



2013 CONCORD ANNUAL TOWN REPORT

Community Development

- [Planning Matters](#)
- [Health Matters](#)
- [Housing Matters](#)
- [Land Matters](#)
- [Development](#)

Natural Resources Commission

- [Cover](#)
- [Town Officials](#)
- [Board of Selectmen](#)
- [Town Manager](#)
- [2013 Town Meetings](#)
- [General Government](#)
- [Public Safety](#)
- [Municipal Light](#)
- [Public Works](#)
- Community Development
- [Schools](#)
- [Human Services](#)
- [Finance](#)

Elissa J. Brown, Chair
 Jeffrey W. Adams
 Dean S. Banfield
 George G. Lewis
 Stephen B. Verrill

The Natural Resources Commission (NRC) and staff are responsible for the overall stewardship of the natural resources of the Town, and the establishment of Town environmental policy in conjunction with the Selectmen and Town Meeting. The NRC administers the state Wetlands Protection Act (MGL Chapter 131, Section 40), Rivers Protection Act (MGL Chapter 258 of the Acts of 1996) and accompanying regulations (310 CMR 10.00), and the Concord Wetlands Bylaw and Regulations. The NRC also plays an important role in open space planning pursuant to its authority under the Conservation Commission Act (MGL Chapter 40 Section 8c).

Wetlands Protection Act

The majority of Commission and staff time relates to administering and enforcing wetland regulations. The NRC held 24 hearings to review permit applications, which included 52 Notices of Intent, 5 Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation, and 21 Requests for Determination of Applicability, for a total of 78 new applications. The NRC also received 2 requests to amend an Order of Conditions. The NRC closed out many completed projects, issuing 48 Certificates of Compliance and 3 Partial Certificates of Compliance. Division staff reviewed 37 Administrative Approvals for very minor projects including limited tree and invasive species removal. The NRC issued two Emergency Certifications to Concord Public

Works to breach beaver dams and one to stabilize a breach in a trail at Sleepy Hollow. The NRC began working with four property owners to resolve new violations for unauthorized driveway reconstruction, invasive species removal, and greenhouse installation. Two Orders of Resource Area Delineations were appealed (221 Baker Ave. and Keuka Rd.), the former being overturned and the latter still in the appeal phase.

Projects of interest reviewed by the NRC this year include a proposal to replace and clean out culverts in a sensitive wetland ecosystem at Moore's Pond in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, an eight-lot subdivision at 9B Monsen Road which will result in 17.4 acres of upland and wetland, including important Blanding's turtle habitat, to be placed under a Conservation Restriction, and a Phragmites removal program at Soutter Field.

Natural Resources Division

Delia R. J. Kaye, Natural Resources Director
Lori A. Capone, Assistant Natural Resources Director
Cindy L. Gray, Administrative Assistant

Land Protection Initiatives

Conservation Restrictions: Three new Conservation Restrictions (CRs) covering 7.21 acres were accepted by the NRC and approved by the Board of Selectmen, two off Lowell Road with frontage on the Assabet River and one off Mildred Circle. All three CRs provide significant public benefit through the protection of upland and wetland meadows and woodland, as well as rare species habitat protection at the Lowell Rd. CRs. A fourth 6.7-acre CR off Old Road to Nine Acre Corner originally granted in 1995 was expanded to include a former No-Cut Zone. The Division is also working with four additional landowners to finalize outstanding CRs.

Open Space and Recreation Plan Update: Significant progress was made to updating the Open Space and Recreation Plan, which will help direct conservation and recreation efforts for the next seven years, and make the Town eligible to receive certain State grants. The Conway School of Landscape Design prepared a draft update that is being revised and updated by the Open Space and Recreation Committee and staff. Members of the Committee include Jeff Adams, Dean Banfield, Peter Baty, Lori Capone, Kat Edwards, Pam Higgins, Ellie Horwitz, Lynn Huggins, Delia Kaye, Gary Kleiman, Laura Lunig, Steve Ng, Susan Rask, Gordon Shaw, Julie Vaughan, and Bryan Windmiller.

