



**CORRECTED**

**City of Keene, New Hampshire**

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

**Tuesday, January 18, 2022**

**4:30 PM**

**City Council Chambers**

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**Commission Members**

Alexander Von Plinsky, IV, Chair  
Eloise Clark, Vice Chair  
Kenneth Bergman  
Art Walker  
Andrew Madison

Councilor Robert Williams  
Brian Reilly, Alternate  
Thomas P. Haynes, Alternate  
Steven Bill, Alternate  
John Therriault, Alternate

1. Call to Order
2. Vote for Chair and Vice Chair 2022
3. Approval of Meeting Minutes – December 20, 2021
4. Applications:
5. Informational
  - a. Subcommittee reports
    - Outreach Subcommittee
    - Arm Fund Subcommittee-Non Public Session
    - Greater Goose Pond Forest Stewardship
  - b. Invasive Species
6. Discussion Items
  - a. Conservation Commission speaking events
  - b. Multiyear Pollinator Census results for Cheshire County
  - c. Beaver Brook to Cemetery
  - d. 2022 Healthy Home Habitats' Monadnock Sustainable Backyard Workshop Series
7. New or Other Business
  - a. 2021 ARLAC Annual Report
8. Adjournment – Next meeting date **Tuesday, February 22, 2022**

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1 City of Keene  
2 New Hampshire

3  
4  
5 CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
6 MEETING MINUTES  
7

Monday, December 20, 2021

4:30 PM

Council Chambers,  
City Hall

**Members Present:**

Alexander Von Plinsky, IV, Chair  
Eloise Clark, Vice Chair  
Councilor Robert Williams  
Art Walker  
Thomas Haynes, Alternate

**Staff Present:**

Corinne Marcou, Administrative Assistant  
Mari Brunner, Senior Planner  
Don Lussier, City Engineer  
Andy Bohannon, Director of Parks,  
Recreation & Facilities

**Members Not Present:**

Councilor Andrew Madison  
Ken Bergman  
Brian Reilly, Alternate  
Steven Bill, Alternate  
John Therriault, Alternate

8  
9  
10 1) **Call to Order**

11  
12 Chair Von Plinsky called the meeting to order at 4:33 PM.

13  
14 2) **Approval of Meeting Minutes – November 15, 2021**

15  
16 Correction: line 323, change “each to pull” to “easy to pull.”

17  
18 A motion by Vice Chair Clark to adopt the November 15, 2021 minutes as amended was duly  
19 seconded by Mr. Walker and the motion passed unanimously.

20  
21 3) **Application: Eversource – North Keene Substation, 115 Park Ave.**

22  
23 Chair Von Plinsky welcomed Jeremy Belanger, Senior Engineer for TFMoran, which is the  
24 consulting firm for the Eversource North Keene Substation project. This is a request for a  
25 Conditional Use Permit through the Planning Board for disturbance to the Surface Water  
26 Protection District (SWPD) buffer.

27  
28 Mr. Belanger provided background on the project. This project is for lot 233-2, located at 115  
29 Park Avenue, with Wheelock Park to the south and NH RT-12 to the north. The parcel itself is

30 15.3 acres and is Zoned as Conservation. The SWPD constitutes the western portion of the lot  
31 due to the location of Tenant Swamp, which is partially located on the west side of the property.  
32 This request is for disturbances equating to 16,050 square feet to the City's 75-foot SWPD buffer  
33 for reconstruction of a gravel access driveway. There are two components of the gravel driveway  
34 that would be placed. The first portion is located within the property and the second portion is  
35 within the RT-12 right-of-way (ROW). NH Department of Transportation (DOT) does not prefer  
36 a permanent access off RT-12 for things such as standard maintenance, operation, and access to  
37 the substation, which would continue to be through the Wheelock Park driveway around the  
38 baseball field with gated access that comes into the south side of the site.

