



CT DEP's Four New Major Environmental Themes: Challenges and Opportunities for Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commissions

Editor's Note: Under the leadership of Commissioner Gina McCarthy the Department of Environmental Protection is developing work plans for the environmental themes discussed below. In developing the themes Commissioner McCarthy has convened "constituent" meetings for both the environmental and business communities. The meetings have included many of the DEP's leadership staff. CACIWC has attended the four environmental constituent meetings and the facilitated meeting with environmental and business representatives. CACIWC has been asked to serve on the Landscape Stewardship Steering Committee.

Over the past several months the Department has engaged in an effort to outline the environmental challenges and opportunities facing Connecticut. Led by DEP Commissioner Gina McCarthy, this effort has culminated in the development of four major environmental themes –

- *No Child Left Inside,*
- *Making "Doing the Right Thing" the "Path of Least Resistance,"*
- *I Have Seen the Enemy and It is I*
- *Landscape Stewardship*

The themes will guide the agency as it works to further resource protection efforts and improve the quality of life for residents of Connecticut. Developed with input from DEP staff and external constituents, the four themes will provide the framework for the Department to continue to address the DEP's overarching environmental goals including the restoration and protection of Long Island Sound.

The themes or environmental agenda items for the Department reflect the diverse programmatic responsibilities managed by the DEP, from recreational opportunities to environmental justice. Although separate and distinct, many of the components incorporated into the individual themes tie directly to initiatives that will be pursued under the banner of another theme.

The four themes will be discussed in greater detail in this issue of *The Habitat*. As an introduction to the themes, the following overview has been provided:

No Child Left Inside – This initiative is an outreach, education, and public relations campaign to reach families across Connecticut, in particular those who live in our urban areas, and make them aware of the many recreational opportunities available to them throughout the state. The overarching goal of this campaign is to connect families, in particular children, to the outdoors and have them experience and learn about the natural resources found in Connecticut's 130 state parks and forests.

Making "Doing the Right Thing" the "Path of Least Resistance" – This initiative includes a number of components designed to achieve regulatory compliance and focus

Themes, continued on page 2

INSIDE:	PAGE
DEP Environmental Themes	3
Comprehensive CT Wildlife Strategy	6
CACIWC's 2006 Legislative Agenda	8
DEP Inland Wetlands Training	10
Plainville CC Pesticide-Free Program	11
1000 Friends of Connecticut	12
Milford CC Student Members	14
CACIWC's (05-06) Membership	15

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Themes, continued

on environmental outcomes, in particular, outcomes that can be measured such as wetlands losses or gains. Components to this initiative include a strong enforcement program, enhanced managerial capacity, and environmental justice initiatives.

Landscape Stewardship – This initiative is an effort to coordinate and focus the Department’s programs that influence land development. Through this comprehensive initiative the Department will work to ensure that the agency leads by example when making land management decisions, while being better able to assist municipalities, land trusts, and others making land use decisions.

Pogo – “I have seen the Enemy and It is I” – This is an initiative to bring attention to environmental impacts associated with non-traditional sources of pollution. As part of this initiative, the Department will be working on a range of topics including recycling, climate change, mobile sources such as cars and buses, and consumer choice. One outcome would be to generate greater awareness of concepts such as product stewardship and energy efficiency and how the combination of these efforts further resource protection endeavors.

In the months ahead, the Department will continue to refine these themes. More importantly, the Department will begin implementing components associated with these themes and shape the environmental agenda for Connecticut.

For more information on these themes and the work that is underway in relation to these themes please contact Matthew Fritz at (860) 424-4117 or by email at matt.fritz@po.state.ct.us. 

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DEP's Four Environmental Themes

No Child Left Inside

Think back to your childhood. Perhaps you ran through the field chasing after an elusive butterfly, entered the forest and turned over logs and rocks to discover redback salamanders, walked along the pond's edge as the green frogs leapt into the water to escape your grasp. All these experiences have become rare for many of our children and yet these experiences shape who we are and who we will become.

More than four decades ago Rachel Carson wrote that the experience of nature was necessary for children's physical, cognitive and emotional development. In 2005, Richard Louv writes in his book "Last Child in the Woods, Saving Our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder" that our children today are the first generation to be raised without meaningful contact with the natural world. Stephen R. Kellert (2002) suggests that although there are positive aspects to organized programs and mass communications exposure to the natural world, these are not adequate substitutes for diminished direct encounters with nearby and familiar natural environments.

What has happened? Why aren't children wading in the water, getting stuck in the mud, or understanding why dragonflies are so absolutely amazing? Why don't kids know what a salt marsh smells like or how to build a boat that won't sink?

There are many reasons – we have become fearful of letting our children venture into the outdoors by themselves, more parents are working, and children are "plugged in" to television, CD's and video games. Research indicates that we have to get our children "unplugged" and let them discover nature for themselves.

