

*Connecticut Association
of Conservation & Inland
Wetlands Commissions*



**34th Annual Meeting &
Environmental Conference**

November 12, 2011
MountainRidge, Wallingford, CT

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*Connecticut Association of Conservation
& Inland Wetlands Commissions (CACIWC)*

34th Annual Meeting & Environmental Conference

*“Celebrating Five Decades of Environmental
Conservation and Habitat Protection”*

Saturday, November 12, 2011

Mountain Ridge, High Hill Road, Wallingford, CT

Schedule for the Day

Registration & Breakfast	8:30-9:00 a.m.
Welcome & Business Meeting.....	9:00-9:30 a.m.
Session 1 Workshops	9:30-10:30 a.m.
Break 1	10:30-10:45 a.m.
Session 2 Workshops	10:45-12:00 p.m.
Lunch & Keynote Speaker	12:00-1:30 p.m.
Awards	1:30-1:45 p.m.
Break 2.....	1:45-2:00 p.m.
Session 3 Workshops	2:00-3:15 p.m.
Final Display Viewing	3:15-4:00 p.m.

Displays will be on view from 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Business Meeting Agenda

Approval of Minutes – November 13, 2010 Annual Meeting

Reports:

Treasurer’s Annual Report FY 2010-2011

Budget FY 2011-2012

President’s Report FY 2010-2011

Old Business

New Business

Election of Officers and Directors

Keynote Presentation:

Daniel C. Esty, Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), in support of CACIWC's conference theme: "Celebrating Five Decades of Environmental Conservation and Habitat Protection"



DEEP Commissioner Esty will help CACIWC celebrate the 50th anniversary of the law establishing conservation commissions in Connecticut and the following decades of habitat protection efforts made by conservation and inland wetlands commissioners and their staff.

Almost ten years before the original Earth Day, a small coalition of local conservation groups and clubs led by Hartford Times editor Ward E. Duffy, convinced members of the 1961 Connecticut General Assembly to introduce House Bill No. 3470, which was passed as Public Act No. 310. By this act, Connecticut municipalities were first authorized to form conservation commissions. Subsequent legislative sessions clarified and added to their duties and responsibilities and eventually led to the added responsibility of regulating inland wetlands and the formation of local wetlands agencies.

Commissioner Esty will discuss the progress that has been made in both preserving critical habitats and improving environmental quality throughout Connecticut during the 50 years since the passage of the 1961 Public Act. He will emphasize the value of dedicated local conservation and wetlands commissioners and staff in continuing their local habitat preservation efforts in partnership

with the DEEP and other agencies.

Commissioner Esty was appointed by Governor Dannel P. Malloy in March, 2011 to serve as Commissioner of what was then the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). He became Commissioner of DEEP when that agency came into being in July of that year. This new agency is focused on better integrating energy and environmental policies and helping Connecticut to build a sustainable and prosperous 21st century economy.

Prior to becoming Commissioner, Esty was the Hillhouse Professor of Environmental Law and Policy at Yale University. He also served as the Director of the Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy and the Center for Business & Environment at Yale.

Commissioner Esty, who holds a BA from Harvard, MA from Oxford, and a law degree from Yale, is the author or editor of numerous books and articles on environmental policy issues and the relationships between environment and corporate strategy.

Commissioner Esty is a native of Connecticut. His career included serving in a variety of senior positions for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as well as practicing law in Washington, DC, and serving as an advisor on the 2008 Obama Presidential campaign and transition team.

Workshop Schedule & Locations

	Session 1 (9:30-10:30)	Session 2 (10:45-12:00)	Session 3 (2:00-3:15)
Open Space/Conservation Biology	A1. Dining Room	A2. Dining Room	A3. Dining Room
Land Use Law/Legal Updates	B1. Room 2	B2. Room 2	B3. Room 2
Best Management Practices & Procedures	C1. Room 3	C2. Room 3	C3. Room 3
Low Impact Development/Sustainability	D1. Room 4	D2. Room 4	D3. Room 4

■ Session 1

A1. "Invasive Species: Diatoms: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly!"

Professor Diba Khan-Bureau, Three Rivers Community College (TRCC)

Because diatoms are microscopic, many people do not know about their ecology or importance. Diatoms convert light, water and carbon dioxide into carbohydrates during photosynthesis. They are the base of the food chain in many aquatic habitats and make up 40% of earth's primary productivity in regards to CO2 fixation. They are of global ecological significance in the carbon and silicon cycles. They are essential for the cycling of nutrients in surface waters and other water bodies. As important as diatoms are, they can be problematic as well. One species, *Pseudo nitzschia*, is found in marine waters is toxic. A second species found in rivers and streams, *Didymosphenia geminata*, can be a serious nuisance ecologically and economically. The presentation will focus on the ecology and control of this nuisance diatom, *Didymosphenia geminata* fondly called "rock snot."