Community Preservation Act: Working with the White Pond Advisory Committee, staff recommended selection of ESS Group to develop a comprehensive watershed management plan at White Pond to document baseline conditions and develop recommendations to protect the ecological

integrity and enhance recreational use of the pond and its environs. Development of the plan was funded from Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds in 2011.

Division staff drafted easements across two properties between the recently-acquired Rogers land and Marshall Farm to provide pedestrian and farm equipment access along the top of the Assabet river bluff from Second Division Brook conservation land to Harrington Park. Acquisition of the easements was funded from CPA funds in 2013.

Division staff oversaw a fourth year of invasive species control at Old Calf Pasture, in part with funding received through CPA funds awarded in 2013. The New England Wildflower Society treated new areas of invasive glossy buckthorn, expanding the areas of improved habitat for native flora and fauna, including the rare Britton's violet.

Natural Resource Management

The Division is responsible for the stewardship of approximately 1,400 acres of Town conservation land (including White Pond Reservation), maintaining 19 miles of trails, and mowing 84 acres to maintain trails and open meadows. Natural resource management also includes staff support to five NRC subcommittees, as well as coordinating with other local and regional stewardship initiatives.

Emerson Thoreau Amble: After several years of planning and construction, the Emerson–Thoreau Amble trail was completed and commemorated with an opening ceremony in June. The trail provides a 1.7-mile walk from Heywood Meadow to Thoreau's cabin at Walden Pond and includes two bridge crossings and an agreement with the Ralph Waldo Emerson Memorial Association for a portion of the trail to traverse private land. This trail also reroutes a portion of the Bay Circuit Trail off busy roads into a quiet woodland setting. The Heywood Meadow Stewardship Committee, Mill Brook Task Force, Trails Committee, Conservation Crew, Jim Macone, the MCI prison crew, Concord Public Works, several dedicated volunteers, and members of the Emerson family coordinated to make this trail a reality.

Conservation Crew: Ian Hunter returned for a second year, joined by Luke Puleo to perform trail maintenance, remove invasive exotic vegetation, and conduct general maintenance on conservation lands throughout Town. The Crew removed the invasive aquatic water chestnut from Macone Pond, Warner's Pond, and Hutchins Pond, and continued the cooperative effort with US Fish and Wildlife, the Concord Land Conservation Trust, the Town of Lincoln to remove water chestnut from Fairhaven Bay and the Sudbury River. For the second summer since 2001, the aquatic weed harvester was not needed on the Sudbury River and Fairhaven Bay. CLCT Trustee Gordon Shaw coordinated and led volunteer hand-harvesting efforts, assisted by the

Conservation Crew. The Crew also replaced, repaired, and/or repainted conservation land signs at several properties.

Interns: The Division engaged two interns this year. Nancy Klaips was with the Division for 12 weeks recreating a wetlands permitting database. Henry Holmes volunteered with the Division and developed an invasive species webpage to assist the community with invasive species identification and management.

Conservation Land Use Permits: A total of 15 permits were issued to various groups using Town conservation lands for drag hunting, maple sap collection, and to a variety of groups for field classroom purposes. Permits were also issued to Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts for overnight camping at Scout Island in Warner's Pond, and the Musketaquid Arts and Environment Program for Earth Day and winter solstice celebrations.

Conservation Restriction Stewardship Committee: The CRSC worked with staff and consultant Land Stewardship Inc. to develop 16 Conservation Restriction Baseline Documentation Reports (BDR's). The Committee completed three additional BDRs and began developing monitoring reports for CRs that have completed baseline reports. Members developed a template to aid in preparing future Conservation Restrictions. Members include Kathryn Angell, David Bell, Peter Farrow, Catherine Perry (chair), and Lydia Rogers.

Heywood Meadow Stewardship Committee: This was an active year for the HMSC to restore, preserve, and beautify Heywood Meadow. Once the snows melted a lovely display of daffodils bloomed on both sides of the Meadow. The bulbs planted last fall on the east side echoed the long established drift on the west Meadow. Another spring highlight was the planting of the Arbor Day crabapple tree to replace one lost last fall. In conjunction with Division staff, the HMSC worked with GCG Associates to develop a plan to restore the crumbling stone wall and to provide stone stairs on to the west Meadow, and remove the cement-capped wall along the west side of Heywood Street. A CPA application was submitted for this work. The HMSC membership includes: Annette Bagley (Clerk), Lola Chaisson, Susan Clark, Mary Clarke, Joanne Gibson (Chair), Stan Lucks, Murray Nicolson, Marian Thornton and Sandy Smith (Concord Battery liaison). Sadly long time member Marion Grabhorn moved out of Town.

