New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions
SERVING NEW HAMPSHIRE'S COMMUNITIES SINCE 1970

56th Annual Meeting & Conference
November 7, 2026
Pembroke Academy

Conference Presenter Biographies

Keynote:

Anthea Lavallee has served as Executive Director of the Hubbard Brook Research Foundation for more than a decade, giving her a front-row seat to one of the world's most dynamic and influential ecosystem studies. She works at the intersection of science, public understanding, and environmental decision-making, striving to foster an approach to environmental stewardship that is scholarly and practical, reality-based and creative, equitable, actionable, and hopeful.

Lindsey Rustad is a forest ecologist and senior research scientist who recently retired from the USDA Forest Service after nearly three decades of studying how forests respond to a changing environment. A longtime scientist at the Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest, she has focused on climate change, extreme events, and changing seasons in northern forests. Her work spans long-term ecological research, emerging technologies, and science communication, with a particular passion for finding new ways to make environmental science accessible, engaging, and useful.

Workshop Sessions

Bohannon, Andrew

Andy Bohannon, CPRP, serves as the Deputy City Manager for the City of Keene, New Hampshire, bringing decades of public service experience rooted in his lifelong connection to the community. A Keene native, he grew up participating in local recreation programs and began working for the City as a teenager. After graduating from Keene State College, Andy returned in 2004 to begin his professional career in municipal service, later leading the Parks, Recreation & Facilities Department before stepping into his current role. Throughout his career, Andy has expanded recreational programs, strengthened partnerships, and guided long-term planning efforts that continue to shape Keene's quality of life. His leadership in public-private collaborations has been especially impactful.

Boudreau, Anna

Anna Boudreau is an experienced practitioner with over 25 years dedicated to environmental conservation. A UNH alumna, Boudreau served as the Executive Director of the Strafford Rivers Conservancy (which has since merged with SELT) for 10 years. In 2000, she became one of the founding members of the Dover Open Lands Committee (OLC), which she currently chairs. In this role, the OLC evaluates parcels for conservation and assists the Conservation Commission and Planning Department with project management, grant writing, and bringing viable projects to a successful close.

Brennen, Jayson

Jayson Brennen is a volunteer member of the Litchfield Conservation Commission, but his real job is global GIS Practice Leader for a large engineering consulting firm.

Berger, Emma

Emma Berger is the Inland Wetland Permitting Section Supervisor at the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES). With over eight years of specialized experience in wetlands permitting, Emma brings technical knowledge and regulatory insight to her role and in workshops she participates in. In addition to her work at NHDES, Emma is passionate about education and mentorship. She has experience as an adjunct professor, where she has taught courses related to wetland science and environmental policy, helping to inspire and prepare the next generation of environmental professionals.

Callahan, Catherine (Katie)

Katie joined the NH Fish and Game Department in 2003 as coordinator of the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Program which supports the entire Department through the collection and analysis of spatial data for conservation, management, and protection of the state's fish, wildlife, and marine populations and their habitats. She previously worked for the NH Department of Environmental Services, Water Division as a GIS specialist. Katie received a B.A. in Zoology from UNH and earned her Master's degree in Environmental Science and Policy from Plymouth State University. She is a wildlife tracking enthusiast, was a volunteer for the Canada lynx/carnivore surveys in NH, and looks forward to helping with the upcoming Northeast regional moose surveys.

Crystall, Sandra

Sandy worked for the NHDES for more than 23 years serving in the Wetlands and Watershed Management Bureaus on wetland permitting, outreach and training, and wetland bioassessment. Sandy also worked in the Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau coordinating the source water protection land conservation grant program under the Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund. Sandy is a professional wetland scientist with a bachelor's degree in Biology and has done post-graduate work in regional planning, natural resources and GIS. She is on two town boards, the Planning Board, for which she is Vice Chair, and the Conservation Commission, for which she is Chair, and on the NHACC board.

Cygan, Doug

Douglas Cygan has been the Invasive Species Coordinator for the NH Department of Agriculture for the past 23-years as well as being a nursery inspector and an Authorized Certification Official for the USDA. Prior to this he was a Wetlands Permitting Officer for the NH Department of Environmental Services (DES) for 2-years, and before that he was a Senior Environmental Manager for the NH Department of Transportation's (DOT) Bureau of Environment for 7-years. In 1992 he graduated from the University of Maine, Orono, with a B.S and an A.S in Plant Science with a minor in Conservation Biology and Wetland Science.

