

Report of the Conservation Commission

Members of the Fremont Conservation Commission spent the year advising local Boards on issues related to conservation, attending site visits, and working with Regional and State organizations on local conservation projects. The following is a summary of the Commission's 2015 activities.

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. Four projects of particular note this past year were:

1. Review of a request seeking a special exception from Article XI Section E.5.2 of the Fremont Zoning Ordinance to allow multi-family use in the Aquifer Protection District and variance from 5 Articles/sections of the Fremont Zoning;
2. Review of a plan for a special exception and an equitable waiver for the property located at 28 Main Street;
3. Review of the granting of a variance to move the motorcycle shop to the machine shop on the same property; and
4. Review of a plan and maps for an amended excavation site plan for lot 35-tax map 5.

Commission members worked throughout the year to digitalize, and organize various Conservation Easements held in the town. In addition, the Commission was busy reviewing the obligations for grants already awarded.

The Commission spent a good deal of time communicating with and working with Southeast Land Trust (SELT). The Commission is pleased to note that the Garrison property was successfully purchased and conserved by SELT. Additionally, the Commission has been working with SELT in their effort to purchase and conserve property owned by the Horsburghs. This is ongoing.

In keeping with the Town Forest Management Plan, Forester, Charles Moreno has inventoried and mapped the Smith property and is in the process of analyzing and putting together a detailed Forest and Wildlife Management Plan for the Smith property. It will be incorporated into a revised and updated Glen Oakes Town Forest Plan.

The Commission was not able to accomplish a variety of its objectives due to the fact the Town voted not to fund a budget for the Commission. The Commission missed opportunities to attend the Drinking Water Conference, the Watershed Conference, the NH Conservation Commission Association Workshop, the Rockingham Planning Commission Annual Meeting, and the Coastal NH Climate Summit due to lack of funding. The Commission was unable to pay membership dues to organizations it previously networked with. This limited the amount of information and help the Commission was able to receive thereby hampering the Commission's effectiveness. In addition, the Commission was unable to obtain digital mapping for the Forest

and Wildlife Management Plan. This would have aided the Commission's efforts to educate and inform the Town's citizens about its Town Forest.

Lastly, the Commission has been working with Open Space to help them maintain, improve and plan for the Town's forest trails. This group of volunteers has given many hours toward these ends and their efforts are very much 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 you are interested in conserving the natural resources of the Town of Fremont, the Fremont NH Conservation Commission is seeking volunteers!

What does the Conservation Commission do?

- Help manage town land for recreation and wildlife
- Steward and implement the Town Forest and Wildlife Management Plans
- Provide educational programs and hikes in your Town Forest in partnership with Open Space
- Work to establish conservation easements on properties in town
- Advise other boards on matters related to the town's natural resources

To learn more about protecting Fremont's natural resources, please contact the Conservation Commission or join one of the regular meetings on the first Monday evening of the month at 7:00 pm in the basement meeting room at the Fremont Town Hall. For more information, visit the Town's Website at www.Fremont.nh.gov.

Sincerely,

Bill Knee, Chairman
Fremont Conservation Commission

Sam Harris, Fremont Open Space Advisory Group volunteer, inspects the new metal blazes he was helping to install in the Oak Ridge Town Forest. A blaze is a trail marker painted on trees alongside a trail. The painted blazes have to be repainted every few years. The metal blazes should require less maintenance and they are installed with logger-friendly aluminum nails.

*Photo Courtesy of Dennis Howland
Open Space Committee Chair*



Report of the Open Space Advisory Group

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.

2015 found the Open Space volunteers continuing their maintenance work on the Town Forest Trail System. With little storm damage this year, maintaining the trail system was much easier than in some previous years. The major accomplishment was to finish the "blazing" work on the footpaths in both Glen Oakes and Oak Ridge. This involved the addition of metal blazes to mark these smaller trails. These will require less maintenance than the painted blazes which were in place. (Note: these metal blazes were installed with logger friendly aluminum nails.)



Jack Karcz and Betty Harris advise Sam Harris where to trim so the new blazes will be visible for hikers.

2015 also found the Open Space crew working towards the eventual expansion of the Glen Oakes trail system into the recently acquired Smith section. This has included exploring the option of hooking up to the South East Land Trust (SELT) trail system being

developed to the north of Glen Oakes. The SELT trail system will include access to the 1959 B52 crash site. Thus a connection to their trail system will give Fremont residents access to this area through Glen Oakes.

Unfortunately, Open Space did not sponsor any hikes last year, but we look forward to once again offering additional activities to encourage residents to take advantage of the wonderful open spaces that belong to all of the residents of Fremont.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis Howland, Chair
Betty Harris

Jack Downing
Jack Karcz

Sam Harris
Matthew Thomas