Mill Brook Task Force: The MBTF continued its efforts to protect the Mill Brook by conducting biannual cleanups and continued public awareness. Members include: Carol Gupta, Bruce MacAlpine, Fran and John Neville, and Allan Schmidt (Chair).

Trails Committee: The Committee dedicated considerable effort to opening the Conant Street entrance of the Domino-Nocella conservation land, which

included eradicating an infestation of invasive Japanese knotweed and resolving a property encroachment issue with an abutting landowner. The success of the eradication will be assessed in the spring at which time a kiosk will be placed at the entrance. The committee has also been developing histories for major conservation areas for the production of a trail guide booklet for all the Town's conservation lands. Members include: Harry Beyer, David Clarke, Jonathan Keyes, Ken Miller (Chair), Murray Nicolson, Peter Siebert, and Robert White.

Wildlife Passages Task Force: The Wildlife Passages Task Force commented on the wildlife underpass proposed as part of the Crosby Corner reconstruction project, and hopes to continue to be involved. Members include: Dave Kay, Ron McAdow, Bob Metcalfe, Lydia Rogers, Dan Stimson, and Bryan Windmiller.

Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area: Division staff continued working with other towns, organizations, and individuals in the Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord Rivers (SuAsCo) watershed to develop and implement strategic regional plans for invasive species management in the watershed, and to promote collaborative approaches to achieve these priorities.

Blanding's Turtle: The NRC continues to support Dr. Bryan Windmiller's research and headstarting efforts on the Blanding's Turtle, a threatened species with a population at Great Meadows.

Agricultural Leases And Community Gardens

Agricultural Farming Agreements: The Division continued to work with local farmers to retain land in agriculture. Three new licenses on the McGrath farmland were issued this year, bringing the total number to 16 agreements covering 197 acres of actively farmed land. Staff worked with other Town officials to find a farmer to operate a farmstead at the McGrath land, which will include the McGrath house, farmstand, and 14 acres of conservation land historically used for agriculture.

Gaining Ground: Gaining Ground, the leaseholder at the Thoreau Birthplace conservation land, is a non-profit organization that grows organic produce for hunger relief with the help of volunteers of all ages and abilities. Gaining Ground donated 34,000 pounds of fresh food in 2013 (a record harvest!) to ten area food-assistance programs, from local pantries in Concord to organizations in Boston and Lowell. This group now has approximately 4 acres in production on Town land, as well as two abutting acres on leased Massport land. In the early spring 130 sugar maples in Concord and Carlisle were tapped and 40 gallons of syrup were donated.

Community Gardens: The long-standing tradition of the three organic community gardens continues to thrive under the helpful guidance of

volunteer coordinators Rebecca Sheehan Purcell (Hugh Cargill), Ray Andrews, Dale Clutter, and Elisabeth Elden (East Quarter), and Tracy Sharakan and Kitty Smith (Cousins). Sadly, the Hugh Cargill Community Garden lost its senior leader, Jim Catterton, who died in December. Jim loved gardening and embodied much of the community garden experience for 30 years. A botanist by training with a great respect for the land, Jim generously shared his prodigious knowledge, as well as seeds and plants, with his fellow gardeners.

All coordinators assist new gardeners in obtaining plots, as well as nurture gardeners to producing beautiful and bountiful harvests. Many gardeners share their bounty by donating vegetables to Open Table, and flowers to the Town House and Stone Soup Dinner.

Environmental And Educational Activities

The Division continues to sponsor the longstanding tradition of early morning Conservation Coffees on the first Tuesday morning of most months at 7:30 a.m. These lively and stimulating gatherings of citizens, conservation organization representatives, and federal, state, and local officials provide an interesting and effective forum to exchange information, ideas, and concerns about conservation and the environment.