39  
40 Mr. Belanger continued explaining why the driveway and impacts are needed. As well as having  
41 the substation on this parcel, there is an existing utility corridor that crosses RT-12 and bisects  
42 the site. He said there had been ongoing line work there recently and there is a temporary gravel  
43 driveway from RT-12 to the line for oversized vehicles and equipment, preventing large  
44 construction vehicles from traversing Wheelock Park and the substation site to access the  
45 corridor. He said that this was the second temporary permit that DOT granted, the first was for  
46 the construction of the substation in 2014 and now there is one in place for the D-108 line  
47 construction. As a part of the substation, electrical improvements were needed that would require  
48 oversized equipment that would struggle to use Wheelock Park. Because the proposed driveway  
49 is located in the same general location as a prior gravel driveway when the substation was  
50 constructed, TFMoran felt it was a better design to create this driveway to permanent standard  
51 and to implement and install stormwater management areas to treat driveway runoff. The  
52 temporary driveway within the ROW would be removed upon completion of these improvements  
53 so that in the future, only this temporary access must be replaced for other work. Mr. Belanger  
54 concluded mentioning that Staff suggested using a conservation seed mix instead of a typical  
55 lawn mix, which TFMoran supported; they included specifications for the NE Conservation  
56 Wildlife Mix from NE Wetland Plants, Inc. as a suggestion.

57  
58 Vice Chair Clark asked if they were installing a permanent driveway except for the short portion  
59 under RT-12. Mr. Belanger replied in the affirmative, stating that NH DOT does not allow  
60 permanent driveways in their controlled access ROWs with federal jurisdiction, which they  
61 equate with putting a driveway onto a highway. Therefore, a temporary permit was granted.

62  
63 The Chairman said he was trying to understand the need for a permanent driveway, wondering  
64 why the whole thing could not be temporary. Mr. Belanger said that would make sense for a  
65 first-time occurrence, but this was the third time the parcel had come forward because Wheelock  
66 Park could be used for certain equipment. There are different standards for temporary and  
67 permanent designs, with the latter having to be built to DOT specifications with a compacted  
68 gravel surface that drains toward the proposed stormwater management area outside the buffer.  
69 Instead of re-disturbing these areas each time and creating more sediment and erosion, the idea  
70 was a permanent structure with surface water management and treatment. There is already gravel  
71 spanning almost the entire length within the buffer with no real grading or treatment. Therefore,  
72 they designed this to pitch stormwater away from the wetlands and provide treatment per an

73 Alteration of Terrain permit and City standards. Thus, because additional work is anticipated in  
74 this area of the State, there would not be increased impacts each time new work is needed. The  
75 proposed work and impacts are fully within the substation yard constructed in 2014, there is no  
76 proposed clearing of trees because all work is within the existing utility ROW, which per  
77 National Electric Safety Commission standards does not allow overhead trees in these areas.

78  
79 Chair Von Plinsky visited the site and asked how the road surface would be different from the  
80 temporary to permanent areas, besides changes like grading. Mr. Belanger replied that currently  
81 at the entrance, it is a riprap type stone, followed by a compacted sandy soil natural material that  
82 is prone to erosion, and there is some gravel in the temporary driveway area. The elevation will  
83 match the existing grade but instead of everything flattened, they pitched it toward the  
84 stormwater management area. They would be replacing a combination of the gravel and  
85 compacted sand with compacted gravel that meets DOT standards. The Chairman continued  
86 asking whether the cut would balance the fill on this site. Mr. Belanger said the whole site was  
87 designed to be pretty even on cut/fill, with only a few hundred cubic yards of material that would  
88 be moved around from the excavation within the substation yard, but all that material is  
89 consistent and can be reused onsite. He showed the reconfiguration of the existing stormwater  
90 management system, which is a depressed area adjacent to the substation that would be filled  
91 from cuts elsewhere on site. The Chairman was glad to hear that fill would not be brought in that  
92 could transport invasive species. Mr. Belanger noted that the contractor is responsible for  
93 managing invasive species per State Standard 3800.

