

## **Bristol Conservation Commission (BCC) Annual Report for 2019**

Commission members during 2019: Ken Johnson, Chair (resigned in April); Pete Diminico, Vice-Chair (resigned in June); Katie Reilley (Chair as of May); Carolyn Dash (Vice Chair as of May); Dave Rosen (reappointed); Carla Fenner (Clerk as of August); Jim Stapleton (resigned in May); Dave Henderson (resigned in May); Kristen Underwood; Randy Durand; Richard Butz (Clerk as of June, resigned in July); Melanie Lloyd; and Jono Chapin (appointed in December).

There were numerous changes in the Commission membership during 2019, as indicated above. Many thanks to Ken Johnson, who had been the Chair of the Commission for seven years, and who had been on the Commission since its inception. Thanks also to those people who became Commissioners, even if they could not continue serving.

This past year, the Conservation Commission was more active in developing and maintaining access trails around town, including the South Street Historical Project, and Memorial Park. This focus occurred as the Commission worked with the Bristol Trail Network (BTN), in particular, Porter Knight. Most notable was the establishment of the South Street Historical Interpretive Trail, which linked with another trail system along the New Haven River, developed by the BTN. Also significant were the efforts on the part of the Commission and the BTN to improve the trail system at Veterans Memorial Forest Park, focusing on making the public access safe and enjoyable. To that end Kristen Underwood worked with UVM students in the Engineering Department to analyze existing conditions and develop improvement plans for several areas around town.

### On-going projects:

- Maintenance of the Eagle Park fishing access including repairs to the walkway, which suffered some erosion, with on-going assistance from Pete Diminico;
- Green-Up Day coordination and site work;
- Coordination with the Bristol Recreation Club and the Bristol Trail Network (BTN), spearheaded by Porter Knight, to develop a hiking trail system about the town;
- Continued involvement in Green Stormwater Infrastructure project which has been incorporated into the Bristol Village Stormwater Master Plan, using grant money from the Ecosystem Restoration Program;
- Development of the South Street Historical Project and installation of interpretive signs as a combined effort of BCC, CORE and the Bristol Historical Society;
- Coordination with Zapata Courage of VT Wetlands and Ripton Conservation Commission to review and re-establish the wetland limits and classification for Beaver Meadow, which straddles the Bristol/Ripton town lines;
- Regular water sampling of streams in the New Haven River watershed by the Addison County River Watch Collaborative and BCC commissioners, to track water quality and develop remediation strategies;
- Evaluation of emerald ash borer activity in the village;
- Maintaining interest in River Corridor Protection; and,
- Working with Ian Albinson of CORE to develop an informational brochure that highlights Bristol's natural resources, as well as revamping the Conservation website.

Many thanks to Bristol residents for your continued support!

## **Bristol Conservation Commission (BCC) Annual Report for 2018**

Commission members during 2018: Ken Johnson, Chair; Pete Diminico, Vice-Chair (resigned in June); Katie Reilley (Clerk Jan. & Feb.); Jim Stapleton (Clerk since March); Dave Henderson; Kristen Underwood; Randy Durand; Richard Butz; and Carolyn Dash.

Administrative change to by-laws: Annual Meeting changed from September to April; officers approved at the Annual Meeting.

### On-going projects:

- Maintenance of the Eagle Park fishing access including using the Conservation Reserve Fund to partially pay for the reconstruction of the access trail (thanks to Peeker as well),
- Green-Up Day coordination and site work;
- Coordination with the Bristol Recreation Club and the Bristol Trail Network (BTN), spearheaded by Porter Knight, to develop a hiking trail system about the town;
- Green Stormwater Infrastructure project has been incorporated into the Bristol Village Stormwater Master Plan, using grant money from the Ecosystem Restoration Program;
- The South Street Historical Interpretive Trail, a combined effort of BCC, CORE and the Bristol Historical Society, has been established and work started on interpretive signs;
- On-going water sampling of streams in the New Haven River watershed by the Addison County River Watch Collaborative and BCC commissioners, to track water quality and develop remediation strategies; and,
- Maintaining interest in River Corridor Protection.

### New Projects:

- Working with Ian Albinson of CORE to develop an informational brochure that highlights Bristol's natural resources, as well as revamping the Conservation website;
- Strategic Planning work with Monica Przybrehart of Vermont Fish & Wildlife to assist the Commission in prioritizing goals and implementing tasks;
- Revitalizing and repairing the Bristol Veteran's Memorial Park;
- Presentation on cougars by Susan Morse in April; approximately 100 attended;
- Coordination with Zapata Courage of VT Wetlands and Ripton Conservation Commission to review and re-establish the wetland limits and classification for Beaver Meadow, which straddles the Bristol/Ripton town lines.

Finally, many thanks to our retiring Commissioners who have been on the Commission since its inception: Pete Diminico (Co-founder), and Dave Henderson. Another long-time Commissioner and Co-founder, Bruce Acciavatti, is moving out of town after years tending to our website. Many thanks to them all for their years of service as guardians of Bristol's natural resources.

