

Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes

December 17, 2025

Attendance

- Present – Lindley Hanson (alt), Janet Slocum (member), Kathi Bradt (select board), Gregg Thibodeau (member, co-chair), Lisa Hyatt (alt), Rob Traver (member), Jennifer Bland (member, co-chair)
- Absent – Mark and Robin

Minutes of 13 August 2025 were approved. Kathi motioned, and Gregg seconded; the motion passed.

The minutes of October 8, 2025, were approved. Janet made a motion, and the motion passed.

The Dec 17th meeting was postponed from last Wednesday, December 10, 2025, due to inclement weather.

Public (if any) - none

Organizational

- **Funds/Budget**
 - Forest Maintenance Fund \$3,915.84 -> \$3,916.00; (+) \$0.16 interest
 - Conservation Land Use Fund \$16,319.99 -> \$16,320.64; (+) \$1.39 interest
 - Pending revenue – \$2020 in land use change tax (LUCT) is being processed and should appear in our account on the next statement.
 - We discussed the proposed budget for 2026, and Gregg advised that the LUCT for 2026 is not known in advance, but on average, the town has 1-3 LUCT transactions each year. The Crescent Lake water testing value was left out because the funding comes from the town's general budget, not the conservation budget. Conservation estimated expenses in 2026 are \$13,950.00.
 - Orchard Hill will be asking us again for a contribution for Acworth students to attend the course. They sent letters to the Conservation Commission showing appreciation for our contribution. Gregg made a motion to contribute \$500 in 2026, and Kathi seconded it. One member opposed, and the remaining 6 members approved of the motion. The motion passed.
- **By-Laws and Conservation Plan** – Roles and responsibilities in progress (GT). To be completed over the winter months.
- **Annual Conservation Town Report Contents**
 - The members reviewed the conservation yearly report for the Town meeting in March 2026. The membership agreed that the following topics should be included: Membership changes, Keyes Hollow Wetland (KHW) assessment, KHW grant and stakeholder engagement, Crescent Lake watershed assessment and action items, Pollinator Pathway activities, completion of Conservation Plan, South Acworth forest work, annual monitoring, inquiries-complaints, # of landowners who were investigating conservation easements, professional development sessions attended, 3 Acworth children were sponsored for the Orchard Hill School,

Forest and Wildlife Conservation

- **Land & Habitat Protection**
 - **Intents to cut** – 25-001-12-T; Derry Hill Road/Hill Road; Hinman; Bascom resp. for cut; 21 of 56 acres; 26 MBF of hardwood, 400 tons of pulpwood, 120 cords of cordwood. Board approved 12/15. Gregg reviewed wildlife assessments associated with this property, and Concom members did not have any concerns with the cut.
 - **Permits, complaints, and inquiries**
 - Assisted with a request from NHEC for a utility easement on the Gove Road Town Forest conservation easement. (map 201, lot 135 and map 211, lot 1)
 - Assisting with a report of a beaver dam on Cold River vicinity River Road/Allen Street bridge in East Acworth. Gregg spoke with Nick Kucia, a wildlife specialist with NH Fish and Game. NH Fish and Game recommends leaving beaver dams if the dam or the eventual failure of the dam does not put at risk the bridge or the road. They also offered support if we want to remove the dam or dissuade/deceive the beavers using techniques that they can administer. At this time, the Highway Department has no issues with the Beaver Dam and will continue to monitor the dam and the potential impact it could have on the roads.
 - **South Acworth Forest** (map 249, lot 9) – Mark G. is seeking the logger's opinion for their recommendations for the harvesting and skidding of the timber cut and working directly for the town.
 - **Private Land Conservation opportunities** – no change; Sirkin Gove Road, Gates Mountain Road, and Hill Road properties. Rob/Gregg are on point to define generic conservation land options to landowners.

