

# Washington Conservation Commission

## Minutes - March 16, 2011

Assembly time: 7:00 PM.

Present: Carol Andrews, Arin Mills, Ken Eastman, Johanna Young, Don Richard, Nan Schwartz, and Jed Schwartz

Guests: 3 Goshen Conservation Commission members, 2 Hillsboro Conservation Commission, 4 Antrim Conservation Commission members and the town planner from Antrim.

- 1.0 Taking Action for Wildlife Workshops – Frank Mitchell, from the UNH Co-operative Extension Service, joined us and gave an overview of the NH Wildlife Action Plan and their Taking Action for Wildlife community assistance program. His group works with communities and landowners on special projects using an application process to find worthy projects for conserving wildlife and habitats in New Hampshire. He spoke to us about using the Wildlife Action Plan and Maps for supporting conservation commission projects such as Natural Resource Inventories and conservation plans.

We learned that New Hampshire is the fastest-growing state in the Northeast. A major threat to wildlife species is loss of habitat from housing, commercial buildings and other development. Air and water pollution, roads and highways, and invasive species present further threats to wildlife in New Hampshire. In order to assess these risks and work to conserve wildlife, NH Fish & Game worked with UNH Cooperative Extension and other partners in the conservation community to create the state's first Wildlife Action Plan (WAP). The plan, published in 2005, guides wildlife conservation efforts and helps New Hampshire decision-makers and landowners restore and maintain critical habitats and populations of the state's species of conservation concern. The Wildlife Action Plan maps consist of wildlife habitat land cover maps and maps that show highest ranking habitats and supporting landscapes. There are both statewide maps and local maps available.

They have just launched a website: <http://www.takingactionforwildlife.org> where you can find many helpful resources. The Wildlife Action Plan can be found here: [http://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/Wildlife/wildlife\\_plan.htm](http://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/Wildlife/wildlife_plan.htm)  
The maps can be found here: [http://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/Wildlife/Wildlife\\_Plan/using\\_maps.htm](http://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/Wildlife/Wildlife_Plan/using_maps.htm)

Frank showed us the Stewardship Guides they have published to help landowners identify wildlife habitats on their land. The brochures can also be

found here: <http://extension.unh.edu/FWT/HabBrochures.htm> These habitats are also referenced on the WAP maps and these brochures do a good job of explaining why these areas are important and what can be found there. He discussed the Granit mapping system, which was created by UNH, <http://www.granit.unh.edu/>, it now incorporates the WAP layers and can be used by anyone to create maps.

Frank spoke to us about various federal programs available for land conservation, such as USDA/NRCS's Wetland Reserves program, the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) and Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP). These programs use the WAP maps for part of their point system for ranking applications.

We spoke about ways that we have used the maps in our conservation and planning work and discussed ways we can use this information for future projects.

For those of us concerned with invasive species he mentioned the IPANE project <http://nbii-nin.ciesin.columbia.edu/ipane/>, which concerns invasive species and maps their distribution in New England, the mapping tool is found here: <http://nbii-nin.ciesin.columbia.edu/ipane/ipanespecies/ipanespeciesmapper.htm>

Anyone who wants to get in touch with Frank about the Wildlife Action Plan and maps can write him at [frank.mitchell@unh.edu](mailto:frank.mitchell@unh.edu) or call him at 603-463-7562. We thank Frank for coming out to educate us about this great tool and for all our visitors from neighboring towns who joined us for this presentation.

## 2.0 What's Happening in Nature?

It's maple sugaring time! This wonderful gift from nature comes only once a year and now is the time to enjoy it. The maple trees are tapped and sap is boiling in the sugarhouses. In Washington, we have several local sugarhouses you can visit and get your supply of fresh maple syrup. **Fletcher & Family Sugar House,**

Ed & Jane Thayer, at 2528 E. Washington Rd. in East Washington, **Atkins Family Sugar House,** Shawn & Kathy Atkins, at 504 South Main St. in Washington and the **Crane Farm** at South Main Street in Washington as well as many back yard sugaring operations. Click here to find out more about maple sugaring: [http://www.washingtonnh.org/WCC\\_Html/NewinNature.html](http://www.washingtonnh.org/WCC_Html/NewinNature.html)

Go watch the action and get your supply of fresh maple syrup!

3.0 Correspondence:

UNH offering books for sale- *Pastures of Plenty: The Future of Food, Agriculture and Environmental Conservation in New England*, *The Real Dirt: Toward Food Sufficiency and Farm Sustainability in New England*

Saving Special Places conference brochure

DES *The Source* drinking water publication

UNH Cooperative Extension conference on Municipal Turf and Grounds March 23rd.

6.0 Adjourned at 9:30 PM, our next scheduled meeting is April 20th at 7 PM in the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Nan Schwartz

Secretary