B1. "Emergency Authorization Procedures for Wetlands Agencies"

Janet Brooks Attorney at Law, LLC

The wetlands act sets out very specific procedure to be followed for applications for regulated activities. But the law is silent when emergencies occur. Has your agency faced immediate septic system failures, road or bridge repair work that can't wait for the agency to receive an application and wait another month for action? This workshop will focus on practical solutions.

Attorney Brooks will offer the various approaches employed by a number of agencies. Come add to the discussion your agency's problems and ways of resolving them.

C1. “The Importance of Maintaining Your BMP”

Lawrence H. Galkowski, PE, Rinker Materials

The use of Best Management Practices (BMP) is considered an essential component of the design and maintenance of systems designed to treat stormwater run-off before it is discharged to the wetlands, brooks, and rivers of our state. The 2004 Connecticut Stormwater Quality Manual, developed by the Connecticut DEEP, has been considered an important guide for designing effective stormwater systems. Of equal importance is the guidance it provides on maintaining more than 25 various types of BMP. This presentation will review important methods and procedures to be considered for correctly designing and maintaining various BMP systems in Connecticut.

D1. “Low Impact Development in Planning & Permitting”

Christopher P. Malik, Connecticut DEEP Watershed Management Program; M. James Riordan, Fuss & O'Neill, Inc.

Low Impact Development (LID)-style best management practices (BMP), such as vegetative filter strips, pocket sand filters, and infiltration systems, have been available for the control of stormwater for several decades. However the LID approach to site design is a relatively recent development and represents a significant change in site planning and stormwater management philosophy. LID emphasizes working within the constraints of landscapes to prevent stormwater generation, while traditional stormwater management emphasizes shunting away stormwater and treating it to the extent practicable. This workshop will review current guidance as an appendix for both the DEEP Erosion and Sediment Control guidelines and the Connecticut Stormwater Quality Manual.

■ Session 2

A2. “Land Trust & Conservation Commission Collaboration: Partnerships for Land Preservation & Stewardship”

Amy B. Paterson, Esq., Executive Director, Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC)

The preservation and stewardship of open space is a challenging task, particularly in this economic climate. In Connecticut, while land trusts and conservation commissions work independently to carry out this responsibility, most accomplishments in conservation are a result of building ongoing, positive relationships amongst landowners, land trusts, governmental entities, and our elected officials. In this workshop we will discuss the importance of collaboration; explore different opportunities for collaboration; evaluate ways to overcome potential roadblocks; hear collaboration success stories; and provide attendees with ample opportunity for questions and discussion.

B2. “Wetlands Law Update and Q&A for 2011”

Janet Brooks Attorney at Law, LLC; David Wrinn, CT Attorney General's Office; Mark Branse, Branse, Willis & Knapp, LLC

This trio of wetlands attorneys has been brought back by popular demand to keep you current with the latest state Supreme Court and Appellate Court cases and legislative amendments to the wetlands act. You'll hear about the August decision of the Supreme Court on whether farm roads are exempt, as well as be brought up to date on the new exemption to the wetlands act and the automatic extended permit length for certain wetlands permits. This work shop will also include a 30-minute question-and-answer session that you have asked that we bring back again each year!

C2. “BMP & Low Impact Development Techniques: What's Working (or Not Working) in Connecticut and What the Current Research is Showing”

Michael Dietz, CT NEMO Program Director, University of Connecticut, Department of Extension, Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR)

This workshop will begin with a very brief introduction to Low Impact Development in general. Then detailed information will be provided on bioretention, green roofs, and pervious pavements. Recent installations of these practices in CT will be discussed, along with advantages/disadvantages of different types of practices. Research results from sites in CT and other parts of the country will also be presented.

D2. “Low Impact Development, A More Sustainable Approach to Creating Workplaces and Homes”

Scott W. Horsley, President, Horsley Witten Group, Inc.

