



Connections

The newsletter of Cold Hollow to Canada Forest Link: Fall 2010



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Special points of interest:

- If you'd like to be more involved with CHC, consider representing your town on our Steering Committee
- If you'd like more information or to be added to our email list, please email us at <info@coldhollowto-canada.org>



Edits by Dorothy Allard
Edits and layout by
Corrie Miller

Connectivity—One Town at a Time

Greetings friends. In this second edition of our quarterly newsletter we're happy to report a new partner in our work to keep our region's forests healthy. Vermont Natural Resources Council (VNRC), in partnership with Cold Hollow to Canada (CHC) and the Staying

with different opportunities and challenges in their own community—to discuss town values related to wildlife. VNRC can then provide the technical assistance skills necessary to identify and draft land use and zoning strategies and non-regulatory approaches that will help



Photo by Conrad Reining

Connected Initiative, will utilize a grant from the Davis Conservation Foundation to lend their town planning expertise to our region. VNRC will work with interested towns in our seven-town project area to help shape planning and zoning strategies to maintain habitat connectivity and honor each town's unique values. The CHC region is recognized as a critical linkage of wildlife habitat within the larger Northern Appalachian Ecoregion that stretches from New York to Maine and Canada.

Over the next year, CHC and VNRC plan to meet with local planning commissions or other municipal groups—each faced

protect the resources the town identifies as important. These may be enhancements to town zoning and subdivision regulations, such as wildlife overlay districts and specific development review standards. CHC also hopes to use our experiences gained through this collaboration to develop a land use planning manual for the communities in our area.

This is an exciting opportunity to forge new ground in community-based planning for conservation, and we're pleased to have VNRC on board as a partner.

Enjoy our newsletter,

Charlie Hancock, CHC chair

CHC Steering Committee:

Bakersfield Dorothy Allard

Enosburgh Nancy Patch

Fletcher Ed Lidster

Montgomery Charlie Hancock,
chair

Richford Bill McGroarty



Teaming Up for the Town Forest

by Charlie Hancock—CHC Steering Committee chair, Montgomery

In July the Montgomery Planning Commission and Montgomery Area Preservation (MAP) group (a local conservation initiative in town) teamed up with the Land Stewardship Program (LANDS)* to develop trail plans for the Montgomery Town Forest on West Hill. MAP is in the planning phase for developing better access to the property so that town members and visitors alike can benefit from this amazing resource.



A field day in the Forest—LANDS interns Ben Bisbach and Lucy deWahl, forester Charlie Hancock, LANDS intern Reed Carr, and Montgomery selectboard member Carol McGregor

The planning project was designed to first conduct a rapid natural and cultural inventory of the property that would supplement the existing Forest Management Plan. With this information, LANDS interns then developed trail route recommendations that accounted for physical features and other points of interest to be highlighted to visitors through interpretive material. At the completion of the project the town was presented with a report detailing the

LANDS findings on the town forest. Their report included recommendations for trail development, a proposed route, and a draft trail brochure. The brochure has directions to the town forest, a trail map, and interpretive material about the forest. Plans are to make the brochure available at several places in town.

This work lays the foundation for the next steps in Forest access and trail development

that will help make the Montgomery Town Forest into a place where people can come together around a shared appreciation for the land we care about.

* The LANDS program is a partnership between the University of Vermont and the Student Conservation Association. The work was funded by the Conservation Leadership Seed Fund of the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources at UVM and by a grant from the Graduate Student Advisory Board. The Staying Connected Initiative assisted in securing this opportunity for Montgomery.



Slow Down & See the Moss

Article and photos by Dorothy J. Allard—moss enthusiast and CHC Steering Committee, Bakersfield

Each time you go for a walk in the woods, make it your goal to learn something new. Sharpen your skills of observation this fall by looking for small plants that don't necessarily stand out amongst the carpet of green, gold and carmine. I am talking about some of my favorite plants, the mosses!

It is only by careful study and slow movement through the landscape that even the most avid field naturalist learns about these organisms. In Vermont, we have over 450 species of mosses, with another 150 or so of liverworts and hornworts. These groups of plants together make up the bryophytes. How many can you identify?

Not many, you say? Not any?? Well, we can fix that! I would like to introduce you to just one species. The study of bryophytes can be overwhelming, so let's take it one step at a time. Maybe we will meet more species in future newsletters.

The Large White Cushion Moss (*Leucobryum glaucum*)

The Large White Cushion Moss is one of the most easily recognized species—one that people tend to notice when they walk through the woods. It forms cushions that sometimes cover extensive areas. When dry, it is an unusual pale, whitish green in color.



A mound of cushion moss



Cushion moss close-up

When wet, it becomes a darker green. It can be found throughout the region.

The Large White Cushion Moss has thick leaves with tips that are pointed and cupped. Its cushions are at least an inch thick and sometimes much thicker, making small hummocks on the forest floor.