## **Annual Report for 2017**

Commission members during 2017: Ken Johnson, Chair; Pete Diminico, Vice-Chair; Katie Reilley, Clerk; Dave Henderson; Dave Rosen (resigned in January); Kristen Underwood; Randy Durand; Richard Butz; Carolyn Dash; and, Jim Stapleton.

The new year started off with an input of new energy, talents and experience with three new Conservation Commission members: Richard Butz, Carolyn Dash and Jim Stapleton. Dave Rosen resigned, after having served on the Commission since its creation in 2003. Many thanks to Dave for his outstanding dedication, and don't worry, you'll still see him at GreenUp Day!

The Commission tackled some new projects this year in addition to our on-going commitments:

- Bristol Natural Resources: bringing to the public accurate and helpful information about interesting sites in town.
- Bristol Trail Network: Initiated and developed by the Recreation Club, spearheaded by Porter Knight; exploring possible hiking/walking opportunities in the town.
- Worked with staff from Agency of Natural Resources and students from University of Vermont on projects including exploring ANR's BioFinder website; UVM's Gabe Andrews presentation on Flood Resilience; Sacha Pealer and Dave Rosa of the VNR regarding river corridor planning; Zapata Courage from ANR on a revision to an inland wetland designation adjacent to the Ripton line.
- South Side Historical Walk: the Commission is teaming with the Historical Society, CORE, Trails Around Bristol, and the Recreation Department to put together plans for the walk and associated educational opportunities.
- Worked with the Addison County River Watch Collaborative to investigate water quality in the New Haven River and Little Otter Creek Watersheds.
- Repaired Eagle Park Fishing access: reconstructed path after damage from heavy rains.
- Maintained other properties and easements: removed Japanese Knotweed and Wild Parsnip, released saplings in riparian areas.
- Green-up Day; an admirable involvement by the residents to make our town more beautiful, healthy and inviting.
- Green Stormwater Infrastructure: There are several projects being evaluated for construction in 2018 to help demonstrate the relatively low cost and high value of small stormwater projects to help mitigate some ongoing water runoff issues in the village. Reducing direct discharge of stormwater and its associated contaminants into the New Haven River has many long-term benefits.

Thank you and Good Luck to Therese Kirby, Pam Correia.

Welcome to Valerie Capels, our new Town Administrator, and Sharon Lucia, our administrative assistant. As always, we on the BCC are grateful for the opportunity to serve the town as members of the commission; for the ongoing support of the town administration; for the time and energy that members of the Bristol community dedicate to helping us in our many varied projects throughout the town and for your contributions to the Conservation Reserve Fund, which has been essential in continuing the legacy of conservation work in Bristol.

## **Annual Report for 2016**

Bristol Conservation Commission (BCC) Annual Report for 2016

Commission members during 2016: Ken Johnson, Chair; Pete Diminico, Vice-Chair; Katie Reilley, Clerk; Dave Henderson; Dave Rosen; Kristen Underwood; Randy Durand; Devlin Rutherford (part of the year).

Several 2015 projects were continued into 2016 and new projects were undertaken.

- Saunders River Access: more tree plantings completed thanks to Stever Bartlett and the Middlebury College football team.
- A VTrans drone survey of the New Haven River at the Saunders Access showed a great deal of movement of the New Haven River channel. The river appears to be moving east toward the location of the flood chute seen in the 1970s.
- Flood Resilience Master's Project: Gabe Andrews, a graduate student in UVM's Place-based Landscape Analysis and Community Engagement (PLACE) Program, interviewed residents along the New Haven River, and produced a presentation entitled 'Water Rising: River Stories' on how communities have adapted to river dynamics over time.
- Conservation Reserve Fund uses: riparian buffer plantings along Baldwin Creek (up to \$2500) and control of Japanese knotweed at the Saunders River Access (up to \$1000).
- Discussions continued with the Bristol Historical Society regarding the development of a trail off South Street. Kristen Underwood investigated signage for the trail.
- The stormwater project on East Street by Richard Butz is functioning effectively. The Commission also reviewed proposed stormwater improvements on West Street.
- Worked with Steve Libby of the Vermont River Conservancy (VRC) regarding a Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) Flood Resilience and Climate Change Grant. This included development of a list of potential projects that are appropriate subjects for funding under the Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP).
- Several BCC members attended an Intertown Conservation Meeting, with representatives from Monkton, Starksboro, Hinesburg, New Haven, Charlotte, Bristol, and Ferrisburgh.
- Greenup Day planning: as Bristol has no landfill, residents took their Green Up Day garbage bags to the recycling center, where staff from R&L Rubbish took the bags. The Town road crew picked up Green Up Day bags along the roadside and took them to Middlebury Solid Waste. More planning is needed to ensure successful Greenup Days.
- Hogback Walking Trail: Proposal by the Watershed Center, presented by David Brynn, to create a phased hiking trail from Mountain Street to the top of Deer Leap area. The Commission was concerned about protected species in the area, and suggested focusing on The Watershed properties on Plank Road.
- Thanks to Devlin Rutherford for his time on the Commission. He contributed much during his short time. Good luck to Devlin in his new job in Wyoming.