Low-impact development (LID) is an alternative approach to site planning, design and building that minimizes impacts to the land landscape and preserves the natural hydrologic cycle. LID is accomplished as a step process using both better site planning; and incorporation of best management practices (BMP). This approach results in reduced impervious surfaces, smaller lawns and more natural landscaping. Therefore it is commonly less costly to construct, lower maintenance and more attractive, adding to real estate values. Natural features, such as vegetated buffers and view sheds, will also play an integral role in any LID planning exercise. Other LID design techniques include green roofs, rain barrels, rain gardens, grassed swales, stormwater infiltration systems, and alternative landscaping. This workshop will emphasize how, through the use of these techniques, natural drainage pathways are conserved, open space is preserved, and the overall impact from development is significantly reduced.

■ Session 3

A3. “Stalking Foxes and Wandering Cats: Current Trends among Connecticut Mammalian Predator Populations”

Andrew LaBonte, Wildlife Biologist, CT DEEP Wildlife Division

Connecticut’s diverse mammalian predators range in size from the diminutive Least and Short-tailed Shrews and the many species of bats through the little known Short- and Long-tailed Weasels up to our increasing seen Black Bear. While all these animals command interest, it is frequently the wild members of the cat (Felidae) and dog (Canidae) families that we find so captivating. This workshop will describe the differences between Gray and Red Fox species and review the latest information on our elusive population of Bobcat. Current theories on the evolution of the Eastern Coyote population will be presented, along with the amazing story of how a Mountain Lion from South Dakota found his way to Connecticut! This workshop will also provide information to assist municipal commissions and staff in responding to public inquiries and offer suggestions on supporting state and regional efforts to track and study these fascinating species.

B3. “Development of Low Impact Development Regulations with Your Local P&Z”

Attorney Mark K. Branse, Branse, Willis & Knapp, LLC

This workshop will discuss how municipal wetlands agencies can enhance their ability to minimize the environmental impact made by new development in their towns through the adoption of low impact development (LID) regulations in conjunction with their town’s planning & zoning commissions. Other joint wetlands, conservation, and P&Z commission efforts to promote the long-term protection of important habitats within their town will also be discussed.

C3. “Sustainable Site Design”

Aris W. Stalis, former CT & NY ASLA Chapter President, will be substituting for Jane Didona, Didona Associates; Stuart Sachs, PRE/view Landscape Architects; Matthew J. Popp, Environmental Land Solutions, LLC will be substituting for Thomas Tavella, Fuss & O’Neill, Inc.

The mission of landscape architecture has always been to balance the human experience with the health of our natural systems. Landscape architects have been designing sustainable sites for over one hundred years. This panel will explore sustainable site design concepts which inform stormwater management, urban forestry and others areas, and will explore the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) Sustainable Sites Initiative, a new system of standards to guide builders to reduce impacts on the landscape component of their developments. This panel will use modern examples to explore how sustainable design is applicable to site and regional planning programs. The principals of the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) and the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) process will be explored using case studies; stormwater management techniques that not only control runoff but create preferred landscapes benefiting the community. The challenges of urban forestry and the benefits of native plants will be explored.

D3. “Sustainability in Town Planning: Long-term vs. Short-term thinking”

John D. Calandrelli, CT Sierra Club Program Director

What constitutes a “sustainable community?” What is sustainability? The factors that go into a sustainable community and examples of these factors will be discussed in this workshop and Q&A session. If municipal staff and commissioners began to use a definition of sustainability as *meeting our needs while allowing the opportunity for future generations to meet theirs*, could this alter the endless cycle of expanding growth and diminishing open space? What are the environmental and economic factors involved? What would sustainability mean for our parks, forests, farms, wetlands, town centers, jobs, and budgets? Join the discussion and consider a new approach for Connecticut cities and towns.

CACIWC Annual Meeting Minutes November 13, 2010

Mountain Ridge, High Hill Road, Wallingford, CT

Alan Siniscalchi, President and Annual Meeting Chairman, convened the meeting at 9:25 a.m. The annual meeting attendees were welcomed and given a brief review of the conference schedule, location of the workshop rooms, display areas, and site amenities.

Conference attendees were encouraged to complete the annual meeting survey form included in the information packet. Alan noted that information from the survey responses provides important feedback from the association members regarding future workshop topics and education and outreach initiatives.

The Business Meeting convened at 9:30 a.m.

Approval of November 14, 2009 Minutes: Motion made by Rod Parlee, second from the floor, to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2009 Annual Meeting. The motion carried.

Reports:

Alan Siniscalchi noted the annual meeting packet information contains the Treasurer’s Annual Report for FY 2009-2010, the CACIWC Budget for FY 2010-2011, and the President’s Report.