Upland conifer forests and forested wetlands are the habitats favored by the Large White Cushion Moss. It prefers acidic sites, such as hemlock or pine forests, and is less common in richer sites such as sugar maple woods. This species usually grows on soil that is enriched with humus, but may also be found on rock that has a thin layer of soil or humus covering it.



A patch of cushion moss at base of hemlock

Even though the cushions of Cushion Moss look high and dry, they usually are moist to the touch. They act as forest sponges, soaking up excess water and releasing it slowly over time, helping the forest to maintain a higher humidity level and reducing runoff. Cushion moss is commonly used in moss gardens because it is easy to establish in shady humus-rich areas, develops interesting forms and patterns, and makes a nice color contrast with greener mosses.

This fall, use these photos to help you find some Cushion Moss in a natural area near you. Enjoy its beauty and revel in your new woods knowledge. Then share it with a friend!



Conservation Commission Corner: Enosburgh

by Nancy Patch—CHC Steering Committee & Enosburgh Conservation Commission

The Enosburgh Conservation Commission (ECC) was formed in 2002 and was only the second conservation commission in Franklin County. In the last year two more conservation commissions have been formed in Bakersfield and Richford with help from Cold Hollow to Canada and ECC. Since 2002, ECC has sponsored dozens of educational events including forest and bird walks; and guest speakers on energy, migratory birds, amphibians and reptiles, medicinal plants, conservation strategies and others.

One of the most important achievements of the ECC was the development of The Enosburgh Natural Resources Assessment completed by Arrowwood Environmental in 2004, contracted in partnership with the Enosburgh Planning Commission and funded by a Regional Planning Grant. This inventory has assisted the planning commission in developing zoning maps, in particular the wetland overlay map, which is used to protect water quality and wildlife habitat by creating protection "buffers" around our surface waters.

We are now revisiting the Natural Resources Assessment with the help of the Vermont Natural Resources Council (VNRC) and through funding by a grant from the Davis Conservation Foundation (described on Page 1 of this newsletter). As ECC takes another fresh look at our natural resources inventory we will be specifically looking at important wildlife habitats and specific measures to protect them. See the following page for the recommendations given to Enosburgh by Arrowwood Environmental in our 2004 Natural Resource Assessment.

Our conservation commission will also be meeting with the Enosburgh Planning Commission through the Davis Grant project to review other aspects of the Town Plan and By-laws that have been cause for concern since changes to these documents were made. The result of this project may also lead to language being developed that could be used by other towns struggling with the same issues in protection of their natural resources while providing reasonable and smart growth in their own communities. Stay tuned for more.



Photo by Cynthia Scott

Bird watching venture at Enosburgh Town Forest

SEEKING MAMMAL TRACKERS!

You too can become a skilled tracker. Cold Hollow to Canada is sponsoring a second year of mammal tracking training through Keeping Track and is now seeking interested trackers for the 2010-2011 training group. The training includes six field days and two evening classes and the full cost is \$395 (we have a grant that can defray some of the costs for individuals living in Eden, Jay, Lowell, Troy, or Westfield). **The field dates have changed and are now scheduled Dec 11, 2010 and Jan 8, 29, Feb 13, March 6, Oct 8, 2011 while the evening classes are Dec 13, 2010 and April 11, 2011** (Note: it is possible to make up a class if there is a conflict). This upcoming year four Canadian trackers will be joining our group, and we look forward to getting to know one another and exploring future cooperative efforts.

Because you only see what you know to look for, this training is a great opportunity to open your eyes to the world of wildlife around you. Sue Morse's knowledge and insight will amaze you, and even the most experienced woods-person will see the forest through a new lens. Just ask anyone from the first class! If you'd like more information, contact Nancy Patch at nancpatch@earthlink.net or download the registration at www.coldhollowtocanada.org.

Habitat Components and Recommendations from Enosburgh's Natural Resource Assessment

The following is a list of habitat components and generalized management recommendations adapted by Nancy Patch and Corrie Miller from the 2004 document by Arrowwood Environmental

Core Habitat: Non-developed lands such as forest and wetlands at least 300 meters from development should remain undeveloped to serve as core habitat blocks for forest-dwelling wildlife (like black bear, fisher, moose, marten, otter, interior songbirds). Paved roads, houses, and other human developments should be discouraged in areas other than the edge of these habitats (within 100 feet).

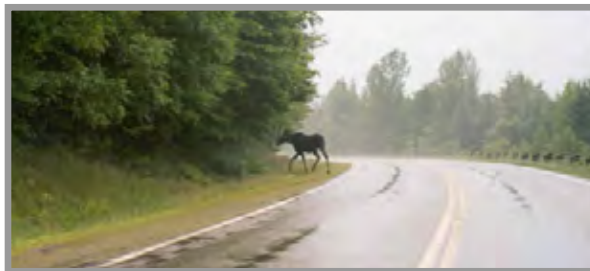


Photo from Google Maps

Development fragmenting forest habitat

Habitat Fragmentation: Do not allow fragmentation of existing habitat blocks. Promote development along the fringes, and in areas without important wildlife habitats and corridors between blocks.