The Bristol Conservation Commission members wish to again express their thanks to all who contributed their time, energy and funds to our many projects. We are also very appreciative of the ongoing financial and administrative support of the Town of Bristol's elected officials,

employees and of the residents of the Town. Our work would be difficult without your support for our efforts and your contributions to the Conservation Reserve Fund, a vital resource for us.

## **Annual Report for 2015**

Commission members during 2015: Ken Johnson, Chair; Pete Diminico, Vice-Chair; Katie Reilley, Clerk; Dave Henderson; Dave Rosen; Kristen Underwood; Randy Durand; Rick Taylor; Devlin Rutherford (appointed May 2015).

Several 2014 projects were continued into 2015 and new projects were undertaken.

- The plantings in the Saunders River Access were redone where trees struggled to survive the dry summer weather in 2014. A BCC workday with volunteers used some of the many successful saplings in the center of the river bend to replant the outer ring area.
- Vermont Geological Survey maps of Bristol are available for viewing at the town offices and online at: <http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/geo/ofreps.htm>.
- Hosted a 'Water Quality Chat' with Matt Witten of the Addison County River Watch Collaborative for residents to discuss any water quality concerns.
- Organized Green Up Day in Bristol, which brought roughly 230 bags to the landfill, resulting in over 1400 lbs. of garbage cleaned up.
- Received hard copies of the Bristol Village Tree Inventory produced by the Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Program.
- Claire Tebbs from the Addison County Regional Planning Commission attended a BCC meeting to discuss newer stormwater management strategies now coming into use. In the future grants may be available to interested towns. Of particular concern is slowing down runoff to allow particulate matter to settle out and getting stormwater absorbed before it can reach a brook, stream or storm drain.
- Helped with a demonstration stormwater project on East Street by Richard Butz and learned about his experiences with a rain barrel program in Buffalo, NY.
- Distributed information through Front Porch Forum about mulch 'volcanoes' on tree plantings. Mulch above the trunk/root flare can starve a tree of oxygen.
- Installed signage showing the most recent e-coli readings at important swimming locations on the New Haven River.
- Provided support and publicity for Sonia DeYoung's project walking the New Haven River in Addison County. Sonia met local residents, and gave a public talk.
- Participated in a storm drain stenciling project, initiated by the New Haven River Anglers. Sixty storm drains in town were stenciled to remind everyone that the drains empty into the river and to keep contaminants out of the storm drains.
- Started discussions with the Bristol Historical Society about collaborating on a trail along historical sections of the New Haven River south of Bristol Village.

The Bristol Conservation Commission members wish to express their thanks to all the organizations and individuals that contributed time, energy and funds to the many projects we

participated in this year. We are also very appreciative of the ongoing support of the Town of Bristol's elected officials, employees and of the residents of the Town. It would be very difficult to accomplish what we have without your support for our efforts and your contributions to the Conservation Reserve Fund, which is vital to leveraging funds from other sources.

## **Annual Report for 2014**

Commission members during 2014: Ken Johnson, Chair; Pete Diminico, Vice-Chair; Katie Reilley, Clerk; Dave Henderson; Dave Rosen; Kristen Underwood; Randy Durand; Nate Bouvier (resigned July 2014); Adam Ginsburg (resigned August 2014), Howie McCausland (resigned August 2014) and Rick Taylor (appointed October 2014).

- The protection of the Bristol Flats property, now named 'Saunders River Access', was finalized and an informational kiosk added. Stabilization area is ongoing.
- The conservation of the Farr and Fuller properties was completed, protecting the northern entrance to Bristol. Vermont Land Trust and the Fuller family sponsored a well-attended celebratory party last September.
- Vermont Geological Survey bedrock and surficial geology in the Bristol and South Mountain Quadrangles is complete. VGS is now developing derivative maps to serve many town needs, including use by the Planning Commission.
- Watershed Wildlands Project, a campaign to solidify the land holdings of the Watershed Center by purchasing 194 acres uniting the Waterworks property to the east with the Lost Pond Forest to the west, was successfully completed, with a contribution from the BCC Conservation Reserve Fund.
- The Vermont Urban & Community Forestry (UCF) Program of the
- University of Vermont conducted an urban tree inventory of Bristol Village, one of 20 towns chosen for study this year. The results are available on the Vermont Natural Resources website.
- Green-Up Day: Saturday, 3 May 2014: about 1500 pounds of refuse were taken to the landfill/recycling center. Thanks to all who contributed!
- Joint sponsorship of Vermont Institute of Natural Science Raptor Encounter: October 3 at Holley Hall: this was very popular and well attended.
- Coordination with Monkton Agricultural and Natural Areas Committee: BCC members attended a collaborative meeting.

