon in the menu at the bottom of the screen. Here, you can add a photo of yourself (or something else to represent yourself). You can change your e-mail, username and other settings. If you want to add a bio to your profile, you will need to do this on a computer.

### FROM A COMPUTER:

- 1. Go to *www.iNaturalist.org* and click *Sign Up* in the upper right-hand corner of the page.
- 2. Once you have an account and are logged in, hover over your username in the upper righthand corner of the home page and click on *Profile*.
- 3. Click *Edit Account Settings & Profile* (underneath your profile image). Here, you can add a photo of yourself (or something else to represent yourself) by selecting *Change Icon*. You can also add a brief bio, change your e-mail notification settings, modify the licensing on any photos you upload, etc. When you are finished editing, click *Save* to return to your profile home page.

# JOIN A BIOBLITZ PROJECT:

Now it's time to join the BioBlitz project! For some BioBlitzes, this is an important step so that your observations are recorded and counted as part of the BioBlitz effort. For others, your observations might be automatically included in a project based on the location and date/time submitted, but joining the project will allow you to follow along. Either way, the BioBlitz coordinator should provide participants with the name of the project in iNaturalist.

### FROM A PHONE:

- 1. On the bottom menu bar, click on *More*.
- 2. In the search bar that appears, type in the name of the project and hit search. This will bring up the BioBlitz project.
- 3. Go to the project page, click on *Join along* the top menu underneath the project name. The project will now show up on the *Projects list* under the *More* tab.

### FROM A COMPUTER:

- 1. On the top navigation bar, hover over *Community*, and select *Projects* from the drop-down menu.
- 2. In the search bar that appears on the project page, type in the name of the project and hit search. This will bring up the BioBlitz project.
- 3. Go to the project page, click on *Join this Project* in the top right-hand corner (above the photo), and follow the steps as prompted. The project will now show up unde*r Projects* on the top navigation bar.



## MAKE AN OBSERVATION:

As you or your group identifies organisms throughout the BioBlitz, you will be entering observations into iNaturalist. In addition to photographs, you will need to record other important information such as date and location.

Below are some basic instructions for submitting an observation using the mobile app, but you can also check out this helpful video from iNaturalist: *https://vimeo.com/162581545*. If you are interested in using the desktop version of the site to submit observations later on, check out this video: *https:// www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCShSn4E-mc*.



- 1. Once the mobile app is open, click the camera icon at the bottom to *Observe* (make an observation).
- 2. Take a photo (or choose one from your photo library) and select Next.
- 3. Enter information about your observation. The predictive feature in *What did you see?* will not work while offline. If you know the exact species name, you can type it in or search for it. If you don't know the species name, type in a placeholder (e.g. moth), which will allow you or other experts to identify from your photos later on.
- 4. The date and location should automatically fill in if you have location services enabled. Otherwise, click *Location* to edit and drag the crosshair to your location.
- 5. If you're on a public property, you will most likely want to leave *Geo Privacy* set as *Open* (the default option). If, for some reason, you don't want others to see where you made your observation, you can choose obscured or private to publicly obscure or hide your observation, but note that choosing these options might mean your observation isn't captured in the BioBlitz project.
- 6. Leave *Captive/Cultivated* as *No* (the default option).
- 7. Click *Projects* to select projects to share your observation with. Choose the name of the project to make sure your observation is added to the project.
- 8. Click Share.
- 9. Your observation will be added to a queue that is *Waiting to Upload*. To view items you have waiting to upload, click *Me* on the bottom menu. Once you return to internet or cellular data service, click the round green *Upload* button at the top of this screen to submit observations to iNaturalist.

Note: Before uploading, you can also click on any individual observation that is waiting to upload to make edits. This will allow you to use the predictive function in the **What did you see?** field now that you have service.

Funding for this project is provided by the Landscape Scale Restoration Grant, U.S. Forest Service. The University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. University of New Hampshire, NH Division of Forests and Lands, US Department of Agriculture and NH counties cooperating.

From: Elise Lawson <<u>ejlawson9@gmail.com</u>>
Sent: Friday, March 17, 2023 11:35 AM
To: Conservation Chair <<u>conservationChair@townofdalton.com</u>>
Subject: Re: Great News!

#### Hi Jon

I am happy I will be working with the Conservation Commission to finish your NRI! And exciting you are doing a bioblitz. They are very fun and you can gather lots of information.