94  
95 Vice Chair Clark asked for the definition of sediment fore bays. Mr. Belanger replied that a  
96 sediment fore bay is a pretreatment technique designed per Alteration of Terrain standards and  
97 the University of NH Stormwater Management Manual. These three fore bays on site would be  
98 two-foot-deep holes that the stormwater is directed into via a concentrated flow, where the water  
99 sits, and sediment settles out before dispersing the clean water into the main cell of the  
100 stormwater management area. Forebays are cleaned twice annually per the Alteration of Terrain  
101 Permit; the permitholder, Eversource, must inspect best management practices biannually per an  
102 Inspection and Maintenance manual. TFMoran has a very good working relationship with  
103 Eversource, and TFMoran inspectors visit the site after snowmelt in the spring and leaf drop in  
104 the fall to inspect sediment in forebays and catch basins, checking for erosion and any other  
105 issues under the Alteration of Terrain permit, which continues in perpetuity.

106  
107 Vice Chair Clark also asked Mr. Belanger to point out on the plans a 12–20-foot-high berm and  
108 its purpose. Mr. Belanger referred to the existing elevational change around the substation and  
109 showed where the existing berm is on the west side, which provides nice vegetation and a  
110 topographical barrier between the site and Tenant Swamp.

111  
112 Vice Chair Clark continued stating her concern that the Zoning Board of Adjustment granted a  
113 Variance for 35-foot building height with more than 20% impervious surface. She asked where  
114 the impervious surface would be created. Mr. Belanger replied that the impervious surface is for  
115 the gravel driveway. He said the substation itself is 20% impervious of the lot and the ZBA

116 granted this permanent portion of the driveway to be placed. While the gravel is compacted, it is  
117 still counted as impervious to be conservative.

118  
119 The Chairman was content that Mr. Belanger addressed the Conservation Commission's typical  
120 concern on native plantings.

121  
122 Mr. Walker moved to not intervene on this Eversource project, which Councilor Williams  
123 seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

124

125 **4) Informational**

126 **A) Subcommittee Reports**

127 **i) *Outreach Subcommittee***

128

129 Mr. Haynes reported that the Subcommittee met and decided on some programs. On February 5,  
130 Vice Chair Clark, Matt Kelly, and Kim Bylancik will lead a Trees and Tracks seasonal walk at  
131 Goose Pond on forest ecology. Mr. Kelly is a newer Extension Service Forester for Cheshire  
132 County Conservation District and Mr. Haynes walked some Goose Pond trails with him recently.  
133 If there are enough participants, there could be multiple groups with the different leaders. This  
134 would be advertised in the standard Facebook, newspaper, etc. platforms.

135

136 Mr. Haynes said the group also discussed a trails maintenance workshop. Director of Parks,  
137 Recreation, & Facilities, Andy Bohannon, helped to contact Lou Shelley, a trails consultant and  
138 builder from Walpole, who seems interested in leading a basic workshop for volunteers on trail  
139 work in Goose Pond and perhaps elsewhere. The Chairman supported this idea to ensure well-  
140 intended members of the public are not damaging trails with maintenance.

141

142 Vice Chair Clark continues submitting Nature Nuggets.

143

144 Mr. Haynes was in contact with an Antioch University New England student, who is focusing on  
145 water and adult programs. Councilor Madison is in communication with the student due to his  
146 water expertise.

147

148 **ii) *ARM Fund Subcommittee – Non-Public Session***

149

150 The group had not met.

151

152 **iii) *Greater Goose Pond Forest Stewardship Committee***

153

154 Mr. Haynes reported that this Subcommittee also met and continued its work prioritizing trails  
155 for short-term maintenance. The group has walked the forest a few times, comparing current  
156 conditions with the Forest Stewardship Plan to determine if anything needs to be adjusted. The  
157 group discussed signage that would be most useful to visitors walking the trails immediately

158 around the pond. The Subcommittee is prioritizing various aspects of the forest for grant  
159 applications, such as signage and trails.