The BCC was also involved in the review of the Town of Bristol's Seth Hill Waterworks Forest Management Plan, discussion of ongoing activities at the Bristol gravel pit, and maintenance work at the Eagle Park Universal Fishing Platform.

The Commission owes thanks to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board for their help in the Farr/Fuller and Saunders projects in Bristol, as well as the Vermont Community Foundation, VT Agency of Natural Resources, Vermont River Conservancy, Vermont Family Forests, Porter Knight, Vermont Land Trust, US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife, New Haven River

Anglers, Otter Creek NRCD, Bruce Acciavatti, and special kudos to Kristen Underwood and Pete Diminico for their limitless energy in pursuit of the commission's goals. We also greatly appreciate the continued support of the people of Bristol for their hands-on help when needed and the Town's contributions to the Conservation Reserve Fund, vital to many of our projects.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken Johnson, Chair

## **Annual Report for 2013**

Commission Members During 2013: Ken Johnson, Chair; Pete Diminico, Vice-Chair; Katie Reilly, Clerk; Dave Henderson; Dave Rosen; Kristen Underwood; Nate Bouvier; Howie McCausland; Adam Ginsburg (resigned July 2013); Randy Durand (appointed Oct. 2013).

Among this year's major projects, the Conservation Commission, guided by Dave Rosen and Kristen Underwood, worked with Al Karnatz of the Vermont Land Trust (VLT) to conserve the Farr and Fuller family properties along VT Route 116, north of Bristol and south of VT Route 17. The conserved properties will remain as farmsteads and include farm fields, upland forest and a segment of Baldwin Creek. We feel fortunate to have been able to use our Conservation Reserve Fund monies to protect the beautiful northern gateway to the heart of Bristol.

Most of the funds to purchase the Farr and Fuller properties development rights came from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board and the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation. The Vermont Community Foundation and Porter Knight from Bristol also assisted by providing fundraising guidance. Approximately \$90,000 was raised by VLT and BCC through local fundraising efforts, including an event hosted by Linda Harmon and Doug Mack at the Inn on Baldwin Creek, and raffling a Folk Rocker donated by Jim Geier. Over 200 people either made a monetary contribution, volunteered their time, or donated goods for the Silent Auction. Thank you all for your generosity!

Kristen Underwood once again led the Commissions efforts to provide assistance to the owners of low-lying property adjacent to the New Haven River in the Bristol Flats area. Working with numerous state and federal agencies Kristen obtained grants to design and implement a management plan to minimize erosion and help to stabilize the course of the river in the stretch behind the residential properties. As part of this project the Town of Bristol became the owners of a portion of the Saunders property, and will work with the Vermont River Conservancy to manage the property.

The Chuck Baser Memorial Universal Fishing Platform at Eagle Park successfully weathered the winter of 2012/2013 and the spring and fall high waters in 2013. We are grateful to the Eagle Scouts who maintain the park and for regular help from the Town Highway crew.

The fishing platform has become a popular local open space. Last summer it won a public space honor award from the Vermont Chapter of the American Association of Landscape Architects.

The Vermont Geological Survey bedrock mapping of Bristol and South Mountain Quadrangles work continues and the Commission continues to assist with the groundwater mapping of the Town of Bristol. By the end of 2014 the Town will be able to choose among a variety of maps that combine different layers of information to assist the town in making planning decisions.

Other items on the agenda for 2013 were: Green-Up Day; Bristol Pond maintenance coordination with Monkton; investigation of Bristol's gravel pit properties.

We appreciate the people of the Town of Bristol supporting our efforts in the projects listed above. Special thanks to Bruce Acciavatti for keeping BCC on the website!

## **Annual Report for 2012**

The Bristol Conservation Commission (BCC) enjoyed a productive year. This success is due mainly to the efforts of Pete Diminico and Kristen Underwood. These hardworking commissioners secured grant money for projects from a number of different state, federal and private sources. The most satisfying project was the construction of a universally accessible fishing platform at Eagle Park on the New Haven River. On October 12, 2012, this fishing platform was dedicated to the memory of Chuck Baser, who was dedicated to fishing and the protection of the New Haven River. The grant funds for the construction of the platform were supplemented by the Chuck Baser Fund, New Haven Anglers funds, and the Conservation Reserve Fund. Rockydale Gardens donated 50+ perennials. Go take a look!

The BCC was involved in a number of farmland conservation projects: the Farr and Fuller properties along North 116, and numerous properties along South 116. Both areas have prime agricultural characteristics and scenic values. The area along the portions of VT Rte. 116 south of Bristol has been subjected to significant erosion from the river encroaching into the flood plain and expanding the limits of the river banks, basically moving its location to the west. Kristen Underwood has been working diligently to access all available programs and funds to help the property owners.

