

**CHESHIRE COUNTY**  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT



SOIL



WATER



WILDLIFE

Promoting the conservation and responsible use of natural and agricultural resources for the people of Cheshire County by providing technical, financial, and educational resources.

## Annual Report 2017

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11 Industrial Park Dr - Walpole NH 03608 - 603.756.2988 ext.116  
[www.cheshireconservation.org](http://www.cheshireconservation.org)

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## *Board of Supervisors and Staff*

### **Supervisors**

Amy Bodwell, Vice Chair - Roxbury  
Bill Foshier, - Westmoreland  
Richard Mellor, NHACD Representative - Rindge  
Andy Pressman, Chair - Jaffrey  
John Treat, Treasurer - Keene

### **Associate Supervisors**

Chris Bowen, Secretary - Swanzey  
Tom Beaudry - Walpole  
Holly and Chris Gowdy - Walpole  
Tracie Looch - Fitzwilliam  
Michael Nerrie - Walpole  
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Peter Renzelman - Alstead  
John Snowdon - Westmoreland  
Pete Throop, SCC Representative - Keene

### **CCCD Staff**

Lola Bobrowski, Outreach Coordinator  
Amanda Littleton, District Manager

### **NRCS Staff, Walpole Field Office**

*The District works in partnership with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) staff who supply technical conservation assistance.*

Mary Ellen Cannon - Soil Conservationist  
Thomas Cappetta - Civil Engineering Technician  
Heidi Konesko - Soil Conservationist  
Steven Pytlik - District Conservationist  
Wendy Ward - Soil Conservationist  
Jessica Zuzack - Program Assistant

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The CCCD Board of Supervisors meet on the 4th Thursday of each month at 9am at the CCCD Office. These meetings are open to the public, please call the District office if you would like to attend a meeting.

## 2017 Cooperator of the Year

### *Hillside Springs Farm of Westmoreland, NH*

Each year the Cheshire County Conservation District honors an individual, business or organization with the “Cooperator of the Year” award. This is done to celebrate the efforts the recipient has undertaken to steward the natural resources on their land in cooperation with the Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). This year we are happy to announce Hillside Springs Farm of Westmoreland, NH as our 2017 Cooperator of the Year.



Hillside Springs Farm includes three acres of gardens, over twenty acres of pastures and hayfields, as well as an orchard, 8,000 square feet of greenhouses, and a sustainably managed woodlot including a small sugar bush. Since 2002 Kim Peavey and Frank Hunter, along with their daughter Gwen, have been the farmers, owners, and stewards of Hillside Springs. They have a strong commitment to both the land and the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) model. Their CSA supports 90 households in the region; providing over 100 varieties of vegetables, herbs, and flowers to these customers is their primary focus, but their produce is also available at the Farmers’ Market of Keene.

“By horse and by hand,” is the way Frank and Kim describe how they farm. Their operation is wholly horse-powered, and they value the partnership they have with their horses in managing the farm chores. This low impact method helps preserve and protect the resources on their farm while reducing air emissions for all. Biodynamic and organic farming practices are followed at Hillside Springs and they are dedicated to improving the health and fertility of their soil to nurture their farm’s future as well as produce the healthiest food possible for the community.

Frank and Kim have been farming together, with draft horses, for nearly twenty two years, fifteen of those living and farming full time in Westmoreland, New Hampshire. After interning on several CSA and draft horse farms in the Northeast, Frank and Kim spent two years CSA farming on rented land near Ithaca, NY, before moving to NH. They love the seasonal rhythm of farming, enjoy working together, both appreciate their connection to nature, and enjoy the freedom of being self-employed.

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## Cooperator of the Year continued

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Frank Hunter grew up in the suburbs of Philadelphia, and majored in Environmental Studies at Prescott College in Arizona. Frank has a strong interest in botany and has done plant inventory work for the Forest Service and worked at a native plant nursery for a couple years before diving into vegetable farming. Frank's interests include seed-saving, grafting heirloom tomatoes, driving horses, live music and travel. He is a volunteer manager for the Farmers' Market of Keene as well as a political activist who volunteers for the Monadnock Progressive Alliance.