160

161 The Chairman noted the new covered bench area in the northeast corner of the pond. Mr.  
162 Bohannon said that was an aspect remaining from the dam project completed with funding from  
163 the start of the Stewardship Program for kiosks and benches, which took some time to install.  
164 The Chairman said the new kiosk is in an ideal location with a good view and he hopes it is used.

165

166 **B) Invasive Species**

167

168 Councilor Williams had no updates as this program is out-of-season. In February, Councilor  
169 Williams hopes to begin meeting with individuals to create a schedule for different projects next  
170 summer, including the former Wheelock Park Campground area, where a disc golf course and/or  
171 a dog park are planned. He hoped to engage both groups in addressing the invasives there.  
172 Additionally, Councilor Williams said that he found a mature Norway maple that is sending out  
173 seedlings in Robin Hood Park on the right side of the amphitheater when looking over the City.  
174 Councilor Williams would send Mr. Bohannon the exact location. The Councilor said that  
175 removing that mother tree could prevent many problems.

176

177 **C) Summit Road/Summit Ridge Drive Ponding**

178

179 Chair Von Plinsky welcomed the City Engineer, Don Lussier, who discussed the background and  
180 recent work the City completed to alleviate ponding at Summit Road/Summit Ridge Drive by  
181 restoring an existing manmade drainage system to functionality. The City Engineer said that  
182 when an adjacent field was used for agriculture, the past farmer installed a French drain at the  
183 lower end of the field, consisting of a clay tile pipe with a small swale above that functioned as  
184 an underdrain. When the Meadow Knoll neighborhood was developed at the top of the hill in the  
185 1990s and Summit Ridge Drive was constructed, a culvert was placed under Summit Ridge  
186 Drive to drain into an adjacent stream. The present owner no longer farms and has no need for or  
187 interest in maintaining the drainage system, which thus fell into disrepair over time. The City  
188 began noticing this issue four years ago, when water from storm events began rising and pooling,  
189 which worsened over time. Three years ago, the City had to close Summit Ridge Drive for a few  
190 winter months because water pooled and froze in the roadway. Since, the City investigated the  
191 issue and found that the original drain system had failed and collapsed. It took the City 1.5-years  
192 working with the property owner to reach an agreement so the City could restore function of the  
193 drainage system. If the City were aware of the issue, they would have had Meadow Knolls fix  
194 the problem during development. The City has successfully restored the original drainage  
195 function.

196

197 Vice Chair Clark said that a neighbor saw a beaver removed and asked if that was a part of the  
198 procedure. The City Engineer said there was a dam on the opposite side of Summit Road and a  
199 beaver was removed to address the dam once the drain was repaired.

200

201 The Chairman asked if the City Engineer felt confident in the repairs and the City Engineer  
202 replied in the affirmative, stating that City crews rented an excavator to complete the work and  
203 were able to remove sufficient sediment to restore the open drainage ditch. They will have to  
204 return to the site in the spring because it is likely that seeds spread in the fall would not take. Mr.  
205 Haynes mentioned a pollinator friendly seed mix and the City Engineer would pass that  
206 information to the Highway Division.

