

Report of the Conservation Commission

Members of the Fremont Conservation Commission worked on local conservation projects, acted to advise local Boards on matters of conservation, made site visits and worked with regional and State organizations to promote and protect the natural resources of our community. The Commission's efforts toward fulfilling its mission throughout the year are summarized below.

Throughout the year, the Conservation Commission acted in an advisory capacity for the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment on matters related to wetland habitat protection, water quality protection and aquifer protection. Three projects of particular note this past year were: 1. Acting in concert with the State's Wetland Bureau and the Planning Board concerning conservation easement violations being mitigated on property owned by the United Soccer Club adjacent to Brown Brook; 2. Working with Public Service of New Hampshire in minimizing impact on wetlands in a major pole upgrade being planned and; 3. Working with Beede Spaulding LLC on a conservation easement that will establish a walking trail from the proposed cul-de-sac at the end of Spaulding Road to Beede Hill Road.



The Conservation Commission is pleased to report that its efforts have at last resulted in amending the existing conservation easement on the Glen Oakes Town Forest to include the Oak Ridge Town Forest Lands of Map 4, Lots 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 16. The amended deed was executed and signed in September of this year with the Society for Protection of New Hampshire Forests. Additionally, the Commission is pleased to report that an additional \$1,000 grant was awarded by the Roy Foundation to put toward the cost of amending the easement deed.

SPNHF's Tom Howe and FCC Chair Bill Knee on September 20, 2013 after executing the amendment to the Glen Oakes Conservation Easement to SPNHF, to include the Oak Ridge Town Forest Lands.

Photo Courtesy of Heidi Carlson

The Commission devoted a portion of several meetings to developing a monthly task (working plan) schedule. An important component of the task schedule is to annually review and make sure the Town remains compliant with the requirements of the grants the Town has received for conservation projects.

In keeping with the Town Forest Management Plan, the middle section of the Glen Oakes Town Forest was selectively harvested to promote forest health and wildlife diversity. The timber harvest occurred in late November and early December.

The Commission sponsored and/or promoted two walks in our town forests this past year. A Snowshoe Hike through the Glenn Oakes Town Forest in February and a Fall Foliage Hike in October into the southern portion of the Oak Ridge Town Forest. Additionally, the Commission has been actively planning events for 2014.

The Commission is sad to have to report that several trail posts and signs were vandalized during the course of the year. In addition, both the Oak Ridge Town Forest and Glen Oaks Town Forest kiosks were vandalized. Needless to say, replacing the damaged materials is expensive and time consuming. Police reports were filed reporting the damage, but citizen vigilance concerning this matter would be appreciated.

Learn more about your Town Forests by visiting “The Fremont Town Forest” Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/FremontTownForests>). It contains lots of current information, maps, pictures and video content. Don’t forget to “Like” it.

If protecting and conserving the Town’s natural resources interest you, please consider getting involved. Both the Conservation Commission and Open Space Advisory have openings and your input is welcomed.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Knee
Chairman

Report of the Open Space Advisory

Since its inception in 2003, the Fremont Open Space Advisory has worked in conjunction with the Fremont Conservation Commission, the Board of Selectmen, and the residents of Fremont to ensure that Fremont’s rural past as well as Fremont’s future is properly protected.

In 2013, the emphasis continued to focus on maintaining, enhancing and promoting the open space in Fremont. These activities built upon the work done in previous years by many resident volunteers.

- The Conservation Commission approved the funding to build a kiosk for the Oak Ridge North Parking lot. Materials were purchased and fabrication work begun. The Open Space Group looks forward to installing this in the Spring of 2014.
- Minor trail work included the removal and clean up of downed trees in both Glen Oakes and Oak Ridge.
- The Fall foliage hike was led by FCC chair Bill Knee. It toured the southern trails in Oak Ridge utilizing the access from the Library and the Rail Trail.

Unfortunately, 2013 saw a dramatic increase in vandalism in our town forests. In Oak Ridge, one trail sign had its 4x4 post completely snapped in two and tossed in the swamp. Another 4x4 post was removed and dragged into the woods. These two signs have been repaired. A third sign was damaged and will require further repair. The Kiosk in the Oak Ridge South parking lot had the plexi-glass windows completely broken. There was also a large amount of trash left behind as the revelers did not practice carry-in, carry-out. The Glen Oaks Kiosk has also had its plexi-glass windows damaged. It is sad to see the actions of a few ruin things for the rest of us.

The Fremont Open Space Advisory will continue to study new opportunities to further protect special areas in Fremont. We plan on offering additional activities and encourage residents to take advantage of the wonderful open spaces that belong to all of the residents of Fremont.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis Howland
Chair

Don't forget to check out the town forests on Facebook! Go to www.facebook.com/FremontTownForests

Dedication of the Aja Mahoney "Founding Member" Plaque at the Fremont Friendship Garden,
In Memory of Founding Member Aja Mahoney
on September 29, 2013



L to R: Fremont Garden Club members Maddie Holdsworth, Pat Richmond, Carolyn Carr, and Mary Kaltenbach (kneeling in front); with Selectmen Brett Hunter (and Jasmine), Leon Holmes Sr, and Gene Cordes

Photo Courtesy of Heidi Carlson