

CENTER HARBOR CONSERVATION COMMISSION (CHCC) 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

The year 2022 ended on a somber note for the CHCC due to the unexpected death of one of its commissioners, George Gurney, in late October. George joined the CHCC in 2017, and served with dedication and enthusiasm for the next five years. His knowledge of the land and water resources within the Squam Watershed was invaluable to the Commission, and his quiet, considerate and contemplative demeanor is sorely missed by all who served with him. For George's environmental contributions to the Town of Center Harbor, and for his diligent efforts to steward its natural resources, the CHCC has chosen to dedicate this year's Annual Report to George Gurney.



Courtesy – Squam Lakes Conservation Society

The amount of Land Use Change Tax (LUCT) monies deposited into the Conservation Fund (CF) in 2022 was \$0, and no expenditures from the fund were made. The end of year balance of the CF stands at \$97,568.66.

2022 proved to be an active & busy year for the Conservation Commission. It held four meetings in February, May, September & November. The meeting agendas and their detailed minutes are found on the CHCC's webpage of the Town's website.

The proposed multiple unit condominium project sited off Bean Road in Moultonborough (at the Center Harbor – Moultonborough municipal boundary) plans' proceedings continued to be closely monitored by the CHCC in 2022. Commissioners Carey, Gurney and Hildebrand regularly attended associated Planning and Zoning meetings throughout the year. The CHCC provided written documentation & input to the Center Harbor Board of Selectmen and to the NH Dept. of Environmental Services in conjunction with the wetlands application filed for the project.

In May 2022, the Commission co-sponsored with the Lakes Region Conservation Trust (LRCT) two vernal pool site walks in Center Harbor Woods. These guided experiential events were offered to the public free of charge, and both were well attended and enjoyed by the community. CHCC is grateful to Dr. Rick Van de Poll and LRCT Stewardship Director Dave Mallard for leading the walks, and for sharing with us their knowledge and expertise in vernal pool identification & assessment! The CHCC also thanks Micaelie O'Hare, LRCT's Stewardship & Outreach Coordinator, for managing all of the events' details. With the overall success of these excursions, the Commission hopes to co-sponsor similar outreach endeavors with our local conservation partners in 2023.

CHCC continued to work closely with the NH Electric Coop (NHEC) on its vegetation management herbicide program, and as a result of their combined efforts, accomplished a goal of providing accurate and time sensitive factual information to the community. Working with NHEC's Communications Administrator, Seth Wheeler, the Commission developed an

information section on its municipal webpage incorporating links to NHEC and its online “opt out” feature, Town website related documents, and additional resources from the Department of Agriculture.

The Commission identified and reviewed this year’s State of NH House of Representatives and Senate bills of environmental concern and impact, including those pertaining to cyanobacteria and wakeboarding, and monitored their activity through the legislative process. In September, the Commission submitted a letter of concern to its State Rep. and Senator regarding House Bill 1454’s (siting of landfills near water resources) veto override.

The oversight of the repair and rebuild of the Snake River / Mosquito Bridge during the summer and fall months was accomplished through a unique & cooperative joint effort between NH Dept of Transportation & their contractors, NH Dept of Environmental Services, the Town of Center Harbor & its Conservation Commission, and the Town of New Hampton. Due to this high level of diligence and coordination, the impact to the Snake River and its Prime Wetlands (which spans both municipalities) was temporary, minimal and localized throughout this process.

In September, the CHCC welcomed Mark Hildebrand to the Commission. With the out-of-town relocation of Commissioners Barbara Picard and Aimee Manfredi – Sanschagrin, the Commission is actively seeking several commissioners and alternates. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Chairman Maureen Criasia at conservationcomm@centerharbornh.org or by calling the Town offices at 603-253-4561. Our public meetings are held quarterly at 8 am on the third Wednesday in February, May, August and November, and on an “as needed” basis.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen A. Criasia, Chairman