

New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions

NHACC is a nonprofit, started in 1970, whose mission is to provide assistance to municipal conservation commissions.

There are 215 conservation commissions in the state (out of 234 municipalities).

1963 – NH’s conservation commission enabling legislation – RSA 36-A

Quite a diversity of people volunteering for commissions. Doctors, lawyers, loggers, foresters, wetland scientists, wildlife biologists, college students, developers, real estate agents, reporters, writers, grandmas.....

Conservation commissions continue to engage a wide range of activities:

- ✦ Studying natural resources and planning for the protection of important places-Conservation commissions continue to create and update their Natural Resource Inventories and Conservation Plans.
- ✦ Land conservation- farms continue to be a very popular focus. Several towns have completed projects using Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program funds. These projects continue to be very popular with community members.
- ✦ Land management is emerging as a stronger focus for some commissions, especially where there are limited funds to protect new land.
- ✦ Trail construction and management
- ✦ Educational programs- vernal pool programs continue to be a popular theme. The Washington Conservation Commission recently brought the Silvio O. Conte Refuge’s WOW Express to the elementary school.
- ✦ Outdoor events such as hikes and town forest days
- ✦ Ag Committees and Energy Committees

NHACC also engages in lobbying on behalf of conservation commissions in NH. Several bills of concern in this legislative session.

The bills attempted to severely restrict the authority of conservation commissions. One bill attempted to stop land use change tax allocations to conservation commissions, another to stopping municipalities from permanently protecting land.

Thankfully we've emerged from this legislative session relatively unscathed.
I also want to mention some emerging issues of interest to NH's conservation commissions:

Town forests/community forests

Stormwater

Wind projects

ADA rules for public trails

Visit NHACC.org for more information about NH's conservation commissions