

Temple Conservation Commission
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2020 Conservation Commission

Scott Hecker, Chair
Lincoln Geiger
Honey Hastings
Cathy Joly
Adie Krulis
Sean Radcliffe
Carol Mamczak, Alternate

Join us at our Meetings

2nd Wednesday of each month
Location: Town Hall

For more info go to

<https://www.templenh.org/>

While there: sign up for e-alerts at:
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And do check off
Conservation Commission

GET INVOLVED

Send your Email to

TempleConCom@gmail.com

And we will keep you updated on
our activities!

We Need Your Help

The Conservation Commission would like to make improvements to the walking trails at various Conservation parcels around town. This spring we will start with the Temple Town Forest and we could use the help of volunteers to assist with re-painting the trail markers, clearing debris, and trimming branches as needed. A few areas of the trail in the Town Forest must be re-routed to avoid sensitive wetland areas. We welcome volunteer assistance and suggest that you let us know by email ASAP at TempleConCom@gmail.com.

We are also looking for assistance to work at other hiking sites in Temple and wish to explore ideas to improve some trails to make them accessible friendly. If we have enough interest, we may even apply for funds for these improvements!



Photo by Scott Hecker

Well Water Testing

Sponsored by your Conservation Commission

This spring will be our 4th annual water testing event! Please join us on the evening of April 1st at 6:30 pm at the Town Hall for an educational presentation about wells, water, and test results.

You can pick up a free water test kit that evening, or get one at the town office or library during the week of March 30th. The kit includes containers for gathering water and radon samples, plus easy-to-follow instructions; the fees vary based on which test(s) you select. Then drop off your kit at the town hall annex meeting room on April 5th between 2-4 pm and we will transport the kits to the state water testing lab. You will receive your test results directly from the DES.

Should You Test Your Water?

The NH DES recommends testing your well water every 3 to 5 years. They have a wealth of information on their website, including how to care for your well, what to test for, how to interpret the test results, and how to treat issues. Their website is https://www.des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/dwgb/well_testing/index.htm.

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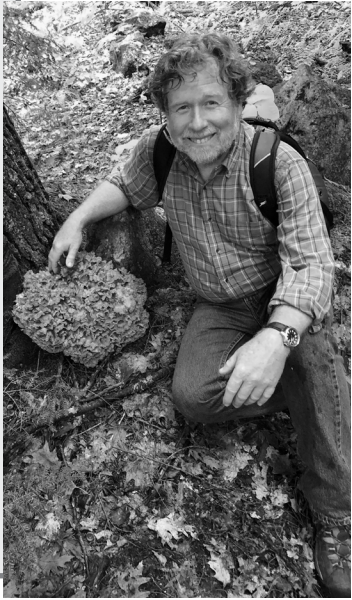
Temple Conservation Commission

A Message from the Chair

The Temple Conservation Commission is proud to resume the TCC Newsletter! Since the establishment of the Temple Conservation Commission at the 1972 Temple Town Meeting, the TCC has worked enthusiastically to maintain the rural character and preserve the environmental and economic well-being of our town. Past accomplishments include establishing and mapping the Town's aquifers, and working to protect our mountain zones, sponsoring an annual well-water testing program, working with landowners to place conservation easements on their lands, establishing several hiking trails in town, and permanently protecting the Town Forest and Chris Weston Conservation Area. We know that Temple residents treasure our town and cherish the simple beauty of our surroundings. We hope that this newsletter inspires you to protect our natural resources and discover more of Temple's wonders.

As the newly elected 2020 Chair of the Conservation Commission, and on behalf of members, I extend my hand to all and welcome you to join us in enjoying the natural beauty of our community, and in working within our town governing bodies to preserve and protect what we hold dear for those who will be here in Temple in the not so distant 2050.

- Scott Hecker



The Importance of Conservation Easements

Whenever Temple residents are surveyed on their vision for the Town, the strong message has been to "maintain our rural character." For many that means saving our farms, forests, and mountains from development, while maintaining or even expanding our hiking and equestrian trails. The focus from others has included the desire to protect our wetlands and wildlife habitats. Not everyone may be aware that conservation easements have and will continue to be a great tool to accomplish all of these goals and more.



Ski Tracks - Photo by Bouchard
Protected land can be enjoyed by humans and wildlife!

Those of us who grew up in other towns may have witnessed firsthand what can happen when rural farms and woodland have succumbed to unplanned development, and residents no longer enjoy the quality of life they once had. Certainly, stores and other conveniences may be closer but rural tranquility is lost. Easements can provide a simple path for property owners to provide a conservation legacy of great value to those who call Temple home in the future.

