



# Town of Merrimack, New Hampshire

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Planning - Zoning - Economic Development - Conservation

## MERRIMACK CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MARCH 4, 2019

### MEETING MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Merrimack Conservation Commission was held on Monday, March 4, 2019 at 6:31 p.m. in the Community Development Conference Room.

Chair Gage Perry presided:

Members of the Commission Present:    Matt Caron, Vice Chair  
   Michael Boisvert  
   Steven Perkins  
   Gina Rosati  
   Michael Swisher, Alternate member  
   Tim Tenhave, Alternate Member  
   Councilor Peter Albert (arrived at 6:34 p.m.)

Members of the Commission Absent:    Cynthia Glenn

Also in Attendance:

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*Chair Perry designated Michael Swisher to sit for Cynthia Glenn and Timothy Tenhave for Councilor Albert.*

**PUBLIC COMMENT** - None

**PUBLIC HEARINGS** - None

**APPOINTMENTS** - None

**STATUTORY/ADVISORY BUSINESS** - None

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **1. 2019 Society for the Protection of NH Forests Membership Donation**

Chair Perry noted the Commission provided a donation of \$250.00 last year. He questioned the will of the Commission.

Commissioner Rosati stated a desire for the Commission to retain its membership.

### **MOTION BY COMMISSIONER ROSATI TO RENEW THE ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP TO**

**THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF NEW HAMPSHIRE FORESTS IN THE  
AMOUNT OF TWO HUNDRED FIFTY DOLLARS (\$250.00). FUNDING SOURCE IS THE  
GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET  
MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BOISVERT  
MOTION CARRIED  
7-0-0**

*Councilor Albert arrived at 6:34 p.m.*

Vice Chair Caron commented on efforts to research some of the properties the Society has in Merrimack. There were few he could identify. He noted a property off Tinker Road. Commissioner Tenhave remarked they own an easement over the top of the land.

**2. SCA New Hampshire Corps.**

Chair Perry noted the information provided (copy attached). “The Student Conservation Association’s New Hampshire Corps (SCA NH Corps.) is a program that engages AmeriCorps members in community and conservation service throughout the State of New Hampshire. They partner with land management agencies and community organizations to protect watersheds, build trails, control erosion, remove invasive species, construct rustic visitor-use structures, and complete restoration work among many other labor-intensive conservation across NH, as well as providing public education and programming in this domain.”

Commissioner Rosati spoke of the Commission’s unsuccessful attempts to gain grant funding to address the issues with Grater Road, and questioned if this organization could be utilized for that project.

Vice Chair Caron commented on his prior experience with the group and his understanding they do mostly hand work. They may take on a project of that size. He spoke of their thoroughness, the skillset and knowledge of the crew leaders, etc. Asked if they have the necessary insurance coverage, he indicated they do.

Vice Chair Caron noted they could easily be allowed to camp in that area. Chair Perry remarked there have been instances, in the past, of individuals questioning the ability to gain a permit to camp, and the uncertainty around who would issue such a permit. There are no Bylaws that address that. Commissioner Tenhave noted the camping requirement only applies to properties that are in Chapter 111 (5 properties).

Chair Perry spoke of reaching out to Dawn Tuomala, Deputy Director/Town Engineer, Public Works Department (PWD). He visited the site with Deputy Director Tuomala. They walked the area and made a site line of where to move the road up and generate a bypass. She has put together a plan for the area. Vice Chair Caron suggested they could bench it out (grade) and, in certain areas, construct a crib wall. He commented the final product will be much more than you would imagine they would be able to do with a ten-man crew.

Councilor Albert questioned how long a project of this type would take. Commissioner Tenhave stated his belief the trees could be knocked down in a matter of days, and then it would be a matter of cleaning up the brush. Chair Perry stated his belief the group would accomplish what it could within the 11 days. He suggested a plan be put in place, e.g., timber down and out of the way as the priority, etc.

Vice Chair Caron suggested the group be informed the Commission has several projects, and identify the preference. From there, the group could determine which it could best take on.

Vice Chair Caron will be the prime contact and Commissioner Perkins the secondary. The Commission will approach them regarding the potential clearing of the Grater Road bypass road. Support will be needed from the Town Engineer. Questions to be posed with SCA include procedures for fuel powered equipment, liability waivers, waste disposal, camping location, open fires, notification of abutters.