Road Crossings: Important road crossings for both large mammals and amphibians should be identified to facilitate movement, keeping wildlife populations healthy and viable.



Moose crossing highway into adjacent forest

Deeryards: State mapped and unmapped deeryards should be assessed by a qualified wildlife professional for signs of recent deer wintering use. Most development should be prohibited within 300 feet of current (activity within 3 years) deeryards.

Bear Habitat: Stands of American beech trees ex-

hibiting use by black bear should be retained and development (roads and houses) should be prohibited within approximately 2500 feet of these high quality and perpetual mast stands. Forested wetlands utilized by black bears should be given a development buffer. Ridgelines, stream valleys, and other areas used as bear travel corridors should also be protected.

Den and Nest Sites: Denning sites, heronries, and nesting sites for uncommon raptors (like Great Blue Heron, Bald Eagle, Osprey)



Photo by Annette Goyne

Bear-scarred American beech tree

should be buffered from development. The potential negative impacts of inappropriate human activities should be assessed within 500-1000 feet of these sites.

Wetlands: The Enosburgh By-laws currently require a 50 foot buffer around all wetlands designated on the Enosburgh wetlands map.

Streamside Environments: Floodplain and riparian habitats should be buffered and protected. For mid-large streams and rivers all development should be assessed for potential negative impacts to plant and animal communities, including fish, Otter, Mink, heron, trout, Wood Turtle, song and shorebirds, and amphibians.

Vernal Pools: Vernal pools should be identified and protected with buffer zones. No alteration, except selective cutting of trees using forestry appropriate management practices within 600 feet of pools should be allowed to protect salamanders, frogs, and invertebrates.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Photo by JoAnne Wazny



Bakersfield Conservation Commission

Meets the last Thursday of every month at 7:00 PM in the Town Hall Building, 40 East Bakersfield Road, Bakersfield.

Enosburg Conservation Commission

Meets the fourth Monday of every month at 7:30 PM in the Emergency Services Building, 83 Sampsonville Road (Rte 105), Enosburg Falls.

Richford Conservation Committee

Meets the first Thursday of the month in the upstairs conference room of the Arvin A. Brown Public Library, 88 Main Street, Richford.

Wild and Scenic River Study Committee

Meets the third Thursday of each month from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. Locations vary so contact 802-393-0076 or visit www.vtwsr.org for more information.

Movie Screening: "Queen of the Sun: What are the bees telling us?" www.queenofthesun.com

Tuesday October 5 at the Savoy Theater in Montpelier. Q&A with director and producer. 8:00 PM. www.savoytheater.com

Wednesday October 6 at the Marquis Theater in Middlebury. Q&A with director and producer. 7:30 PM. [802-388-4841]

Thursday October 7 at The Big Picture in Waitsfield. Q&A with director and producer. 7:30 PM. www.bigpicturetheater.info

Friday October 8 - Thursday October 14 at Merrill's ROXY Theater in Burlington. Q&A with director and producer on the 8th and 9th @ the 7 PM & 9 PM showtimes. [<http://merrilltheatres.net/>]

Invasive Insect Workshop and Survey

Wednesday, October 13, 5:30 PM-7:00 PM, at the North Woods Stewardship Center in East Charleston. A free workshop to teach citizens how to identify the Asian Longhorned Beetle and Emerald Ash Borer. This will help early detection and better the chances of quick eradication of these destructive non-native forest pests.

Chainsaw Safety and Tree Felling Training

Game of Logging Level 1 Training - Women Only

Saturday, October 16, 8:00 AM-4:00 PM, at the Green Mountain Audubon Center in Huntington. You must register for the workshop and the cost is \$150. Please bring your own lunch. Contact Audubon Vermont @ 434-3068 or ksharpless@audubon.org to register.

Game of Logging Levels 1-2

*Saturday-Sunday, **October 30-31**, 8:00 AM-4:30 PM, \$150/day*

Game of Logging Levels 3-4

*Saturday-Sunday, **November 6-7**, 8:00 AM-4:30 PM, \$150/day @ North Woods Stewardship Center. Contact (802)723-6551 (x113) or www.northwoodscenter.org/events.html by Oct 26 to register.*

Explore Wildlife Pelts, Skulls and Mounts with Sue Morse

Tuesday, October, 19th at 6:30 PM in the International Room at Jay Peak Resort. Sue Morse, a nationally-recognized tracker and photographer, will display wildlife artifacts and photographs. For more information see the next page in this newsletter.

Don't forget to check www.coldhollowtocanada.org for updated Upcoming Events



Photo by Annette Goyne

