

REPORT OF THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The conservation commission was pleased to present the Plainfield Conservation Award to Ruth Ann Wheeler at the 2006 town meeting. Ruth was recognized for her work with the local 4-H Club, the "Herbs and Such" PlainFacts column she wrote for many years, and above all for her pioneering work to conserve Plainfield open space lands for recreational use and other public benefit. The 1989 town report noted that "There were several changes to the composition of the Conservation Commission. Ruth Ann Wheeler stepped down after more than four years as chairwoman. Her naturalist's perspective, personal commitment to a conservation ethic and her knowledge of the town's land and people are largely responsible for effective commission activity." We couldn't have said it better.

Jim Taylor declined reappointment to the conservation commission, having served five terms dating back to 1992. We valued Jim's reasoned positions in every decision, and his leadership continued well beyond the few years he spent as the chairman. Bill Knight, fresh off masterminding the construction of the Ira and Sara Townsend Bridge, was appointed to fill the vacancy. Bill is a builder, coach, and outdoorsman who clearly likes to get things done. We are pleased to report that he has hit the ground skiing.

For the last two years, voters have approved appropriations from the Forest Maintenance Fund to mark boundaries on town-owned lands. The surveyor has done the deed research and located the boundaries of our most obscure property, the Townsend Lot. While substantial progress has been made, the work is not yet complete. We will wait to get this caught up before continuing with the project. The Forest Maintenance Fund has a balance of \$23,069.17.

Wetland permits, road maintenance, a serious erosion problem at the school and an adjacent farm field, and one or two landowner concerns comprised the bulk of our water resource considerations. Several potential land conservation projects were on the radar screen. The recently completed Natural Resource Inventory – Phase 1 will form the basis for future conservation planning. The Conservation Fund, the primary purpose of which is to conserve lands with important natural resources, has a balance of \$84,264.48.

Stewardship of Victor Hewes Memorial Park included basic administration as well as the planning of a new driveway, parking area, and related improvements which we expect to have completed in the spring of 2008. Also among our discussions was the wetland buffer zoning proposal, Greenup Week, protection of Class 6 roads from damage by heavy off-road traffic, and several trail issues. The Townsend Bridge and Trail Fund, (not a conservation commission fund – the board of selectmen is the "agent to expend") has a balance of \$8014.20.

Conservation commission meeting minutes are posted on the town's website at www.plainfieldnh.org or can be seen, with agendas and occasional supporting material, at the town office. The Natural Resource Inventory is also available on-line.

Respectfully Submitted,

David Grobe, Chairman
Conservation Commission