207

208 **5) Discussion Items**

209 **A) Conservation Commission Speaking Events**

210

211 Tabled until next month.

212

213 **B) Multiyear Pollinator Census Results for Cheshire County**

214

215 Tabled until next month.

216

217 **C) Beaver Brook to Cemetery**

218

219 The Chairman said that a former commissioner, Denise Burchsted, approached Mr. Bohannon  
220 because one of her students found a wood turtle in the cemetery along Beaver Brook and was  
221 concerned about it. The wood turtle is not endangered but is worthy of note. This led to a  
222 conversation between the Chairman, Dr. Burchsted, Mr. Bohannon, and Councilor Jan  
223 Manwaring. The group of four walked the area and developed some ideas. They think they  
224 solved the wood turtle problem, which was ensuring a wood turtle could move safely from its  
225 place along the brook to its wood area. Mr. Bohannon would help enhance an existing corridor  
226 by mowing it less and widening the corridor. The group noticed many invasives in the area,  
227 including Japanese knotweed. They considered a way for the Commission to pool their expertise  
228 along that section of Beaver Brook and upstream, including invasives; starting upstream and  
229 working down to the finish line at Beaver Street, addressing knotweed and barberry in particular.  
230 Chair Von Plinsky said a good thing is that there are native species trying to thrive despite the  
231 knotweed, which means that expertly clearing the knotweed could help restore the natives over  
232 the course of several years. Additionally, there are frequent issues in the area with beaver. The  
233 group also discussed bringing in a beaver expert to deceive the beaver into not doing what they  
234 want, which benefits the beaver and stops their trapping every season. They discussed inviting a  
235 beaver expert to advise the Commission on long-term solutions to intermittent flooding in the  
236 cemetery, which would help invasives too. The Chairman thinks this is a great effort for the  
237 Commission.

238

239 Mr. Bohannon added that the group also discussed that the area is so rich, diverse, and strong  
240 that they might want to consider signage on the watershed in the area for education, including the  
241 salamander road closing and the mating seasons. They have found that on the road leading to the  
242 Beaver Brook Bridge, where they walked, that some species do not make it across during the  
243 summer because of the heat; there have been conversations to paint that road white to let it cool.

244 In general, Mr. Bohannon wondered if there were better ways to make that area an educational  
245 resource and engage citizens in the opportunity. It certainly serves Councilor Williams' invasives  
246 efforts and helps the City Staff to do less maintenance and create no mow zones. He said there  
247 were many possible wins. The Chairman said this was just to inform the Commission and he  
248 welcomed feedback on this blank canvass for public outreach, water management, and more.

249  
250 Councilor Williams said he flew drones over that wetland, created some maps, and noted a  
251 massive knotweed area on the interior, invisible from any of the roads. Regarding the turtles, he  
252 noticed that in one of the channels with rocks along it, the rocks had been moved and he asked if  
253 the group did that. The Chairman said the group did not move anything. Mr. Bohannon was  
254 unsure and said the area they were discussing was closer to the corner of the property near  
255 Beaver Street. The de-channelization of a small stream that Councilor Williams saw was closer  
256 to North Lincoln Street; if it was intentional, he said it seemed a good idea. Chair Von Plinksy  
257 was pleasantly surprised by the good access from the stream to the woods for the turtles, but said  
258 it could be widened. One of the biggest problems that Dr. Burchsted educated the group on was  
259 mowing when turtles are crossing. This is the Colony family plot, which is accessed over the  
260 bridge, down the road to the left, then down the dirt road on the right, is a small area to keep not  
261 mowed and potentially adding small bushes. Councilor Williams would like to eliminate the  
262 buckthorn. The Chairman agreed the knotweed could require an additional funding source.  
263 Councilor Williams said there is the Ellis Harrison Park just north of that location with a  
264 particular knotweed problem cutting off the stream from the rest of the park; this could be a  
265 smaller project for practice.

266  
267 The Chairman said he had a video to share with the Commission. Mr. Bohannon said a student  
268 approached the Recreation Division last fall for a capstone project on blue space; like green  
269 space parks and forests to soothe and relax, blue spaces are water and snow areas for a similar  
270 purpose. The student created a great video to explain, and she would lead six tours in the greater  
271 Keene area beginning in February targeted toward young adults and people 20–50 with their  
272 families, to get them experiencing new conservation areas like Robin Hood Park, Ashuelot River  
273 Park, Goose Pond, Granite Gorge, and others. Mr. Bohannon will share the video by next  
274 meeting and hopes people will attend the programs that are a terrific addition to the Parks and  
275 Recreation programming.

276  
277 Vice Chair Clark said the University of NH Cooperative Extension has some excellent videos on  
278 turtle conservation and habitat restoration, including wood turtles, which are a species of special  
279 concern. She said Matt Tarr is a contact who said that wood turtles can walk through Japanese  
280 knotweed.