### **3. HB442 - Coyote Hunting - Stoddard Conservation Commission Request**

Chair Perry noted Commissioner Glenn was unable to be in attendance. She is concerned with HB442, and has requested the Commission refrain from taking a position until she is able to participate in the discussion.

Commissioner Rosati noted the March 7<sup>th</sup> deadline. Councilor Albert commented on the proactive nature of the newly elected Representatives, and questioned if Commissioner Glenn has reached out to them. They have expressed the desire to be made aware of issues concerning Merrimack residents.

Commissioner Boisvert stated his observation this appears reasonable in that the proposed change would add the following language: "No coyote shall be hunted at any time from April 1 through August 31 to coincide with coyote pup rearing.". He commented on no longer hearing coyote calls in Grater Woods or seeing any as of late. It seems to him the numbers are down.

Councilor Albert stated his neighbor informed him there are coyotes in the wildlife refuge off Back River Road.

Commissioner Rosati shared her opinion that every species deserves a break to raise their children. She encouraged the Commission to support the proposed legislation.

Chair Perry commented it is the reintroduction of that predator species that has put a stop to the large problems experienced in the national parks, e.g., river erosion.

### **MOTION BY COMMISSIONER ROSATI TO SIGN THE STODDARD PETITION IN SUPPORT OF RESTRICTING COYOTE HUNTING FROM APRIL 1 THROUGH AUGUST 31 TO COINCIDE WITH COYOTE PUP REARING MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BOISVERT**

#### **ON THE QUESTION**

Commissioner Perkins questioned if it is part of the Charter of the Commission to provide input to this sort of topic. He questioned why it would be a House Bill as he would expect Fish & Game to address this. Commissioner Tenhave responded it is a legislative issue as a result of some disagreeing with Fish & Game. This is the way they feel they can voice their disagreement and provide enforcement.

Commissioner Swisher commented, from a wildlife management perspective, the bill could be in the interest of hunters as well because it would protect the young allowing them to get to an age that could be hunted.

Chair Perry noted the information received from the Stoddard Conservation Commission indicated “A similar proposal was made by the biologists at NH Fish and Game during 2018 rulemaking, but was voted down by the NH Fish and Game Commission. Studies and field observations show that year-round hunting of coyotes does not reduce the coyote population or predation on livestock.” NH Fish & Game have been and will continue to be involved in this matter.

Vice Chair Caron responded to the question of whether it is part of the charge of the Commission to take formal positions on matters such as this; not exactly, but without coyotes, there would be an increased number of ticks, etc. that are not desired. More coyotes are good for the ecosystem.

Commissioner Perkins commented he feels unqualified to tell Fish & Game they are not doing this right. Commissioner Rosati questioned if Fish & Game is funded by hunters. Commissioner Perkins stated concern if the Commission puts forward an opinion on this type of matter, it could be labeled as a politically energized activist conservation commission. Commissioner Rosati stated the Commission is not, which she knows for a fact. The Commission is conservation; conserving nature. We are conserving a habitat where a predator would be allowed to raise their young in peace. We are protecting conservation.

Chair Perry noted the legislation specifically states homeowners/landowners can protect their property. Commissioner Boisvert reiterated his belief the proposed legislation is reasonable.

Vice Chair Caron commented hunters are likely finding a den, setting a tree stand up over a den with pups in it, and waiting for the adult female coyote to return. He spoke of being outdoors between April and August and of having seen coyote hunters out in Grater Woods right along the trail with their rifles. There are quite a few coyote hunters there in early morning.

Commissioner Swisher stated a desire to understand the numbers in the community. Commissioner Boisvert questioned if Jeff Littleton, Moosewood Ecological, has an idea of the number of coyotes in Town. Vice Chair Caron commented deer hunters wear orange and are visible. Coyote hunting is completely different, hunters are laying down, cannot be seen, and pop up out of the woods with a rifle. It is a different kind of hunting where they really must disguise themselves. Not having that in the woods between April and August would be nice.

Councilor Albert questioned if it is the place of the Commission to put forward an opinion on this at the State level. Commissioner Rosati commented the Stoddard Commission seemed to believe it appropriate. The question was asked of whether an opinion was sought by the State. Chair Perry remarked he does not believe so. Commissioner Boisvert commented the intent is to provide public input.

