

## CONSERVATION COMMISSION REPORT 2015

In 2015 the Conservation Commission focused on continuing to control erosion at Jackson Falls as set out in the Fall's action plan. We primarily worked to better define parking spots, reduce the number of access paths to the falls and to designate one path parallel to the Wildcat River. In order to accomplish these goals the Commission held several work-sessions. In addition the town crew performed some of the heavy work. In spring, the Commission planted approximately 80 seedlings in order to stabilize steep banks and create future "green fences" in order to keep visitors to the established paths. In addition to new plantings, the Commission has asked the town crew to reduce mowing and understory cutting at the falls. The Commission spread more woodchips in order to help define paths. The Commission created "Welcome To" signs at the designated access points as well as roping off areas where foot traffic is not wanted. The town crew created a four car parking area at the corner of Carter Notch Rd. and Valley Cross Roads as well as refreshing the rip-rap controlling run-off from Carter Notch Rd. They also used boulders to block vehicle access off Valley Cross Rd. In 2016 the Commission plans to continue this work.

At Prospect Farm the idea of creating new trails was raised and, without much support, the Commission has decided not to pursue this option. Rather, we will focus on improving signage and creating a walking social and natural history tour. As usual, the annual mowing of the cellar holes, apple orchard and viewpoints at Prospect Farm was contracted out. However, this year the mowing costs were moved from the Commission's budget to the Road Agent's Maintenance budget.

The Commission continues to maintain the Mystery House Loop behind the Library and attempts to keep up with the knotweed to limited success.

The Commission reviewed the engineering plans for the Black Mountain snow-making pond diversionary dam and provided written comments to the Selectmen and the state as this portion of Great Brook is part of the Wildcat River Wild and Scenic designation.

The Commission performed its annual monitoring of properties with Conservation Easements as well as commented on a proposal to install solar panels on an easement property.

We thank all who volunteered at our work sessions, and as always, encourage attendance at our monthly meetings.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Seidel, Chairman