Darby, Representative William

Will is on the Resources, Recreation and Development Committee in the NH State Legislature. He is a representative from Ward 8, Nashua NH. He has sponsored numerous bills to protect the environment. He is on the Nashua Conservation Commission, Nashua Energy and Environment Committee and the Public Water Access and Advisory Board. He has a Master's in Computer science from Villanova. An Ardent Outdoorsman, he spends as much time as he can exploring NH's forests and goes fishing whenever possible.

Gagnon, Mike

Michael is the UNH Cooperative Extension County Forester for Hillsborough County. Through this role, Mike works primarily with private landowners and communities to help assist and educate them on forest resource issues to help them better meet their stewardship goals. Mike's work within Extension's Forest Stewardship team also focuses on upland invasive nuisance vegetation control and management. Mike is a NH Licensed Forester and holds a NH Supervisory Pesticide License. Mike has an associate degree in forest technology from the Thompson School of Applied Sciences, a bachelor's degree in forest science, and a master's degree in natural resources & forestry from the University of New Hampshire.

Hirschlder, Russell

Russell Hirschler has been the Executive Director of the Upper Valley Trails Alliance since 2008, where he is responsible for the day to day operations as well as the future vision of the organization. He was formerly the Director of Education at Save The Bay in Providence, RI. He also served as the Development Director at the Upper Valley Land Trust in Hanover, NH. Russell received his undergraduate degree in Natural Resource Management and Environmental Planning from Binghamton University and his Masters Degree in Organizational Management from Antioch University, New England.

Jamison, Sarah

Sarah Jamison is the Senior Service Hydrologist at the National Weather Service in Gray, Maine, with over 20 years of agency experience spanning offices in Missouri, North Carolina, and Ohio. These diverse postings have provided her with a broad geographical perspective on water management and emergency response. A subject matter expert in dambreaks, ice jams, and rain-on-snow flood events, Ms. Jamison has provided critical hydrologic support for more than 20 hurricanes, numerous severe weather outbreaks, and significant regional floods—including the major event of December 18, 2023. Her career is dedicated to advancing flood-risk mitigation and providing essential decision support to protect lives and property across the Northeast.

Johnson, Lesley,

Lesley Johnson has served as NHACC President from 2022-2026, has been on the NHACC Board since 2018, and is a member of the Surry Conservation Commission. Lesley has more than 20 years of experience in occupational and environmental safety and health integrating program development, regulatory compliance, testing/monitoring, and finding practical problem-solving solutions. Lesley integrates a systems orientation with experience in training, environmental education, and geology/geography/anthropology. and holds an MBA with a Human Resource Certificate, an MS in Community Economic Development and the Certified Safety Professional and Associate of Risk Management credentials.

Littleton, Jeffry; Conservation Ecologist, Moosewood Ecological

Jeffry Littleton is very enthusiastic about exploring our natural world. He is the principal ecologist and founder of Moosewood Ecological LLC, having more than 30 years of experience in ecological studies and environmental education. He specializes in conservation planning, land management and stewardship, habitat restoration/enhancement, and education. Jeffry employs a systems approach to understanding the spatial dynamics of the environment, blending conservation biology with the ecology of landscapes. He uses a GIS to analyze natural resources to help guide conservation and restoration planning efforts. Jeffry served as an adjunct faculty for 17 years at Antioch University where he provided course instruction on wildlife and plant inventory techniques, forest community ecology, and interpreting past land use histories from clues remaining in our forested landscape. In addition, he currently is a member of the Cheshire County Cooperative Extension Advisory Board.

McGuigan, Jaime

Jaime McGuigan is an ecologist, conservation and wildlife biologist, and founder of Access Conservation, a nonprofit focused on connecting people with wildlife, conservation, and ecological science. She holds a master's degree in Environmental Science with a concentration in Conservation Biology from Antioch University New England and a bachelor's degree in Biology from Keene State College. Her work includes wildlife monitoring, ecological fieldwork, science education, and the use of wildlife cameras to better understand how animals use the landscape. She is particularly interested in making ecological information accessible and useful to communities, landowners, and conservation organizations.