Commissioner Tenhave stated his opinion it is more a matter of preservation than conservation. He agrees it is a risky thing to take a stand against legislation. When the Town Council appointed commissioners, it was to manage the natural resources and provide input based on what is within the Charter. The Charter does not speak to a political position. Councilor Albert commented that is the hurdle he is stuck on.

Commissioner Rosati questioned if it is political. Commissioner Tenhave remarked by reaching out to legislators, you are part of the political system. He remarked he has no issue with individuals doing so on their own, but thinks, as a body, it is a slippery slope.

Commissioner Boisvert commented the New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions is constantly posting bills, trying to generate interest and public comment. He does not believe the Commission can be isolated politically.

Councilor Albert commented the Town Council provides feedback on issues that have a direct impact on our community. Asked if this bill would have a direct impact on our community, Vice Chair Caron stated it would, given the coyotes in Grater Woods and the Horse Hill Nature Preserve (HHNP).

Commissioner Rosati stated her belief it can be preservation as well as conservation.

Councilor Albert questioned if a problem is being seen with coyotes. He understands the intent of the law, and has no issue supporting it on a personal level, but would not want to do so as a Commission.

Chair Perry stated his opinion this is a very personal item. If the Commission wishes to vote to take a position, he is okay with that, but wonders if the opinion will differ in the next term, etc.

Commissioner Swisher questioned the opportunity for residents to provide input. Vice Chair Caron noted the subject matter was identified on the Commission's agenda. Chair Perry remarked there are residents who would and who would not share the opinion of members of the Commission. This is a politically charged item. He reiterated he would be more comfortable supporting this as an individual.

Commissioner Perkins noted the item was not brought to the Commission by a resident, it was brought by another conservation commission.

Councilor Albert questioned if the Commission wished to table the item. Commissioner Rosati noted the vote is on March 7<sup>th</sup>.

## **MOTION FAILED**

**3-4-0**

*Commissioners Perry, Perkins, and Swisher and Councilor Albert voted in opposition*

Chair Perry commented on the number of times the Commission has voted not to become involved politically.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **1. Game Cameras on Conservation Properties**

Vice Chair Caron stated he contacted the Police Department and learned the camera model the department purchased is no longer available; however, a similar product is. The camera is not costly; however, requires an SD card. The cost of the camera is \$169, and an SD card \$40.

Councilor Albert questioned the standards for use of cameras. Chair Perry agreed there should be standards identified. Vice Chair Caron suggested working with Chuck Miller to have a Town computer that can be used for downloading photos.

Commissioner Swisher questioned the purpose, and was informed of recent and past instances of individuals in areas on the properties where they were not permitted. Recently, the Police Department placed a camera on the Sklar property. They were able to quickly identify individuals, contacted them,

and informed them the activities they were participating in were not permitted. The issue was quickly resolved.

The Commission would notify the Police Department who would in turn address any issues. Vice Chair Caron commented previously, members of the Commission and sub-committees utilized personal cameras. When bringing photos to the Police they were unable to be utilized as the department was not involved in the investigation, had no knowledge of where the camera was placed, etc.

Asked if there is a requirement to post notice of a camera, Vice Chair Caron stated if individuals pay to be in a location, recording is not permitted without notification. If on public property, where you are not paying to be there, providing there is no audio recording on the camera, it is permitted, without notice.

Councilor Albert remarked you can identify the impetus for placing a game camera, e.g., vandalism. He questioned if there is any concern regarding the Right-to-Know Law; can individuals request to view photos.

Asked where the cameras would be located, Vice Chair Caron indicated they could be placed on all Commission properties at one time or another.

**MOTION BY VICE CHAIR CARON TO AUTHORIZE THE EXPENDITURE OF AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED FIVE HUNDRED FIFTY DOLLARS (\$550.00) FOR THE PURCHASE OF TWO (2) GAME CAMERAS AND FOUR (4) SD CARDS. FUNDING SOURCE IS FUND 53**

**MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER ROSATI**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**7-0-0**

**2. Amend Home Depot Purchase Approved at the Jan. 7, 2019 Meeting**

Chair Perry noted the actual cost of the bridge and decking material was \$14.75 over the \$600 approved by the Commission.