Kim Peavey grew up on a family dairy farm in central New York State and studied literature, theology, and environmental issues, earning a Master of Divinity and Master of Arts in English Literature before returning to her farming roots. Kim is a freelance writer and over thirty of her essays and poems have appeared in various periodicals, and she also writes the monthly column Farm Talk on farming and sustainability. Kim currently volunteers as the Chair of the Parents in Partnership group at the Monadnock

Waldorf High School and Frank and Kim have been co-class parents at the Waldorf School which their daughter, Gwen, attended since kindergarten.

Gwen knew the difference between a weed and a lettuce transplant before the age of two. These days, she may prefer reading to weeding, but she helps with the whole spectrum of the farm and enjoys horseback riding and being outdoors. This accomplished family of three live in the 1880's farm house on the property and run the farm with no staff. They have a no-debt farm, and focus on slowly and intentionally growing and improving their business each year. "We couldn't have done it without great neighbors; it's all about community," comments Frank. Both he and Kim appreciate the people of the Monadnock Region, who have provided a welcome environment from day one, offering helping hands and many learning experiences along the way.

Hillside Springs Farm has been working with our partner the USDA NRCS since 2012 on conservation planning and implementation. They have participated in the Environmental Quality Incentive



Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and Agricultural Management Assistance Program (AMA) which are all Farm Bill Programs. Practices they have worked on include conservation crop rotation, cover crops, mulching, nutrient management,



seasonal high tunnel for crops, residue and tillage management, forage and biomass planting, heavy use area protection, irrigation and water management plan, irrigation pipeline including micro-irrigation, pumping plant, fencing, forest management plan, forest stand improvement, early successional habitat development and management, and brush management.

Beyond their environmental commitment, Frank and Kim are also dedicated to improving food access for all income levels. CSA farms often attract membership with high incomes and they are working to address this both through creating a CSA scholarship fund with contributions from members, and offering work/barter options. They have also formed a partnership with the CCCD to accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and offer Granite State Market Match to double the food dollars for low income families that participate in their CSA farm. Kim and Frank also make vegetarian chili full of their own farm vegetables once a week for the Hundred Nights Shelter in Keene NH.

Offering education and service to the

community are also a big part of the mission of Hillside Springs. They have worked with UNH Cooperative Extension, the CCCD, and NOFA-NH on educational events, trialing new vegetable varieties, offering pollinator habitat, and hosting open farm days. In addition, they offer their farm as an outdoor classroom and host groups from the Monadnock Waldorf School, Keene State College, Antioch University and KROKA. Kim and Frank also initiated and organize the Annual Monadnock Region CSA Open House, which has been going strong since 2005 and is a fantastic educational opportunity for the general public, as well as a way for farmers to work together to grow their markets.

“You two have courage,” a neighbor said to Frank and Kim. I think all can agree that they have courage, a strong work ethic, and a whole lot of heart to follow their dreams and build a beautiful life for their family while giving back so much to the community that supports them.

It is with great honor that the Cheshire County Conservation District presents Hillside Springs Farm with the 2017 Cooperator of the Year Award.

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## 2017 Educator of the Year

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### *Brett Amy Thelen of the Harris Center for Conservation Education*

The CCCD is honored to recognize Brett Amy Thelen of the Harris Center for Conservation Education as the 2017 Educator of the Year. Brett served as the Science Director for the Ashuelot Valley Environmental Observatory (AVEO) from 2007 to 2009, and joined the Harris Center in 2011, when AVEO became their citizen science arm.

In her role as the Harris Center's Science Director, Brett manages their conservation research programming – facilitating research on Harris Center protected land and coordinating citizen science projects and public education programs. Brett's passion for connecting community members to the natural world is contagious and has helped fuel the growth and success of several citizen science projects in the Monadnock region.

