

Draft Minutes Nelson Conservation Commission

March 2, 6:00 PM

Lower Level of Library

Call to Order 6:05

Present Janet Yardley, chair, minute taker; Dave Birchenough; Nina Iselin

Guests Jeff Littleton, Moosewood Consulting; Scott Semmens, Conservation Commission Stoddard, Professor at Keene State College; Raine Sanderson, student of Scott Semmens:
Al Stoops 6:30 Kathy Schillemat; 7:00 Rick Church; Eric Masterson, Harris Center for Conservation

Conservation Moments Tabled

Approval of minutes of meeting December 1, 2025, Moved by Janet Yardely, Second by Nina Iselin, passed 3/0

Options for update on Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) last written in 2001. Usual is to do an update every 10 years or so. There are several levels of NRI based on the amount of detail involved and amount of field work. Some examples of NRIs done for other towns in NH have been circulated to commission members. There is also the option of developing an interactive Story Board to make the data more accessible to all. Scott Semmens and his student, Raine Sanderson have offered to create a story board. It might need to be updated once the NRI is complete if we decide to do that. A formal Conservation Plan can be added as an additional product of the study, at an additional cost if we want that.

Jeff is not a certified wetland specialist so cannot certify areas as wetlands, but can indicate those areas that have components that may qualify them as wetlands. The main areas to be included are Water Resources (surface waters), Aquaphors (ground water), Ecological Resources (wildlife habitat and connectivity or corridors), Agricultural Resources and Forested land.

We discussed the Great Meadow and other wetlands as being important. Having these resources included in the NRI and the Town Master Plan have been useful for people who have put conservation easements on their land.

The timeline would be Field work in March-mid October, Fall mapping work which is computer based, Winter for report writing and public forums and presentations. It usually takes a year for the full report. If we wanted to get this done within one year, we would need to decide soon.

General discussion was in favor of updating the NRI, but need more investigation of the levels of reports to decide what we want to include.

Nelson Highlands fundraising update, 655 acre Harris Center/SFPNHF, Presented by Eric Masterson. This project was first discussed at the December Meeting of NCC by Dave Birchenough who also serves on the Board of Harris Center. \$650,000 is the Harris Center's portion of the fundraising. The SFPNHF is doing the larger portion of the fundraising and will also include another parcel owned by the same company. SFPNHF has applied for a grant in order to raise the increased amount needed for the second parcel. S&M timber wants to sell their third parcel in NH but at this point Forest Society is not interested in buying that parcel also. The closing date has been moved to March 2027 in order to have time to raise additional funds for the second parcel. The SFPNHF will own the land. Current Use taxes will continue to be paid to the town. Harris Center will hold the conservation easement and expects to have land open to hiking. Timber harvesting will be allowed but likely less often than in the past. It is not easily accessible for harvesting. We did not discuss hunting. The Harris Center has raised \$405,000 to date. We discussed donating money from the Partridge Trust fund. This fund is defined to be for acquisition of additional land for conservation. It was started with the donation of money by the Partridge Family. After buying and developing Partridge Woods and with income from grants to develop the land that fund currently has \$156,000 plus some additional investment income. The Harris Center has identified a way for us to have a matching donation so that we will match money donated by Nelson Residents and Landowners. We discussed setting a limit of \$100,000. The group was enthusiastic and wanted to wait until the next meeting to have the input of Margy Iselin who was not able to join the meeting .

See attachments for description of the land to be preserved and photos.

Other Business:

Chesney shoreland permit approved. The Select Board will need to address the issue that one of the proposed buildings is partially within the 100 foot set back as zoned for building on Nubanusit.

Well Permit pulled by Beffa-Negrini. Janet will check with them if they are updating infrastructure or doing any building on that lakefront property.

Reminder that Town Meeting is March 14 with Town Election on March 10.

Reviewed meeting schedule for the year and will move meeting on May 4 to May 11 and the meeting on Sept 7 to September 14.

Motion by Nina Iselin for Janet Yardley to continue as Chair of the Commission. Second Dave Birchenough, passed 3/0.

Nina Iselin's term is up this year. She will let me know about whether she wants to continue to serve.

Roadside Cleanup will be April 25, the Saturday after Earth Day, April 23. Kathy will continue to help organize that.

Kathy Schillemat is retiring from her job in December 2006 and is interested in rejoining the Conservation Commission.

Motion to Adjourn at 8:50 by Janet Yardley, Second Dave Birchenough Passed 3/0

Other Business

Review dates for 2026 meetings, April 6 Easter Monday ? issue for anyone; May 4 Janet out of town, meet without her or reschedule

Reminder, Town Meeting March 14, 2026

Update on Chesney DES Permit Approved by DES, May not meet Nelson setback from shore line

DES Permit for water well 106 Rocky Hill Road Janet will check with them to see if they are upgrading their infrastructure or if they are planning to do any additional building.

Motion for Janet Yardley to continue as chair NCC for 2026 through Town Meeting 2027

Future meeting dates: April 6 is Easter Monday is that an okay day for meeting; May 4 Janet will be out of town, reschedule or meet without Janet; July 6 is day after the July 4 holiday; August 3 Old Home Day is August 8 do we want to meet then also; September 7 is Labor Day do we want to meet then or reschedule.

Next Meeting April 6, 2026 6:00 PM Lower Level of Library