Alan Siniscalchi reviewed key elements of the President’s Report and the goals of CACIWC’s active committees.

Board member Rod Parlee, Tolland County Representative, discussed the development of the Environmental 911 brochure produced by the Conservation Commission Education Committee. CACIWC distributed the brochure to Conservation Commissions this year; additional copies are available upon request.

Alan Siniscalchi acknowledged the effort and assistance of Jeff Mills, of J.M. Communications, in assembling the annual meeting exhibitors attending the conference.

Old Business: no discussion.

New Business: no discussion.

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the Business meeting at 9:33 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen FitzGerald
Secretary, CACIWC



*Treasurer's Annual Report 2010-2011
and Budget FY 2011-2012*

	Actual '10-11	Budget '10-11	Budget '11-12
INCOME			
Membership Dues			
Commission Dues	8,980.00	11,000.00	12,000.00
Individual & Org. Dues	40.00	0.00	1,000.00
Interest Income	33.36	40.00	40.00
Habitat Advert./Sponsorship	5,440.00	6,500.00	7,000.00
CACIWC Publication Sales	325.00	75.00	110.00
Contributions	0.00	1,000.00	1,550.00
Reimbursements	21.73	0.00	0.00
Grant-Income	0.00	0.00	10,000.00
Annual Mtg Receipts	13,810.00	14,000.00	15,000.00
TOTAL	28,650.09	32,615.00	46,700.00
EXPENSES			
Education & Information			
HABITAT - layout	2,055.46	2,000.00	2,100.00
HABITAT - printing	3,408.00	4,000.00	4,500.00
HABITAT - labels	577.76	650.00	650.00
HABITAT - mail service	302.26	600.00	600.00
HABITAT - postage	2,387.03	3,250.00	3,250.00
HABITAT - advertising	3,049.32	2,500.00	2,500.00
WEB SITE admin	520.00	1,000.00	600.00
WEB SITE fees	107.40	150.00	150.00
LIST SERVE - mgt	190.55	500.00	300.00
Workshops	0.00	1,500.00	1,000.00
Organization Support	325.00	400.00	400.00
Board Development	95.00	200.00	200.00
IWC Education & Information	0.00	250.00	250.00
CC Education & Information	411.75	400.00	400.00
Interns (s)	0.00	0.00	0.00
ADMINISTRATION & OPERATION			
Bookeeping Service	0.00	0.00	0.00
Administrative (Other)	18.61	0.00	100.00
Membership Database Mgt	1,093.75	500.00	700.00
Staff / Executive Director	0.00	0.00	10,000.00
Office Rental (DeKoven PO Box)	600.00	600.00	600.00
Office Equip/Furniture	0.00	1,000.00	500.00
Telephone / Fax	496.92	500.00	500.00
Postage / Supplies	56.64	200.00	200.00
Insurance	505.00	500.00	500.00
Auditor/Acct	350.00	250.00	400.00
Fees	50.00	25.00	50.00
Refunds	0.00	0.00	0.00
Legislative Action	0.00	1,000.00	750.00
Annual Meeting Expenses	11,442.21	15,500.00	15,500.00
TOTAL	28,042.66	37,475.00	46,700.00
CLOSING BALANCE	14,424.14		

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Young, Treasurer

President's Report for the 2011 Annual Meeting: Another Year in Perspective

During 2011, CACIWC has maintained efforts to implement the goals of our strategic plan. We have continued to build the foundation for our financial development plan with additional work being completed by our board of directors, headed by fellow executive board members Vice President Charles Dimmick, Secretary Maureen FitzGerald, and Treasurer Pat Young. Other board members completing the second year of their first two year terms include members Mary Ann Chinatti, Laura Magaraci, and Alicia Mozian who joined existing members Ann Beaudin, Marianne Corona, Kimberly Kelly, and Rod Parlee. We were pleased to welcome our new member, Heidi Wallace, who joined the board during 2011. The board thanks all past members for their work on behalf of CACIWC.

While we have endeavored to implement the long-term goals of our strategic plan, the short-term focus of much of the board's energy has been our education and outreach efforts, in particular our **annual meeting and environmental conference**. Organizing a large scale annual conference is a major task for any organization and is a particularly challenging task for a small volunteer board without full-time staff. We are inspired to continue this event each year by the feedback we receive from all of you. We value every comment and suggestion that you provide to us each year as we strive to bring timely and relevant topics and issues to your attention. Many components of our 33rd Annual Meeting & Environmental Conference were developed in response to your suggestions. This event, held on Saturday November 13, 2010, was the ninth day-long conference. A total of 12 workshops were provided within four topic tracks for inland wetlands and conservation commissioners and staff.