Brett grew up in New Jersey and frequently hiked with her father. She remembers always appreciating nature for its beauty, but wasn't inspired to look deeper until later in her life. After receiving her B.A. in Literary & Cultural Studies from the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, VA, Brett spent some time traveling. During that time, she remembers the crystalizing moment that inspired her passion for conservation work – at an outdoor, overnight concert in the Everglades of Florida. As the concert came to an end, Brett remembers watching the sun rise over



wading herons and glistening waters, juxtaposed by a field of trash left behind by concert-goers. It was in this moment that Brett knew that she needed to do more to help protect the natural world she so loved and appreciated.

Brett had her first taste of citizen science while working on a horseshoe crab monitoring and tagging project with AmeriCorps Cape Cod sixteen years ago. The experience taught Brett that all people connect to the landscape in different ways and that citizen science projects allow people to, as she put it, “dip their toe in and see what science is like and know that what they’re doing is making a difference.” Brett received her M.S. in Environmental Studies: Conservation Biology from Antioch University New England and eventually returned to the

Cape Cod National Seashore to complete her thesis work focused on citizen science, before joining AVEO in 2007.

Arguably the most popular citizen science project that Brett coordinates is the Salamander Crossing Brigades. Salamander migrations are a “weather dependent natural phenomenon” in which amphibians make their way toward vernal pools to breed, and often get killed while crossing busy roads. Each spring, Brett trains volunteers to safely usher migrating amphibians across roads during the first big rainfall events of the year – often referred to as “Big Nights.” Since 2007 the project has trained nearly 1,000 volunteers, ushered nearly 35,000 live amphibians across roads, and identified nearly 60 crossing sites throughout the Monadnock region.

“People want to make a difference,” Brett says. “They want the opportunity to help, especially in our current political climate where things feel hopeless and scary. Citizen science at its essence is a hopeful act – you’re doing this because you care and because you believe that there is a future for this species or ecosystem and you want to help ensure that that future is a good one.” The Salamander Crossing Brigades are unique in the way that volunteers come back year, after year, after year. Drawn to the experience of holding live animals in their hands and to quite literally saving the lives of hundreds of animals in just a few hours, volunteers recognize right away that they’re making a difference. “My favorite nights of the year are the

first warm, wet nights of spring when I grab my reflective vest and headlamp and help amphibians cross the road, collecting citizen science data and practicing inter-species good will,” said Jessica Baum, volunteer now in her 5<sup>th</sup> season. On any given “Big Night,” individual crossing sites may host up to 25 volunteers, who usher upwards of 1,000 amphibians to safety.

There is no doubt that the commitment of volunteers is directly linked to the passion Brett brings to the programs she directs. Sarah Wilson and her elementary aged daughter Emily began volunteering with the Salamander Crossing Brigades nearly 10 years ago and were instantly hooked – in great part due to the personal connection they made with Brett. “Brett is such a wonderful, positive influence on the citizen science world of the Monadnock Region. Her knowledge of the natural world is impressive and her passion for the topic is infectious,” said Sarah. Sarah went on to join additional citizen science projects after working with the Brigades, and years later Emily eventually wrote her college admissions essay on her experiences growing up volunteering with the Brigades. “I feel lucky to know Brett and am appreciative of the positive influence she has had on my daughter - and me!”

Though popular indeed, the Salamander



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## Educator of the Year continued

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Crossing Brigades are merely the tip of the iceberg when it comes to citizen science and public programming with the Harris Center. The Vernal Pool Project trains volunteers to identify and document vernal pools (small, temporary ponds that serve as critical amphibian breeding habitat) in the Monadnock region – the “first step in protecting the habitat,” as Brett points out. The goal of this project is to document vernal pools on lands where information is needed for conservation planning, and to use the data to inform land protection efforts.

Project Nighthawk is an urban bird monitoring project first developed in 2007 by NH Audubon and coordinated in Keene by the Harris Center. Volunteers for this program are trained to watch for the state-endangered Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*) on summer evenings in downtown Keene. By observing the behavior patterns of local nighthawks, volunteers help to identify potential rooftop nesting sites, with the ultimate goal of documenting and protecting the breeding birds.