The Senior Walking Program, a collaborative effort between the Division and the Council on Aging, continues to be a successful program, offering two weekly walks on Concord's trails in a safe communal environment.

Agriculture Committee

Charles Poutasse, Chair

Brian Cramer

Dudley Goar

Bill Kenney

Susan Macone

Associate Members

Laura Sackton

Emily Wheeler, Clerk

The Agriculture Committee provides a forum for discussions about matters of interest to farmers in Concord. It also advises the Board of Selectmen concerning how the Town can help to support farming in Concord.

McGrath Farmstead

The Committee was active in advocating purchase of the McGrath farmstead by the Town for purposes of leasing to a farmer. The farmstead, located on Barrett's Mill Road, includes 1.9 acres of land, a residence, and a farm stand with attached greenhouse. The farmstead is surrounded by approximately 40

acres of farmland that the Town already owned, which had been farmed by Pat McGrath before his death in 2012. Purchase of the farmstead was authorized by the Town Meeting, and the purchase was completed in July. A Request for Proposal was issued in December, inviting interested parties to make proposals for agricultural use of the farmstead and approximately 14 acres of farmable land adjacent to the farmstead. The farmstead and land are being offered at an affordable rent which would make it possible for a new resident farmer to become established in Concord. Grants from the Concord Housing Foundation have assisted the Town in renovating the residence for this purpose. The Committee provided advice for terms of the Request for Proposals, and is available to assist in reviewing proposals. An applicant will be selected by the Town Manager to begin farming at the site in 2014.

Ag Day

The Committee sponsored the eighth annual farmers' market festival on September 7 on the Milldam. This year the "Ag Day" event was run in cooperation with a Farm and Garden Fair, sponsored by the Concord Gardeners' Cooperative. In addition to the Farmer's Market on the Milldam, the event offered tours of some of the commercial farms in Concord, five community gardens, a number of private gardens, and other sites related to farming and gardening. Tours took place in the afternoons on September 7 and 8.

Guide to Concord Farms

The Guide to Concord Farms was updated and 1,500 copies were printed in 2013 for distribution in 2014. The updated Guide has listings for 20 Concord farms with a map showing where they are located and a brief description of the products raised and sold at each farm. It will be available at locations throughout Town starting this spring.

Stone Soup Dinner

The sixth annual Stone Soup Dinner was held on September 15, serving Concord grown produce prepared by Concord chefs and restaurants. The event was held at Verrill Farm and was well attended, with great weather. The Stone Soup Dinner is run by a newly-organized non-profit corporation, Stone Soup Dinner, Inc., with cooperation and support from the Ag Committee and the participating restaurants. Proceeds from the dinner are contributed to a "Plant a Farmer" grants program to support new farmers in Town.

Visitors to Committee Meetings

During the year the Committee invited a number of Town officials and other persons to speak about issues of interest to the farming community.

Selectmen Jeff Wieand and Carmin Reiss and Natural Resources Director Delia Kaye provided ongoing updates concerning the McGrath farmstead. Susan Rask, Public Health Director, discussed Board of Health permitting regulations concerning farm animals. Town Assessor Lane Partridge spoke about the Chapter 61, 61A and 61B classifications for forest, agricultural, and recreational land, and in particular about the current review being conducted by the Assessors Department of parcels under 61A classification. A School Committee member attended one of our meetings to discuss possible use of part of the Burke parcel as a school bus depot. (The Burke parcel, adjacent to Ripley School, is excellent farming land that has been leased to a Concord farmer since the Town purchased the land a number of years ago.) We also had representatives from the Trustees of Reservations, the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission, and the Concord Land Conservation Trust attending various meeting during the year.



Jim Catterton, Former Agriculture Committee member, enjoyed the annual farmers' market on the MillDam immensely.

Dudley Goar

New Committee Members

Committee Chair Jennifer Hashley stepped down at the end of her Chair term. Jennifer moved to a new residence just over the line in Sudbury, so she is no longer a Concord resident or a Committee member. However, Pete and Jen's Birds continues to raise chickens in Concord, so Jennifer continues to be an active member of the Concord farming community. Chip Poutasse, owner of Brigham Farm, was approved as new Committee Chair. The Board of Selectmen approved Brian Cramer (manager at Hutchins Farm) as a full Ag Committee member. Laura Sackton (First Root Farm) and Carolyn Goethert (volunteer at Scimone Farm) became Associate Members.

