



12-31-2002

## Community Conservation Assistance

Frank Mitchell

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# COMMUNITY CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE

A Final Report to  
The New Hampshire Estuaries Project  
Submitted by  
Frank Mitchell  
UNH Cooperative Extension  
131 Main St, 220 Nesmith Hall  
Durham, NH 03824

December 31, 2002

This report was funded in part by a grant from the Office of State Planning, New Hampshire Estuaries Project, as authorized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency pursuant to Section 320 of the Clean Water Act.



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Community Conservation Assistance Project had the following goal and objectives:

**Goal:** Sustain and protect open space lands identified by communities and land trusts as critical to water quality and biodiversity through voluntary land conservation.

**Objectives:**

1. With the SPNHF and other partners, establish a seacoast office for the Center for Land Conservation Assistance.
2. Provide education to various audiences in the seacoast region.
3. Create a library of relevant materials
4. Develop and compile publications
5. Establish with the SPNHF and other partners and participate in the first annual NH Land Conservation Conference
6. Evaluate program effectiveness
7. Coordinate town projects associated with the Natural Outreach Coalition.

The NROC met the project objectives through a variety of methods. The principal one was to offer a presentation titled, NROC “Dealing With Growth” followed one week later with a meeting of all interested parties to formulate action plans to address issues the presentation raises. During the project period, four of our client communities participated in this approach: Dover, Exeter, Newfields, and Stratham.

Other methods used to reach the project objectives included:

- Sustained technical assistance as requested by client communities.
- Individual meetings, phone calls and correspondence with client community representatives.
- Training specific to client groups, on request
- The NH Land Conservation Conference
- Regional workshops
- Distribution of publications and similar material
- Putting community representatives in contact with each other to share ideas and resources
- Assisting communities with grant applications.
- Assisting communities with communications to build support for their initiatives.
- Assisting communities with outreach strategies.

A total of 26 communities and 2 land trusts were reached by the Community Conservation Assistance project during the funding period.

Our experience with the Community Conservation Assistance project has led us to the following conclusions:

1. The program objectives were met or exceeded, with the exception of the delayed schedule for formal program evaluation.
2. The NROC approach of an initial presentation followed by a planning meeting is an effective strategy to maximize the momentum of the presentation and to mobilize communities to protect land, water and open space.
3. Funding for community projects identified during the NROC process has been extremely valuable in motivating community leaders and volunteers to action on issues they’ve identified as important.
4. The diverse staffing of NROC is one of its greatest assets.

5. NROC is maturing as an organization, increasing its coordination needs and leading to increased reliance on committees to carry out its various tasks.

## INTRODUCTION

The Natural Resources Outreach Coalition is a multi-organizational initiative to support New Hampshire communities in their efforts to conserve and protect land, water, wildlife habitats and quality of life.

We do this through:

- X Coordinating the educational and technical assistance resources of the state's major natural resource and planning organizations and agencies.
- X Serving as a clearinghouse and referral agent for available resources.
- X Presenting education and technical assistance programs to communities, upon request, that emphasize both voluntary and regulatory tools for resource protection and that illustrate the connections between natural resources, economy and quality of life.
- X Helping community leaders to better understand their community's resources; threats to these resources; and the actions necessary to sustain the resources; and then using this information as a basis for community planning and land use decision making.

The Natural Resources Outreach Coalition includes the following organizations:

- County Conservation Districts
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- NH Dept. Of Environmental Services
- NH Fish & Game Dept. - Great Bay Estuarine Research Reserve
- Office of State Planning - NH Coastal Program & NH Estuaries Project
- Regional Planning Commissions
- UNH Cooperative Extension

The Community Conservation Assistance Project had the following goal and objectives:

**Goal:** Sustain and protect open space lands identified by communities and land trusts as critical to water quality and biodiversity through voluntary land conservation.

**Objectives:**

1. With the SPNHF and other partners, establish a seacoast office for the Center for Land Conservation Assistance.
2. Provide education to various audiences in the seacoast region.
3. Create a library of relevant materials
4. Develop and compile publications
5. Establish with the SPNHF and other partners and participate in the first annual NH Land Conservation Conference
6. Evaluate program effectiveness
7. Coordinate town projects associated with the Natural Outreach Coalition.

The NROC met the project objectives through a variety of methods. The principal one was to offer a presentation titled, NROC "Dealing With Growth" followed one week later with a meeting of all interested parties to formulate action plans to address issues the presentation raises. During the project period, four of our client communities participated in this approach: Dover, Exeter, Newfields, and Stratham.

Other methods used to reach the project included:

- Sustained technical assistance as requested by client communities.
- Individual meetings, phone calls and correspondence with client community representatives.
- Training specific to client groups, on request
- The NH Land Conservation Conference
- Regional workshops
- Distribution of publications and similar material
- Putting community representatives in contact with each other to share ideas and resources
- Assisting communities with grant applications.
- Assisting communities with communications to build support for their initiatives.
- Assisting communities with outreach strategies.

## PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

**Goal:** Sustain and protect open space lands identified by communities and land trusts as critical to water quality and biodiversity through voluntary land conservation.

**Objectives:**

1. With the SPNHF and other partners, establish a seacoast office for the Center for Land Conservation Assistance.
2. Provide education to various audiences in the seacoast region.
3. Create a library of relevant materials
4. Develop and compile publications
5. Establish with the SPNHF and other partners and participate in the first annual NH Land Conservation Conference
6. Evaluate program effectiveness
7. Coordinate town projects associated with the Natural Outreach Coalition.

## METHODS

The work tasks to meet the above objectives included:

1. Assigning lead staff
2. Establishing a seacoast office for the Center for Land Conservation Assistance
3. Providing educational programs and assistance\*
4. Library development and development and compilation of publications
5. Organize a NH Land Conservation Conference
6. Coordinate NROC community projects

\* The basic approach to meeting the project objectives was to offer a presentation titled, NROC “Dealing With Growth” followed one week later with a meeting of all interested parties to formulate action plans to address issues the presentation raises. During the project period, four of our client communities participated in this approach: Dover, Exeter, Newfields, and Stratham.

Other methods used to reach the project objectives were used as well and these involved other communities. These approaches included:

- Sustained technical assistance as requested by client communities.
- Individual meetings, phone calls and correspondence with client community representatives.
- Training specific to client groups, on request
- The NH Land Conservation Conference

- Regional workshops
- Distribution of publications and similar material
- Putting community representatives in contact with each other to share ideas and resources
- Assisting communities with grant applications.
- Assisting communities with communications to build support for their initiatives.
- Assisting communities with outreach strategies.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### RESULTS REPORTED BY OBJECTIVE

#### **1. With the SPNHF and other partners, establish a seacoast office for the Center for Land Conservation Assistance.**

In October, 2002, Brenda Lind was hired as a part-time Technical Specialist for the NH Center for Land Conservation Assistance to assist land trusts and municipalities in the seacoast region. The CLCA negotiated an arrangement with her to work from her home, so the CLCA will not be opening a new seacoast office. Brenda, however, will work regularly in the region and her position is dedicated specifically to the seacoast.

#### **2. Provide education to various audiences in the seacoast region.**

This has been done in a variety of ways. See Methods, above for a general list of educational methods and Appendix A for a complete list of specific educational programs conducted during the project period.

#### **3. Create a library of relevant materials**

See Appendix D for a list of compiled educational materials relevant to the project.

#### **4 Develop and compile publications**

See Appendix D for a list of compiled educational materials relevant to the project. These and others are housed in a natural resources publications collection in the Nesmith Hall offices of UNH Cooperative Extension. The collection also includes information provided by most of New Hampshire's land trusts.

#### **5. Establish with the SPNHF and other partners and participate in the first annual NH Land Conservation Conference**

In April, the Landscapes and People: Conservation Tools for a Growing State was held, co-sponsored by the Center for Land Conservation Assistance and UNH Cooperative Extension. Approximately 200 people attended, of which 42 were from coastal watershed communities. The success of this conference has led to plan to offer it again in 2003.

#### **6. Evaluate program effectiveness**

During the course of this project, the NROC has organized into committees to conduct some of its work, including evaluation. We are currently preparing to evaluate recent programs using a series of indicators to measure program impacts. The timing of the projects of the three regional "Squamscott River" communities is such that it will make sense to ask clientele to complete evaluations within the next several months, after they have made sufficient progress on their work plans.

Evaluation of our programming also involves assessing the accomplishments of our client communities during our involvement with them. Here are representative examples:

##### Dover:

- Community action groups worked on specific actions as part of one-year action plan.
- Development of a list of prioritized areas for protection.