Past projects include invasive plant surveys and water quality monitoring. In 2006-2008,



AVEO volunteers also surveyed nearly 800 culverts in the Ashuelot watershed, leading to the Falls Brook stream restoration project in Swanzey, NH – implemented in part by the CCCD and completed last year. With every project, Brett notes that it is important to be mindful that the data be used for something – in this case, volunteer surveys ultimately led to the stream restoration project in Swanzey, and in 2008, land up for sale on N. Lincoln Street in Keene was purchased as conservation land by the City of Keene after the Conservation Commission and City Council reviewed Salamander Crossing Brigade data.

“We as a culture are becoming less and less connected to the landscape that sustains us,” says Brett. “Citizen science is a point of connection for a lot of people, and anything that we can do to reconnect ourselves and our communities is important.” Citizen science provides an entry point into a world that many have never experienced. It offers tools, resources, and comradery to create an inviting and sustainable system of volunteerism that provides participants with a sense of connection and importance. It informs decisions, encourages participation and builds community.

Brett emphasizes that, “if we were connected more to each other and more to the land, we’d all be better off – this is just one point of connection and we need lots of them.” We thank Brett for the valuable services she provides to our community and it is with great honor that the CCCD presents Brett Amy Thelen with the 2017 Educator of the Year Award.

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## 2017 Highlights

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The CCCD reached out to over 2,800 individuals in 2017 with programs regarding resource conservation & farm viability. If you are interested in learning more or have suggestions for future programming please don't hesitate to contact the CCCD office.



### *NRCS Farm Bill Program Workshops & Demonstration Projects*

Each year the conservation district works along side their partner the Natural Resources Conservation Service to assist landowners on the voluntary conservation of natural resources on their land. This is accomplished by providing administration of the technical and financial assistance that enables good stewardship of the soil, water, air, wildlife, and related natural resources. This year workshops were offered on how landowners can apply for financial and technical assistance from NRCS through the 2014 Farm Bill —workshops included— **Cover Crops, No Till Farming, Equipment Demonstrations, Forest Management, Skidder Bridge Building and Irrigation Water Management.** Educators from Cheshire County UNH Cooperative Extension are key partners in these workshops.

### *Services of CCCD*

Offered historical **aerial photography** of Cheshire County and provided soil information to Cheshire County landowners, particularly the **Soil Potential Index (SPI)** assessment for landowners in the Current Use program. Provided **talks as well as educational displays** at community events through out the year. Worked with landowners on an individual basis to assist them in better understanding the resources on their property and how to conserve them. The CCCD also offers **outreach on behalf of NRCS** to make landowners aware of the conservation programs available to them.



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**All programs are offered on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, disability or political beliefs.**

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## 2017 Highlights Continued

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### *Organizational Membership*

- Antioch Community Garden Connections - Advisory Committee
- Monadnock Conservancy - Stewardship Committee
- Monadnock Farm and Community Coalition - Board of Directors
- Monadnock Sustainability Network - Board of Directors
- National Association of Conservation Districts
- New Hampshire Association of Conservation Districts
- New Hampshire Food Alliance - Land Resources Action Team
- New Hampshire Nutrition Incentive Network - Regional Lead
- Southwest Region Planning Commission - Natural Resources Advisory Committee

### *Fundraising*

The CCCD Board of Supervisors conducted an annual appeal and offered three fundraisers during 2017 to provide additional funds for CCCD programs.

- **Conservation Plant Sale - Bulb Sale - Bulk Seed Sale**

We would like to offer many thanks to the community members who participated!

### *Planning & Communications*

The CCCD adopted a five year Strategic Plan in 2017 setting the organization up with refined priorities and measurable outcomes.

We are also delighted to share that we have launched a new website with greater functionality and more resources to share with the community.

