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NHACC February Enews

1 message

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Conservation Commission Activities, Legislative Updates and more!



Establish Priorities to Keep Focused

It's important to have priorities, no matter what project your town is working on. Priorities keep you focused on your goals and help to guide discussion and evaluation. Creating a checklist or guidelines for land conservation in your community ensures that your time and energy will be focused on critical natural resources instead of a reactive approach to land protection. As pressure from development increases, municipalities must plan to protect natural areas with the highest value for wildlife habitat, forest connectivity, water quality and quantity, climate resilience, working lands, and recreation. Read the full article on the [Taking Action for Wildlife](#) website.



Photo credit Jennifer Cameron

CCs in the News

Belmont Conservation Commission Hosted Forum on Climate and Health

In early February, the town conservation commission invited the public to a forum to discuss impacts of climate on health. Climate change is having a real and increasing impact on human health around the world. In New Hampshire, there is increased incidence of vector-borne disease, extreme heat, air and water quality problems and extreme weather events. Physicians representing the NH Healthcare Workers for Climate Action, a grassroots, non-partisan coalition of health care workers, discussed the basics of climate science, how climate change impacts health, climate solutions and suggested actions.

Meredith Conservation Commission Offers Snowshoe Hike

The public is invited to join with the Meredith Conservation Commission at 10:00 AM on Saturday, February 17th for a guided snowshoe tour in the Hamlin Town Forest. The destination for the trip is Arbutus Hill Pond, where traveling on the ice, we will observe beaver lodges and the large beaver dam that impounds the pond. Along the way we will look for signs of wildlife including otter, bobcat, turkey, snowshoe hare, grouse, and fox. Go to the [Meredith website](#) for more info.

Hudson Conservation Commission Installs Duck Boxes

Conservation commission members installed new Wood Duck nesting boxes around Musquash Pond in January. The frozen pond offered easy access to nesting habitat. Man-made wooden duck boxes help preserve and enhance wood duck habitat and helps to protect ducks from predators. For more information on installing duck boxes, go to [Ducks Unlimited](#).

Training & Education Opportunities

Check out Nature Groupie for Training and Education Programs

[Nature Groupie](#), is a program coordinated by UNH Extension that helps match volunteers with conservation opportunities. This online platform is an easy way to recruit younger volunteers and support the needs of these conservation organizations in New England. They are a great resource for commissions who want to promote programs and volunteer activities.

Butterflies in NH

NH Butterfly Monitoring Network

Wednesday, March 6, 2024 • 6:30pm-7:30pm

Join NH Fish & Game Wildlife Biologist Heidi Holman and UNH Extension Wildlife Conservation State Specialist Haley Andreozzi for an introduction and overview of butterflies in New Hampshire. We'll provide information on what we know about butterflies in New Hampshire, an introduction to some of the more common species in the state, actions you can take to benefit butterflies and other pollinators, and useful resources. [More info.](#)

Volunteer Easement Monitor Training The Upper Valley Land Trust

Wednesday, March 13, 2024 • 4:00pm-6:00pm

Saturday, March 16, 2024 • 10:00am-12:00pm

Do you live in or near the Upper Valley and are interested in monitoring conserved properties

including farms and forests? Join the Upper Valley Land Trust for this year's volunteer easement training so you can learn all you need to know about monitoring properties! [For more info.](#)

Salamander Crossing Brigade Workshop

Harris Center for Conservation Education

Thursday, March 14, 2024 · 7:00pm–8:30pm

Every year, the Harris Center trains community scientists to serve on Salamander Crossing Brigades at amphibian road crossings throughout the Monadnock Region. These heroic volunteers move migrating amphibians across roads by hand during one or more “Big Nights” each spring, keeping count as they go. [For more info.](#)

NHACC Lunch & Learn Programs

Turtles of New Hampshire

Wednesday, February 28

12 to 1:00 pm presented on Zoom

Joshua Megyesy from New Hampshire Fish and Game's Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program will discuss at-risk turtle ecology, habitat use, threats, and conservation actions developed through long-term population monitoring. A focus will be on road mortality and strategies to reduce roadkill. Joining Josh will be Lauren White, a graduate student in the Department of Natural Resources and the Environment at the University of New Hampshire, whose thesis focuses on reducing road mortality of turtles, specifically Blanding's Turtle.