DEP Commissioner Gina McCarthy, not unlike Rachel Carson and Richard Louv, does realize how important it is to get our kids "unplugged" and back outdoors. Adopting the phrase "No Child Left Inside" as its title and mission the Commissioner has begun a campaign that will reach out to families across Connecticut and make them aware of the many educational and recreational opportunities available in our CT State Parks and Forests. The *No Child Left Inside* initiative will work in partnership with many organizations throughout the state to promote visits to Connecticut's State Parks and Forests for outdoor activities and to build an enthusiasm for continued natural resource based recreation and education.

Children need to have fun in the outdoors. It is important to our children's health. It is important for their cognitive

development. It is important for the development of our next generation of environmental stewards. For more information on DEP's outreach and education programs, contact Diane Joy (203) 734-2513 or diane.joy@po.state.ct.us.

Making "Doing the Right Thing" the "Path of Least Resistance"

Connecticut is subject to continually increasing development pressure, the impacts of which potentially affect the health of wetlands, watercourses and Long Island Sound. The Department of Environmental Protection administers a number of permit authorities to help commercial and private land owners protect water resources by "doing the right thing". These efforts that are aimed at environmental results count for more than merely working to achieve and maintain compliance. In fact, the easier and cheaper it is to get the environmental result, the more likely it will happen and be sustained. The Department of Environmental Protection will focus on achieving environmental results, providing flexibility and certainty in how to come into and maintain compliance, and leveling the playing field by keeping the costs of non-compliance high.

For information on the work plan being developed for this theme please contact Matthew Fritz at (860) 424-4117 or by email at matt.fritz@po.state.ct.us.

Pogo: "I Have Seen the Enemy and It is I"

DEP's "I have seen the Enemy and It is I" initiative acknowledges that the choices we make daily – the cars we buy, how we get to work and school, the products we buy, how we handle and dispose of household waste and electronics, the source of electricity we choose – impact our lives and our planet. Our consumer habits and lifestyles rely heavily on energy derived from fossil fuel which contributes to climate change, as evidenced by increases in global atmospheric temperatures. Through this initiative, the Department is working with all sectors to broaden understanding of the impacts of global climate change and the simple actions we can take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Annual average temperatures related to such emissions are projected to increase 6°-10° F in New England over the next century. The implications of such changes include: sea level rise; more intense storms; wetland loss; increased damage to infrastructure and habitats from storm damage,

DEP, continued on page 4

DEP, continued

flooding, and erosion; expanded vector-borne diseases; and species shifts and losses.

Many individuals, businesses, universities, faith communities and towns in Connecticut have taken action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. What can your town do to address global climate change?

• **PURCHASE CLEAN ENERGY**

The following Connecticut municipalities have shown great leadership by committing to purchase 20% clean energy by 2010: Bethany, Canton, Cheshire, Fairfield, Hamden, Mansfield, Middletown, Milford, New Britain, New Haven, Orange, Portland, Stamford, Trumbull, West Hartford, Westport. In addition, the State of Connecticut has committed to 20% clean energy by 2010 for all state agencies and over 4,500 Connecticut residents have signed on to purchase either 50% or 100% clean energy for their homes.

• **QUALIFY FOR A FREE SOLAR INSTALLATION**

The Connecticut Clean Energy Communities Program provides free solar photovoltaic systems to Connecticut's cities and towns that commit to purchase 20% clean energy by 2010 and 100 local residents and businesses sign up to purchase clean energy. Work on the first solar installation under this program is underway at Middletown High School. Five other towns have also qualified for free solar energy systems. The mayors of West Hartford and New Haven have challenged each other to see which town has the greatest number of clean energy purchasers by earth day.

• **CLEAN UP YOUR FLEET**

Since transportation emissions are responsible for about 40% of the greenhouse gas emissions in Connecticut, cleaner vehicles can make a big impact. Some towns – Windsor, Mansfield — have purchased hybrid-electric vehicles, which significantly reduce emissions and fuel use. These vehicles can be purchased through state contract. In addition, Norwich and New Haven have reduced diesel emissions through the Clean School Bus program.

• **INCREASE RECYCLING AND SOURCE REDUCTION**

The outstanding recycling programs in the following towns have been recognized in the past on DEP's Municipal Recycling Honor Roll: Cornwall, Granby, Litchfield, Manchester, Mansfield, Middletown, New Britain, Norwalk, Portland, Redding, Salisbury, Sharon, Somers, Stonington, and Windsor Locks.

• **DEVELOP A LOCAL CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN**

Eighteen municipalities - Bridgeport, Fairfield, Hamden, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, Plainville, Stamford,

Weston, Windham, Windsor, and the Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency serving Bristol, New Britain, Berlin, Burlington, Plainville, Plymouth, and Southington - have pledged to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and joined Cities for Climate Protection, a program run by the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives. The City of Stamford received a 2005 Climate Champion award from Clean Air Cool Planet for their efforts in energy and climate planning. The city has long been a leader on energy efficiency beginning with the creation of a full-time energy manager position in the mid 1990s. Annual savings for Stamford's energy projects include: 7 million kwh, over \$1.1 million, and greenhouse gas emission reductions of close to 6,000 tons.