Currently protected lands in Temple include large tracts protected by State and Federal governments and small to large-sized large tracts protected by individual landowners through easements. Many of these easements are open for recreational use, and those owned by individual residents remain on the tax rolls. Currently, Temple's easements total 800 acres with three of the easements abutting on the north side of West Rd. that provide miles of hiking and equestrian trails.

It is important to recognize that most of Temple's open space is not protected and could be developed. Some properties are rocky or have steep slopes, but most are suitable for development. It is never too early to revisit how future development could impact the integrity of the Town's aquifers, the connectivity of our wildlife habitats, and the recreational values to our residents and visitors. The Commission welcomes all input and participation of residents and members of Town boards to protect what we believe matters most in the years ahead.

To learn more about Conservation easements contact the Conservation Commission, the Monadnock Conservancy (603-357-0600), and the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (603-224-9945).

Temple Conservation Commission

Take a Hike

Temple Town Forest

Are you looking for a short ramble on maintained trails through Temple woodlands? The one and a quarter mile walk over easy terrain and through diverse ecosystems in the Temple Town Forest is for you! The trails, developed in the early 2000’s, led by past Conservation Commission member, Dave Repak, have recently been cleared of overhanging and ground debris and the trail markings have been updated by commission members to provide clear directions through the woods. A great starter hike for young people, the Town Forest offers solitude to walkers, dogs and horses, and is a rewarding snowshoe destination. No motorized vehicles are permitted.

Conservation Commission members toured the property in late summer and are considering the next step for maintenance taking into account the unique characteristics noted by the county forester who visited and produced a report with some recommendations. Of note are the black gum (Tupelo) trees, native but uncommon in Temple, stands of large, old red hemlock, numerous beech and maple trees, a wide range of fungi seen seasonally, Allegheny mound ants and historical debris from the property’s former life as a farm. Many ash trees can be found near the parking area, and the commission is watchful for Emerald Ash Borer, although no signs have been found as yet.

The Commission plans to include community participation in the repainting of trail markings and winter trail cleanup this spring. The Town Forest is located on North Road at the border with Lyndeborough. A trail map may be found on the Conservation Commission page on the Temple website.

Ant Metropolis Lives in Town Forest

There are those that have known about the unusually large ant mounds in Temple for decades and those who first heard about this from the wonderfully written story by Abbe Hamilton for the Monadnock Ledger-Transcript last October. What opening lines she wrote...



Ant expert, Aaron Ellison, from Harvard Forest with Allegheny ant mounds in Temple Town Forest.
Photo by Scott Hecker

“About fifty years ago, a mated queen ant dropped to the forest floor on the Temple Lyndeborough town line. She’d flown from a colony miles away, on a search and destroy mission to claim a home for her future colony.”

Abbe joined me and New England ant expert, Aaron Ellison to examine the bare sandy mounds covering an area thirty by fifty feet, where millions of these ants

have lived fifteen feet deep beneath the surface for decades. If you have not read this story I recommend you have a look at the full story on October 2, 2019 at this link: <https://www.ledgertranscript.com/Allegheny-mound-ants-discovered-in-Temple-28250579>.

These large red ants cause no harm to the forest, and may even benefit the trees by preying on other insects and scavenging larger dead organisms found within 100 feet of the colony. This species is at its northwestern New England geographic limit here. This summer Aaron will assist the Commission by providing an educational sign for the unusual site that will explain the ant’s ecology as well as warn visitors not to trample their temple mounds as they are known to bite intruders!

Temple Community Hiking Group

If you like to hike and would enjoy the fun of hiking with others, Linda and Steve Bollinger coordinate several community hikes throughout the year, for people of all ages. Hiking together is a wonderful way to enjoy nature, get some great exercise, and connect with others.

The hikes range in difficulty level, environment, and timing, and they try to adjust the features according to who



Temple Mountain/ Whitcomb peak hike in April of 2019 led by Steve and Linda Bollinger.

has expressed an interest in any given hike. Their group includes people of all ages--some are regulars, some are occasional participants.

To be added to the community hiking list, send contact information to Linda (phone: 603-878-1078, or by email at llkbollinger@gmail.com). They also maintain lists of local hikes and trail associations; both are great resources to help you discover more hiking opportunities in this beautiful area.

