HCC Leadership and Membership Changes

After 19 years on the Hooksett Conservation Commission (HCC), we had to say goodbye to our long-time chair Steve Couture. Cindy Robertson, formerly Vice Chair, stepped up as the new chairperson. JoCarol Woodburn, HCC member since 2012, was voted in as Vice Chair. Phil Fitanides and Deborah Miville remain as members. The HCC welcomed two new alternates, Robert Better, and John Pieroni. We are also happy to announce David Hess’ return to HCC after a brief time away. David Ross remained as Town Council Representative, and Leann Fuller returns as staff assistant. We want to thank Kathy Lawrence for stepping in as staff assistant for several meetings.
**Hooksett Conservation Blog**

You can read more about the membership changes on the HCC blog, which has been revived this year with new postings. Learn about our latest activities from the Hooksett.org website:

Conservation Commission website:  [https://www.hooksett.org/conservation-commission](https://www.hooksett.org/conservation-commission)

HCC Blog:  [https://hooksettconservationcommissionblog.wordpress.com/](https://hooksettconservationcommissionblog.wordpress.com/)

**Hooksett Riverwalk Trail**

This year, the second phase of the Hooksett Riverwalk Trail kicked off with tree clearing in March to begin construction on the **Brick Kiln Historic Trail Loop**. The work had to be completed by April 1 for the protection of the **northern long-eared bat**, a threatened species that has been noted in this area by our easement holder, **Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (SPNHF)**. Phase 2 is expected to be completed in the fall.

The trail system design takes into consideration wildlife enhancement, protection of endangered species, and scenic views of the river and unique property.
Laurel Road Conservation Area

A timber harvest was undertaken at the 155-acre Laurel Road conservation property south of Whitehall Rd. This harvest brought in $25,000 in revenue for the town, under the direction of Swift Corwin of Calhoun and Corwin Forestry, LLC. Logging is done during the winter (when the ground has frozen) and late summer (when trees leaf out and draw moisture from the ground) for minimal impact to the environment. Harvesters removed 2 loads of pine, 2 loads of hemlock logs, 1 load of hardwood logs, and 4 loads of pump.

Clay Pond Conservation Area – 750 acres

This year, HCC worked in partnership with the Bear-Paw Regional Greenways to develop enhanced site maps. An area was identified for assistance from the Student Conservation Association to develop trails, planned for late August/September. The kiosk verbiage and design is underway.

After much research and deliberation, the HCC recommended to Town Council to end an agreement with the ATV association that allowed for ATV use on a 3-mile stretch of the Class 6 Chester Turnpike (that runs through the conservation area). The Commission heard from members of Southern NH Off Road in support of ATV traffic as well as insight and opinions from the Hooksett Police, Manchester Water Works (John O’Neil, Watershed Land and Property Manager), Bear Paw Regional Greenways (Director Dan Kern), and NH Fish & Game (Mike Marchand, Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program Supervisor); and email correspondence from the Allenstown Police Department confirming that the town does not allow ATV use on their portion of Chester Turnpike. With this input, the Town Council decided in favor of the HCC recommendation to disallow ATV use beginning July 1, 2019.

The Clay Pond Conservation Area Stewardship plan calls for targeted timber harvests on some sections of the property for the enhancement of wildlife and forestation on the property. As such, logging activities are expected to resume in 2019-2020.

Hooksett-Bow Forest Project

A conservation easement was established on nearly 38 acres, north of South Bow Road and west of Hackett Hill Road and I-93 near the Hooksett-Bow town line, identified in the 2004 Master Plan as one of the five prime natural areas to be conserved.
**Hooksett Old Home Day 2018**

The HCC created a new banner for Old Home Day and other public events. Members staffed the booth through-out the day, interacting with residents.

![Hooksett Old Home Day banner](image)

**Benton Rd Site Walk, Feb 2, 2019**

Members of HCC, Town Council, and the Planning Board participated with about 25 residents in a site walk of the planned sports dome at 9 and 13 Benton Rd. The HCC voted 4-2 to recommend that the project move forward.

**Land acquisition and conservation projects**

With greater than 25-percent of town land conserved, the HCC is focusing on stewardship, trail enhancements, and educational opportunities. Hooksett can be proud that it has achieved the “gold standard” in acquired and permanently conserved lands for the protection of wildlife, preservation of our natural resources, and enjoyment of future generations.

The Hooksett Conservation Commission meets the second Monday of the month at 4:30 pm in the Town Hall Chambers of the Municipal Building. All residents are encouraged to provide input on conservation related matters. Residents interested in becoming members or interested in participating in a specific project are urged to contact the Conservation Commission. All of us extend our deepest thank you to the community for your continued support and interest.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Robertson, Chair  
JoCarol Woodburn, Vice Chair  
Phil Fitanides  
Deb Miville  
Alternate Members: Robert Better, Dave Hess, and John Pieroni  
David Ross, Town Council Representative  
Leann Fuller, Staff Support
Plaque created for Steve Couture in honor of his long-time service and contributions to the Town of Hooksett and the Conservation Commission:

**Hooksett Conservation Commission**

*Explore. Protect. Reconnect.*

“Vision and Triumph” Celebration Event
SNHU, October 24, 2014

Hooksett Riverwalk Trail
Grand Opening Sept 28, 2016

Hooksett Kiwanis, Community Impact Award
April 6, 2015

Governor Hassan, Hooksett Riverwalk Trail
Earth Day, April 22, 2015

Steve Couture
Hooksett Conservation Chair
2000-2019

*Over 2,200 acres protected*