

WHAT DOES THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION DO?

The mission of the Conservation Commission is to keep an inventory and conserve Thompson's natural and historic resources and open spaces and to serve in an advisory capacity to the Board of Selectmen and other municipal agencies.

The Conservation Commission was originally combined with the Inland Wetlands Commission. Concerns regarding the town's residential and economic growth gave rise to the need for a separate commission geared towards balancing growth with conservation. The Conservation Commission became a separate entity and began operating independently in July 2005.

The Commission advocates the wise use of our natural resources and conservation of priority open space lands. The work of the Commission involves:

- ◆ Advising the Inland Wetlands Commission and the Planning & Zoning Commission regarding the natural resources involved in development proposals before the boards,
- ◆ Advising the Board of Selectmen and the land use boards regarding acquisition of priority open space lands and conservation easements,
- ◆ Stewardship of the town's conservation easement lands,
- ◆ Updating natural resources mapping as new data become available.

The Commission refers to the Town's Open Space Plan and Natural Resources Inventory to support its work.

HOW ARE WE BALANCING GROWTH WITH CONSERVATION?

Here in the quiet northeast corner of Connecticut, we share our borders with Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Our close proximity to major cities and the availability of pristine open space make Thompson a desirable location. The rural beauty, rolling hills, three major rivers, and ten historic villages all contribute to Thompson's attractive character. Pressure to change and grow is challenging our town to find a balance between conservation and development.

Three major rivers flow through Thompson, and these waterways were the source of Thompson's farming and manufacturing history. Today the waterways provide abundant opportunities for wildlife and for people. Between our major waterways Thompson has much forest land. Our natural and cultural resources have been inventoried and mapped. The areas where we have multiple resources, rare and endangered habitat, and historic or archaeological treasures are the areas most worthy of conserving.

By using the natural resource inventory and maps, the land-use commissions can make informed decisions and support development in appropriate places while conserving environmentally sensitive places. In its advisory role, the Conservation Commission brings natural resource information to the attention of the land-use commissions.

Another way in which the Commission works to balance growth is land and conservation easement acquisition. The Commission has been instrumental in acquiring 139 acres of conservation easements and 50 acres of open space land. These conservation and open space acquisitions add to the 1,857 acres under Federal flood control and 615+ acres of State Forest and Park in Thompson.

WHAT ARE THE COMMISSION'S CONSERVATION GOALS?

The Commission's authority comes from the Connecticut General Statutes which provide for the Commission to be advisory and not regulatory in land-use decision making. In an advisory role, the Commission works diligently to reach its goals of: (1) maintaining and disseminating natural resource information, (2) preserving significant natural and cultural resources, (3) acquiring noteworthy land or conservation easements, and (4) stewarding the lands that have been entrusted to the town through conservation easements.

For more information about the Commission or Thompson's natural resources, visit the Conservation Commission's web site at www.thompsonconservation.org.

INFORMATION and RESOURCES

Thompson Conservation

Commission, 815 Riverside Drive, No. Grosvenordale, CT 06255, 860-923-1852, website: www.thompsonconservation.org

Thompson Historical Society, P.O. Box 47, Thompson, CT 06277, 860-923-3200, website: www.thompsonhistorical.org

Thompson Together Environment Committee preserves and enhances our community through education, environmental planning and promoting citizen participation. For more information contact Norma at 860-923-2969.

The Last Green Valley (*preserving The Last Green Valley*), 111 Main Street, Danielson, CT 06239, 860-774-3300, website: www.tlgv.org

and

The Green Valley Institute website: www.greenvalleyinstitute.org

Windham County Extension Center (*University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension Center – College of Agriculture and Natural Resources*), 139 Wolf Den Rd., Brooklyn, CT 06234, 860-774-9600, **Extension Forester** - Stephen Broderick website: www.extension.uconn.edu/pages/department/locations_windham.html

Eastern CT Conservation District, Brooklyn Agriculture Center, 139 Wolf Den Rd., Brooklyn, CT 06234, 860-774-8397 ext. 203, website: www.conservect.org/eastern

Natural Resource Conservation Service Center Office, Brooklyn Service Center, 139 Wolf Den Rd., Brooklyn, CT 06234-0399, 860-774-0224, website: www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs

CT Farm Bureau Association, 775 Bloomfield Ave., Windsor, CT 06095-2322, 860-298-4400, website: www.cfba.org

American Farmland Trust, 1 Short Street, Suite 2, Northampton, MA 01060, 413-586-4593, website: www.farmland.org

Southern New England Forest Consortium, Inc., P.O. Box 760, Chepachet, RI 02814, 401-568-1610, website: www.snefci.org



GETTING TO KNOW THE THOMPSON CONSERVATION COMMISSION



Thompson Conservation Commission
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Balancing Growth with Conservation