Protecting Our Aquifers

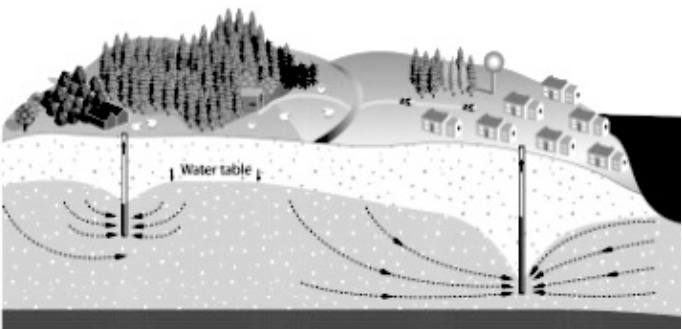
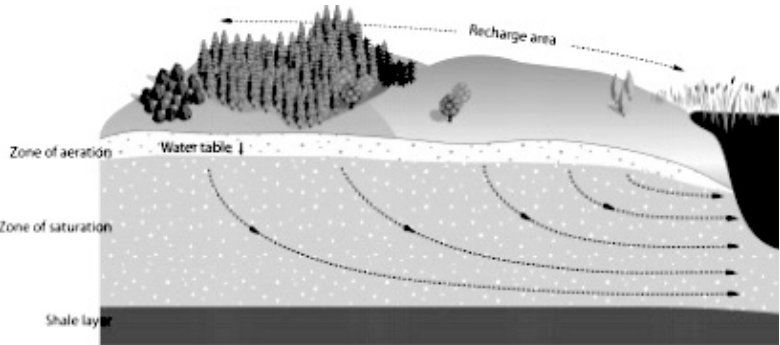
Aquifers are important in any community but they’re particularly important in Temple. Starting in 2010, the Conservation Commission undertook a detailed study of the town’s aquifers. An early comment from the hydrologists doing the work noted that because we are a hill town where no freshwater flows in, it is imperative we protect the water sources we have.

That study led to the Town’s Aquifer Protection Ordinance which was jointly developed by the Conservation Commission and the Planning Board, and adopted by the voters in 2013. The threats to our aquifers are many and all residents need to be on the lookout for pollution sources. While junkyards are an obvious example of a potential pollution source, we all need to be careful with fertilizer, manure, solvents, etc. Landscape can also affect our natural resources.

Landscape Change Affects Both Groundwater Quantity and Quality

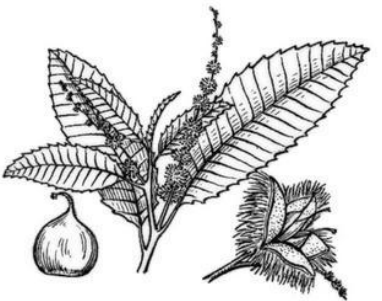
“Land use changes pose some of New Hampshire’s biggest challenges to groundwater management and protection. Increased development may be affecting long-term groundwater availability by preventing or reducing recharge after precipitation.”¹

1. New Hampshire Water Resources Primer: https://www.des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/dwgb/wrpp/documents/primer_chapter4.pdf (4.2.2)



Restoring American Chestnut Trees

Temple resident, farmer, and friend of the Conservation Commission, Vince Mamone, presented results of his research on restoring American Chestnut trees to the landscape at recent meetings. A healthy and substantial population of these native trees was devastated in the early twentieth century by an imported parasitic fungus known as the chestnut blight. New growth that sprouts from the stumps of dead trees lives only a short time before displaying the characteristic orange blight on its bark that girdles the trunk eventually killing the tree. Multiple approaches to restoring these magnificent mast trees are being implemented throughout the area. Vince hopes to propagate American Chestnuts on his farm and if successful, would like the Commission to consider doing the same at selected locations in town.



American chestnut (*Castanea dentata*)

Vince considered three approaches. The first, promoted by the American Chestnut Foundation, crosses American Chestnuts with Chinese Chestnuts, which have known resistance. It was recently found that after many generations, resistance was not what was expected. The second approach involves adding a wheat gene for blight resistance, but he was not interested in a GMO product. The third option, and the one he chose to pursue, is to obtain nuts from Kentucky farmer, Steve Hartman, who has shown success with an organic orchard whose trees come from two types of American Chestnuts that he has gathered. The reason he selected Hartman’s trees is that they exhibit some natural tolerance of Chestnut Blight and that they are pure American Chestnut, not crosses. Vince plans to propagate them in his greenhouse in deep containers that will allow for strong tap root development, and transplant them outdoors this summer. He will take precautions to protect the seedlings from deer and other wildlife. The Commission looks forward to his results and shares his enthusiasm for American Chestnuts in Temple.