The BCC also applied to the STATEMAP program to complete geologic mapping of the Bristol quadrangle and funding will come in part from the Conservation Reserve Fund. This is already underway, again thanks to Kristen Underwood and Pete Diminico.

Other items addressed by the commission include:

- State policy concerning excavation in streams: Act 138 'An act relating to regulation of flood hazard areas, river corridors, and stream alteration.'
- Green-Up Day held Saturday, May 5, 2012;



- New Haven River: removing debris from river section in the vicinity of Prayer Rock
- Bristol Pond: paddle and educational field trip
- Japanese Knotweed Control: at Sycamore Park and at Paul Fuller's
- Met with the newly organized New Haven Conservation Commission to discuss the history of the BCC, early direction of the BCC, accomplishments and members.
- Route 116 Gravel Pit: discussion about possible closure and management plan with Selectboard and David Brynn.

Finally, the members of the BCC would like to extend our thanks for the continued support of the townspeople of Bristol. Your funding of the Conservation Reserve Fund, your participation in our fieldwork projects and the ideas and concerns you bring to our meetings are vital for our continued success.

## **Annual Report for 2011**

### CONSERVATION COMMISSION REPORT 2011

The Bristol Conservation Commission (BCC) has a full complement of members at present consisting of Nathan Bouvier. Pete Diminico (vice-chair), Adam Ginsburg, Dave Henderson, Ken Johnson (chair), Howie McCausland. Katie Reilley (clerk), Dave Rosen, and Kristen Underwood. The BCC meets on the second Thursday of each month at 6:00 PM at Holley Hall, are welcome to attend.

The Universal Fishing Platform on the Lincoln Road, which is ADA compliant, is at this point not finished but should be completed by July 2012. Tropical Storm Irene caused significant damage to the completed access ramp. The platform was fortunately not yet installed and is currently safely stored. The Town of Bristol has made a claim to FEMA for the damages, which is likely to cover the loss. We should have a determination by the end of January 2012.

Using grant funding, the BCC has been been of a river assessment and planning project to address erosion concerns along the New Haven Riser. Many groups have worked together to assist Bristol landowners affected by riser erosion including the USDA Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Forest Service, US Fish & Wildlife, UVM Extension, VT Agency of Agriculture, VT River Management Program, Vermont Land Trust, and Vermont River Conservancy. A public meeting will be hosted by the BCC in the fall of 2012.

Two BCC members (Pete Diminico and Kristen Underwood) and two Planning Commission members (Kris Perlee, John Elder) prepared a Selectboard-approved application to the Vermont Geological Survey (VGS) for grant funding to fund mapping of surficial and bedrock geology in the town of Bristol. Once funding is obtained, geologist(s) will be hired by the VGS to conduct geologic mapping in 2012 and 2013. Interpretive maps can then be developed from these base geologic maps and will be helpful for a variety of town planning needs.

Dave Rosen and Katie Reilley worked to put Green Up Day together. Dave did all the organizational work, including: obtaining bags from the state. tracking the number of bags and pickup locations. asking Town Hall staff to distribute hags in the week prior to Green Up Day and asking for Town Highway Crew pickup of bags by the roadside (THANK YOU, EVERYONE!!). Katie was at the Town Green on Green-Up Day morning to distribute the bags. 130 bags were distributed and approximately 1.600 pounds of waste and 59 tires were turned in.

Additional activities: Repaired the vandalized kiosk and updated tree identification tags along the nature trail at Sycamore Park\_ The Selectboard approved a recommended disbursement of \$1000 from the Bristol CRF in support of conservation projects along the Rt 116 North gateway to Bristol. The BCC provided comments on Bristol's Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The BCC has asked for \$10.000 from this year's budget to be added to the CRF. The Commission's goal is to build a CRF exceeding \$50,000 over the next 5 years; we hope you will support this on Town Meeting Day in support continuing conservation projects in Bristol.

Respectfully submitted\_  
Ken Johnson, Chair

## **Annual Report for 2010**

The Bristol Conservation Commission (BCC) now meets the second Thursday each month at 6:00 PM at Holley Hall. Public input is always welcome. A recent resignation leaves an opening for one more person to join current members Nathan Bouvier, Pete Diminico (vice chair), Dave Henderson (chair), Ken Johnson (treas.), Howie McCausland, Katie Reilley (clerk), Dave Rosen and Kristen Underwood.

During 2010 we finalized planning and permits to build a universal (handicapped) fishing access on the New Haven River at Eagle Park on the Lincoln road. An informational kiosk regarding the invasive didymo species will also be placed here in honor of our former commissioner Chuck Baser. Pete Diminico has clerked this project from the start, Funding comes from Vt. Fish and Wildlife, the New Haven River Anglers, the Chuck Baser Memorial Fund and, if required, the Bristol Conservation Reserve Fund. Construction bids will go out this spring.