• **BENCHMARK AND INCREASE THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF YOUR BUILDINGS**

Thirteen Connecticut towns are performing Energy Star benchmarking to rank and track the energy use of their schools compared with similar buildings nationwide. The Institute for Sustainable Energy at Eastern Connecticut State University has helped, resulting in benchmarking at 120 schools and additional funding for school benchmarking.

• **BUY LOCALLY GROWN FOOD**

Buy food that is grown locally to support Connecticut's farmers and reduce food packaging and transportation emissions. The Farm to Schools Program, run by the CT Department of Agriculture, promotes direct purchase of Connecticut grown food products by school systems. Currently there are over 50 school districts buying from more than 30 local farms.

• **REDUCE FERTILIZER USE**

A portion of nitrogen applied to the soil is subsequently emitted as N₂O, a greenhouse gas. Milford, Cheshire, and Plainville have programs in place to reduce non-farm fertilizer use. Plainville is also developing an organic turf program, which will be piloted on selected municipal fields.

• **PROMOTE "GREEN" BUILDINGS**

Some Connecticut towns have built "greener" buildings and passed resolutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from buildings. Mansfield has adopted a resolution on LEED building standards (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design). Windsor has an energy conservation checklist for developers. For more information, see the Connecticut Green Building Council website.

• **BUY CLIMATE FRIENDLY PRODUCTS**

The Department of Administrative Services has contracts for many energy efficient and environmentally friendly products including: LED (light emitting diode) traffic lights,

DEP, continued on page 5

DEP, continued

hybrid-electric vehicles, computers and appliances, and office furniture. Connecticut towns can piggy-back on state contracts to purchase these products.

All of these actions and many others are included in the CT Climate Change Action Plan 2005. For more information and links to all of the municipal actions listed above, visit Connecticut's climate change web site at www.ctclimatechange.com or contact Lynn Stoddard at the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, 860.424.3236.

Landscape Stewardship


The Connecticut landscape we have inherited is the framework within which environment, economy and community interplay to create our quality of life. As development has progressed, it has become increasingly clear that we must become better stewards of this landscape so that generations to come can enjoy and benefit from it as we have. We need to continue to conserve open space, maintain the biodiversity of our environment, and protect sensitive habitats such as river corridors, ridgetops and coastal resources. We must protect stream flow, efficiently manage water diversions, and prevent wetland losses. And we must do all this in balance with thoughtful and reasoned economic growth.

The Department is attempting to better focus, consolidate and coordinate its many programs and tools in order to ensure, as much as possible, the compatibility of economic growth and the protection of our landscape. There are numerous ways in which departmental programs affect the landscape. They range from operation of State parks and forests and management of wildlife to review of coastal development and brownfields. Add to these programs the landscape conservation efforts underway outside of the Department, including the natural resources inventory and planning of local conservation commissions, the land management role of inland wetlands commissions and the

work being done by various independent non-governmental organizations to identify, protect and preserve notable natural resources throughout the State and there is an tremendous opportunity to work together to maintain our landscapes, provide for economic development and protect the quality of life that residents of Connecticut enjoy.

The Commissioner of DEP, Gina McCarthy, recognizing the enormous value of these diverse efforts, the large potential for overlap between them, and the benefits that might be achieved through improved communication and coordination, created the Landscape Stewardship Initiative to identify opportunities for and cultivate synergy among existing programs. She is committed to having the DEP lead by example by creating a greener agency, providing increased assistance to communities and leveraging and bolstering the good work already being done both within and outside of the Department.

The work plan for the Landscape Stewardship Initiative is currently in development under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner David Leff and it is premature to announce any specifics. Before finalizing the work plan the Commissioner will be appointing a steering committee of local officials, planners, representatives of the building community and other interested parties. The universe of potential and worthy projects is enormous and the Department, with the assistance of the steering committee, needs to quickly identify, review and evaluate them then set priorities for action. The intent of this dynamic program is to bolster the abilities of state and local resource managers to protect both our vital landscapes and the economic well-being of our communities.

For further information or to submit ideas for consideration, please contact Margaret Welch by phone at 860.424.3618, via e-mail at margaret.welch@po.state.ct.us or by postal service at Landscape Stewardship Coordinator, DEP-Planning and Program Development, 79 Elm Street, Hartford, CT 06106-5127. 

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Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS) for Connecticut

The DEP Wildlife Division has developed a Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS) for Connecticut. This will allow the Department and its partners, including conservation commissions, to integrate the management of natural resources, build valuable partnerships, and support regional and national efforts to secure long-term funding for wildlife conservation.

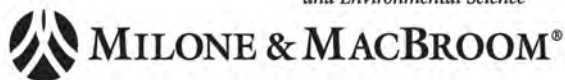
Connecticut's strategy identifies species of greatest conservation need and their affiliated habitats. The strategy also identifies the priority research needs and conservation actions needed to address problems facing these species and habitats.