CACIWC hosted two keynote speakers during this annual meeting and environmental conference with its historic theme of "Celebrating Four Decades of Environmental Conservation and Habitat Protection." Amey Marrella, Commissioner of the State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, gave an "Introduction and Connecticut Perspective" to this significant environmental anniversary. Stephen Perkins, the Director of EPA New England's Office of Ecosystem Protection, was able to substitute for EPA Regional Administrator H. Curtis "Curt" Spaulding (who was recovering from surgery) and present "The State of the Environment in New England — 40 Years after Earth Day." Numerous display tables provided additional opportunities for learning and networking. This year's conference continues our efforts to extend the range of educational options includ-

ing new workshops, developed in response to requests for new advanced topics for conservation and wetlands commissioners and staff.

CACIWC has also continued its efforts for the **support of commissions and recognition of commissioners and staff**. Two major annual recognition awards were given to deserving recipients during the 2010 annual conference. **Jennifer Allcock, member and chairperson of the Guilford Conservation Commission**, received the 2010 award for **Conservation Commissioner of the Year**. Dr. Allcock was recognized for her extraordinary contributions to the Town of Guilford, having led or been involved in virtually

every significant conservation activity undertaken by the town, including working closely with the Planning and Zoning Commission in the development of the Plan of Conservation and Development, Municipal Coastal Plan, and many others initiatives. She also worked with other environmental advocates to create the town-wide Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment in 2005 and led the commission in the management of the Town's 500 acre Timberlands property. The impact of Jennifer's inspired conservation ethic remains in Guilford even after her relocation to Pennsylvania. **George A. Ziegler, long-term member and chairman of the Salem Inland Wetlands Commission**, was honored with the 2010 **Lifetime Achievement Award**. Mr. Ziegler was recognized for his more than three decades of service to the Town of Salem. He first became a member of the Conservation Commission on January 1980, within a decade of the original Earth Day. He and fellow commissioners took on the additional task of regulating inland wetlands in April 1992, when the Commission expanded to become the Salem Inland Wetlands and Conservation Commission. Through his years of service as chair and member of the expanded commission, Mr. Ziegler proved to be a valuable asset to his town in the protection of its many important natural habitats. His participation in a working group that reviewed the Niantic River Watershed Plan exemplifies his sought-after knowledge and skills that earned him the respect of his fellow commissioners and this special CACIWC award.

The board continues its other efforts to provide **information and outreach support** to commission members and staff through our website, CACIWC.org, and our quarterly publication, *The Habitat*, which are published under the direction of Editor and former President, Tom ODell, and Associate Editor and former Executive Director, Ann

continued next page



President's Report for the 2010 Annual Meeting (continued)

Letendre. Other municipal commission and environmental advocacy efforts were pursued in conjunction with various partner organizations.

The entire board of directors is dedicated to **expanding the educational opportunities for municipal land use commissioners and staff**. One of my first priorities as president was the reactivation of our conservation and inland wetlands education committees during 2008. The Conservation Education Committee, under the direction of Co-Chairs Ann Beaudin and Rod Parlee, developed an environmental toolkit pamphlet that was distributed to Conservation Commissions and is available on our website. Committee members plan to meet throughout 2011 to review topics for educational materials and training programs.

During 2011, we continued a three-year program to focus our activities to the five priorities established in our **Strategic Plan**. This plan was developed in 2008 under the patient guidance and facilitation of the late Allan Williams, to whom we dedicated the 2009 conference. The board is pleased to share progress on these high priority goals, reproduced below, as part of our 34th Annual Meeting & Environmental Conference report:

1. Plan and initiate regional workshops on technical topics relevant to local commissions. The board and the membership had identified education as the most important program on which to focus for the next few years. CACIWC is committed to preparing a series of new workshops that will educate and energize local commissions to carry out their duties with greater skill and effectiveness. Board members have continued to reviewing topics for educational materials and have worked the State of Connecticut, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), and the Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) and others in the review of training needs for inland wetlands commissioners and staff.

2. Evaluate responsibilities and functions of officers, directors, committees and staff, make recommendations for appropriate changes, and implement recommendations. CACIWC is committed to grow and to become a more effective organization to serve you, our municipal partners and members. During 2009, the board began an examination of the duties of volunteers, staff, and committees to increase productivity and promote volunteerism. During 2010-2011, the board review clarified the need for additional committees and staff to improve the efficiency of the organization in the decade to follow.