In April we were made aware of some major erosion problems involving agricultural land and threatening homes on Bristol Flats. A Vt. Clean and Clear grant was submitted by Kristen Underwood and approved by ANR to allow a renewed geomorphic assessment of this area as well as other sections on the New Haven River and Baldwin Creek that have been altered by high water events since 2004. Our hope is this will lead to remediation for the involved landowners.

On request from the select board and with much help from David Brynn of Vermont Family Forests we completed a current use application for the 113 acre Bristol property in

Lincoln that once was our primary village water source. That designation will markedly reduce the taxes now paid to the town of Lincoln.

Other BCC activities for 2010 included closing on the Bacon property conservation easement adjacent to the Waterworks off Plank Road. Bristol conservation reserve funds (CRF) allowed the final sum to be reached. Dave Rosen headed up another Green Up Day May 1. 125 bags were distributed. Select board approval was given for the USFS purchase of the Kerstetter parcel near Bartlett Falls. The commission voted support for a Vermont Land Trust conservation easement on the Choiniere property at Bristol's western border on Plank Road. No CRF money was required.

Due to repeated vandalism of the Sycamore Park kiosk the maps and information sheets there will not be protected by glass but simply laminated.

We spent much time and thought on Bristol's Conservation Reserve Fund. We petitioned the article that appears in this year's town meeting warning. The Commission's goal is to build a CRF exceeding \$50,000 over the next 5 years. We hope you will support this on meeting day.

Respectfully submitted, Dave Henderson

## **Annual Report for 2009**

The Bristol Conservation Commission (BCC) meets at 6 PM the fourth Wed each month. We now have 6 members with openings for up to 3 more. The untimely death of Chuck Baser this spring deprived us of one of our most passionate and dedicated members.

With a Vermont Watershed Grant we were able to further improve Sycamore Park. A river interpretive trail map and brochure were completed, the kiosk upgraded and picnic tables added.

The BCC headed up another Green Up Day in May. We hope to improve the recycling component in 2010. We also co-hosted with the Rec Dept a raptor presentation by VINS in Oct.

We have tried to have a BCC presence at Select board and Planning Commission meetings. We believe our input to the new town plan section on natural resources significant and helpful. Our approval of a hazard mitigation plan facilitated FEMA support.

The Commission is now working with Vt. Fish and Wildlife to site universal (handicapped) fishing accesses on the New Haven River at Eagle Park on the Lincoln Road and at the former Shackett property on Rt. 116. With grant money, help from local organizations and volunteer efforts we hope to do this without stressing the Conservation Reserve Fund (CRF). A tribute to Chuck Baser in the form of education about Didymo (rock snot) is to be a part of this project.

A more substantial CRF is an important goal of the Commission. The economy has resulted in allocations less than we have requested. We continue to debate and wrestle with options of short-term expenditures to demonstrate the need for a CRF vs. building a fund for larger conservation opportunities in the future. We were happy to support the recent select board decision to allocate up to \$6235 to complete the purchase of a conservation easement on the 194 acres of the Bacon property adjacent to the Waterworks. We would like to put in place a more predictable and permanent means to build up the Conservation Reserve Fund.

BCC members are Dave Henderson (chair), Pete Diminico (vice chair), Katie Reilley (clerk), Ken Johnson (treas.), Dave Rosen and Kristen Underwood.

## **Annual Report for 2008**

Members of the Conservation Commission for 2008 included Bruce Acciavatti, Chairman Chuck Baser, David Henderson Vice-Chair; Ken Johnson, Treasurer; Susan Kavanagh (through March); Katie Reilley, Clerk; David Rosen; and Kristen Underwood.

Three topics garnered the largest portion of the Conservation Commission's discussions during the year 2008: the Vermont Watershed Grant for a Sycamore Park interpretive trail and website (application and implementation); the New Haven River and recommendations for a flood erosion hazard overlay district; and the Natural Resources Plan. Other significant topics of discussion included the Conservation Reserve Fund, opportunities to obtain new members, and, concern about *Didymosphenia geminate* Didymo (Rock snot) coming to the New Haven River.

The year started with a presentation to the Commission by Amy Diller of the Addison County Regional Planning Commission, who introduced the New Haven River Corridor Plan for the river section from Route 116 in Bristol to Sargent Cross Road in New Haven. The plan aims to reduce erosion and the resultant sediment loading in the river. It also identifies areas where changes could be made to reduce erosion, and to directly involve property owners who have property affected by the erosive forces of the river. In addition, the corridor plan sets priorities for remediation efforts, and identifies funding sources and technical support for recommended improvements. Also, staff from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources discussed adoption of a 'Flood Erosion Hazard Overlay District' and distributed a 'Municipal Guide to Fluvial Erosion Hazard Mitigation, 1 August 2007'. This map would delineate the river corridor, an area surrounding the river that is needed by the channel to maintain or adjust toward equilibrium.

In February the Conservation Commission endorsed the New Haven River Corridor Plan Reaches M06-M11 and specifically recommended that the Selectboard include the Corridor Plan by reference in the Town Plan update. Specific language was forwarded to the Planning Commission to this end.