Goals of Connecticut's CWCS

The intent of the CWCS is to provide guidance and vision for wildlife conservation in Connecticut. Accordingly, the strategy:

1. Addresses the broad array of all fish, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrate species.
2. Uses available funding to address the species in greatest need of conservation and their habitats.
3. Identifies actions needed to conserve species diversity and keep common species common.
4. Builds upon past efforts to conserve all species of wildlife.
5. Encourages the creation of partnerships with conservation organizations at local, state and regional levels to enhance opportunities for implementation of actions to conserve wildlife.

To read more about CT's CWCS, go to: <http://dep.state.ct.us/burnatr/wildlife/geninfo/fedaid/cwcs/home.htm>. 



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The purpose of the Wetlands & Watersheds Article Series is to expand the Center for Watershed Protection's (CWP) current watershed protection guidance, tools, and resources to provide guidance to local communities on how to integrate wetlands into larger watershed protection efforts. The audience for the articles includes local natural resources managers and land planners, including Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commissions, who can benefit from guidance on local tools for protecting wetlands. See the new CWP article series at: <http://www.cwp.org/wetlands/articles.htm>.



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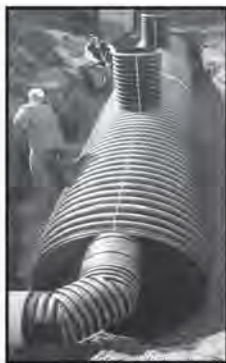
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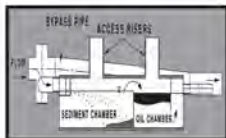
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CACIWC's 2006 Legislative Agenda

CACIWC's mission statement includes, "...to promote the legislative mandate of Connecticut Conservation Commissions and Inland Wetland Commissions/Agencies, and to foster environmental quality through education, and through conservation and protection of wetlands and other natural resources." Providing advice and appropriate action on legislation and governmental affairs is a means of accomplishing this goal.

Our legislative and governmental activities have primarily focused on: 1) providing testimony at legislative public hearings; 2) contributing to grass roots advocacy by providing members with timely information and by encouraging members to work with their legislators; and 3) advocating with and supporting organizations that have similar environmental concerns.

The 2006 legislative agenda is summarized below. CACIWC's efforts in 2006 will concentrate on legislation that best supports Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commission responsibilities. Priority legislation is marked with **. Efforts on other legislation will be handled based on available volunteer time. Updates on all legislation noted below will be made available, as appropriate, on CACIWC.org and CACIWC Listserv.

OPEN SPACE and FARM LAND FUNDING

Connecticut needs to sustain the progress it has made over the past several years in preserving the natural lands that protect water quality, wildlife and scenic character. In 1998 Connecticut set a goal of conserving 21% of the state's land as open space. To achieve that goal we need to sustain our efforts while natural lands are still available.

****Bonding:** *CACIWC will support a five-year State initiative of \$45 million in bonding each year:*

Open Space Matching Grants Program: \$15 million annually. As of 11/05 this program had protected 17,136 acres.

Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Fund: \$20 million annually. As of 11/05, the RNHT fund acquired 18,344 acres.

Farmland Preservation - PDR: \$10 million annually. As of 12/05 the PDR program had protected 220 farms (30,640 acres).

****Community Investment Act (Public Act No. 05-228):** This Act provides a new sustainable source of funding for the Open Space Matching Grants and for Farmland protection, an essential complement to bond funding for these programs. An estimated \$6.5 million will be available for each of these programs annually. *CACIWC will support leveraging these funds to address immediate needs and will watch legislation to ensure the revenue generated by the \$30.00 real estate document fee stays intact.*

****Community Preservation Act (A real estate conveyance tax):** Connecticut's Towns must be given the option of choosing additional funding sources for open space preservation and other essential community needs. Enabling municipalities to impose a small increase in the real estate conveyance tax would be an appropriate and effective means of protecting resources most impacted by real estate activity. Many towns will not be able to provide the 40-50% match required for the open space matching grant program. *CACIWC will support an enabling real estate conveyance tax that towns could use to provide matching funds for other open space funding programs.*

****State Surplus Funds:** State surplus funds should be used to enable the state to address urgent and immediate open space and farm land preservation needs. With the continual increase in the cost of land, funds must be made available now if we are going to achieve Connecticut's goal of conserving 21%. *CACIWC will support legislation that will provide funds from the fiscal year 2006 budget surplus for open space and farm land preservation.*

OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT

****Open Space Enforcement:** Evidence for encroachment of public and preserved land is easy to document but there is a lack of legal recourse available to defend against them. A recent Supreme Court Case, a survey by the Farmington Land Trust, and a special Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) report recommends legislation to strengthen enforcement of encroachment on state, municipal and private land. *CACIWC will support legislation that strengthens enforcement of encroachment on state, municipal and private lands.* That is, bills that would increase penalties for illegally cutting trees, or installing lawns, driveways, dumps, or swimming pools on municipal, land trust or state land.

****ATVs:** CACIWC continues to support the need for legislation requiring that all ATVs must be registered, all must bear identification markers, and that registration fees should be used to purchase and develop ATV facilities. *CACIWC will*

oppose legislation that will allow ATVs on State Forest land. CEQ has indicated they will study and report on the ATV problem in 2006. It is expected that legislation for enforcing ATV encroachment will be proposed in 2007.