3. Identify and define educational topics to be addressed throughout the year and provide scientific, technical, legal, and administrative information papers on new or unfolding topics for local commissions. In this era of information explosion, it is incumbent on CACIWC to research scientific, legal, and financial topics to provide up-to-date information, in useable formats, for its member commissions. The board has begun a new initiative to identify a new series of white papers to outline our policies and provide guidance for local commissioners and staff.

4. Expand and enhance CACIWC.org. The organization recognizes the increased importance of the website for communicating with its members and partners, for posting and providing links to research, for providing time-sensitive news, and for conducting organization business. The board is initiating a new review process to improve the design and usability of our website.

5. Prepare and adopt a financial development plan that will ensure the viability of CACIWC for the next 5-10 years, a plan that will utilize a diversity of funding sources to support the successful accomplishment of the organization's goals. All the goals in the Strategic Plan remain dependent on the successful completion of this goal. Under the direction of Vice President Charles Dimmick, the board has continued efforts to document our various fiscal and organizational policies and begun the development of a core application for the pursuit of foundation grants and related funding opportunities.

During 2011, the board was pleased to complete the first three years of efforts toward achieving the five priority goals of our 2008 CACIWC Strategic Plan. We remain committed to continuing efforts that will enable CACIWC to expand its role as a strong and effective statewide organization in support of you, our municipal conservation and wetlands commissioners and staff.

As federal, state, and local fiscal challenges continue, we must maintain our vigilance of the ongoing loss of funding and other threats to important state and local environmental conservation programs. Those of us whom you entrust to lead CACIWC will continue efforts to bring you relevant educational programs while informing you of the latest issues affecting your role as one of Connecticut's most important assets.

Thank you again, and enjoy the 2011 annual meeting and environmental conference!

— Alan J. Siniscalchi, President

CACIWC 2011 Annual Recognition Award Recipients

ANITA GOERIG, vice-chairperson of the Beacon Falls Conservation Commission, is receiving the 2011 “**Conservation Commissioner of the Year**” award. Ms. Goerig, who served on the Conservation Commission, both as its Vice-Chair and Chair of Community Outreach, is being recognized for her many contributions to her town. Anita tirelessly works to support all the Conservation Commission’s activities. As Chair of Community Outreach, she strives to advance the Conservation Commission’s natural resource planning initiatives by educating the stakeholders on the value of these resources and the importance of engaging the community and its leaders of its efforts.

Ms. Goerig works with other advocates to create opportunities to promote habitat conservation and environmental awareness among the residents of the Town of Beacon Falls. During 2011, she worked to expand the annual community forum into a two-day environmental event by coordinating with school officials, securing sponsors, and recruiting an impressive panel of speakers, awards, and other activities. Her almost single-handed efforts to organize and manage this event brought important information on conservation and environmental advocacy to many residents, including the many students who participated in the Discovery Day events scheduled the following day in a local park. CACIWC is pleased award this special honor in recognition of her dedicated efforts on behalf of her town.

THE NORFOLK CONSERVATION COMMISSION is receiving the 2011 “**Conservation Commission of the Year**” award. We all have witnessed the fine work of many commissions since the Connecticut General Assembly passed enabling legislation 50 years ago authorizing the formation of conservation commissions within Connecticut municipalities. Despite this legislative authority and our long-term advocacy, many towns have not created separate inland wetlands and conservation commissions.

In 2005, the Norfolk combined Conservation Commission/ Inland Wetlands Agency established a subcommittee to create a natural resources inventory for Norfolk. The Natural Resources Inventory Subcommittee became the separate Conservation Commission in February 2009. The young commission worked to not only inventory Norfolk’s natural resource, but to work to conserve its pristine habitats through many outreach and educational initiatives.

One major priority is the commission’s efforts to educate the town on invasive species. Their initial efforts included a media-recognized project on Town Hall property to replace large existing barberry and burning bush with native shrubs and flowers donated by the Northwest Conservation District. They have continued their efforts to address many important invasives through well-publicized programs that include free native replacements. Ms. Shelley Harms, who serves as the Conservation Commission Chair, deserves special recognition for her zealous leadership of this inspiring group. CACIWC is very pleased to recognize the many efforts of one of Connecticut’s youngest commissions by selecting it as the recipient of our 2011 Conservation Commission of the Year award.

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