Jim Catterton, Former Committee Member

Jim Catterton passed away in December this year. Jim was a member of the Ag Committee for a number of years, serving most recently as Chair through April 2012. Jim had a lively interest in everything related to farming and gardening, and he had definite opinions about many issues involving farming in Concord. He was a long-time member of the Hugh Cargill Community Garden, and was active in organizing Concord Ag Day as an annual event.

Future of Farming in Concord

Concord still has an ample base of good, productive farmland. There may be more farm stands operating in Concord than in any other town in eastern Massachusetts. Active agriculture will succeed in Concord if the regulatory climate is supportive, if there are people who want to work hard to cultivate the land, and if there are secure markets for local farm products. Based on enrollment in agricultural education programs and interest in farm / farmer matching programs, there appears to be an increasing number of young people interested in becoming farmers in the New England area. There is farmland in Concord protected from development under a number of programs and therefore available for farming purposes at reasonable rents. However, the high cost of renting or buying a residence in Concord has been a significant barrier to new farmers becoming established as older farmers retire or pass on. Hopefully the Town's purchase of the McGrath farmstead, to be leased at an affordable rent for farming purposes, will be a step toward overcoming this barrier.

Concord Land Conservation Trust

Concord Land Conservation Trust Trustees:

John M. Stevens, Jr., Chair
 Jonathan M. Keyes, Secretary
 Pauline Cross Reeve
 Gordon H. Shaw, Treasurer
 Eleanor C. Horwitz
 Joan D. Ferguson
 Lynn G. Huggins

Concord Open Land Foundation Directors:

Thomas C. Tremblay, Chair
 Joan D. Ferguson, Secretary
 John G. Bemis, Treasurer
 F. Robert Parker

The Concord Land Conservation Trust (P.O. Box 141, Concord, MA) is a tax exempt, charitable organization established in 1959, with membership open to all who are interested in conservation of our natural resources. It complements other conservation efforts of the Town, State and national governments and offers an alternative and a balance to development in our

Town.

The Land Trust works closely with its affiliate, the Concord Open Land Foundation. COLF generally acquires property that may be preserved only in part or used as a means for preserving other property. For example, in 2011, COLF acquired through a bargain/sale and generous gift by Paul and Susan Ware 8.6 acres of property between the Ripley School and the Ridge behind Lexington Road. COLF sold the portion of the property constituting a house lot at 201 Independence Road, on which a new house is now being built, and transferred the remainder of the acreage to the Land Trust for permanent conservation.

[Concord Land Conservation Trust](#)

For some years, the Land Trust has become more active in taking the initiative in land preservation. The combination of development pressure resulting from Concord's desirability as a place to live and the limited space available for development means we have a small window for preserving the existing balance of land uses in the Town. As a result, the Land Trust now makes an effort to preserve from development, by purchase if necessary, virtually every large property that comes on the market, parcels that abut or link other open areas and properties in areas of the Town where open space is scarce.



Margaret O'Brien and Nick Stewart head out to pull invasive water chestnut plants from the Sudbury River.

Courtesy CLCT

During 2013, the Land Trust undertook a number of new stewardship initiatives. A forester began thinning dense growths of pine seedlings and saplings in the Wright Woods in order to maintain a healthy forest and to improve sight lines from trails. We instituted a new mowing schedule to enhance the value of the Newbury Field as wildlife habitat while preserving its character as a hillside field. We started the arduous process of eliminating

invasive phragmites, one plant at a time, from the marshes by the Bigelow Woods.

Despite increasing landholdings and consequent burdens of stewardship, the Land Trust remains an organization that relies in principal part on the volunteered services of our trustees, COLF's directors and our members. CLCT's only paid employee is Nancy Cowan, who on weekday mornings staffs the Land Trust's small office on Sudbury Road near the railroad crossing.

The Land Trust held its annual meeting on November 3 at the home of Michael and Sally Schnitzer. The meeting followed a walk from Lowell Road around the Chamberlin Woods, into the Estabrook Woods and back along Bateman's Pond.

