



New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions

SERVING NEW HAMPSHIRE'S COMMUNITIES SINCE 1970
54 Portsmouth Street, Concord, NH 03301 | (603) 224-7867 | www.nhacc.org

55th Annual Meeting of the New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions

November 1, 2024 | Pembroke, NH

8:30 AM Business Meeting for Members

9:00 AM Keynote

What does it mean to love a forest?

In this talk, Ethan Tapper, a forester, bestselling author and digital storyteller from Vermont, will draw from his work as a forester and his book *How to Love a Forest: The Bittersweet Work of Tending a Changing World* to discuss what it means to care for forests and other ecosystems at this moment in time. How do we respond to the harmful legacies of the past? How do we use our species' incredible power to heal rather than to harm? How do we reach toward a better future? In a time in which many believe that “protecting” ecosystems means protecting them from ourselves, Ethan argues that humans must take action to help ecosystems heal and to move into a more abundant future, and that to do so is an act of care and compassion – of love.

Ethan's message is at once compassionate and pragmatic, clear-eyed and hopeful, sobering and inspiring – a powerful new vision for how we can build a world that works for all of its ecosystems and all of its people.

Session A - 10:00AM - 11:00 AM

1A

FUNDAMENTALS of CONSERVATION COMMISSIONS

Paul Wainwright, Atkinson Conservation Commission, NHACC Board
Larry Spencer, Holderness Conservation Commission

New to your conservation commission? Join us for this informative session on the fundamentals of conservation commissions. This session will give new commissioners the basics on conservation commissions, the laws governing what conservation commissions are established to do and some of their optional roles. We will cover the ins and outs of how to make sure your meetings are successful. Bring your questions! The *Handbook for NH Municipal Conservation Commissions* is complementary to commissioners who register and attend this session.

2A

LAKE-FRIENDLY LIVING; PROTECTING OUR SHORELINE TOGETHER

Brea Arvidson, Director of Programs, NH LAKES

New Hampshire's lakes, ponds, and rivers are for everyone – spending time on or around them is a treasured way of life! Healthy shorelands are essential for restoring and preserving water quality, wildlife habitat, and the natural heritage of our water resources.

This session will explore practical ways to engage and educate your community on best practices for shoreland protection, with strategies grounded in the NH LAKES LakeSmart Lake-Friendly Living Program. Learn more about sharing lake-friendly, approachable messages that inspire positive change, as well as how you can partner with residents, local organizations, and businesses.

3A

COMPLETION of the 2025 NH STATE WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN

Mickayla Johnson, NH Fish & Game WAP Coordinator

It's Time to Get to Work! Every 10 years, the New Hampshire Fish and Game Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program leads the way in revising the NH State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). The NH SWAP is an assessment of the health of New Hampshire's wildlife and habitats and provides a conservation framework for conservation commissions to use; from using the SWAP mapping tools to identify high quality habitat in your town, to implementing habitat stewardship for Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). The 2025 NH SWAP was completed in October and is ready to be shared with important conservation partners like you! This session will provide background on the NH SWAP, an overview of the updates to the 2025 Plan, and discussion of how conservation commissions, landowners, and others across the state can use the 2025 NH SWAP to help us meet our conservation goals over the next decade.

4A

PROTECTING POLLINATORS: Why They Matter and What We Can Do.

Kathy Youzwak, Pollinator Pathways

Pollinators are crucial for the ecosystem and their numbers are declining precipitously. Come and learn about who our pollinators are, the threats they face, and what we can do to help restore them and their habitats. The good news is that we each can make a difference for them, and our world.

5A

LANDOWNER OUTREACH

Brian Hotz, Society for the Protection of NH Forests

Learn the basic options that New Hampshire landowners have for permanently conserving their land, and the ways that Conservation Commissions can assist in these transactions. This workshop will introduce you to the important steps for approaching a landowner and how to discuss land protection projects. It will provide tips on how to prepare for your first meeting with a landowner and make suggestions on working with landowners. Participants will learn about conservation options and how to get landowners interested in protecting their land. This program will help answer a few basic questions; What steps should volunteers take in talking to or approaching landowners? What tasks and questions should they leave to the professionals?

6A

WORKING WITH INTERNS on COMMUNITY CONSERVATION PROJECTS

Jayson Brennen, Litchfield Conservation Commission; **Dallas Huggins**, Nottingham Conservation Commission; **Jim Riddle**, Hillsborough Conservation Commission

Working with an intern can be a rewarding, effective way to complete a community conservation project. This program will provide commissions with an overview of potential projects that could be completed by an intern. It will also cover tips and tricks on working with an intern and how to clearly identify a project, document the scope of work with realistic expectations, and how to complete the project with an intern's assistance. Providing internships to students can help meet your town's conservation goals, while providing real life experience to students. The goal is to create value for both the intern and your municipality.

7A

ROUNDTABLE: How can we interest children in nature?

Jennifer Beck, NHACC Board and Wilton Conservation Commission

The Nature Deficit is real. Our young people are spending 35% less time outside than their parents did. Some studies report a 50% reduction in unstructured play time outdoors over the past two decades. It's well documented that lack of access to nature creates physical and mental health issues. But what about their interest, knowledge and love of the outdoors and open spaces and wildlife? Will they grow up to vote to protect natural resources, or retreat into their virtual worlds? This Roundtable Discussion hopes to discover ways we can engage our young people and work with educators and administrators to develop the mindset and the habits that will contribute to human health and nature's health.

8A

CLIMATE RESILIENT GARDENING

Fran Bader, UNH Master Gardner

As home and community gardeners, how do we prepare and adapt our practices to make our gardens more climate-resilient? From seasonal temperature shifts and extreme temperature swings to excess moisture or drought, we will talk about some practical strategies to address these challenges, and what it means to grow a climate-resilient garden that can not only ‘weather’ these changes, but also reduce your environmental footprint.

9A

ADVOCACY 101

Peter Ntourtourekas, Training manager, New Futures

Advocacy is needed to help shape policies directly impacting our lives. This training teaches participants how to engage in state-level legislative advocacy efforts. It provides an overview of the NH state legislature and how a bill becomes a law, and discusses when and how to get involved by participating in public hearings, reaching out to legislators, using media, and other advocacy strategies. Stories are powerful tools for change and are essential in influencing policy change. Participants leave feeling more empowered to take action and influence state policy-making decisions.