I have been working on your GIS maps which will go along with your report. Here are a few draft maps for you to check out. I still need to create dense softwoods/permanent openings, overall habitat types, subwatersheds, but you can at least look at a few of them. They are still draft and will be edited/updated based on field work. For example, I know of a few vernal pool locations, and I am sure Nancy does too. So they will be added, along with any findings in our last two days of field work. I would also love to include data from your bioblitz! It is very relevant to your NRI.

I will finish draft maps this spring. I then have two more days of field work...locations to be determined by the DCC (Nancy and I have talked about areas she feels are important to visit). Of course we also need landowner permission to visit areas on private property.

After all that, I will complete GIS analyses and write a draft report for the DCC to review at your convenience. Then finalize the report and maps, give you all of the data, and I think we have a public presentation at the end of this project so anyone who is interested can learn about what we have done. These usually have great discussions too.

Hope this helps! Does this make sense to you? I am happy to explain further or answer any questions. I would normally be happy to join you to discuss in person, but I am at a planning board meeting next tuesday.

All the best Elise Gina Damiano <ginamariedamiano@gmai l.com>

To: Conservation Commission

Tue 3/21/2023 11:26 AM

Hello!

I recently attended the Dalton town meeting where it was discussed that there is an open alternate seat on the Conservation Commission. With all of the discussion around the work that the CC does, I was inspired to step forward and volunteer to serve on the CC in the alternate position if the spot is still open.

During the pandemic, my job went remote so I was able to do what I've always wanted to do, move full time to Dalton. My family roots in the North Country go back for generations here in Dalton, Littleton and Franconia. My great-grandfather, Roland Peabody, was <u>integral in the development of Cannon Mountain and the Tramway</u>. His dedication and enthusiasm for developing recreation in the White Mountains has carried forward in the family. I continue his tradition as an avid outdoor enthusiast from hiking to skiing (alpine and nordic!), snowshoeing and mountain biking.

Over the last year and a half, I've been leading the effort to develop the Friends of Forest Lake Trails, a volunteer group of local residents focused on stewarding the trails in Forest Lake State Park. We hope to build new trails at some point in the future and are working right now to finalize our first work plan with the NH State Parks office so we can begin trail work this spring. We're even hoping to coordinate some community events like an Ice Out Polar Plunge at Forest Lake and trail activities in the summer, fall and winter.

I believe deeply in the conservation and protection of the natural resources in Dalton and NH as well as the promotion of the North Country as a destination for outdoor recreation. I hope to be able to join other Dalton residents with the same enthusiasm! I look forward to supporting efforts around the bio blitz, natural resource inventory and any other initiatives.

Thank you for your consideration!

Gina Damiano Dalton Resident

### **Dalton Roadside Cleanup Street Sign-Up Sheet**

ACHORN HILL RD	HUNTER FARM ROAD	STAR KING LEDGE
BEAR LANE	HURLBURT ROAD	ROAD
BIG HILL ROAD	KNOB HILL ROAD	TUCKER ROAD
BLAKSLEE ROAD	LANDRY ROAD	UNION ROAD
BRIDGE HILL ROAD	LOWER OX TEAM ROAD	WALLACE ROAD
BRIGGS ROAD		WELLS ROAD
BUCK ROAD	MARTIN MEADOW POND ROAD	WEST SIDE ROAD
BUCKSHOT ROAD		WHITEFIELD ROAD
BUSH ROAD	MCGINTY ROAD	WINTER LANE
	MCINTYRE ROAD	
CADUTTAIL	MEADOW MIST DRIVE	
CARLETON HILL ROAD	MILLER ROAD	
COMEAU ROAD	MIRROR LAKE ROAD	
CUSHTON DRIVE	MOUNTAIN ROAD	
DALTON ROAD	NICHOLS ROAD	
DORSEY ROAD	O'NEIL ROAD	
ELGOSIN ROAD	PARKER ROAD EXT.	
FARAWAY ROAD	RAILROAD LN	
FRENCH ROAD	RIDGE ROAD	
GEISZ WAY	RIDGEVIEW TERRACE	
HALL ROAD	ROONEY ROAD	
HARRIMAN ROAD	SCOTTS JUNCTION	
HASKINS LANE	SIMONDS ROAD	
HOMESTEAD LANE	SMITH ROAD	