**The Cheshire County Conservation District was created in 1945. It is a political subdivision of the State of New Hampshire, [RSA 432:12](#), with a 170 C 1 non-profit status under the IRS tax code. As a subdivision of the State of New Hampshire, conservation districts foster partnerships between federal, state and local agencies interested in the wise use of natural resources.**



SOIL



WATER



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## Supporting Healthy Productive Soil through Education and Equipment Rentals

### SOIL



In 2017 the Conservation District further developed its Soil Health Education and Equipment Rental program to help producers meet their soil health goals. The following implements are now available: no-till seeder, single shank Sub-soiler, penetrometer, roller-crimper, aerator, and wood ash/lime spreader.

We worked with UNH Cooperative Extension and USDA NRCS to offer workshops, demonstrations, and host our annual Equipment Field Day .

In partnership with Keene State College and with funding from NH Humanities we launched an educational series focused on the Natural & Cultural History of Soil. This culminated in a visit by MacArthur Fellow, author, and professor Dr. David Montgomery.



New Hampshire  
humanities

## 2017 Highlights Continued



**WATER**

### Improving Water Quality Through Skidder Bridge Rentals, River Clean ups, and Farm Partnerships

#### *Windyhurst Farm - Manure & Waste Water Handling Improvement Project*

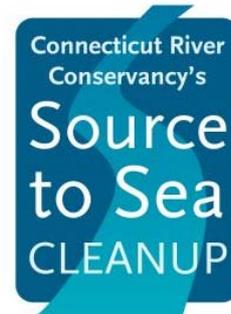
The Windyhurst Farm infrastructure project will improve water quality in the Connecticut River Watershed by retrofitting an existing dairy barn to effectively and efficiently move manure and milkhouse waste from the dairy cattle barn and milking center to the watertight manure tank. Windyhurst is partnering with the USDA NRCS on this project. Additional funds secured by the Conservation District from the NH SCC and Connecticut River Watershed Council will be used to tie the milkhouse wash water and parlour waste water to the new system.



## *Source to Sea River Clean Up*



On September 15th and 16th a large group of enthusiastic volunteers pitched in to help clean up the Ashuelot River in Keene, Marlow, and Swanzey and Beaver Brook in Keene as part of the Connecticut River Conservancy's "Source to Sea Cleanup". 79 volunteers pulled over 2,960 lbs of trash and 3 shopping carts from the two water bodies! This event is made possible with the partnership of the City of Keene, Keene State College, Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee, Moosewood Ecological, Harris Center for Conservation Education, Granite State Rural Water Association, and Keene Young Professionals. We would also like to thank the Mountain Corporation of Keene for their generous donation of t-shirts for volunteers.



## *Cheshire County Skidder Bridge Initiative*



In 2017 the conservation district continues to rent three skidder bridges to land owners and managers that are interested in making stream crossings while preserving water quality during timber harvests. This is made possible through funding from the NH State Conservation Committee. This service would not be possible without strong and

committed partners including UNH Cooperative Extension and Peter Renzelman.

## 2017 Highlights Continued



### Improving Wildlife Habitat for the Health of Our Ecosystems

#### WILDLIFE

#### *Cheshire County Pollinator Initiative*

In 2017 the CCCD expanded the Cheshire County Pollinator Initiative. Pollinators are vital to ecosystems and the agricultural economy, but unfortunately they are in decline as a result of habitat loss. The Cheshire County Pollinator Initiative is addressing this problem through the establishment of twenty pollinator habitat installations. As a secondary goal the CCCD has also taken on a vigorous public education and outreach campaign to share the innovative methodology of habitat creation undertaken in this project and the results of the pollinator abundance and diversity monitoring. In 2017 this included a June pollinator tour of habitat establishment sites. The final project results



will include an expansion of pollinator habitat in Cheshire County and increased landowner and technical service provider understanding on the variety of innovative and effective installation techniques including organic establishment. Funding for this project is provided by the USDA NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant program and the NH State Conservation Committee.





