
Sanbornton Conservation Commission

Committed to the Stewardship of Sanbornton's Natural Resources

Fall/Winter 2019 Newsletter

Trail Update

The four Sanbornton Town Forest hiking trails overseen by the Conservation Commission – This is My Song, Hal Graham, Virginia Sutton and Wayne Elliot Trails – will all be receiving an upgrade to their entrances. The project will be completed this fall allowing for better access to the trailheads of our 3.1-mile system. In the next few editions of this newsletter we will provide a brief history of the dedication of each of the Town Forest trails.

Hal Graham Trail

The Hal Graham Trail is dedicated to a gentleman who has served our community, county and State of New Hampshire in the promotion and sustaining of hiking trails. He founded the Belknap Range Trail Tenders (BRATTS), a hiking group dedicated to construction and maintenance of trails in the Belknaps, and he was one of the founders of a similar organization called Trailwrights. Hal and his wife Peggy, longtime residents of Sanbornton, have been trip leaders for the AMC and have hiked throughout the USA.

Sanbornton Central School Project

The Commission, in partnership with NH Fish and Game and Trout Unlimited, is supporting a science project on habitat for trout led by Faith Sanborn, a fifth-grade teacher at Sanbornton Central. During the program students will raise trout from eggs, monitor and care for their temporary habitat and learn about ecosystems. The program culminates in the spring with the students releasing their trout in local streams, providing them a concrete link between caring for the fish and caring for our watershed, and fostering a conservation ethic.

Commission Managed Lands

Sanbornton has 12 parcels of land with a total of approximately 500 acres overseen by the Conservation Commission. The Commission ensures the proper management of timber, firewood, reforestation and other natural resources through planning, timber stand improvement, harvesting, reforestation and use programs. This also ensures consistency with forest management programs, deed restrictions and pertinent

ordinances or regulations. A map of the Town Forest trails is featured on the Town of Sanbornton website and a smaller version of it is included on the back of this newsletter.

Consider a Conservation Easement

A conservation easement is a permanent, legally binding agreement between a landowner and a qualified conservation organization such as a conservation commission. Primary attention is given to protection of the land's significant natural features. The landowner continues to have use of and the right to manage the land while giving up the right to engage in certain intensive uses of the property. If interested in learning more about the benefits of a conservation easement, please contact any member of the Conservation Commission listed on the Town of Sanbornton website.

Pathway to Sanbornton Library

You may well have had the opportunity to use the recently constructed pathway from the Sanbornton Central School parking lot to the town field adjacent to the library. The pathway provides the students of Sanbornton Central School and community members a safe and convenient access to our library and community field. The Commission appreciates the support of the Winnisquam Regional School District, and town officials in supporting this effort.

Young Forest - Nature's Pantry *(By Karen Bordeau)*

A young forest can be an old field coming up in saplings, a shrubby wetland or new trees springing up after a timber harvest. A young forest is nature's pantry for many birds, mammals and reptiles. The abundant insects and berries produced in a young forest help newly fledged birds quickly grow, and fuel up for successful fall migration. Black bears will frequent a young forest to gorge on berries, building up fat reserves. Moose depend on food provided by dense woody shoots of young trees and shrubs. Snakes hunt for mice, chipmunks, and other small mammals that are themselves drawn to patches of young forest to find meals of their own. *(Cont'd on back)*

Young Forest - Nature's Pantry (Cont'd)

The need for young forest is great. There are currently 89 species of wildlife classified as "species of greatest conservation need" that require young forest habitat to survive and breed. Many other kinds of wildlife, including those found more often in woodlands, also venture into young forest habitat for many of their life needs. These habitats are created across the landscape through repeated disturbances to the forest, caused either by humans, through practices such as timber harvesting, mowing or by brought about by natural processes that remove mature trees, including fire, floods, and high winds. Disturbed areas are quickly colonized by new vegetation springing up from roots

systems of toppled trees and shrubs, or by seeds of plants adapted to growing in full sunlight, carried in by wind, water, or wildlife. A clearcut can look raw and messy but young trees will grow back within a year or two to provide habitat for a more diverse range of wildlife that previously inhabited the site.

Managing land to favor young forest wildlife can appear heavy-handed and even destructive and sometimes in direct opposition to what the public considers "conservation". Understanding the pros and cons of creating young forest and the proper placement on the landscape is necessary to ensure the survival of a diversity of wildlife, including many cherished birds, mammals, and reptiles.

Resources

Sanbornton Conservation Commission:

sanborntonnh.org/conservation-commission

NH Assoc. of Conservation Commissions:

nhacc.org

BRATTS:

belknapangetrailtenders.org

Trailwrights:

trailwrights.org

Appalachian Mtn Club (AMC):

outdoors.org

NH Fish and Game:

wildlife.state.nh.us

Trout Unlimited:

tu.org

Trout in the Classroom:

troutintheclassroom.org

Winnisquam Regional School District:

wrdsau59.org

Sanbornton Public Library:

splnh.com - or -

facebook.com/splnh

Sanbornton Town Forest

Sanbornton Conservation Commission - Steward