[Register Here](#)

Overview of the ARM Fund

Wednesday, March 27

12 to 1:00 pm presented on Zoom

This program will provide an overview of compensatory wetland mitigation requirements, the ARM Fund Program, and details on the 2024 ARM Fund Grant round. Compensatory mitigation is required for unavoidable impacts to aquatic resources authorized through state and federal permit actions when impacts exceed thresholds defined in **NH Code of Administrative Rule Env-Wt 313.04** and federal **33 CFR 332 (Compensatory Mitigation Rule)**. The purpose of compensatory mitigation is to off-set lost functions from aquatic resource impacts at the watershed scale. Compensatory mitigation requirements may be satisfied by an in-lieu fee payment into the ARM Fund, permittee responsible mitigation, or a combination of both. In-lieu fee payments into the ARM Fund are pooled according to watersheds, and made available as competitive grants to fund restoration, enhancement and in certain circumstances preservation activities across the state. This presentation will summarize when mitigation is required, compensatory mitigation approaches, and how pooled funds are awarded as grants to offset functions and values lost in the watershed.

Presenters; **Emily Nichols**, Aquatic Resource Mitigation (ARM) Fund Program manager and **Seta Detzel**, ARM Fund Program Wetland Mitigation Specialist

[Register Here](#)

The State of the Piscataqua Watershed... and what we can do about it

Wednesday, April 10

Kalle Matso, Director, Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership

12 to 1:00 pm presented on Zoom

Using two estuaries as our focus points, we explore trends in the health of our watershed by looking at changing health of valuable habitats and changing levels of stressors, such as impervious surfaces and pollution. We also take the time to discuss what we can do to protect and restore our lovely watershed. Registration opening soon.

NH Department of Environmental Services Offer Videos

NH DES has developed a series of new video resources for 2024 to help make the permitting process easier to understand, as well as to help share knowledge about New Hampshire's protected shoreland and other aquatic resources.

Video Resources Now Available:

1. [\(Private, non-tidal\) Beaches](#)
2. [Tips for Accessory Structures in Protected Shoreland](#)
3. [Using the Natural Heritage Bureau DataCheck Tool as a Wetlands Permitting Resource](#)
4. [Protected Shoreland Permit Tips](#)
5. [What is a Priority Resource Area](#)
6. Wetland Permit Applications ([Part 1](#), [Part 2](#))
7. [Vegetation Management for Water Quality in Protected Shoreland](#)

Grants

Community Project Funding

2025 Community Project Funding requests are due on Saturday, March 1, 2024. Community Project Funding allows local governments and qualified nonprofits to receive a one-time, small to medium-sized allocation to complete projects of local importance and priority. All funds will be limited to state and local governments and nonprofits that carry out quasi-government functions. Projects are restricted to a limited number of federal funding streams, and only state and local governments and eligible nonprofit entities are permitted to receive funding. The [NH Center for Non-Profits](#) has more information.

Federal Funding Wetland Conservation Supported

The [North American Wetlands Conservation Council](#) is excited to announce several significant and profound changes to the U.S. North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) [grant programs](#) that will go into effect with the 2024 proposal cycles. The intent of making these changes is to reduce barriers and increase participation on projects, to help build partnerships with new organizations. The Council and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) believe these changes will empower our grantees and partners to continue to conserve vital wetlands, benefitting waterfowl, wetlands habitat and numerous other species of wildlife, today and into the future. Projects must involve long-term protection, restoration, enhancement, or establishment of wetland and associated upland habitats to benefit migratory birds.

Visit our Website

NHACC.org

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