Invasive Plants: One of the greatest threats to municipal and land trust open space is invasive plants. The Invasive Plants Council will sponsor legislation to create new funding sources to establish an Invasive Plant Control Program which would be able to respond to new invasions, and educate residents. The goal is to raise \$300,000 for a DEP rapid response and education program. Two revenue sources are being proposed: (1) a \$2.00 surcharge for boat registrations; (2) a \$25.00 fee for commercial operations that sell nursery stock. *CACIWC supports legislation submitted by the Invasive Plants Council.*

WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES

Preservation of Rivers and Streams. Diverting water from rivers and streams has increased, threatening the ecological stability of the watercourse. Raised Bill No. 5277 (Environment Committee) will allow the Commissioner of Environmental Protection to investigate, review, issue orders, and hold hearings regarding registered water diversions and permits for such diversions. *CACIWC supports legislation such as RB 5277 that will give the CT DEP management options for water diversion from rivers and streams.*

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

Endangered Lands Coalition (ELC) *As a coalition member CACIWC supports the following legislation proposed by ELC:*

(1) A bill requiring that municipal land use commissions notify the Department of Public Health of development proposals within public drinking water watersheds. (2) A bill protecting legislation that gives tax breaks to water companies that donate land for open space. Last year legislation was introduced which would effectively weaken the intent of the tax break.

****Clean Water Fund Support:** Increase the Clean Water Fund bond allocation. Substantial cuts in funding over the last four years has halted clean water projects such as eliminating combined sewers and upgrading municipal sewers, thus threatening restoration of major rivers and Long Island Sound. Proposed Bill No. 5348, An Act Concerning the Clean Water Fund, requests that 70 million dollars be deposited into the Clean Water Fund for the purpose of funding grants pursuant to the Clean Water Fund provisions. *CACIWC supports legislation that will increase the Clean Water Fund bond allocation, including proposed bill No. 5348.*

Pesticides: Use of pesticides on lawns, school athletic fields and town parks contributes to non-point source pollution and threatens public health. *CACIWC supports legislation that reduces pesticide use.*


OTHER IMPORTANT ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION

****An Act Concerning Environmental Review for State Land Transfers:** The CEPA Working Group, of which CACIWC is a member, is promoting legislation to change certain parts of the Connecticut Environmental Protection Act (CEPA) to require environmental review of state land transfers. Every year state land is transferred to municipalities or other entities without appropriate environmental review. Once the land is transferred, environmental review is at the discretion of the party receiving the land. The State would like to ensure that there is an environmental review to guide the proposed transfer and land use following transfer. *CACIWC will support legislation that requires environmental review prior to transfer.*

****An Act Expanding the Beverage Container Redemption Provisions to Water Bottles:** 301,000,000 containers of non-carbonated beverages were sold in Connecticut in 2002. Of this total, 215,000,000 containers were made of PET plastic, the same type of plastic bottles already recycled using the redemption system. *CACIWC will support expansion of redemption fees for beverage containers to include PET plastic bottles* to help keep municipal and state parks, commuter parking lots, and town and state open space trails litter free.

****DEP Operational Funding:** The DEP's scope of responsibility covers all facets of environmental protection and management and reaches every Connecticut citizen on a daily basis. Yet, despite its effectiveness, the DEP continues to suffer from staffing restrictions and budget shortages. Program support comes mainly—approximately 70%—from decreasing federal funds. CACIWC is primarily concerned about inadequate staffing in the Bureaus of Water Management, Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation. *CACIWC will support legislation that will increase staffing for: assisting Municipal Inland Wetlands Commissions in carrying out their responsibilities (Water Management); managing state forests (Natural Resources); and managing and supervising state parks (Outdoor Recreation).* 🍀

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DEP 2006 Municipal Inland Wetland Commissioners Training Program

(See page 16 for training schedule.)


The 2006 Municipal Inland Wetland Commissioners Training Program information is available online: <http://www.continuingstudies.uconn.edu/professional/dep/wetlands.html>

Segment I

This segment is designed for new agency members and staff, or for those agency members seeking a refresher of the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Act. Participants will learn the fundamentals of wetland and watercourse protection in Connecticut. Topics to be presented include the history of wetland protection in Connecticut, the statutory basis for regulating wetlands and watercourses in Connecticut, the role of municipal inland wetland agencies, the functions and values of wetlands and watercourses, and a basic lesson in site plan review. Time permitting, the workshop will also provide an overview of other regulatory programs pertaining to wetlands and watercourses.

Segment II

This segment is recommended for all agency members and staff. The workshop will begin with representatives from the Office of the Attorney General providing a review of pending court cases; as well as a discussion of any current legislative issues, including amendments regarding wildlife and wetland regulation. The workshop will continue with a discussion of topical legal issues.