- Implementation of a very successful public education and outreach program. Each of the four - workshops in the series was attended by approximately 60 people.
- Through the Education and Outreach program, developed the momentum and community support to begin working on getting funds for land protection through a bond.
- Worked with the Strafford County Commissioners and the County Legislative Delegation to protect the Strafford County lands with a conservation easement, completed in December, 2002.

#### Squamscott Communities (Newfields, Exeter, Stratham and Newmarket)

- Combined meetings with the three communities have given the communities a regional perspective for natural resource based planning. All three communities are focused on open space protection as a primary means of conserving important lands and natural resources.
- Newfields, Exeter and Stratham have all developed proposals for NROC funding for community projects involving prioritizing lands for conservation, outreach and building public support, landowner outreach, water resources study and grant writing to support the above.

#### **7. Coordinate town projects associated with the Natural Outreach Coalition.**

This task has been performed by Amanda Stone of UNH Cooperative Extension during the project period.

A total of 26 communities and 2 land trusts were reached by the Community Conservation Assistance project during the funding period.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Our experience with the Community Conservation Assistance project has led us to the following conclusions:

1. The program objectives were met or exceeded, with the exception of the delayed schedule for formal program evaluation.
2. The NROC approach of an initial presentation followed by a planning meeting is an effective strategy to maximize the momentum of the presentation and to mobilize communities to protect land, water and open space.
3. Funding for community projects identified during the NROC process has been extremely valuable in motivating community leaders and volunteers to action on issues they've identified as important.
4. The diverse staffing of NROC is one of its greatest assets.
5. NROC is maturing as an organization, increasing its coordination needs and leading to increased reliance in committees to carry out its various tasks.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on our experience with this project, we feel that the interest in land and water conservation in the seacoast is very high and likely to be sustained or increase as growth pressures continue to affect communities. We therefore recommend that the NHEP continue to consider ways to support communities in their conservation efforts. Examples would include funding projects by groups such as the Natural Resources Outreach Coalition that support community conservation initiatives, helping to connect NHEP grantee organizations with each other and funding specific community projects generated through processes such as that used by the NROC.



We also anticipate that the educational needs of local officials and volunteers will continue to evolve, requiring a more advanced level of education and training as these clientele become more experienced with conservation activities.

**APPENDIX A - ACTIVITY REPORT**  
**Community Conservation Assistance Project**  
**NH Estuaries Project Local Grants Program**  
**May, 2001 - December 31, 2002**

**May, 2001**

UNH Cooperative Extension (UNHCE) represented (by Mitchell) on Hiring Committee for the Center for Land Conservation (CLCA) Executive Director.

UNHCE staff (Mitchell &, Stone) met with NHEP & Coastal Program staff (Lay & DeLauer) about staff roles and responsibilities.

Began compiling a file of information sheets on conservation topics written by UNHCE staff. Drafted and circulated for review ideas for the first annual NH Land Conservation Conference to be held in 2002.

Assisted 2 communities in the coastal watershed with conservation projects. One (Barrington) is a "stewardship plan" for land to be acquired by the community, the other (Candia) a natural resources inventory and conservation plan.

Held the introductory session of a "Community Mapping" course in which one representative of a coastal watershed community (Farmington) is enrolled.

**June, 2001**

UNHCE staff (Mitchell, Auger, Stone) met with Danna Truslow, Executive Director of the Seacoast Land Trust about how UNHCE and the CLCA can assist that group with the activities related to its NHEP-funded project, Mapping the Future of Berry's Brook and Sagamore Creek. We developed a list of UNHCE roles and a rough time frame for the project tasks.

Planned a series of 4 educational sessions with a regional conservation group (Bear-Paw Regional Greenways) which will coordinate the series. The group received a grant to increase the capacity of local conservation commissions to lead land conservation projects. UNHCE is assisting in the education component.

Planned a Natural Resources Outreach Coalition (NROC) presentation ("Dealing With Growth") to be held in Dover in September.

**July, 2001**

With officials from the city of Dover, began planning a "Dealing With Growth" program to be held in September.

Assisted the Candia Conservation Commission with a natural resources inventory and conservation plan. Southern regional Planning Commission was also involved.

Contributed to a water supply "stewardship plan" for over 1,000 acres of land to be acquired by the Town of Barrington. Durham, Lee, Madbury, Dover, Portsmouth and UNH are also partners in the project, which involves land in the headwaters of three public water supply watersheds.

Contributed as a Steering Committee member to operations of the Center for Land Conservation Assistance, conducted by SPNHF, UNHCE and other parties.

**August, 2001**

With officials from the city of Dover, continued planning a "Dealing With Growth" program to be held in September. Assisted the Candia Conservation Commission with a natural resources inventory and conservation plan. Southern regional Planning Commission was also involved.

Contributed to a water supply "stewardship plan" for over 1,000 acres of land to be acquired

by the Town of Barrington. Durham, Lee, Madbury, Dover, Portsmouth and UNH are also partners in the project, which involves land in the headwaters of three public water supply watersheds.

Contributed as a Steering Committee member to operations of the NH Center for Land Conservation Assistance, conducted by SPNHF, UNHCE and other parties. Also, worked closely with the Center's Director to produce a survey of land trusts and other conservation groups' interests in topics for a planned New Hampshire Land Conservation Conference in Spring, 2002.

### **September, 2001**

With Natural Resources Outreach Coalition partner agencies, presented a "Dealing With Growth" presentation in Dover. Approximately 40 people participated. A presentation on growth issues was followed by discussion of those issues. One week later, NROC led a follow-up meeting to identify action steps and a work plan to accomplish goals identified by the community discussions. NROC will provide follow-up assistance to committees established through this process. Participants' written evaluations of the "Dealing With Growth" presentation indicated a generally very favorable reaction to the program.

Led portions of a "Cocheco River Exploration" educational program attended by over 60 people.

### **October, 2001**

Assisted the Seacoast Land Trust with planning and interpretation of their natural resources inventory, developing conservation project selection criteria and planning community presentations of the group's conservation plan for Berry's brook and Sagamore Creek watersheds in Portsmouth and Rye.

Contributed to a water supply "stewardship plan" for over 1,000 acres of land to be acquired by the Town of Barrington. Durham, Lee, Madbury, Dover, Portsmouth and UNH are also partners in the project, which involves land in the headwaters of three public water supply watersheds.

Contributed as a Steering Committee member to operations of the NH Center for Land Conservation Assistance, conducted by SPNHF, UNHCE and other parties. Also, worked closely with the Center's Director to produce a survey of land trusts and other conservation groups' interests in topics for a planned New Hampshire Land Conservation Conference in Spring, 2002.

Held a series of workshops on protecting wildlife habitats and other natural resources, with some attendance from residents of coastal communities.

Cooperated with a regional land trust (Bear-Paw) to present a series of 4 workshops for land trust and conservation commission volunteers from seven towns, six of which are in a coastal watershed. The theme of the workshops was Landowner and Community Outreach. Approximately 20 people attended the series, which was favorably evaluated by attendees. The workshop continued into November.

Piloted a presentation based on the NROC "Dealing With Growth" program for a community outside the coastal area. This represents interest by NROC staff to export the successful model to other parts of the state.

Durham - land conservation/estate planning workshop in October 2001

### **November, 2001**

Continued to assist the Seacoast Land Trust with planning and interpretation of their natural resources inventory, developing conservation project selection criteria and planning community presentations of the group's conservation plan for Berry's brook and Sagamore Creek watersheds

in Portsmouth and Rye.

Continued to contribute to a water supply “stewardship plan” for over 1,000 acres of land to be acquired by the Town of Barrington. Durham, Lee, Madbury, Dover, Portsmouth and UNH are also partners in the project, which involves land in the headwaters of three public water supply watersheds.

Continued to contribute as a Steering Committee member to operations of the NH Center for Land Conservation Assistance, conducted by SPNHF, UNHCE and other parties. Also, worked closely with the Center’s Director to conduct a survey of land trusts and other conservation groups’ interests in topics for a planned New Hampshire Land Conservation Conference in Spring, 2002.

Conducted a presentation on Protecting Wildlife and Other Natural Resources to conservation commissioners at the Annual Meeting of the NH Association of Conservation Commissions. Approximately thirty people attended, including residents of coastal watersheds.

Presented a one-day meeting on Open Space protection for professionals and some community leaders. Approximately 20 people who live or work in coastal watersheds attended.

Facilitated a second follow-up meeting with the action groups that formed following the September NROC presentation, “Dealing With Growth”. The purpose of the meeting, attended by approximately 8 people, was to allow all groups to learn of the progress of others and identify next steps toward the stated goals and objectives.