281  
282 **6) New or Other Business**  
283 **A) 2022 Calendar**  
284

285 Vice Chair Clark moved to approve the 2022 Conservation Commission calendar, which Mr.  
286 Haynes seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

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Vice Chair Clark noted that the Commission received a letter from the Society for the Protection of NH Forests, stating that there were no violations found to the conservation easements on Goose Pond and other City properties.

7) **Adjournment – Next Meeting date: Tuesday January 18, 2022**

There being no further business, Chair Von Plinsky adjourned the meeting at 5:33 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Katryna Kibler, Minute Taker  
December 27, 2021

Reviewed and edited by,  
Corinne Marcou, Administrative Assistant



THE KEENE PUBLIC LIBRARY

presents

# Create a Sustainable Backyard

Michele Chalice of Healthy Home Habitats  
shares

**FIVE STEPS TO SAVE TIME, MONEY,  
& RESOURCES ON YOUR HOME  
LANDSCAPE**

**10 am, Saturday  
February 19th**

Register for this free program at:  
**<https://bit.ly/SustainableBackyards>**  
Heberton Hall, 60 Winter St., Keene, NH  
or by ZOOM

**Keene Public Library, City of Keene, NH**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Contact: Gail Zachariah or Michele Chalice**

**603-352-0157 - [gzachariah@ci.keene.nh.us](mailto:gzachariah@ci.keene.nh.us)**

**603-313-9153 - [hhabitats@gmail.com](mailto:hhabitats@gmail.com)**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 11, 2022

CREATE A SUSTAINABLE BACKYARD - Keene Public Library invites you to a free public presentation on creating a sustainable backyard. The one-hour session will be offered in-person at Keene Public Library's Heberton Hall and through ZOOM on Saturday, February 19th at 10 am. Michele Chalice, Environmental Landscape Designer and owner of Keene's own "Healthy Home Habitats," will share five steps to save you time, money, and resources managing your home landscape. These same methods will also reduce your use of costly resources such as water, fertilizers, and pesticides. They will also increase your soil's fertility and improve your home's environmental impact. Reduce your eco-anxiety by discovering these often simple actions we can take right at home by creating your own Sustainable Backyard. To sign up for the free presentation, visit <https://bit.ly/SustainableBackyards> or call the Keene Public Library at 603-352-0157. The Keene Public Library is located at 60 Winter Street.

Americans manage nearly 40 million acres of personal property and Northeastern homeowners enjoy the largest, average backyards in our nation. Our yards are where we enjoy and control our own personal, natural resources of air, water, soil and plants. Transforming your property into a sustainable backyard can not only save you money and time but also reduce your impact on the environment while increasing the ecological health of both your family and our community.

*Chalice states: "It's amazing, you can minimize your weekly efforts while creating a healthier, environmentally friendly landscape."*

All Keene Public Library programs are free and open to the public. The Zoom event will be captioned. If you require another access service to participate or have any questions about accessibility, please contact Gail Zachariah at 603-352-0157 or [gzachariah@KeeneNH.gov](mailto:gzachariah@KeeneNH.gov). To ensure the best experience, be sure to contact us at your earliest convenience.

**#ENDS**

**Word Count = 331**

**ABOUT HEALTHY HOME HABITATS**

Healthy Home Habitats offers affordable, environmentally-friendly landscape design, co-gardening assistance, and fun, family growing projects. I create more vibrant and ecologically diverse gardens and landscapes *with* clients that are easier to manage and healthier for our families, our soil, and our communities.

Michele Chalice, 603-313-9153

## **PHOTOS**

Sustainable Backyard.png Graphic of Sustainable Backyard components, M.Chalice  
Michele Chalice at the Healthy Home Habitats Demonstration Landscapes, M. Chalice took or owns these photos.

# Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee

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Washington Lempster Marlow Gilsum Sullivan Surry Keene Swanzey Winchester Hinsdale

## 2021 Annual Report

ARLAC members met monthly discussing permits, monitoring projects and reviewing violations. Members also engaged the community in river projects. The Committee became educated about the hydroelectric dam relicensing process and began work to update the Ashuelot River Corridor Management Plan.

PERMITS: ARLAC reviewed and commented on impacts to the river corridor.

