

Report of the Conservation Commission

In January, the Commission held a public outreach program to present the results of the bio-inventory that was completed by West Environmental as part of the Taking Action for Wildlife grant that was received in 2010. Mark West presented the final report of the Exeter River Corridor Bio-Inventory Project to the general public.

In March Jack Karcz, former Chairman, left the Commission after several years of service. Sincerest thanks go out to Jack for all of his energy and hard work over the years.

Early in the year, planning began for a Bio-Blitz which was to be conducted in the Glen Oakes Conservation Area in the upcoming spring. Assisting the Commission during the planning stage were Frank Mitchell and Amanda Stone of UNH Cooperative Extension. The purpose of the event was to do an actual, hands on field study of Glen Oakes to determine what types of plant species and wildlife currently inhabited the area. The findings could be used as a baseline report to assist in monitoring the overall health of the natural area in the future. The event took place in May and professionals from UNH Cooperative Extension and New Hampshire Audubon Society, among others, assisted in helping to identify species found within the conservation area. Their expertise was invaluable. In addition, there were several residents who volunteered their time to help with identification and record keeping. As always, the willingness of the general public to donate their time and energies to a project like this was greatly appreciated. The results of the Bio-Blitz ultimately identified hundreds species of plants, insects and animals, some of which are listed as rare and endangered species. Using the data collected, Commission Member Bill Knee prepared a Species Inventory for Glen Oakes, which is available on the Town's Website under the Conservation Commission's link.

Much trail work and mapping of trails in both the Glen Oakes and Oak Ridge Town Forests was completed by Dennis Howland of the Open Space Committee. Dennis organized and hosted a moonlight snowshoe hike in Glen Oakes and a fall foliage hike in Oak Ridge. Many thanks go out to Dennis for his commitment and dedication to making our public lands accessible for all.

Glen Oakes received its annual monitoring by the Society for Protection of New Hampshire Forests and although some minor encroachments were noted along the boundary lines and some evidence of ATV usage was noted, the overall health of the area was good. Please be mindful that per Fremont's Town Forest Ordinance, ATV usage is not permitted within any of the Town Forest areas of Fremont and non-compliance of this is punishable by monetary fine.

The Commission is in the process of acquiring 76 acres of land that abuts Glen Oakes. Discussions with the landowner have been ongoing since 2005 and this year the property was surveyed and a Purchase and Sale Agreement for the acquisition was put in place. Once the acquisition is complete, the 76 acres will be added to the Glen Oakes Conservation Area and a conservation easement will be granted to the Society for Protection of New Hampshire Forests. This easement will be similar to the easement currently on the Glen Oakes Conservation area.

Through the diligent work of Commission Member and grant writer Pat deBeer, \$80,000 in grant money has been secured to assist with the acquisition of this property.

The Commission wishes to thank members of the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Adjustment and the Citizens of Fremont for their ongoing support.

The Commission also wishes to thank Land Use Administrative Assistant Meredith Bolduc for her never ending assistance over the past year.

Please visit the Conservation Commission page on the Fremont Town website for ongoing updates and information relative to minutes, agendas and related activities at www.Fremont.nh.gov.

If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions for the Conservation Commission, or if you would like to participate by filling one of the available positions, please contact the Land Use Office at 895-3200 x 17 or fremontpz@comcast.net.

Respectfully Submitted,

Janice O'Brien, Chairman
Bill Knee, Vice Chairman
Patricia deBeer, Member
Leanne Miner, Alternate
Meredith Bolduc, Alternate



March Full Moon Snow Shoe Hike - Who brought flashlights?
Photo Courtesy of Dennis Howland, Open Space Committee