**MOTION BY VICE CHAIR CARON TO AUTHORIZE THE ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURE OF FOURTEEN DOLLARS AND SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS (\$14.75) FOR DECKING REPAIR AND OTHER BRIDGE WORK ON THE QUARRY TRAIL. SOURCE OF FUNDING IS FUND 53**

**MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER ROSATI**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**7-0-0**

**3. HHNP – Loop Trail & Beaver Activity**

Chair Perry and Dr. Matt Tarr, Wildlife State Specialist, University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension, walked the property. Dr. Tarr was provided with information relative to the complaint from the sub-committee. He questioned the concerns, and was told that although there has been activity in prior years, this year it was aggressive, and there is uncertainty as to what has caused the change in



behavior. Chair Perry commented he was intentionally vague in his description as he wished to gain Dr. Tarr's opinion.

The Commission, and the Community Development Department, was provided with the information received from Dr. Tarr. Chair Perry will forward a copy to Don Laliberte, Member, HHNP Sub-committee.

Asked what he concluded, Chair Perry stated they purposely try to stay close to the den. That area is very close to the den/lodge. There is no longer a lot of small shrub (have eaten it all). Now they are taking down the larger trees so they can get to the small woody branches at the top.

Commissioner Perkins commented it was pointed out it is cyclical; now that the larger trees are gone, they will be replaced with smaller trees, and the process will repeat. Chair Perry commented towns that are purposely trying to create habitat for beaver will do what they have done; make small clearings to encourage growth of small shrubby underbrush.

Commissioner Tenhave commented the sun will cause the seeds to grow. Providing we, as trailblazers, don't go off trail and destroy the plants that will be created. We almost want to put up signs that say stay on trail - forest regeneration in progress.

Chair Perry noted there remains a single, large tree that is caught up in the crook of another. He will inquire of the Public Works Department if they are able to cut it down.

**MOTION BY CHAIR PERRY TO RE-OPEN THE LOOP TRAIL BETWEEN POSTS 3 AND 4**  
**MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILOR ALBERT**  
**MOTION CARRIED**  
**7-0-0**

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **1. Sub-committee Updates**

##### **Wildcat Falls**

Commissioner Rosati stated the moonlight snowshoe walk did not occur given the lack of snow.

#### **2. Winter Carnival Update**

Commissioner Rosati commented on how well interactive items were received by the children.

Vice Chair Caron remarked the location they had was great. There was a lot of traffic that allowed for more visibility. A neighbor of Wildcat Falls stopped by and asked questions about a sub-division going in at the end of Fir Street. He was concerned as a surveyor was on his property line. He questioned if the Commission was selling some of its property for development, and was told that is something he does not have to worry about. He also had questions about dumping grass clippings on Commission property. He left indicating he would pass along what he learned to his neighbors. He also had questions about closing the park at dusk; if he could walk in there after that time. He was uncertain if it is the parking lot that is closed or the trail(s). Vice Chair Caron commented on the distinction noting the planned snowshoe walk. The parking lot is closed.

Commissioner Tenhave noted Chapter 111 (5) parcels are closed between dawn and dusk. Councilor Albert remarked that is how it has always been interpreted; if the police see a car in the parking lot and someone is in it, they move them out. Asked which parcels fall under that, Commissioner Tenhave remarked he would have to look it up to provide all five, but noted some of the parcels included are the 80 acres of Wildcat Falls, Riverside Park (off Amherst Road), one of the two parcels that make up Mitchell Woods, and Gilmore Hill.

Chair Perry suggested, as part of the Commission's outreach, there should be mention of successional forests, e.g., Beaver meadow, Gilmore Hill and the HHNP.

Vice Chair Caron informed the Commission of a Life Scout who reached out looking for an Eagle Scout project. He will follow up with him.

### **3. Winter Ecology Walk - March 9<sup>th</sup>**

The Grater Woods Winter Wildlife Ecological Walk is scheduled for Saturday, March 9, 2019 beginning at the Merrimack Middle School upper parking lot at 9:00 a.m.

Commissioner Rosati spoke of a post on the positive Facebook page regarding advertising of events. It was explained, the desire is for events to go on a single source. Given the numerous social media platforms available, e.g., Facebook, Twitter, the decision was reached that the single source/location for listing events is the Town's website.