Morelli, Toni Lyn

Dr. Toni Lyn Morelli earned a B.S. in Zoology at Michigan State University and a PhD in Ecology & Evolution at Stony Brook University. She has spent years trekking around the mountains of California and Madagascar and Tanzania and, best of all, New Hampshire exploring how mammals are responding to climate change. She has spent ~15 years as a researcher with first the US Forest Service and now, in her current role with the US Geological Survey Northeast Climate Adaptation Science Center, using methods of knowledge coproduction, geospatial analysis, ecological modeling, and decision science to facilitate natural resource management and habitat and species conservation in the face of climate and land use change. Most importantly, she spent several years as a conservation commissioner in Massachusetts.

Neely, John

John Neely has been working with wildfire and controlled burning in New England for over 20 years. After retiring from the Forest Service John currently works with the State of New Hampshire Department of Natural and Cultural Resources helping communities assess and reduce their fire risk. In addition he is engaged in research looking at the past fire history of the region from wildfire to indigenous burning.

Nichols, Cynthia

Cynthia Nichols is an RN Care Manager with a background in Conservation Biology. Understanding how people's health is directly connected to a healthy environment, her goal is to share information and support projects to help mitigate climate impacts and contribute to more resilient and environmentally friendly communities.

O'Brien, James

Jim O'Brien is Senior Director of Policy & Government Relations for The Nature Conservancy in New Hampshire, where he leads efforts to advance conservation through public policy, strategic partnerships, and public funding initiatives. He has extensive experience working at the intersection of conservation and government, including prior service in municipal government, which provides him with a practical understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing local communities. Jim works closely with state and local officials, businesses, and nonprofit partners to develop solutions that protect New Hampshire's lands and waters while strengthening community resilience and economic vitality.

Rogers, Shannon

Shannon Rogers, Ph.D., serves as the State Specialist of Nature Based Economic Development on the Community and Economic Development Team. Trained as an ecological economist, she focuses on how people use and value the environment and natural resources. Rogers is also an Associate Extension Professor and is affiliated with the Natural Resources & Earth Systems Science Doctoral Program at UNH. Rogers has experience working in the private sector at Industrial Economics, Inc., an environmental economic consulting firm in Cambridge, MA. She has also held positions in government and non-profit sectors and most recently has worked in academia as an Assistant Professor at Plymouth State University. Rogers maintains affiliated faculty positions at Plymouth State and Dartmouth College and is a Senior Fellow in the Environmental Leadership Program. She earned a bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies from Dartmouth College, a Masters degree in Resource Administration and Management from UNH and a doctorate degree in Natural Resources & Environmental Studies with a minor in College Teaching from UNH.

Scribner, Wendy, UNH Cooperative Extension

Wendy is a Natural Resources Field Specialist with UNH Cooperative Extension. She works in Carroll County and provides research-based natural resource information and assistance to a wide range of clientele including: private landowners, licensed foresters, members of the logging and forest products industry, municipalities, schools and organizations. She specializes in forestry and wildlife. She provides assistance and information on topics including: managing woodlots, selling timber, enhancing wildlife habitat, controlling invasive plants, and improving forest health and productivity. Wendy is a licensed forester in both NH and Maine and holds a Bachelor's and Master's Degree in Forestry from UNH.

Silvestri, Lisetta,

Lisetta joined Ransmeier & Spellman in March 2024 and works on land protection projects, conservation transactions, and other real estate matters. She grew up in Hancock, New Hampshire and graduated from the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law. While in law school, Lisetta worked at the Environmental Law Clinic, representing clients on matters involving environmental justice, water quality, and other environmental issues, and also earned second place in the Merhige National Environmental Negotiation Competition. After graduating law school, Lisetta worked for nonprofit land conservation organizations in Maryland and New Hampshire, focusing on land protection transactions. Most recently, she owned and operated a land conservation consultancy business.

Spencer, Larry; Holderness Conservation Commission- past member

Larry Spencer is Professor Emeritus of Biology at Plymouth State University where he started teaching in September of 1967. His areas of interest there were vertebrate and invertebrate zoology, ecology and evolutionary biology. Since the 1970's he's been chair of the Holderness Conservation Commission. He serves as the NHACC representative to the NH Rivers Management Advisory Council where he is the vice chair of the group. Until a few years ago, he ran many races going from 5k to marathons and did triathlons.