The Commission also approved the Master Plan for Sycamore Park and submitted the document to the Selectboard as a plan to guide the management of Sycamore Park.

In March, we received notification that the town had been awarded \$3500 grant for the establishment of an interpretive trail and website on Sycamore Park and its geomorphic significance. Kristen Underwood applied for the grant, with the support and enthusiasm of Shelly Snyder's Mount Abraham classes. The students have been actively involved in setting up the website and writing the descriptions for the interpretive trail. Commission members, and friends, put up trail markers to identify stops on the trail. Many thanks to Kristen, Shelley and students, and all who contributed!

May found us leading the charge for Green-Up Day once again. Thanks to Sue Kavanagh for her volunteer time at the Town Green, distributing information, encouragement and collection bags. We always appreciate the generous contribution of time and work from Bristol's residents doing something from which we all benefit.

At the end of the year, the current Chairman and charter member, Bruce Acciavatti, provided notice that he will be leaving the commission this spring. Our profound regrets, as well as our thanks for all the work he's done and the leadership he's provided.

For 2009, the Conservation Commission will be continuing to work with Mt. Abe students and faculty on the Sycamore Park website which will be accessed from The Mt. Abe website. There will also be links from the Conservation Commission site. Be sure to look for it.

The commission will also be sponsoring Green-Up Day and hopefully another Annual New Haven River Day. There's a great deal of work to be done in educating people about the presence of *Didymosphenia geminata* Didymo, especially in the New Haven River. We will also be continuing to work with the Planning Commission and the Selectboard in future meetings of the town plan.

The Conservation Commission's mission is to work to conserve Bristol's natural and cultural heritage for present and future generations; raise public awareness of these resources; and provide opportunities for greater involvement by the community in this area.

## **Annual Report for 2007**

### **1. Conservation fund:**

- At town meeting night, a \$500.00 appropriation for a yearly operating fund was approved, as well as a request for an operating conservation reserve fund starting in fiscal year 2007 in the amount of \$10,000.00 for conservation land, project and education purposes.

### **2. Natural Resources Plan:**

- Continued working with the Planning Commission on natural resource issues and the Land Use section of the proposed new town plan.

### **3. Sycamore Park:**

- The board developed a management plan to be used by the town to uphold the

ecological integrity of the park, and applied for a grant to develop a Geomorphic Interpretive

Trail to highlight its hydrological and geomorphic features.

- Joined residents involved with the Edith Stock bequest in advising the town and landscape architect in the work conducted this year to improve security and access to the property to help protect it from misuse, as well as to complement its ecological values.

#### 4. Green Up Day - May 5<sup>th</sup> :

- Coordinated Green Up Day in Bristol and encouraged participants to separate recyclables from other garbage collected that day. Made recommendations to the State Green Up Committee for future Green Up Day considerations including the use of biodegradable bags and encouraging recyclables separation statewide.

#### 5. General conservation efforts:

- Co-sponsored Vermont Family Forest's April 28, 2007 Addison County Conservation Congress, "Fueling Our Community: Building Local, Sustainable Energy Solutions"
- Supported the continuation of the New Haven River corridor plan in partnership with the State Agency of Natural Resources, Addison County Regional Planning Commission, and South Mountain Research & Consulting.

The Conservation Commission's mission is to work to conserve Bristol's natural and cultural heritage for present and future generations; raise public awareness of these resources; and provide opportunities for greater involvement by the community in this area.

Monthly meetings of the Conservation Commission are held the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7pm in the Holley Hall meeting room downstairs. All residents are invited, and public participation is encouraged.

Bristol Conservation Commission members: Bruce Acciavatti (Chair), David Henderson, (Vice Chair), Ken Johnson (Treasurer), Katie Reilley(Clerk), David Rosen, Chuck Baser, Sue Kavanagh and Kristen Underwood.

## **Annual Report for 2006**

### 1. Natural Resources Plan:

- Completed a comprehensive Natural Resources Plan with maps and supporting documentation that was submitted to the Planning Board for inclusion in the new Town Plan.

- Worked with the Planning Board on natural resource issues and the Land Use section of the new town plan.

## 2. Green Up Day - May 6<sup>th</sup>:

- Coordinated Green Up Day in town and conducted the annual cleanup at Sycamore Park and other town-owned properties.

## 3. Town-owned properties:

- Conducted environmental surveys of The Waterworks property in Lincoln, Bartlett Falls area and Bristol Memorial Park to inventory them and determine their conditions in order to make recommendations for improving protection of sensitive areas.

## 4. Conservation fund:

- Submitted to the select board, a request for appropriations to be voted at town meeting night. A \$500.00 appropriation for the yearly operating fund, and the request for fiscal year of 2007 in the amount of \$13,000.00 for an operating conservation reserve fund.