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- **Easement Monitoring** – Gregg and Jen are completing their reports, and Mark will complete his reports when he returns from his travels.
- **Pollinator Pathway Update** – Janet, Lisa, and Lindley worked with the Acworth Historical Society and obtained their approval to plant a pollinator garden behind the village store. They are going to plant seeds that they have collected. A recommendation was made that our pollinator seeds may also be desired by the Crescent Lake residents. The Water Quality Group (WQG) and Crescent Lake properties are working with Chase from Cat Swamp Farm to identify native shrubs and plants that can help stabilize soils to prevent erosion and act as a vegetative buffer. The WAG has worked with Chase to define plants that Chase will grow over the winter for spring planting.
- **Crescent Lake Town Property Land Survey update**
 - 2 properties and 4 boundaries are being worked with Concom to close gaps in the boundary lines. (map 201 lots 101/100 and lot 102)
 - 2 properties and 3 boundaries remain to be addressed.
 - 4 properties and 11 boundaries are complete.
- **Acworth Historical Society (AHS)** requested support with an Acworth Community Charitable Trust (ACCT) application. AHS asked if Concom could apply on their behalf to obtain an ACCT grant. AHS had recently applied, and according to ACCT rules, they cannot submit consecutive applications. Concom has its own plan to apply in 2026 to augment the Davis grant for the Keyes Hollow Wetland assessment. A recommendation was made to inquire if the Board of Selectmen could sponsor the grant for the AHS. AHS will write the application. Kathi will discuss this option with the Select Board.
- **Water Protection** (Crescent Lake, Cold River, watersheds, wetlands, ponds, and perennial streams)
 - **Keyes Hollow Wetland Assessment Review** – We received a Davis Foundation grant for \$15000. Great job Rob and thank you for all your hard work. Rob will write an assessment of how this grant was completed for future reference when applying for another grant. Total estimate is \$21000-\$24000. Next steps include re-engaging CT River Conservancy (CTRC) to engage engineers and complete the survey. Rob will follow up with Lauren (CTRC). Concom to complete an ACCT application and commit additional Concom funds to fund the \$6000-\$9000 variance.
 - **Crescent Lake Watershed assessment update**
 - Property actions for 18 properties are in various stages of completion. All of these properties are leveraging the NH Lakes Lake Smart certificate process. Town actions include culverts and ditches on North Shore (Unity), culverts and ditches on Cold Pond, and culverts and ditches on Crescent Lake Road. Work is also planned to improve erosion issues on a Gove Road culvert. Work is also being completed to identify a project manager. A meeting was conducted with the Crescent Lake Association Board and the Unity Select Board to improve engagement and support.

Outreach, Training, and Professional Development

- **Community Outreach**
 - **Newsletter** – next topics and next writer(s); draft due the 20th of the prior month
 - Gregg Endangered Species – We agreed to break this up into two newsletters. Gregg to complete.
 - Rob Land Conservation Options
 - Gregg Crescent Lake Watershed Assessment
 - Other possible educational topics: climate change and adaptive and resilience best practices for property owners.
 - **Volunteer Field Events** - Keyes Hollow Nature Trail; Gove Road Stream Erosion Effort; Crescent Lake Boundary Marking
- **Professional Development & Training**
 - NH Association of Conservation Commissions (NHACC) Fall Wetlands Training Program - Lyndley attended this training and found it very informative.
 - NHACC Annual Meeting – Rob provided a summary of this year's meeting. Rob finds this meeting very informative and productive for networking. The meeting is always in November. A couple of members expressed an interest in attending.

Other - none

Next Meeting – 14 Jan 2025 at 7 pm in the Town Hall.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25PM

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Conservation Commission Members

- Jennifer Bland (co-chair) (3/2026)
- Gregg Thibodeau (co-chair) (3/2026)
- Kathi Bradt (Select Board rep.) (3/2026)
- Mark Girard (member) (3/2027)
- Janet Slocum (member) (3/2028)
- Rob Traver (member) (3/2026)
- Lisa Hyatt (alternate) (3/2027)
- Lindley Hanson (alternate) (3/2028)
- Robin Ungeheuer (alternate) (3/2027)

Concom Volunteers

- Jennifer Griffin
- Terry Mattson
- Scott Travers
- Chip Colello
- David Heacock

Contact information:

- Webpage <https://www.acworthnh.net/conservation-commission>
- Email acworthconservation@gmail.com
- Meeting 7:00 p.m. every 2nd Wednesday of the month at the Town Hall
- Mail 13 Town Hall Rd., P.O. Box 37, Acworth, NH 03601,
Attention: Conservation Commission
- Phone 603-835-6879 (town office)