If you have program content questions, please contact Darcy Winther, Inland Water Resources Division, Bureau of Water Management, DEP, at (860) 424-3063 or darcy.winther@po.state.ct.us 



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Conservation Commission Leads Plainville's Pesticide Free Program


Plainville's Pesticide Free initiative, led by Conservation Commission member Jason Rupaka, is based on evidence from sources, including the Center for Disease Control, that lawn-care pesticide use is linked to an increased risk of certain cancers and birth defects in humans and deformities or death in animals.


Significant progress has been made toward the goal to have all properties in Plainville become pesticide-free. In July 2005, the Plainville Town Council adopted a non-binding resolution that encourages residents and businesses to refrain from using pesticides and synthetic fertilizers on lawns and gardens. Thereafter, what is known as the "Freedom Lawn Initiative" was started and homeowners chose to adopt environmentally safer lawn care practices by installing small white lawn signs, proclaiming their yards a "Pesticide Free Zone." Similar "Freedom Lawn" programs have been started in Milford and Cheshire.

In February 2006 the Town Council approved a proposal to test the use of natural and organic fertilizers and materials on the 37-acre Paderewski Park with the goal of making the park pesticide- and chemical fertilizer-free, beginning this spring.

For more information on Plainville's Pesticide Free program contact Jason Rupaka, Conservation Commission, email: jhrupaka1@sbcglobal.net. Or visit Jason's web site: www.rupaka.com. 

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1000 Friends of Connecticut

Connecticut has a new smart growth organization. 1000 Friends of Connecticut promotes reasonable, sustainable growth in the state. The organization was created to advance the smart growth education and advocacy work begun by All Aboard!, the CenterEdge Coalition, the Regional Institute for the 21st Century and others. It hired its first staff in the fall and, by partnering with organizations like CACIWC and its member towns, aims to stop sprawling development and its negative impacts on Connecticut.

Connecticut's population isn't growing fast. There's no region in the state that's attracting people at the rate of Las Vegas or Raleigh-Durham. In fact, Connecticut is subject to the *European disease*. Our population is growing older and, if it weren't for immigration, it would be getting smaller. We're not attracting new businesses and we're not attracting young families. Business growth has been flat for 15 years, according to a recent report of the Connecticut Economic Resource Center. And census data show 18- to 30-year-olds are leaving the state. But, still, the state is growing.

In the last 30 years, our cities have gotten smaller and poorer as people and jobs moved out to greener places with lower crime rates and better schools.

At the same time, we've consumed land at 850 times the rate population has grown. We're eating up fields and forests. We're losing farmland faster than any other state in the country. We're hollowing out historic downtowns to build retail strips with miles of impervious parking lots. The water briskly running off the pavement scours our streams, pollutes our rivers and fails to replenish the water table.

In recent years, many of our towns passed zoning requiring minimum one- or two-acre lots. We thought it would slow development and leave more open space. Unfortunately, it hasn't worked that way. Instead, we have a disruption every one or two acres. The lawns, and driveways and increased edge areas are a boon for turkeys, deer, sparrows and field mice. But for salamanders, bob cats and myriad other species, the increased heat in the summer, greater cold in the winter, and lower humidity all year round, present too much stress. And the high cost of land means fewer people can afford a home in our towns. In the past five years,

Friends, continued on page 13



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housing prices in the state have increased nearly 10 times the rise in wages.

All those widely spaced houses mean we need more miles of road and lose more hours in traffic. The time of the average Connecticut commute increased 16 percent between 1990 and 2000. They also mean our towns start to look alike. Canton begins to look like Orange and Waterford begins to look like East Hartford and it all starts to run together and look like Atlanta.


Most of our towns also instituted single-use zoning. We built houses with houses, businesses with businesses, and retail with retail. That zoning pattern created some beautiful residential areas and meant that we wouldn't have farm or factory sounds or smells right next door. It also meant we can't walk to the market. We have to drive our elderly parents to the doctor, our kids to school and ourselves to work, the store, the dry cleaner, and everywhere else.

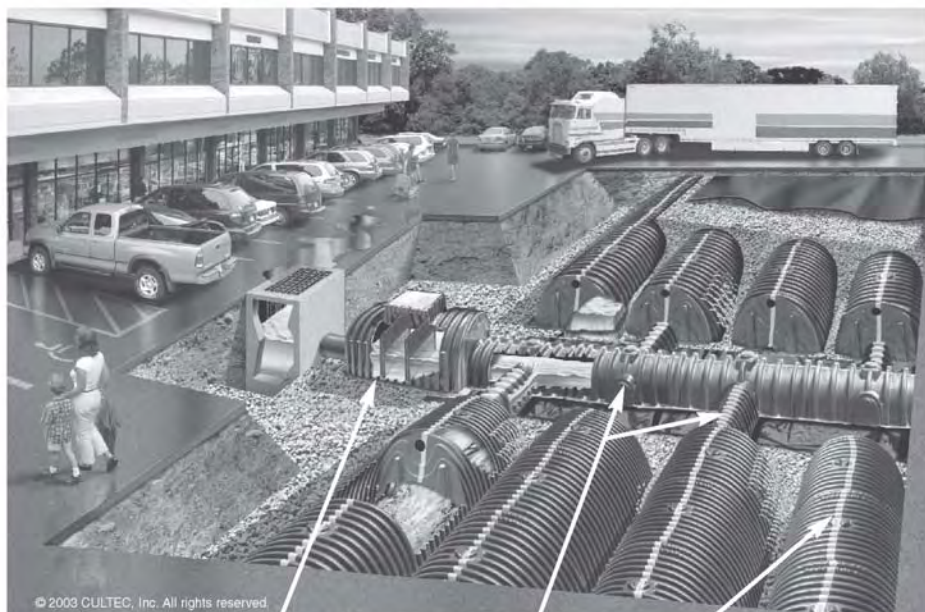
For the most part, the policies we've instituted over time to govern growth and development, have been well intentioned. And, for many people, have produced good results. But for many Connecticut residents, they've created too limited a choice in where to live and how to get from place to place.