## 5. Communications:

- The board is increasing efforts to communicate more with other town boards (i.e. the Select Board and the Planning Board) by attending meetings and providing input.

At our Annual Meeting in September, we elected a new Chairman, Bruce Acciavatti, and Vice Chair, David Henderson. Many thanks to Pete Diminico for his 3 years of leadership as Chair.

## **Annual Report for 2005**

### 1. Sycamore Park:

- Volunteers assisted commission members on Green Up Day, May 7<sup>th</sup>, to clean up the area by removing trash for the second year in a row, and there was much less to deal with this time! Also, many stumps and much old vegetation were cleared out. Thanks to everyone who helped out!
- A nature trail was laid out by placing down bark mulch. Thanks to Chris and Cassie Marion's Girl Scout Troop and The A. Johnson Co., LLC for all their assistance.
- A vegetative inventory was taken, and identification labels were placed on trees along the trail. In the Spring of 2006 herbaceous plants will also be labeled. A bird survey was also initiated.
- Held a New Haven River Day in September to help introduce people to the park and river.

- Received a \$500 grant from the Vermont Watershed Grants program to produce a brochure and map of Sycamore Park.

2. Green-Up Day coordinated from the Village Green and Sycamore Park. About 100 volunteers participated.

3. Sponsored and worked with the Recreation Department to produce a Peregrine Falcon slide program by Margaret Fowle of the National Wildlife Federation and a Raptor Demonstration conducted by Vermont Institute of Natural Sciences in May at Holley Hall. Over 80 people attended.

4. Setbacks for waterways and river protection:

- Developed recommendations to the planning board, with the assistance of South Mountain Research & Consulting and the Addison County Regional Planning Commission, for inclusion of language in the zoning regulations to require a zoning permit for development to have a setback of 75 ft. from a stream, pond or wetland to prevent erosion and protect water quality.
- Consequently the planning board added a section in the zoning regulations for Waterside Protection, adopting language that places setbacks on public waters that meet the minimum rear yard setback depending on the zoning district. This can be anywhere from 10 to 100 feet. The conservation commission recognizes this as an improvement. We will continue to work with the planning board to provide them more information that will help them strengthen the language to come in line with state-recognized and recommended standards for setbacks.
- Made recommendation to the planning board to keep the area at Rockydale, along and near the New Haven River, zoned as a conservation district, so as to provide the most protection to this sensitive area.

5. Made recommendations to the select board to restrict parking on Mountain Terrace when accessing the Ledges Trail.

6. Special thanks to Joan Allen who produced an interpretative 'Take A Walk' flyer highlighting the natural and human history of Bristol Memorial Park and The Watershed Center, which was distributed around town.

## **Annual Report for 2004**



1. Sycamore Park (formerly known as Palmer's Court or Tin City):
  - Volunteers assisted commission members on Green Up Day in May to clean up the area by removing truckloads of trash.
  - Trees were planted to fill in some open areas, and for stream bank stabilization.
  - Test plots of Japanese Knotweed were treated by cutting and covering. This will be ongoing and more aggressive in the new year.
  - Worked with Bristol Recreation Dept. to develop a plan for the park which included: mapping to include different habitats and trails, and providing descriptions of plant species and a history of the area.
  - Built a kiosk at the entrance to the park, and posted on it a welcome sign, map of the park, map of the New Haven River Watershed, a history of the area, and a species list.
  
2. New Haven River Geomorphic Phase II Study\*:
  - Worked with Kristen Underwood of South Mountain Research & Consulting on an assessment of the present geomorphic condition on the New Haven River network that was sponsored by the Addison County Regional Planning Commission and funded by a grant from FEMA .
  - Hosted a public presentation by Ms. Underwood in October of the results.  
\*A copy of this **Phase 2 Stream Geomorphic Assessment** can be obtained by contacting the Bristol Conservation Commission - [vim@gmavt.net](mailto:vim@gmavt.net)
  
3. Provided a Questionnaire at Town Meeting asking what townspeople would like the Conservation Commission to focus on. Received a very good response ♦ over 200 questionnaires returned.
  
4. Offered monthly 'Discover Your Town' hiking/walking/snowshoeing outings.
  
5. Added a web page on the Bristol town web site for the Conservation Commission.

## **Annual Report for 2003**

The Bristol Conservation Commission was approved at the 2003 Town Meeting, and by June, after an interview and selection process, 9 members were appointed by the Selectboard for 3, 4 and 5 year terms. The first meeting was held on July 8<sup>th</sup>.

The first few meetings were used to find out about what other commissions and conservation organizations in the state were doing by inviting guests to speak, as well as to getting to know and learning to work with each other.

Bylaws were adopted, and a Mission Statement was adopted: “To work to conserve Bristol’s natural and cultural heritage for present and future generations; raise public awareness of these resources; and provide opportunities for greater involvement by the community.”

Monthly meetings were established on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month at 7-8:30pm in the Holley Hall main meeting room downstairs. All residents are invited.