## **PRESENTATION OF THE MINUTES**

Merrimack Conservation Commission. . . . . February 11, 2019

*The following amendments were offered:*

Page 5, Line 9; correct the spelling of "GeoEnvironmental"

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER ROSATI TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED  
MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BOISVERT  
MOTION CARRIED**

**6-0-1**

*Commissioner Swisher Abstained*

**PUBLIC COMMENT** - None

## **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Boisvert spoke of hearing shooting within Grater Woods. He visited the site hoping to determine the exact location. He believes it may have been coming from the land that was cleared, which is not part of Grater Woods (private property).

A tree is down on the Drilled Rock Trail.

Commissioner Boisvert contacted Anheuser Busch regarding a clean-up day at the Sklar property. He suggested an April date during the work week. The interest is more in the warmer weather. He



explained why the April timeframe is preferable; however, the Commission is open to any assistance. He will continue communicating with them.

Councilor Albert spoke of being on the Parks and Recreation Commission. They are planning the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Earth Day Community Clean Up Day for Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION BY VICE CHAIR CARON TO ADJOURN**  
**MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER PERKINS**  
**MOTION CARRIED**  
**7-0-0**

*The March 4, 2019 meeting of the Merrimack Conservation Commission was adjourned at 7:56 p.m.*

Submitted by Dawn MacMillan

## Cooperative Extension

### Natural Resources

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**Belknap County**  
527.5475

**Carroll County**  
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**Cheshire County**  
352.4550

**Coös County**  
788.4961

**Grafton County**  
787.6944

**Hillsborough County**  
641.6060

**Merrimack County**  
796.2151

**Rockingham County**  
679.5616

**Strafford County**  
749.4445

**Sullivan County**  
863.9200

**Education Center**  
877.398.4769 (Toll Free in NH)

**UNH Cooperative Extension  
State Office**  
862.1520

March 4, 2019

Gage Perry  
Merrimack Conservation Commission  
Merrimack, NH 03054

Gage,

This letter is a follow up to the visit you and I made on February 25, 2019 to observe the recent beaver activity adjacent to the established beaver pond on the Horse Hill Nature Preserve in Merrimack. Our visit was in response to concerns you received regarding the large number of trees that beavers have felled, or are in the process of felling, adjacent to the northeastern corner of the pond (Picture 1). The following letter provides a series of photos and notes I took during our visit to document the cutting activity, the beaver lodge, and the series of beaver dams that are at this site.



*Picture 1. Location of recent beaver tree cutting on Horse Hill Nature Preserve. Amherst Road, Merrimack, NH*

Town to do anything further and there should be no cause for concern regarding what beavers are doing here. The Google Earth photo (Picture 1) shows there was a beaver-created opening here prior to this most recent cutting activity, and we observed old cut stumps throughout the area where the new trees have been cut (Picture 3). This indicates that beavers have been cutting trees here for some time, but they have recently increased the number large trees they are cutting.

Overall, I don't have any ecological concerns regarding what the beavers are doing here because all of their activities are completely normal and located where they should be expected. My only concern is one of safety for pedestrians in the area where the hiking trail passes directly under one or more trees that were cut by beavers, but that haven't yet fallen from where those trees are supported by neighboring trees (Picture 2). These cut trees will eventually fall and obviously that isn't a great situation to have in the immediate vicinity of a heavily used pedestrian trail. As we discussed, it would be best to have an agent from the Town of Merrimack cut these hanging trees to eliminate the potential safety hazard they pose currently. Beyond cutting these hazard trees, there is no need for the



*Picture 2. An aspen tree cut by beavers dangles near the pedestrian trail on the northeastern side of the beaver pond.*



*Picture 3. Evidence of stumps of trees cut by beavers prior to 2019 indicate a history of beaver cutting activity at this location.*

So why have beavers begun cutting large trees adjacent to this wetland? This typically happens when they are running out of their preferred winter food of small diameter hardwood browse (e.g., young branches and buds of aspen, maples, birches, and shrubs). Beavers prefer young branches (Picture 4) because these are among the most nutritious food items they have during the winter. When the amount of this preferred food becomes low (this is common following years of regular beaver foraging around a pond), beavers will begin cutting larger trees to access the small branches of the tree tops and to eat the inner bark (i.e., the cambium) of the trunks and branches of the trees they fell (Picture 5). A short walk around this area of recent cutting reveals there is very little small hardwood and shrub growth to provide beavers with food; that which is here has been browsed by beavers repeatedly over consecutive years (Picture 6). Overall, my conclusion is that the availability of preferred browse around this wetland has become limited for beavers and the beavers are responding in a predictable way by cutting larger trees to access tree branches and bark for food (Picture 7).