### **December, 2001**

Assisted the Dover Open Lands Committee with interpreting natural resources inventory maps, choosing conservation priorities and planning additional mapping for conservation planning.

Provided guidance to a UNH Senior Project Team that refined the Town of Candia’s priority conservation lands mapping.

Continued to assist the Seacoast Land Trust with planning and interpretation of their natural resources inventory, developing conservation project selection criteria and planning community presentations of the group’s conservation plan for Berry’s brook and Sagamore Creek watersheds in Portsmouth and Rye.

Continued to contribute to a water supply “stewardship plan” for over 1,000 acres of land to be acquired by the Town of Barrington. Durham, Lee, Madbury, Dover, Portsmouth and UNH are also partners in the project, which involves land in the headwaters of three public water supply watersheds.

Continued to contribute as a Steering Committee member to operations of the NH Center for Land Conservation Assistance, conducted by SPNHF, UNHCE and other parties. Also, worked closely with the Center’s Director to interpret results of a survey of land trusts and other conservation groups’ interests in topics for a planned New Hampshire Land Conservation Conference in Spring, 2002.

Worked with other NROC staff to coordinate a regional Dealing With Growth project with Exeter, Stratham and Newfields.

### **January, 2002**

Continued to assist the Seacoast Land Trust with planning and interpretation of their natural resources inventory, developing conservation project selection criteria and planning community presentations of the group’s conservation plan for Berry’s brook and Sagamore Creek watersheds in Portsmouth and Rye.

Continued to contribute to a water supply “stewardship plan” for over 1,000 acres of land to

be acquired by the Town of Barrington. Durham, Lee, Madbury, Dover, Portsmouth and UNH are also partners in the project, which involves land in the headwaters of three public water supply watersheds.

Continued to contribute as a Steering Committee member to operations of the NH Center for Land Conservation Assistance, conducted by SPNHF, UNHCE and other parties. Also, worked closely with the Center's Director to plan details of a planned New Hampshire Land Conservation Conference in Spring, 2002 and to establish a Board sub-committee to work on the conference.

Continued to work with other NROC staff to coordinate a regional Dealing With Growth project with Exeter, Stratham and Newfields.

Facilitated a third follow-up meeting with the action groups that formed following the September NROC presentation, "Dealing With Growth". The purpose of the meeting, attended by approximately 10 people, was to allow all groups to learn of the progress of others, refine the work plan and identify next steps toward the stated goals and objectives.

Provided training to UNH Senior Project Teams, two of which will be conducting conservation projects in Danville (wetland evaluations) and Raymond (interpretive trail on conservation land). Both towns contain portions of coastal watersheds.

### **February 2002**

Developed a final workplan with the Dover action group participants. The action groups will be working on their tasks over the next few months, and will call on NROC staff when assistance is needed. The next full group meeting will be scheduled for May, 2002.

Continued to work with other NROC staff to coordinate the regional Dealing With Growth project with Exeter, Stratham and Newfields.

Continued to assist the Seacoast Land Trust with planning and interpretation of their natural resources inventory, developing conservation project selection criteria and planning community presentations of the group's conservation plan for Berry's brook and Sagamore Creek watersheds in Portsmouth and Rye. Also participated in one presentation in Rye.

Continued to contribute to a water supply "stewardship plan" for over 1,000 acres of land to be acquired by the Town of Barrington. Durham, Lee, Madbury, Dover, Portsmouth and UNH are also partners in the project, which involves land in the headwaters of three public water supply watersheds. Continued to contribute as a Steering Committee member to operations of the NH Center for Land Conservation Assistance, conducted by SPNHF, UNHCE and other parties. Also, worked closely with the Center's Director to plan details of a planned New Hampshire Land Conservation Conference in April, 2002 and to establish a Board sub-committee to work on the conference.

Trained 24 Community Tree Stewards on greenway design at a program at the Urban Forestry Center in Portsmouth.

Stafford County Lands - meet twice with the Dover Open Space committee and County Commissioners to discuss conservation easements on county lands; the issue is now going before the delegation

Dover landowner visits - two landowners this year; one is progressing and will probably utilize the state ground water fund

Barrington landowner assists - helped find a "conservation buyer" buyer for the Fogg Farm; meetings and TPL sessions on the Hellgott land.

### **March, 2002**

Presented a workshop program in Dover: "Balancing Growth, Taxes and Open Space. This

workshop is the first in a the Growing Greener workshop series co-sponsored by the City of Dover Planning Department, Conservation Commission, and Open Lands Committee. This is part of the work being done with the action groups that resulted from the Dover “Dealing With Growth” presentation. Planned the workshop “Protecting Quality of Life in Dover” which will be presented through the Dover Adult Learning Center.

Continued to assist the Seacoast Land Trust with planning and interpretation of their natural resources inventory, developing conservation project selection criteria and planning community presentations of the group’s conservation plan for Berry’s brook and Sagamore Creek watersheds in Portsmouth and Rye. Also participated in one presentation in Rye.

Met with the Dover Open Space Committee to review their NRI and discuss any additional wildlife habitat mapping that could be done.

Continued to work on the Squamscott Regional project. Participated in meetings with community reps from the three communities, Exeter, Stratham and Newfields, to discuss areas of pending development, areas of concern (could be developed or protected), and routes with significant traffic concerns. Set up presentation and followup meeting dates for the Dealing With Growth presentation in the three Squamscott communities.

Two workshops in Dover, Open Space Economics and Land Conservation, sponsored by the Open Lands Committee’s Education & Outreach Subcommittee.

Continued to contribute to a water supply “stewardship plan” for over 1,000 acres of land to be acquired by the Town of Barrington. Durham, Lee, Madbury, Dover, Portsmouth and UNH are also partners in the project, which involves land in the headwaters of three public water supply watersheds.

Continued to contribute as a Steering Committee member to operations of the NH Center for Land Conservation Assistance, conducted by SPNHF, UNHCE and other parties. Also, worked closely with the Center’s Director to plan details of a planned New Hampshire Land Conservation Conference in April, 2002 and to establish a Board sub-committee to work on the conference.

Assisted the Gulf of Maine Institute Without Walls with preliminary planning for their 2002 program in NH.

#### **April, 2002**

Presented a workshop program in Dover: “Estate Planning and Land Protection”. This Workshop was the second in the Growing Greener workshop series co-sponsored by the City of Dover Planning Department, Conservation Commission, and Open Lands Committee. Met with the Dover Open Lands Committee and the Strafford County Commissioners to discuss permanent open space protection on county lands. These meetings are part of the work being done with the action groups that resulted from the Dover “Dealing With Growth” presentation.

Participated in four meetings of the Barrington Water Supply Reserve Stewardship (Management) Committee, which is developing a stewardship plan for the property.

Helped plan and present a public meeting and field trip to the Barrington Water Supply Reserve. The principal topic was the management of the property.

Continued to contribute as a Steering Committee member to operations of the NH Center for Land Conservation Assistance, conducted by SPNHF, UNHCE and other parties. Also, worked closely with the Center’s Director to execute the first New Hampshire Land Conservation Conference on April 13, 2002.

Presented a Land Conservation & Estate Planning workshop in Candia.

Met with the newly formed Deerfield Open Space Committee to set priorities, and

develop the framework for a one-year work plan.

As part of the Natural Resources Outreach Coalition (NROC), continued to work on the Squamscott Regional project. Participated in two work sessions to review the draft Dealing With Growth presentations for Exeter, Newfields and Stratham.

### **May, 2002**

Continued to contribute as a Steering Committee member to operations of the NH Center for Land Conservation Assistance, conducted by SPNHF, UNHCE and other parties.

Met with the Brentwood Land Conservation Subcommittee to help guide conservation efforts in the community. This work session reviewed conservation options, set priorities in the community for conservation, and established policies and procedures.

Presented a Land Conservation & Estate Planning workshop in Deerfield.

Participated in UNH Senior Project presentation in Danville (wetland evaluations). Danville contains a portion of the coastal watershed.

Participated in Dover's Smart Growth workshop, the third in the Growing Greener workshop series co-sponsored by the City of Dover Planning Department, Conservation Commission, and Open Lands Committee.

Presented a workshop on Identifying and Protecting Significant Wildlife Habitats in Newfields.

Continued to provide assistance to the Deerfield Open Space Committee with their one-year workplan.

Continued to assist the Seacoast Land Trust. Participated in an information meeting for landowners in the for Berry's Brook and Sagamore Creek watersheds in Portsmouth and Rye.

Participated in the Exeter and Stratham NROC- Dealing With Growth Presentations, as part of the NROC-Squamscott watershed.