- Ashuelot Street, Keene, removal of impervious surface (Comment: Support but asked to limit chemical use for new grassy surface).
- Hydro dams in Hinsdale and Marlow (followed the permitting process and submitted comments on relicensing and a letter of support for studies)
- Ashuelot Pond, shoreland development in Washington (Comment: urged protection of vernal pools and shoreland vegetation. Recommended open bottom culvert for wildlife crossing in wetland. Effected modification of plans)
- Surry home site, permit to improve drainage and increase septic load, (Comment: concern of increased sediment run-off and nutrients to river.)
- Eversource pole replacements (Reviewed with no comments)
- Winchester, use of Class B Biosolids on farmland. (Comment: concern of leaching of heavy metals through permeable soils to water table and river. Application withdrawn)
- Bridges in Keene and Hinsdale, spraying for poison ivy and invasives. (Comment: caution regarding application near Kilburn Brook)
- City of Keene, Wastewater Treatment Facility Discharge Permit (Comment: supported USEPA guidelines of stringent effluent limits)
- Winchester: Mitchell Sand & Gravel installation of two 10,000-gallon tanks for diesel fuel storage. (Comment: adhere to NHDES regulations and Town Groundwater Protection Ordinance. Application withdrawn)
- Winchester: Mitchell Sand & Gravel, installation of one 20,000-gallon asphalt storage tank. (Comment: concern for proximity to river and need for better safeguards)
- Swanzey: Keene Wastewater Treatment Facility, installation of ground mounted solar in floodplain area. (Comment: opposed cutting four acres of floodplain forest)
- Keene, Eversource Alteration of Terrain application to build permanent roadway to Route 12. (Comment: asked for restoration of connectivity between adjacent wetlands)

PROJECTS: ARLAC monitored several projects in the river corridor.

- Corridor Management Plan: members surveyed the corridor and met with town boards to gather data and comments to update the 2006 Plan; working with Southwest Regional Planning Commission.
- Instream Flow data collection: members learned about the 1<sup>st</sup> year studies on the Ashuelot conducted by NHDES; leads to a management plan for flows to support aquatic habitat and human uses.
- Winchester rail trail grant: (letter of support provided)
- Winchester Brownfields Redevelopment Plan using USEPA funds to cleanup site (letter of support provided)
- Keene NHDOT Floodplain Storage mitigation plan (participated in advisory meetings)

## VIOLATIONS and INFORMATIONAL

- Winchester, river bank destruction, formal complaint to NHDES by Town.
- Winchester: active spill into the river in July on Back Ashuelot Rd. NHDES removed 54 drums containing 2,000 gallons of oil and gas.
- Sea Lamprey Survey was cancelled because of high water in July.
- Hinsdale: Wildlife Habitat/bank restoration project on Hinsdale farmland failed because of high water in July. Look to restoration in the future.
- LIHI (Low Impact Hydro Institute), members reviewed this designation and certification process for dam operators.

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Source to the Sea River Cleanup: 70 volunteers collect 1,664 pounds of trash from the Ashuelot River and Beaver Brook in September.
- Monthly river water quality monitoring was conducted by 19 volunteers May through September. Unusually high flows in July and Sept skewed some results such as lower than usual Specific Conductance (measures ions in the water), which otherwise continued to show moderate to high impact in Keene continuing downstream to the mouth of the river. Readings of pH continue to be low indicating impairment for acidity. E.coli remained in the acceptable range except for a spike in Keene and Swanzey that occurred in June, and spikes in Winchester and Hinsdale that occurred in September possibly related to road projects. Total Phosphorus remained at acceptable levels except for two instances approaching undesirable levels, one at Rte 101 in Keene in August and one at the Thompson Covered Bridge in July. Readings of Dissolved Oxygen and Chloride remain better than Class B standards. Complete data can be viewed under annual reports at <https://www.des.nh.gov/water/rivers-and-lakes/river-and-lake-monitoring>.

Submitted by  
Eloise Clark, Clerk