

Saving Special Places 2010

Session 1 Workshops

9:30am – 10:45am (75 minutes)

1A: Basic Conservation Options and Tax Benefits

Phil will cover the various options available including deed restrictions, gifts of land and conservation easements. He'll also provide information on the changing income tax benefits picture as well as the list of costs associated with doing land conservation transactions and the sources of funding available to help offset those costs or provide income.

Presenter:

Phil Auger, *UNH Cooperative Extension*, <http://extension.unh.edu>

1B: Shared Vision for the Lakes Region Conservation Plan

In 2009, the Forest Society convened a group of local and regional land trusts, representatives of NH Fish & Game and the Lakes Region Planning Commission, to develop a strategic conservation plan for the Lakes Region. Spanning more than 2,000 square miles and 41 communities, the group used a Delphi process to develop a “shared vision” of conservation priorities in the region. This presentation provides an overview of the group vision process and the results in a series of GIS maps illustrating key natural resources, a weighted resource co-occurrence map, and delineation of final core conservation focus areas. Dan Sundquist will explain the project and Roger LaRochelle will speak about his role in the process and the usefulness of the plan to the Squam Lakes Conservation Society

Presenters:

Dan Sundquist, *Society of the Protection of NH Forests*, www.forestsociety.org

Roger Larochelle, *Squam Lakes Conservation Society*, www.squamlakes.com

1C: Conservation Success through Effective Community Organizing

Hopkinton recently approved a large open space bond to help fund the purchase of a conservation easement on a working dairy farm containing over 400 acres of farm and forest land with four miles of frontage of three rivers. Learn about the key strategies and tools we deployed as the landowners, local land trust, town open space committee and highly energetic local volunteers navigated unfriendly municipal committees, raised matching funds, turned out the largest town meeting ever, and secured a resounding “Yes” vote in spite of the recession and vocal local political opposition.

Presenters:

Mark Zankel, *Five Rivers Conservation Trust*, www.5rct.org

Dijit Taylor, *Hopkinton Open Space Committee*,

http://www.hopkinton-nh.gov/Pages/HopkintonNH_BComm/openspace

1D: Aquatic Resource Mitigation and Open Space Institute Grant Funds

Come learn about several innovative funding programs available to New Hampshire conservation groups. Lori Sommer from NH DES Wetlands Bureau will provide details on the Aquatic Resource Mitigation (ARM) Fund, including project eligibility and results of the first disbursement of funds in the Merrimack River watershed. Jennifer Melville, Open Space Institute's (OSI) Grant & Loan Coordinator will give an overview of several funds available for New Hampshire, including OSI's Community Forest Fund and the Transborder Fund. Jennifer will also talk about OSI's loan program for conservation

projects. At the end of the session, Lori and Jennifer will facilitate a discussion with participants about funding gaps and new ways to bring conservation funding into New Hampshire.

Presenters:

Lori Sommer, *NH DES Wetlands Bureau*, <http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wetlands/index.htm>

Jennifer Melville, *Open Space Institute*,

http://www.osiny.org/site/PageServer?pagename=AboutOSI_Mission

1E: Farm and Ranchland Protection Program for Working Farmlands

The NRCS Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) provide matching funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farm and ranch land in agricultural uses. USDA provides funds to State, Tribal, or local governments and non-governmental organizations (eligible entities) to acquire development rights through conservation easements on land from landowners. Presentation will include land & landowner eligibility, application process, estimated timeline and required partner participation.

Presenter:

Jody Walker, *Natural Resources Conservation Service*, <http://www.nh.nrcs.usda.gov>

1F: Helping Landowners Care for Their Forest Land

This session will review the many educational, technical and financial resources available to help landowners manage their land, including a sneak preview of components of the second edition of *Good Forestry in the Granite State*.

Presenters:

Karen Bennett, *UNH Cooperative Extension*, <http://extension.unh.edu>

Andy Fast, *UNH Cooperative Extension*, <http://extension.unh.edu>

1G: Tax Benefits and Substantiation Rules for Conservation Transactions

This interactive workshop will focus on those legislative, regulatory and judicial developments (beginning with the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 and continuing through the Pension Protection Act of 2006) and their regulatory and judicial progeny which represent the most challenging aspects of the expanded tax treatment of conservation easement donations and other qualified conservation transactions. The appeal of the expanded incentives may be muted by increasingly stringent gift and valuation substantiation requirements issued through recent Internal Revenue Service guidance. Also, the IRS has stepped up its scrutiny of all facets of conservation transactions, including the related activities of those land trusts involved with conservation transactions. The activities of everyone involved with conservation transactions – land trust staff and boards, attorneys, appraisers, tax preparers – may be subjected to IRS oversight.

Presenter:

Stefan Nagel, *Law Office of Stephen J. Small, P.C.*, <http://www.stevesmall.com>

1H: Archaeological Research on Conserved Property

Archaeological field research is predominantly destructive since it involves excavating sites and removing artifacts. How can this be reconciled with a conservation ethic of preservation in place? This workshop will explore how this inherent contradiction can be resolved and circumstances where “destructive” research should give way to conservation.

Presenter:

Dick Boisvert, *NH Division of Historic Resources*, <http://www.nh.gov/nhdhr/>

1I: Importance of Shrublands & Young Forests to Wildlife

Impenetrable and dense, shrublands and young forest are often ignored and undervalued. For some species of wildlife, such as New England cottontail rabbits, American woodcock, and ruffed grouse, shrublands provide the best possible cover. The shrubs and young trees growing in these areas also provide an abundance of berries and fruit, eaten by many different birds and mammals. Over the past 100 years, there has been a dramatic decrease in the amount of shrubland and young forest in New Hampshire. This has led to population declines in many wildlife species that use and rely on these habitats. You will learn about the biology of shrublands and young forests, the wildlife species that use them, and how to manage these important habitats on your land.

Presenters:

Matt Tarr, *UNH Cooperative Extension*, <http://extension.unh.edu/Wildlife/Wildlife.htm>

Emma Carcagno, *UNH Cooperative Extension*, <http://extension.unh.edu/Wildlife/Wildlife.htm>

1J: Land Trust-Municipal Partnerships

More and more land trusts are working cooperatively with Conservation Commissions/Open Space Committees to achieve their land protections goals. The workshop will help both land trusts and town commissions or committees explore these relationships when it comes to defining the partnership roles, developing conservation priorities, applying for grants, using town funds, negotiating with landowners, and gaining approvals through the town process.

Presenters:

Pete Throop, *Monadnock Conservancy*, <http://www.monadnockconservancy.org>

Brian Hotz, *Society for the Protection of NH Forests*, <http://www.forestsociety.org/>

1K: Challenges to Conservation Easements

Challenges to Conservation Easements can come from surprising quarters, and this session will discuss recent cases and issues that have arisen in courthouses and town halls across the state. The panelists will discuss recent court cases including a recent challenge of enforcement rights by an easement neighbor (Tallman case), a pending case where a landowner is disputing whether a portion of land is subject to the conservation easement, and the challenge by citizens to a town's investment in land protection (the Bond property in Raymond). We will also discuss political challenges to town spending. We hope to have an update from town meeting season and look forward to lively contributions and discussion from the audience.

Presenters:

Tom Masland, *Ransmeier & Spellman, P.C.*, <http://www.ranspell.com>

Brian Hart, *Southeast Land Trust of NH*, <http://www.seltnh.org>

Sara Callaghan, *Society for the Protection of NH Forests*, <http://www.forestsociety.org/>