Coordinated meetings for Newfields, Exeter and Stratham (& Newmarket) to follow-up on the interests generated by the NROC Dealing With Growth Presentations.

Participated in meetings of the Barrington Water Supply Reserve Stewardship (Management) Committee, which is developing a stewardship plan for the property.

### **June, 2002**

Facilitated followup meetings to the Dealing With Growth presentations in Exeter and Stratham, and met with Newfields to discuss open space protection issues.

Participated in a two-part Municipal Board Training Series sponsored by UNHCE, Rockingham Planning Commission and the Rockingham County Conservation District: "Water, Water Everywhere, But Where are the Drops?"

Presented Estate Planning and Land Conservation workshops in Hampton Falls and Wakefield

Continued to participate in regular meetings of the Barrington Water Supply Reserve Stewardship Committee.

Continued to work with the Deerfield Open Space Committee to refine the one-year workplan and to begin work on prioritizing areas for open space protection.

Participated in a meeting with NH Land Surveyors in Hampton to discuss conservation design and incorporating wildlife habitat and other natural resource protection into subdivisions.

Provided a "Following the Flow" training for members of the Stratham conservation commission. Extension staff facilitated the training so that the community could do a reconnaissance of the Mill Pond watershed for sediment sources as part of an NH DES 319 grant to eventually dredge the pond.

## **July, 2002**

Facilitated a followup meeting of the Squamscott project communities (Exeter, Newfields, Newmarket & Stratham) to discuss open space protection issues and coordinate activities with common interests. This included coordinating work plans for the communities and helping to identify common interests that can lead to collaboration.

Contributed to development of a management plan for the Barrington Water Supply Reserve as a member of the Stewardship Committee.

Participated in preliminary meetings to form an Advisory Committee for the Barrington Water Supply Reserve project.

Continued to work with the Deerfield Open Space Committee to refine the one-year workplan and to begin work on prioritizing areas for open space protection.

Assisted the Dover Open Lands Committee with a plan to gain the support of the city council for land conservation funding proposal.

Worked with the NROC Marketing Committee on program marketing for the coming year.

Led a 4 part Land Conservation Workshop Series for municipal leaders, land trusts and others. Approximately 50 people participated. The series was held in Brentwood.

## **August, 2002**

Continued the Land Conservation Workshop Series for municipal leaders begun in July.

Contributed to development of a management plan for the Barrington Water Supply Reserve as a member of the Stewardship Committee.

Participated in preliminary meetings to form an Advisory Committee for the Barrington Water Supply Reserve project.

Continued to coordinate and participate in quarterly NROC Coalition meetings.

## **September, 2002**

Trained UNH Senior Project Teams in natural resources inventories, wetland evaluation, riparian buffers and other topics. UNHCE staff will also advise the teams during their projects. The teams will conduct conservation-related projects in two coastal watershed communities.

Facilitated a second followup meeting of the Squamscott project communities (Exeter, Newfields, Newmarket & Stratham) to discuss proposed projects for NHEP funding and regional open space protection issues.

Presented a session on conservation planning to trainees in the Coverts Project, in which volunteers promote wildlife habitat conservation and lead educational programs on that topic. Five of the 26 trainees were from coastal watershed communities.

Represented NROC at a Coastal Smart Growth Roundtable, using the opportunity to promote the program.. Approximately 100 people attended.

Contributed to development of a management plan for the Barrington Water Supply Reserve as a member of the Stewardship Committee.

Participated in preliminary meetings to form an Advisory Committee for the Barrington Water Supply Reserve project.

Participated in an interview committee to hire a Seacoast Technical Specialist for the Center for Land Conservation Assistance.

## **October 2002**



Facilitated 2 sessions in Newfields (Open Space Committee) to formulate a strategy for effective education and outreach planning. 12 participants.

Assisted a New Durham Planning Board member with resource protection issues and a meeting with town officials about a possible NROC presentation (in Jan. 03)

Assisted the Barrington Open Space Committee with organizational development issues. 6 people.

### **November 2002**

Reviewed proposals for NROC community funding and worked with community representatives from Exeter, Newfields and Stratham on refining them.

Presented a training session on effective outreach and education for the Exeter Open Space Committee and other interested people. 6 participants.

Presented a program on wetland ecology in Fremont as part of an education series on natural resource protection sponsored by the Fremont Conservation Commission and the Rockingham County Conservation District. 30 people attended.

### **December 2002**

Continued reviewing proposals for NROC community funding and worked with community representatives from Exeter, Newfields and Stratham.

Assisted a Northwood resident with preliminary plan to establish a municipal Open Space Committee.

Presented on conservation options for landowners at a program in Greenland, sponsored by the Conservation Commission and the Seacoast Land Trust. 10 people attended.

### **October through December 2002**

Coordinated all aspects of NROC organization and programming.

Assisted 17 land trusts and conservation commissions and related groups with landowner contacts in 21 communities.

Educated 32 landowners about conservation options through person-to-person meetings.

Trained and advised UNH students who conducted natural resource inventories for Kingston and Raymond Conservation Commissions. Twelve students were involved.

Contributed to development of a management plan for the Barrington Water Supply Reserve as a member of the Stewardship Committee.

Assisted the Town of Barrington in conducting outreach with communities that contributed to the protection of the Tamposi Water Supply Reserve property. 5 people.

Worked with the Center for Land Conservation Assistance on planning for the 2003 NH Land Conservation Conference.

## APPENDIX B – MEDIA COVERAGE

All the news releases below were used by news media.

Strafford County Commissioners  
The Society for the Protection of NH Forests  
City of Dover Open Lands Committee

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dec. 3, 2002

Contact: Jim Graham, 224-9945, ext. 330 or Joyce El Kouarti, 743-0037

Strafford County Farm Gains Permanent Protection  
Conservation agreement covers 213 key acres in Dover

DOVER - One of the Seacoast region's most valuable remaining open spaces received permanent protection today with the finalization of a conservation easement covering 213 acres of the Strafford County Farm.

Signed during a ceremony at the county administration offices on the property, the agreement ensures that the land will remain undeveloped, and that it will continue its traditional mix of working farmland, wildlife habitat and public recreation.

The farm now becomes only the second county farm in New Hampshire to gain protection from development pressures. For local residents, it also means that critical lands needed for drinking water protection, scenic values, historic preservation and public access will be maintained forever.

The farm covers about 281 acres, including administrative offices, the county nursing home and jail, working croplands, recreation fields, forests and wetlands. It also includes 1.9 miles of frontage along the Cochecho River, where a new public access for non-motorized boats was recently built by the Cochecho River Watershed Coalition and the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension.

The farmlands provide feed for two local dairy farms; and 26 acres are a well-managed, certified Tree Farm, which is used by the UNH Cooperative Extension to demonstrate sound forestry practices. An interpretive nature trail on the property is enjoyed by county residents and visitors.

Within the easement are 17 acres of wetlands, including key habitat for four bird species listed as endangered, threatened or "of special concern" by the state: The golden-winged warbler, northern harrier, osprey and upland sandpiper. The land also includes some of the best agriculture soils in New Hampshire, and overlies an aquifer that serves both private and municipal water supplies.

The easement will be held by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, the state's oldest and largest conservation organization.

"Generations from now, the people who work here, farm here and come to enjoy this landscape, its wildlife and recreation opportunities can credit the many public and private partners that had the foresight to protect this land, and a way of life, we all cherish," said Jane Difley, president/forester of the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests.

The agreement comes as communities in the fast-growing Seacoast region work to find innovative ways to protect their largest tracts of dwindling open spaces. By 2020, Strafford County's population is expected to grow by 30,000, an increase of 28 percent.

Recognizing the potential that development of the farm might have upon both the county and city, the City of Dover offered to pay the legal, surveying and other transaction costs associated with the property's protection.

The Strafford County Delegation endorsed the plan in May.

"Rarely does the delegation, being composed of 37 representatives of different parties and ideologies, speak with one voice. But in this instance, they have unanimously supported the conservation easement on our county land," said Rep. Gary Gilmore, D-Dover, Strafford County Delegation chairman. "It should be looked at as a challenge to other New Hampshire counties with large tracts of undeveloped land to follow this lead."

The signing was witnessed by a broad coalition of county and local officials, volunteers and environmental leaders. In remarks at the signing ceremony, a wide range of partners praised the coalition. "We're very proud of the fact that we're able to do this for a number of reasons. Most importantly, we want to conserve this land in its undeveloped state for future generations to enjoy," said County Commissioner George Maglaras. "We've always been good stewards of the county land; the fact that it still exists is testament to that."