Spillane, Representative James

James A. Spillane is a lifelong New Hampshire native, writer, and father of three. James works as a senior technical writer, bringing the same precision and attention to detail to complex documentation as he does to his fiction. His published work includes *Musings from the Mountain*, and *The Sisyphus Project*. Outside of writing, James has dedicated much of his life to service and community. A long-time elected member of New Hampshire's historic volunteer legislature, he has worked to preserve the state's character, freedoms, and traditions. He is also the founder of the New Hampshire Veteran Sportsman Foundation, a charitable organization providing free hunting and fishing licenses to veterans in need—an effort that has restored connections to the outdoors for hundreds of servicemen and women.

Steckler, Peter

Peter is the Principal at Northeast Conservation Services, LLC, where he brings over 25 years of natural resource management and conservation expertise to advance the protection and restoration priorities of municipalities, land trusts, state and federal agencies across the northeastern US and eastern Canada. Peter formerly led geospatial planning, wildlife connectivity, and climate adaptation programs at The Nature Conservancy in New Hampshire, and before that provided environmental services at a civil engineering firm. Peter holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Vermont and is a Certified Wetland Scientist in New Hampshire.

Stevens, Denise

Denise Stevens is an epidemiologist with expertise on the role of the built environment, connecting the space between where we live, sleep, eat, sleep, play and pray, and how it

influences individual health as well as population health. She is an avid outdoor enthusiast who enjoys hiking and beach combing for materials to use in her mosaic artwork.

Stevens, Drew

Drew Stevens holds degrees in music composition and computer science, spending over a decade working as a researcher at the University of New Hampshire's Center for Coastal and Ocean Mapping. He is now a licensed wildlife rehabilitator, educator, and conservation advocate focused on turtle species native to New Hampshire. He co- founded and manages New Hampshire Turtle Rescue, a volunteer-run nonprofit public charity dedicated to the rescue, rehabilitation, release, and preservation of wild turtles native to the Granite State. He also serves his community in Nottingham as a Conservation Commissioner and Planning Board chair.

Tarr, Tracy

Tracy is a Certified Wildlife Biologist, Certified Wetland Scientist, and Certified Erosion, Sediment, and Stormwater Inspector with over 25 years of experience in wetland assessment, wildlife surveys, and permitting. She is currently an Associate Principal at GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc. (GZA) and serves as the Ecological Practice Lead for the company. She previously served on the DES Vernal Pools Rule Committee which drafted the original vernal pool rules in New Hampshire and continues to provide professional workshops to professional wetland scientists and related fields. She also served for approximately ten years on her local Conservation Commission in the Lakes Region and volunteers for the Five Rivers Conservation Trust.

Tilton, Mary Ann; NH Department of Environmental Services

Mary Ann Tilton serves as the Assistant Wetlands Bureau administrator, and has worked on compliance, permitting and program development. She has been with the wetlands bureau for more than 30 years. She is also a Professional Wetlands Scientist and a Certified Wetland Scientist. She has a Master's of Science from URI (in wetlands ecology); a BA from Connecticut College, and a JD from UNH Law School.

Thyng, Darla

Dr. Thyng is a Family Medicine physician working for Dartmouth Hitchcock. A life long outdoor enthusiast. She has been interested in our climate and its affect on our health for many years.

Tutein, Emma; UNH Cooperative Extension

Emma Tutein has worked at UNH Cooperative Extension for over 15 years in a variety of roles. In her current role as Community Conservation State Specialist, Emma works with conservation professionals and volunteers to support their work in protecting NH's natural resources. She coordinates educational and professional development for land trust staff, conservation commissioners, landowners, and others interested in land conservation and stewardship. Emma received her undergraduate degree in Ecology and Natural Resource Management from Rutgers University and her Master's Degree in Wildlife Ecology from the University of New Hampshire.

Wells, Chris

Chris has served as the Executive Director of the Piscataquog Land Conservancy since 2014. He is responsible for day-to-day leadership and administration of the organization, plus finance, development, communications, outreach and occasionally advocacy. Chris also plays an active

part in PLC's land conservation project selection, structure and funding strategy. From 2002 to 2014 he was on the staff of the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. Between 1995 to 2002 Chris worked at the Trust for Public Land (TPL) in the Mid-Atlantic states.