*Picture 4. Beavers are cutting large trees to access small branches in the tree tops. These small branches become preferred beaver food once beavers have eaten all of the low-growing saplings and shrubs from around a wetland.*



*Picture 5. Once beavers fell a large tree they eat the top branches and the inner bark of the tree trunk and large branches. In addition to the top branches, the inner bark is where most of the nutrients are in these trees.*



*Picture 6. A highbush blueberry shrub that has been browsed repeatedly, over multiple years by beavers along the northeastern edge of the beaver pond.*



*Picture 7. Pole-sized aspen trees recently cut by beavers on the northeastern edge of the pond. When beavers begin cutting numerous large trees it indicates that saplings and shrubs that are preferred beaver food have become scarce around the wetland.*



The beaver activity occurring in this area of the Horse Hill Nature Preserve is completely natural and is an integral part of the ecology of a beaver pond. If beavers run out of food here they should be expected to abandon the pond temporarily until young trees and shrubs have grown back and are again abundant around the pond edge. That could take anywhere from a few to many years. The Town doesn't need to do anything here for the beavers. The process of beavers creating a lodge and dam (Picture 8), or multiple dams (Picture 9); of the beavers eating all of the preferred browse and then cutting larger trees for food; and of the beavers abandoning a pond when food runs out — is natural. The Town should not feel compelled to intervene with this process. This pond provides valuable habitat for a variety of other wildlife species; this includes providing tall dead trees within the pond that function as a nesting rookery for a small number of great blue herons. By providing a unique combination of cover, food and water, this pond, in all stages of flooding and abandonment, likely more than doubles the number of wildlife species that can be expected to use the Horse



*Picture 8. The active beaver lodge and the main beaver dam at the north end of the beaver pond on Horse Hill Nature Preserve.*



*Picture 9. Beavers have created a series of three dams on the downstream side of the main beaver dam that holds back the water of this pond. It is common for beavers to build multiple dams on streams they have occupied for many years.*

Hill Nature Preserve.

Some landowners do decide they don't want beavers to abandon a pond, so they work with a biologist/forester to create small clearcuts immediately adjacent to the pond edge to stimulate sapling and shrub growth that beavers prefer as winter food (they eat mostly aquatic plant roots and wetland grasses during spring and summer). This habitat management is something the Town may want to consider the next time there is any commercial timber harvesting planned near this wetland. At that time, I would be happy to meet with the conservation commission and with the Town's forester, to identify the best areas to locate forest openings to benefit beavers and other wildlife. In the meantime, the cutting the beavers are doing is creating an opening that biologists would mimic with clearcutting (Picture 10). Now that the beavers have cut the large trees that were shading this

wetland edge, the increase in sunlight will stimulate natural regeneration of grasses, wetland shrubs (e.g., high-bush blueberry and silky dogwood), and sapling hardwoods (most likely an abundance of root suckers from the aspen trees the beavers recently cut). In addition to providing future food for beavers, these plants will provide dense cover for birds such as song sparrows and common yellowthroats, small mammals such as red-backed voles and white-footed mice, and reptiles such as garter snakes and northern water snakes. These wildlife will provide foraging opportunities for barred owls, sharp-shinned hawks, gray fox, bobcats, mink and short-tailed weasels. Thus, the cutting activity that beavers are currently conducting here is natural and incredibly valuable for maintaining the natural function of this wetland and for influencing the great variety of wildlife that will use it for habitat.

I appreciate the opportunity to visit this great parcel of community-owned land and to see all of the work the beavers have been doing here! Please don't hesitate to contact me if you or other conservation commission members have additional questions or would like further assistance on this, or any other property.

Sincerely,



Matthew D. Tarr, Ph.D.  
Extension Professor, Wildlife Specialist  
UNH Cooperative Extension/NREN  
131 Main Street  
216 Nesmith Hall  
Durham, NH 03824  
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*Picture 10. Sunlight can now reach the ground in areas where beavers have cut multiple tall trees. This sunlight will stimulate natural regeneration of shrubs and saplings that will provide cover for birds, small mammals, reptiles and amphibians, as well as future food for beavers.*