The Strafford County Commissioners George Maglaras, Paul Dumont and Ronald Chagnon have been steadfast advocates for the preservation of the county land as a county resource. The guiding principle for the Commissioners has been that this land belongs to every county resident, and it should be available to all responsible users. The signing of the conservation easement document is viewed as an act that will preserve the county land for public recreational activities for generations to come.

The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests is the state's oldest and largest non-profit conservation organization. The Society's mission is to perpetuate the forests of New Hampshire by establishing permanent conservation areas and promoting wise stewardship of private lands. Working with public and private landowners, the Society completes permanent agreements protecting an average of 4,000 acres of forest land, farm land, natural areas, and shorefront every year.

#### The City of Dover

The City of Dover master plan identifies the Strafford County Farm, which is located in the rural northwest corner of the city, as an area of high conservation value that should be a priority for protection. For more than a decade, members of Dover's City staff, Conservation Commission, and Open Lands Committee have supported and lobbied for the permanent protection of the Strafford County Farm.

The UNH Cooperative Extension UNH Cooperative Extension provides New Hampshire citizens with research-based education and information designed to enhance their ability to make informed decisions that strengthen communities, sustain natural resources, and improve the economy. UNH Cooperative Extension has been the primary steward of the Strafford County Farm, forest and shoreline. The Extension Service developed a comprehensive wildlife management plan for the total 288 acres of the property and manages 26 wooded acres on the Strafford County land as a tree farm. In addition, UNH Cooperative Extension established long-term lease agreements with local farmers for their use of the county's fields.

The Cocheco River Watershed Coalition The Cocheco River Watershed Coalition is a citizen and community-based group whose purpose is to improve and protect the Cocheco River watershed. Cocheco River Watershed Coalition members helped create a self-guided nature trail along the Cocheco River, have monitored the water quality of the river over several years, installed a public canoe launch on the Strafford County land, and drafted the original proposal that described the county farm's natural resource features.

Open Lands Committee  
City of Dover  
288 Central Avenue  
Dover, NH 03820  
603-516-6008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: November 1, 2002

Page 1 of 2

Contact: Joyce El Kouarti, 603-743-0037

Dona Layton Masi, 603-742-2352

OPEN SPACE HELPS KEEP TAXES LOW

DOVER, NH - Dover property owners recently received their tax bills. The \$1.50 drop from last year's rate of \$22.36 per thousand still meant higher property taxes for many citizens. Residents are feeling the impact of a net assessed value increase of Dover city property from \$1.59 billion to \$1.85 billion, in part the result of a rapid rise in residential development.

Property owners who are concerned about rising taxes and the environment are exploring land protection options as a means of stabilizing tax rates while preserving their property in its natural state.

A comprehensive study of all 234 New Hampshire municipalities has demonstrated that the state residents who pay the lowest taxes are those who live in the communities that have the most undeveloped open space. Cost of community service studies of Dover and other New Hampshire municipalities have shown that for every \$1.00 of revenue generated by open space, the community pays an average of only \$.50. This is substantially lower than the \$1.07 to \$1.15 that residential development costs a community in municipal services, such as sewer, water, police and fire protection and schools.

Not only does increased development generally lead to higher property taxes, but it also threatens a community's natural and cultural resources. This has prompted many property owners to take steps to simultaneously stabilize the tax rate while preserving their land in its natural state.

One of the tools available to property owners is a conservation easement. This is a practical way for property owners to protect environmentally significant land while retaining ownership of it. Easements provide permanent protection from land use that could damage or destroy the scenic, recreational, ecological or natural resource value of the land. While the landowner retains the deed to his property, he agrees to extinguish his right to develop or subdivide it.

"Many landowners would love to see their property preserved for posterity, and yet wish to enjoy the fruits of having held on to those valuable assets for many years," according to Financial Investment Officer Doug Dede, former Dover Open Lands Committee member. "In many cases the Open Lands Committee can help landowners achieve their objectives. The Committee is active in seeking out landowners whose land is sufficiently qualified to merit consideration for their easement programs."

The Dover Open Lands Committee is an advisory group that was established by the Dover City Council to promote open space protection as outlined in the city's 2000 Master Plan. The committee works to protect undeveloped lands that possess significant conservation features, including drinking water supply resources, farm and forestlands, critical wildlife habitat, and historic and scenic areas. For more information about land protection options, contact the Open Lands Committee through the Dover Planning Department at 603-516-6008, or email [openlands@ci.dover.nh.us](mailto:openlands@ci.dover.nh.us).

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Growing Greener  
City of Dover Planning Department  
288 Central Avenue, Dover, NH 03820  
Tel. 603-516-6008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Page 1 of 1

Date: December 12, 2002

Contact: Joyce El Kouarti, 603-743-0037

CITY OF DOVER RECEIVES REGIONAL RECOGNITION FOR  
NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION EFFORTS

DOVER, NH - A group of local grassroots volunteers and the City of Dover agencies that supported them were recognized for their recent outreach efforts. The volunteers who comprised the City of Dover Outreach and Education task group organized a series of four "Growing Greener" workshops during Spring of 2002. The City of Dover Planning Department, Conservation Commission and Open Lands Committee co-sponsored the workshop series, which emphasized the importance of protecting and managing the region's natural and cultural resources. Grant funding for the series was provided by New Hampshire Estuaries Project.

Workshop Co-coordinators Anna Boudreau and Joyce El Kouarti attended the Gulf of Maine Council's regional award ceremony with City of Dover Conservation Commission Chairman Tom Fargo and City Planner Steve Bird. At the ceremony, they were presented with a Gulf of Maine Visionary Award for the state of New Hampshire. The mission of the Gulf of Maine Council is to maintain and enhance the environmental quality in the Gulf of Maine and to allow for sustainable resource use by existing and future generations.

The award reads,

The Dover, NH Outreach and Education Committee, in conjunction with the Planning Board, Conservation Commission and Open Lands Committee, coordinated a series of 'Growing Greener' workshops to address open space protection within the Gulf of Maine watershed. Through the workshops, hundreds of residents, decision-makers, landowners and developers learned about the benefits of permanent land protection and strategies for mitigating harmful impacts of development.

The success of the workshops continues. Through changes in zoning ordinances and subdivision regulation, the Planning Board is managing residential growth and protecting natural resources. Proponents of economic development have embraced open space protection as a means of controlling residential growth, stabilizing taxes and contributing to the quality of life for Dover residents.

This committee of grassroots volunteers, along with the municipal boards that supported them, deserves to be recognized for the results of their efforts and the ripple effect that their success has had throughout Dover and the NH Seacoast region. They have inspired other residents to step forward and offer their time and talent to the achievement of community goals.

"Organizing and delivering the workshop series was a group effort," said Dover Conservation Commission Chairman Tom Fargo. "The program really resonated with residents of Dover, which is testament to the concerns that local citizens have about environmentally responsible land use. The award itself recognizes our effort to guide land use practices that impact upon the Gulf of Maine ecosystem."

"The workshops were successful because Dover's citizen volunteers and its community leaders worked together," said workshop Co-coordinator Joyce El Kouarti. "I think there was some wariness on both sides when we first started out, but now there's a real synergy between the environmental activists, elected officials and city staff. It's nice. It feels like finally, we're all playing on the same team."

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Growing Greener  
City of Dover  
288 Central Avenue  
Dover, NH 03820

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Page 1 of 2

Date: February 20, 2002

Contact: Joyce El Kouarti, 603-743-0037

DOVER VOLUNTEERS RECEIVE \$5,000 GRANT  
TO HOST WORKSHOP SERIES

DOVER, NH - A group of local volunteers have received grant funding to host a series of environmental education workshops to be presented under the banner, "Growing Greener." Scheduled to take place in Dover in spring and fall of 2002, each workshop is designed to educate city residents and decision makers alike about the various means of protecting the area's water, land, and wildlife resources, as well as the economic, social, and environmental consequences of those options. Specific workshop topics will include Balancing Growth, Taxes and Open Space; Land Protection and Estate Planning; Shoreline Protection; and a two-part series on Smart Growth.

The grant, in the amount of \$5,446, was awarded by the New Hampshire Estuaries Project in support of the City of Dover's work with the Natural Resource Outreach Coalition (NROC) to help Dover implement its natural resource protection and green development work plan.

"We really appreciate the New Hampshire Estuaries Project's willingness to help fund our outreach initiative," said group Coordinator Anna Boudreau. "Knowing that the money is there makes it so much easier for us to move forward with our planning efforts."

"We were impressed with the volunteers' ability to get things done quickly, and how well-informed the members are about the topics," said Barbara McMillian, one of the NROC facilitators who recommended that the "Growing Greener" group be awarded the grant. "All of the workshop coordinators are doing this on their own time, and they're doing a fantastic job."