From time to time throughout the year, the Land Trust organizes walks on several of our properties to encourage their use by our membership. Once again during 2013, the Land Trust and Harvard University collaborated in sponsoring a public lecture program and related seminar series for students at Concord-Carlisle Regional High School, the Middlesex School and Concord Academy. The program was organized, and the Harvard lecturers selected, by Andy Biewener, a Concord resident who is a Professor of Biology at Harvard and the director of the University's Concord Field Station, which administers the Harvard property that forms the core of the Estabrook Woods.

The Land Trust is grateful to the many residents of Concord who have been so generous in donating both land or conservation restrictions on land and the funds necessary to acquire and maintain conservation land. We are privileged to live in a Town that places such a high value on maintaining a balance of land use characteristic of the traditions of a New England Town. The Land Trust acquires and holds property not as museum pieces but for use by the public. Our properties are available for hiking, skiing, picnicking and, in most cases, horseback riding. We hope that all of you will join us in using and enjoying the properties you have helped us to preserve.

White Pond Advisory Committee

Chris Leary, Chair
 Arra Avakian
 David Caruso
 Jerry Frenkil
 Jim Lyons

The White Pond Advisory Committee (WPAC) was established in 1973 as an advisory and liaison Committee to review and analyze the concerns of the White Pond watershed and play a leadership role in acting as steward for the pond and its environs. White Pond was described by Thoreau as the "Gem of

the Woods”; today, it remains a prime Town resource for a wide variety of recreational activities including swimming, fishing and boating to name a few.

Water Quality

The WPAC has a working relationship with the Friends of White Pond (FOWP) in regards to water testing and the general wellbeing of the pond. This includes phosphorous testing, quantification of aquatic vegetation, and a survey of erosion sites on the shoreline. FOWP has been conducting regular water quality tests of clarity and dissolved oxygen on a volunteer basis for many years. New baseline water quality testing is in process with the Comprehensive White Pond Watershed Management Plan.

Erosion Control

The WPAC has worked with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in the past to identify critical erosion areas contributing to the degradation of water quality. Water bars, fencing and signage have been added to these areas, but have been removed illegally by users of White Pond. The WPAC and DNR are in the process of securing remaining money from the 2011 CPA application for future design and implementation to help repair these critical areas of erosion.

White Pond Reservation

Many efforts have evolved over the years from the Committee’s concern about the Town-owned property known as White Pond Reservation. This property is located on the southwest shore of the Pond, extending back over forty acres of woods and trails to the Sudbury border. While it has been proposed before, there is currently no management plan in place for this spectacular property since its acquisition by the Town in 1992. The WPAC continues its working relationship with the DNR to encourage the proper use of this area, along with Town officials promoting this valuable resource to Town residents.

Comprehensive Pond Management Plan

The WPAC along with the Town of Concord and the DNR has retained the services of ESS Group of Waltham, MA, to implement a Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. This plan when complete will provide baseline data on the health of the pond, a program for maintaining the ongoing water quality, will quantify issues associated with private land ownership within the White Pond watershed, and a formulate a position on the recreational uses and limitations of the pond. The plan will consider how the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT) may impact future use of the pond.

Building and Renovations in the White Pond Area

A continuing responsibility of the WPAC is to work with the Building Commissioner and other Town Committees in review and advice in regards to new construction (e.g., additions, landscape changes, etc.) in the White Pond Watershed to ensure that the health of the pond and its environs are preserved. A number of these reviews were performed in 2013 and the committee approved each with a quorum. Of particular concern to the WPAC is any activity that would have an adverse effect on the quality of the Pond water and surrounding habitat.

Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT)

The WPAC has been actively involved in the discussions surrounding the BFRT to ensure that the Pond is properly protected given that the proposed trail passes closely to White Pond. The WPAC is working with the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee and other groups such as Concord-based Friends of Rural Trails, the Friends of the BFRT and the Trails Committee. The WPAC feels it is important to elevate awareness of the impacts of the trail construction, activities, and increased visitor traffic on the health and aesthetics of the Pond, the surrounding woods and on the wildlife corridor, while encouraging Town usage of this great asset.