1000 Friends of Connecticut was created to promote greater choice in housing and neighborhood type.

We believe there should be more safe neighborhoods where stores, schools and shops are all within walking distance of homes. There should be sidewalks, cross-walks, bike paths, buses, trains and greater transportation options. There should be parks, beaches, tracts of open land, and working farms. We should have jobs in our towns and cities, good schools and housing we can afford.

Around the country, individuals and organizations have harnessed the power of joining together to shape their cities and towns. They cooperate with their state, regional and local government officials to coordinate transportation and land use. They come together to protect natural, historic and farmland resources. They work in coalitions to clean up soil, air and water. Clearly, we can't turn around 70 years of development in a day. But working in coalition with 1000 Friends of Connecticut, we can begin today to shape the next 70 years.

For more details and to join 1000 Friends of Connecticut, please see our webpage at www.1000friends-ct.org or call (860)523-0003. 



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Milford Conservation Commission Welcomes Student Members!

In 2004 the Milford Conservation Commission began accepting High School students as advisory members, in accordance with commission bylaws. The program introduces the students to conservation issues at the municipal level and how city government works, or doesn't work to address those issues. The students provide the commission with different perspectives on addressing the conservation issues and are eager to carry out their responsibilities as advisors. One emerging problem is that one year is not long enough for student advisors to see the final results of many of the applications and decisions they have worked on.

The bylaws that allow student members and the Teacher Recommendation form are shown below. For copies of the student application and additional information please contact the Chairman, Milford Conservation Commission, Town Hall, 70 West River Street, Milford CT 06480. 

SAMPLE BYLAWS FOR STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

Section 4, CC Membership

4.1 The CC is comprised of nine members, each serving a three year term, on a staggered basis, plus three advisory members, each serving a one year term, for a total of twelve members. The three one year term advisory members shall be high school students nominated by the principals, or his or her designee, from Milford's public high schools.

4.2 All three year membership terms shall start on January 1st and run through December 31st of their final year. The three one year membership terms shall start on October 1st and run through September 30th of the next year.

4.3 The following guide-lines are suggested for high school student nominates;

- 4.3.1 An academic standing (GPA) of B or better.
- 4.3.2 A written essay on why they would like to be on the CC with possibly some biographical information.
- 4.3.3 A recommendation from two teachers, one being a science teacher. (*see below format*)
- 4.3.4 Have a good attendance record.
- 4.3.5 Be a matriculated eleventh year high school student.
- 4.4 All members are appointed by the Mayor.

TEACHER RECOMMENDATION FORM

The student named below is applying for a one year membership on the **Milford Conservation Commission**. The Commission is looking for an interested, responsible, enthusiastic, and articulate high school junior who will attend monthly meetings and participate in the Commission's work and debate regarding land use in Milford. Your recommendation should speak to these qualifications and provide evidence that this student would be a good candidate for the position. Thank you for your time. The student will attach this recommendation to his/her application or you may leave it in the mailbox of the science department chair at your school.

Application Date _____ Student Name _____

SAVE THE DATE

Wildlife Conservation Workshop - hosted by the University of Connecticut

"Conserving Connecticut's Wildlife - the Future is Now."

May 2, 2006 from 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Topics include threats, challenges and opportunities for conserving Connecticut's wildlife presented by leading researchers of birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish and invertebrates.

Watch for the announcement at <http://www.wildlife.uconn.edu/>

WE APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT!

As of Jan 30, 2006, the following Town commissions have supported CACIWC through membership dues for the 2005-2006 fiscal year (July1, 2005 – June 30, 2006). THANK YOU! If you do not see your Commission on the list, please encourage your commission to join. Member dues are listed on page 2, or call (860)399-1807 for a membership form. If we are in error we apologize and would appreciate knowing. Member Commissions receive a copy of The Habitat for each commissioner if dues have been paid.