The volunteers met in fall of 2001 at a series of NROC workshops titled, strategy for informing residents about their options for protecting and managing Dover's land and water resources, economic vitality, and community character.

The City of Dover has experienced tremendous growth over the past two decades. Between 1980 and 1999, the population of Dover increased nearly 20 percent, from 22,377 to 26,992 (NH Office of State Planning, 2000). As a result, Dover's landscape has undergone dramatic and rapid changes: where forests and farmland once stood, housing developments and strip malls have risen. Buildings, roads, and other infrastructure are eroding not only the area's remaining undeveloped land, but also the character of the community.

The City of Dover Planning Department, Conservation Commission, and Open Lands Committee have united to cosponsor the workshop series. "We readily accept and encourage any positive participation from the public," said Planning Director Steven Stancel. "This coalition is providing that. I'm impressed with the group's knowledge of planning issues and its readiness to understand the 'big picture.' We're not only trying to create more open space in the city, we're also trying to manage growth and balance fiscal revenues while still maintaining some sense of affordability in the community."

The "Growing Greener" workshop series is presented by the City of Dover Open Lands Committee, Planning Department, and Conservation Commission. In accordance with the City of Dover Master Plan 2000, the "Growing Greener" workshop series is designed to inform area residents about the importance of protecting and managing the region's natural and cultural resources. For more information about the workshop series, call 603-743-0037, or email [openlands@ci.dover.nh.us](mailto:openlands@ci.dover.nh.us).

NROC is a group of environmental resources professionals that provides education and technical assistance to New Hampshire's coastal municipalities. For more information about NROC, contact Verna DeLauer at NH Coastal Program, 603-271-2155.

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Open Lands Committee  
City of Dover  
288 Central Avenue  
Dover, NH 03820  
603-516-6008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Joyce El Kouarti, 603-743-0037  
Date: October 31, 2002  
Page 1 of 2

DOVER RESIDENTS SIGNING STATEMENT OF SUPPORT TO BOND FUNDS FOR OPEN SPACE  
PROTECTION

DOVER, NH - Dover citizens are showing their support for the protection of open space. City residents are turning up in record numbers to sign a Statement of Support crafted by members of the Dover Open Lands Committee in favor of a bonding funds to protect the city's rural character and natural resources.

The Statement, which is located in the Dover Public Library reading room, reads, "I support bonding funds for the permanent protection of Dover's significant natural and cultural resources, including drinking water supply resources, farm and forest lands, critical wildlife habitat, and historic and scenic areas. I understand that if the City of Dover bonds \$5,000,000, the Dover property tax rate will increase by approximately 25¢ per \$1,000 of assessed value. If the city bonds \$2,500,000, the property tax rate will increase by approximately 12¢ per \$1,000."

Many Dover residents signed the Statement of Support in October at Apple Harvest Day, when it was on display near the Open Lands Committee both. Immediately following the event, the Statement was displayed outside the Dover Planning office at City Hall. Supporters can now find and sign the petition at the Dover Public Library, located at 73 Locust Street.

The recent surge in residential development in Dover has led to less open space, destruction of critical wildlife habitat, less agricultural land, contamination of the drinking water supply, and more traffic congestion. Deer, foxes, bears and other wildlife are forced to inhabit smaller and more fragmented parcels of land that will not be able to sustain their populations much longer.

Furthermore, the erosion of the city's rural character has been accompanied by an increase in taxes. In order to cover the cost of municipal services such as education, police and fire protection and infrastructure, the assessed value of each new house built in Dover must be at least \$330,900, according to a 2002 study presented earlier this year by University of New Hampshire Educator Phil Auger.

In contrast, studies have repeatedly demonstrated that protected land pays far more in property taxes than a municipality spends providing services to the property. Although preserving land as open space requires communities to spend additional tax revenue in the short term, the investment saves money in the long run.

"Permanent land protection tends to stabilize the tax bill," said Auger at a March 2002 presentation at Dover Middle School. "Towns with the highest ratio of undeveloped land per year-round resident have lower tax bills."

"We've been looking at bonding money for open space into the CIP fund for some time," said Steven Stancel, Dover director of planning and community development. "It's recommended in the City's Master Plan, and the recent public demonstrations of support for the preservation of undeveloped lands have brought this issue to the fore again."



For more information about open space protection, contact the Dover Open Lands Committee through the Planning Department at 603-516-6008, or email [openlands@ci.dover.nh.us](mailto:openlands@ci.dover.nh.us).

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Growing Greener  
City of Dover Planning Department  
288 Central Avenue, Dover, NH 03820  
Tel. 603-516-6008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Joyce El Kouarti, 603-743-0037

Date: November 15, 2002

Page 1 of 4

CITY OF DOVER PROPOSES \$2.5 MILLION BOND FOR OPEN SPACE

DOVER, NH - Dover is booming. People who come to our community appreciate its attractive setting, its wide-open spaces, its outstanding community services and recreational opportunities. A survey called "Speak Out Dover" reported that Dover's country atmosphere and small town appeal are the main reasons cited by residents when asked why they choose to live here.

But Dover is changing. Where fields, forests and farms once stood, new housing subdivisions have risen. There's more traffic on the roads, more children in the classrooms, and higher taxes for everyone as Dover's open spaces disappear.

The NH Office of State Planning projects that Dover's population will increase 18 percent from 2000 to 2020. As development pressure intensifies, our community leaders must decide how we will pay for the new expenses brought about by growth, such as new schools, a new police station, a new fire station, new roads, and expanded water and sewer systems.

"Growth is inevitable and desirable, but destruction of community character is not," according to Edward T. McMahon of the Conservation Fund. We can wait until we have to invest in town services, or we can choose to manage growth proactively right now.

The Dover Master Plan states that, "The primary needs in Dover are to preserve key open space areas in order to manage development, protect natural resources, and maintain the community's character." Managing growth and stabilizing the tax rate have been identified as key priorities of Dover's decision-makers. University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension studies and others demonstrate that the residents of those communities with the most undeveloped land pay the lowest tax rates.

The Dover Master Plan also recommends that the City budget money each year for the protection of community natural and cultural resources. With this directive in mind the City of Dover proposes to bond \$2.5 million into the 2007 budget to stabilize the city's long-term property tax rate while conserving Dover's natural and cultural resources.

Several neighboring communities, including North Hampton, Stratham, Newfields and Newmarket, have already bonded several million dollars for land protection. This will place further development pressure upon communities such as Dover that do not have substantial funds available. In spite of the fact that the cost to service the bonds in these communities averages \$1 per thousand dollars of assessed property value, more than two-thirds of all residents voted to support open space bonding at their respective town meetings.

In Dover the anticipated cost to service a \$2.5 million bond would be only 14¢ per thousand dollars, largely due to Dover's higher population and more diverse tax base. After the initial 15-year repayment period, the bond will continue to pay for itself many times over in tax savings.

The proposed bond monies would supplement the existing change-of-use fund, which is used to protect land of significant conservation value through the purchase of development rights or, in some cases, fee simple purchases. Matching funds and tax deductions are also available from state, federal and private sources to assist the transactions.

However, even with matching grants and deductions, many feel that the amount of money currently remaining in the conservation fund - approximately \$650,000 - is insufficient to achieve its purpose.

"At this point, the balance of the conservation fund is spoken for," said Dover Open Lands Committee Chairman Brian Stern. "We're looking at several properties right now that all have tremendous conservation value. However, we just don't have the budget to move forward with all of them. It will be a real shame if we miss out - opportunities like this don't come every day."

Dover Conservation Commission Chairman Tom Fargo agreed. "A lot of the city's open space is owned by long-time residents who are being courted by realtors and developers," he said. "By 2007, it may be too late."

The Dover Open Lands Committee is charged with identifying, prioritizing and protecting the City's remaining open spaces. The committee is working actively with several landowners to explore options for protecting key properties possessing the kinds of qualities that define the character of our community - acres of rolling farmland with historic farmsteads, well-managed forests and tree farms, as well as unique habitats that provide shelter for rare plants and exemplary animal communities and groundwater protection areas. Many of these properties are slated for development unless conservation measures can be put into place, Stern reported at a recent City Council meeting.

"Right now, [the Open Lands Committee] has the opportunity to ensure public access to some of our most valuable community resources for future generations," added ad hoc committee member Anna Boudreau. "But the committee needs appropriate funding now to move forward. If we wait five years, that window of opportunity will have closed."

The Dover Planning Board will vote on the budget at its November 26 meeting, which begins at 7 p.m. at City Hall. Dover residents are encouraged to share their views on reallocating the \$2.5 million bond from the 2007 to the 2004 budget. "Fill the room with people," urged Planning Board Member and City Councilor Parks Christenbury. "That's the way to do it."

For more information about open space and the bonding process, contact the Dover Open Lands Committee through the Planning Department at 603-516-6008, or email [openlands@ci.dover.nh.us](mailto:openlands@ci.dover.nh.us).

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Growing Greener  
City of Dover Planning Department  
288 Central Avenue, Dover, NH 03820  
Tel. 603-516-6008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Page 1 of 1

Date: March 27 2002

Contact: Joyce El Kouarti, 603-743-0037

**CITY OF DOVER PLANNING BOARD  
PROPOSES TO ALLOCATE FUNDS TO OPEN SPACE PROTECTION**

DOVER, NH - On the March 26th Dover Planning Board meeting, Board member Tony McManus proposed a resolution to request that the Dover City Council set aside funds to bond undeveloped open lands, much as the communities of Stratham and Newmarket have done. "If a community the size of Stratham can commit \$5 million to land protection, Dover can do no less," McManus said.

The Planning Board voted to pass the resolution on to the City Council in order to raise awareness of the critical nature of this issue as part of the Board's overall effort to manage growth in Dover.

McManus stated that the Growing Greener March 20th workshop on "Balancing Growth, Taxes and Open Space" had been instrumental in providing him with a new perspective on the financial benefits of open space protection to a community.

At the workshop, UNH Land and Water Conservation Educator Philip Auger overviewed several economic studies that illustrate the relationship between open space, residential growth, and tax rates in a number of New Hampshire towns. One study that examined all New Hampshire communities demonstrated that those with the highest ratio of undeveloped land per year-round resident have the lowest tax bills. Towns with larger tax bases, more year-round residents, and more commercial/industrial property have the highest taxes.

More than 60 environmental advocates, city officials and landowners braved a snowstorm to attend the workshop. "Balancing Growth, Taxes and Open Space" was the first workshop of the Growing Greener series co-sponsored by the City of Dover Planning Department, Conservation Commission and Open Lands Committee, with grant funding provided by the New Hampshire Estuaries Foundation.

The second workshop in the series will also feature Phil Auger describing "Estate Planning and Land Protection" measures on Wednesday, April 16, 2002 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm. The workshop will be held in the Dover Middle School Renaissance Room, located at 16 Daley Drive in Dover, NH.

The "Growing Greener" workshop series strives to emphasize the importance of protecting and managing the region's natural and cultural resources. For more information, contact the City of Dover Planning Department at 603-516-6008.

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## **NROC Promotes Natural Resource-Based Planning in Dover (from OSP's *Tidelines* newsletter)**

- Joyce El Kouarti, freelance writer and 'Growing Greener' Workshop Series Co-Coordinator

Dover's City Hall was filled with energy when NROC came to town. The room was packed with more than 60 concerned citizens, local board members, and City officials, all there to see the first Natural Resource Outreach Coalition (NROC) public meeting on "Dealing With Growth in Dover." NROC presenters addressed issues of sprawl, habitat fragmentation, water supply protection and non-point source pollution – all tied to data and examples from Dover. The presentation was eye opening, but it was the maps of Dover featuring the city's natural resources and potential build-out that brought the message home. One picture is worth 1,000 words, and the impact of five Geographic Information System (GIS) maps was tremendous. By the end of the meeting, the overall mood was one of excited anticipation. Something positive was happening to address growth in Dover, and every person in the room knew it.

The seeds that NROC planted at that September 19<sup>th</sup> meeting fell into fertile soil. In 1999-2000, the City of Dover had revised four chapters of the community's Master Plan, calling for renewed efforts to protect the City's natural resources. One recommendation involved the creation of the Open Lands Committee to identify and prioritize the community's remaining undeveloped land parcels that should be protected. In November 1999 the City Council established a Conservation Fund to direct the Change of Land Use fees collected by the City for the specific purpose of preserving conservation lands.

Dover Conservation Commission Chairman Tom Fargo recognized the need to increase public involvement in the City's efforts to protect wildlife habitat, water resources, and the other significant conservation features outlined in the Master Plan. In the fall of 2000, Tom approached NROC for assistance, and by March 2001, Dover's application for inclusion in the "Dealing With Growth" program had been accepted.

"NROC has been very helpful in generating public interest in smart growth and natural resource protection initiatives in Dover," says Fargo. "It is clear that this message is resonating with the people of Dover. Continuing assistance from the NROC partners not only facilitated the very successful 'Growing Greener' seminar series, but also carried over into ongoing Planning Board efforts to manage residential growth and enhance natural resource protection through changes in Dover's zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations."

The second Dover-NROC public meeting, on September 26<sup>th</sup>, was distinctly organizational. NROC facilitators and an auditorium filled with more than 50 residents focused upon the natural resource-related goals listed in Dover's recently updated master plan. The group identified open space protection and minimizing the impacts of development as primary goals, then circulated a sign-up sheet. The Dover Open Lands Committee (OLC) stepped forward to assume a leadership role in completing many of the tasks identified, including the development of a prioritized inventory of the city's remaining open lands based upon their environmental features. The OLC subsequently reorganized into four working groups that closely resembled the tasking suggested by participants at the second NROC public meeting.

In addition, an ad hoc committee formed to address public outreach and education. Comprising members of Dover's Open Lands Committee, Conservation Commission, and Planning Board as well as concerned citizens, the Outreach and Education group successfully applied for and received a \$5,000 grant from NH Estuaries Project to host a series of workshops focusing upon various aspects of open space protection and minimizing the impacts of development.

The first Growing Greener workshop, “Balancing Growth, Taxes and Open Space,” drew a crowd of more than 70 municipal officials and planners, environmentalists and concerned citizens despite a raging blizzard. Members of the city’s planning staff as well as seven out of eight members of the Dover Planning Board attended the workshop. Within two weeks of the event, the Dover Planning Board voted 7-1 in support of a resolution to research bond funding for the protection of open space. The Board members referenced the workshop as having been instrumental in their decision.

The second ‘Growing Greener’ workshop on “Land Protection and Estate Planning” attracted a group of 60+ area landowners and conservationists. In the seven weeks following the workshop, eight local landowners came forward to seek additional information about conservation easements and other land protection options. Open Lands Committee members responded quickly, meeting with landowners and providing additional information. As of the time of this printing, four of these landowners had taken steps to have their properties appraised to determine the land’s conservation value.

Approximately 50 local residents, realtors and area planners attended the third workshop on “Smart Growth: Protecting Our Quality of Life.” The workshop offered concrete local examples of smart growth principles in action such as minimum impact design, mixed-use development, open space subdivisions, infill projects, public transportation planning, and walkable communities. According to the workshop survey, the majority of concerned citizens who attended the workshop left with a greatly enhanced appreciation of both smart growth principles and their community. “I was so impressed by what I heard yesterday that I took the bus to work this morning for the first time,” reported one attendee the following day.

The final workshop in the series featured well-known conservation planner Randall Arendt describing “Conservation Subdivision Design as a Tool for Building Community-wide Open Space Networks.” This workshop drew an audience of more than 110 planners, municipal board members, and developers from throughout the state of New Hampshire, many of whom requested additional information about open space subdivisions. In fact, the workshop precipitated an exchange on the NH Office of State Planning PlanLink listserve among planners who sought and shared information on zoning regulations designed to encourage the development of conservation subdivisions.

Concurrent with the ‘Growing Greener’ workshops, the Dover Planning Department established four subcommittees to suggest changes to zoning and subdivision regulations to manage residential growth, promote increased commercial/industrial base, promote open space, and address quality of life. These Planning Board subcommittees include many citizen volunteers who participated in the NROC program. “This has been a coordinated effort in which city staff and community volunteers have worked hand in hand to initiate change,” says Dover Planning Board Chair Ron Cole. “It’s good to see volunteer spirit alive and well in Dover.”

“We’ve been working on this for some time,” says Dover City Planner Steve Bird. “In fact, we tried to initiate residential zoning changes several years ago, but we were not as successful as we had hoped to be. NROC’s involvement in Dover has assisted in moving these action items forward again.”