CC = Conservation Commission
 IW = Inland Wetlands Commission
 CC/IW = Combined Commission
 Z/IW = Zoning/Inland Wetlands Commission
 (sus) = sustaining level of support

ASHFORD	CC+IW	GRANBY	IW	POMFRET	IW
BETHANY	CC	GRISWOLD	CC+IW	POMFRET	CC
BETHANY	IW	GROTON	CC	PORTLAND	IW
BETHEL	CC+IW	GROTON	IW	PORTLAND	CC
BOLTON	IW	GUILFORD	CC	PROSPECT	IW
BOLTON	CC	HADDAM	IW	PROSPECT	CC
BOZRAH	CC+IW	HAMDEN	IW	REDDING	CC+IW
BRANFORD	CC	HAMDEN	CC	SALISBURY	CC+IW
BRANFORD	IW	HARTLAND	IW	SCOTLAND	CC+IW
BRISTOL	CC+IW	HARWINTON	IW	SEYMOUR	IW (SUS)
BROOKLYN	CC	KENT	CC	SHARON	IW (SUS)
BROOKLYN	IW	KENT	IW	SHERMAN	IW
BURLINGTON	CC+IW	KILLINGWORTH	IW	SHERMAN	CC
CANAAN	CC+IW	KILLINGWORTH	CC	SIMSBURY	CC+IW
CANTERBURY	CC+IW	LEBANON	IW	SOMERS	CC+IW
CANTON	IW (SUS)	LEDYARD	CC	SOUTHBURY	IW
CHAPLIN	IW	LITCHFIELD	IW	SOUTHINGTON	CC+IW
CHAPLIN	CC	LYME	CC+IW	SPRAGUE	CC+IW
CHESHIRE	IW	MADISON	IW	STAFFORD	CC
CHESHIRE	CC	MANCHESTER	CC	STERLING	IW
CHESTER	CC	MANCHESTER	Z+IW	STONINGTON	CC (SUS)
CLINTON	CC+IW	MANSFIELD	IW	STONINGTON	IW
COLCHESTER	CC+IW	MANSFIELD	CC	THOMASTON	CC+IW
CORNWALL	IW	MARLBOROUGH	CC+IW	TORRINGTON	CC+IW (SUS)
COVENTRY	CC	MIDDLEBURY	CC	WALLINGFORD	CC
COVENTRY	IW	MIDDLEFIELD	IW (SUS)	WALLINGFORD	IW
CROMWELL	CC (SUS)	MIDDLETOWN	IW	WARREN	CC+IW
CROMWELL	IW (SUS)	MIDDLETOWN	CC	WASHINGTON	IW (SUS)
DARIEN	CC+IW (SUS)	MILFORD	IW	WASHINGTON	CC (SUS)
DERBY	CC+IW	MILFORD	CC	WATERFORD	CC
EAST HADDAM	CC	NEW CANAAN	CC (SUS)	WATERTOWN	CC+IW
EAST HADDAM	IW	NEW FAIRFIELD	CC+IW (SUS)	WEST HARTFORD	CC
EAST LYME	CC+IW (SUS)	NEW HARTFORD	IW	WEST HARTFORD	IW
EAST WINDSOR	CC+IW (SUS)	NEW LONDON	CC+IW	WESTON	CC+IW
EASTFORD	CC	NEW MILFORD	CC	WESTPORT	CC+IW (SUS)
EASTFORD	IW	NEWINGTON	CC+IW	WILLINGTON	CC
EASTON	CC+IW	NORFOLK	CC+IW	WILLINGTON	IW
ELLINGTON	IW	NORTH HAVEN	IW	WILTON	IW
ELLINGTON	CC	NORWALK	CC+IW (SUS)	WILTON	CC
ENFIELD	CC (SUS)	OLD SAYBROOK	IW (SUS)	WINCHESTER	IW (SUS)
ENFIELD	IW (SUS)	OLD SAYBROOK	CC (SUS)	WINDSOR	CC
ESSEX	IW	ORANGE	IW	WINDSOR	IW
FAIRFIELD	CC+IW	ORANGE	CC	WINDSOR LOCKS	CC
FARMINGTON	CC	OXFORD	CC+IW	WINDSOR LOCKS	IW
FARMINGTON	IW	PLAINVILLE	CC	WOODSTOCK	CC
GLASTONBURY	CC+IW (SUS)	PLAINVILLE	IW		
GOSHEN	IW	PLYMOUTH	CC+IW		



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DEP 2006 Municipal Inland Wetlands Commissioners Training Program

Segment I (March/April)

Connecticut's Inland Wetlands & Watercourses: An Introduction to Principles and Practices

Friday, **March 24**, Burlington - all day Monday, **March 27**, and Wednesday, **March 29**, Derby - two evenings

Saturday, **April 1**, Storrs - all day Tuesday, **April 4**, and Thursday, **April 6**, Old Lyme - two evenings

Segment II (May/June)

Connecticut's Inland Wetlands & Watercourses: Legal Issues, Resource Management and Related Disciplines

Wednesday, **May 24**, Derby - all day

Wednesday, **May 31**, Old Lyme - all day

Tuesday, **June 6**, and Thursday, **June 8**, Hartford - two evenings

Saturday, **June 10**, Storrs - all day

Possible fifth date (if above registrations fill) on Saturday, **June 17**, Burlington - all day

For more detail about the training program content, see inside page 10. 

Winter 2006

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