NROC’s arrival last September helped stimulate the drive toward additional community involvement in natural resource-based planning in Dover. The full impact of that first meeting and the initiatives that it spawned cannot yet be fully measured – the waves continue to ripple throughout the city and beyond. One thing is certain: Dover will never be the same again.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 12, 2002  
Contact:

***Call for Applications:  
Assistance to Communities in the Coastal Watersheds  
Application deadline: January 30, 2003***

*Are you concerned about fields, forests and farmland? Community character? Economic development? Water quality? Water quantity? The Natural Resources Outreach Coalition (NROC) can help you! Communities in the coastal watersheds are invited to apply for NROC's Spring 2003 Community Assistance program.*

*The NROC team helps towns and conservation groups deal with the impacts of growth. The program starts with an educational presentation called Dealing with Growth for all municipal board members and staff, and interested residents. Dealing with Growth reviews the current status of your community's natural resources and introduces various techniques for managing them. NROC follows this presentation by meeting with interested residents to help focus their natural resource protection goals. Follow up assistance also includes: developing an action plan to protect natural resources in town, educational workshops, and directing the town to sources of financial and other assistance. The NROC program is tailored to each community's specific needs.*

*There is no fee for the NROC presentation or follow-up assistance. Grants are often available to NROC towns to begin work on related projects.*

*To apply for NROC's Spring 2003 Community Assistance Program, call 862-1029 for an application packet. Completed applications must be received by the deadline date of **January 30, 2003**. Applicants for NROC assistance can include single communities, multiple adjacent communities, and regional conservation groups.*

***NROC works with a limited number of communities a year, so selection can be competitive. Applicants are selected based on a community's readiness to start working on natural resource-based planning strategies, and a willingness of local decision-makers to participate.***

If you would like to know more about NROC assistance prior to applying, or would like to encourage other boards to participate, NROC is offering a short (15 minute) introductory presentation to interested communities in January. To schedule an introductory presentation in your community, please the NROC Coordinator at 364-5324.

The Natural Resources Outreach Coalition (NROC) is a collaboration among ten state, regional, and non-profit organizations. It is supported by the participating organizations, and funding through the NH Estuaries Program and NH Office of State Planning's Coastal Program. NROC assistance is currently limited to communities in the coastal watersheds.

## APPENDIX C – PUBLICITY MATERIALS



**Call for Applications for Assistance to Seacoast Communities**  
**Sponsored by the Natural Resources Outreach Coalition, Spring 2003**  
**Application deadline: January 30, 2003**

**For participation in a Spring (April/May) Presentation and Follow-up Assistance**

**What is the Natural Resources Outreach Coalition?**

The Natural Resources Outreach Coalition (NROC) is a collaboration among ten state, regional, and non-profit organizations. It's supported by the participating organizations and funding through the NH Estuaries Program and NH Office of State Planning's Coastal Program. NROC assistance is currently limited to communities in the coastal watersheds.

**What does NROC do?**

The NROC team provides guidance and technical assistance to help communities deal with the impacts of growth. Specifically, this includes technical support, assistance developing an action plan to implement natural resource-based planning strategies, educational workshops, and directing the community to sources of financial and other assistance. NROC assistance is tailored to your community's specific needs. **There is no fee for the NROC presentation or follow-up assistance.** To give you an example of NROC assistance, a news article describing the 2001-2002 NROC program in Dover is enclosed.

**What is the NROC program?**

NROC assistance starts with an educational presentation called Dealing with Growth for all municipal board members and staff, and interested residents. Dealing with Growth reviews the current status of your community's natural resources and introduces various techniques for managing them. NROC follows this presentation by meeting with interested community members to help focus their natural resource protection goals, develop an implementation strategy, and locate the technical and financial assistance they need to accomplish them.

**How do I apply for NROC assistance?**

Complete and return the enclosed NROC application form **by January 30, 2003**. Applicants for NROC assistance can include single communities, multiple adjacent communities, and regional conservation groups. We recommend you involve municipal boards and other local groups (e.g. open space committee) in providing information for this application.

**NROC works with a limited number of communities a year, so selection can be competitive. Applicants are selected based on a community's readiness to start working on natural resource-based planning strategies, and a willingness of local decision makers to participate.**

If you would like to know more about NROC assistance prior to applying, or would like to encourage other boards to participate, NROC is offering a short (15 minute) introductory presentation to interested communities in January. To schedule an introductory presentation in your community, please call Amanda Stone (see details below). If you need assistance completing the application form, or would like additional information about NROC, please call the NROC Coordinator, Amanda Stone (see contact information below).

We look forward to hearing from you!.

Amanda Stone  
NROC Coordinator  
UNH Cooperative Extension  
36 County Drive  
**Laconia, NH 03246**  
Tel: 364-5324 Fax: 364-2456  
**E-mail: amanda.stone@unh.edu**

# Natural Resources Outreach Coalition (NROC)

## Application Form

**Town or Regional Conservation Group:**

**Name of primary applicant:**

*(conservation commission, open space group, conservation group, etc.)*

**Name of primary contact person:**

**Mailing Address:**

**Phone: (Day):**

**(Evening):**

**E-mail:**

**1. Describe your community's primary concerns and needs (provide details in the space below, or on a separate sheet):**

- Open Space Protection
- Wildlife Habitat Conservation
- Water Resources Protection (quality and quantity)
- Farmland Preservation
- Wetland Protection
- Managing Suburban Sprawl
- Subdivision Design
- Zoning
- Other (please describe in the space below)

**2. How do you think your community/conservation group would benefit from the NROC program (what would you like to get out of it)? (Use a separate sheet if necessary)**

**3. List the existing natural resources-based information that your community already has, and give dates of completion:**

**Completed**

- Natural resources section in master plan (give date of last master plan update)
- Natural resources inventory (give date of last update)
- Natural resource protection ordinances (e.g. Wetlands or watershed protection ordinances)
- Resource protection oriented overlay zoning district (specify which resources):
- Open space plan
- Conservation plan
- Wetland inventory/evaluation
- Forest management plan
- Other (describe below):

**4. Please describe current (in progress) natural resource protection efforts in your community needs (provide details in the space below, or on a separate sheet):**

- Master Plan Update
- Open Space Plan
- Conservation Plan
- Natural Resources Inventory
- Water Resources Protection
- Land Protection
- Bond Allocation
- Other (please describe in the space below):

**5. NROC typically holds an initial feasibility meeting with representatives from all municipal boards and other interested community groups. Please list community boards and other groups in support of this application with a contact name (chairperson) for each, e.g. conservation commission, planning board, city council, open space group, ad hoc committee, etc.:**

**6. Expected time frame: It typically takes the NROC team three months to prepare the introductory presentation and followup with the community. When do you think you would want to host the presentation?**

**7. How did you hear about the Natural Resources Outreach Coalition (NROC)**

- From another community (which one?)
- Newspaper article
- NROC flyer
- NROC mailing
- Other:

**PLEASE RETURN YOUR COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM TO:**

**Amanda Stone  
NROC Coordinator  
UNH Cooperative Extension  
36 County Drive, Laconia, NH 03246**

**tel: 364-5324    fax: 364-2456    e-mail: amanda.stone@unh.edu**

## **Working with NROC - Community Responsibilities**

Applicants for NROC assistance must be ready to begin working on natural resource based planning when the application is submitted. The NROC team will need assistance from community members to prepare for the customized presentation and follow-up meetings. Specific community responsibilities include:

**Attend initial meeting between NROC staff and community representatives to discuss the NROC *Dealing with Growth* program (presentation and follow-up) and to discuss local issues.**

**Develop a small work group with representation from two or more municipal boards to work with the NROC team developing the *Dealing with Growth* presentation (which is customized to your community/conservation group) and to plan the follow-up. Involving your community's land use decision makers is key to the program's success.**

**Select dates and meeting facilities for the presentation and followup meeting one week later.**

### **Publicize the Presentation**

- Invite town or city officials (including select board, planning board, ZBA, conservation commission), and other local organizations via letters of invitation.
- Invite members of the public (newspaper articles, notices in public places, letters, phone calls).
- Publicize the event.
- Follow letter invitations with phone calls.

### **Provide Information for Presentation**

- Photographs (e.g. scenic views, open spaces, downtown, new developments, town hall, schools, parks, important local resources, etc.), preferably in digital format (hard copies are also acceptable). Digital images should be in .tif or jpeg format.
- Other local information that would enhance the presentation, e.g. where does the town get it's drinking water?

### **Review and Comment on Presentation.**

Input will be sought during the development of the presentation, plus a meeting of the work group to review the final presentation.

### **Attend Presentation**

### **Host follow-up meeting to begin developing an action plan**

The follow-up team should involve all boards, and interested presentation participants.

APPENDIX D - LIST OF RESOURCE MATERIALS COMPILED  
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**December, 2002**

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- ## **Land for People: Working with Landowners to Bring Private Land into Public Ownership.**@ - Pamphlet - The Trust for Public Land. San Francisco.
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