## Initiatives to Increase Local Food Production and Expand Markets

### FARM VIABILITY

#### *Launch of Monadnock Food Coop Farm Fund*

The Monadnock Food Co-op Farm Fund's mission is to support local farmers in increasing sustainable food production and wholesale sales to contribute to a thriving local farm economy. This is a new grant opportunity for local farmers through a partnership with the Monadnock Food Co-op. Launched in 2017, three grant awards were made during the first year to Archway Farm, Flying Cloud Dairy, and Manning Hill Farm to expand their cold storage and improve their on-farm infrastructure. This will be an annual grant opportunity for farms in the region.



#### *NH Harvest of the Month*

In 2017 CCCD and partners launched a Harvest of the Month program in NH. The goal of the program is to promote seasonal eating, encourage healthy diets and support the local economy. Partners on this initiative are the regional school districts in Cheshire County, NH Farm to School, Food Connects, Vital Communities, Antioch University New England, and The Cornucopia Project. Funding has been provided by the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food through the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant.



## 2017 Highlights Continued



In 2017 we strengthened our Cheshire County network of farms and farmers markets to double supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP/ food stamps) benefits with Granite State Market Match. Hillside Springs Farm, the Winchester Farmers' Market, and the TEAM Jaffrey Farmers Market joined Picadilly Farm, the Farmers' Market of Keene, and the Keene Housing Buying Clubs to offer Market Match.

We continued work with a statewide network of incentive providers lead by the NH Food Bank to share resources and best practices. Funding is made available through the USDA, HNH Foundation, the Wholesome Wave Foundation, and Healthy Monadnock.



### *Monadnock Menus - Farm to Institution Initiative*

Monadnock Menus offers weekly aggregation and delivery of local farm fresh food to wholesale food buyers such as schools, institutions, and businesses. 2017 was our fourth full year of sales and have over 30 farms and food producers participating as well 40 registered buyers. We are excited to share that Food Connects, our management partner in Monadnock Menus and a 501c3 based in Brattleboro VT, has taken over ownership of Monadnock Menus in the final quarter of 2017. This transition will allow Monadnock Menus to grow and develop into an even stronger distribution service for our region's farmers. Funding is provided by the NH Charitable Foundation and Cheshire Medical Center's Healthy Monadnock Initiative. An additional development in 2017 was that the CCCD has been able to invest over \$15,000 in equipment for farmers and their local institutional buyers to enable them to become more efficient and increase the overall sales of fresh fruits and vegetables through Monadnock Menus. Funding through NHDAMF SCBG.



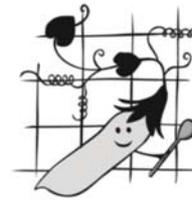
## *Cheshire County Complex—Maplewood Garden*



In 2017 the County of Cheshire continued their partnership with Antioch University New England's Community Garden Connections (CGC) program to garden at the Cheshire County Farm in Westmoreland NH. The produce they harvested (over 3,000 lbs) was donated to the Community Kitchen in Keene. This partnership will continue to expand into 2018 along with educational opportunities at the site.

## *Monadnock Localvores*

In 2017 the Localvores offered scholarships to summer farm camp to 22 children through the Jeffrey P. Smith Farm Scholarship. This is a partnership with the Hannah Grimes Center, the CCCD, and committed volunteers.



## *Educational Events*

### *Erosion Control Field Day*

Partnered with other conservation districts and EJ Prescott on a training for professionals working in soils, erosion control, water quality, public works, engineering, roads, planning, and consulting.

### *Conservation Commission Potluck*

Partnered with the NH Association of Conservation Commissions to offer this networking and information sharing event at Stonewall Farm. Colin Lawson of Trout Unlimited spoke on aquatic organism passage and replacing undersized culverts.

### *Getting Started with Fruit Trees, Handling & Planting Bareroot Stock, Ecological Landscape Design, and Planting with a Purpose*

This diversity of topics on gardening and landscaping were presented in a series of workshops with partners such as Distant Hill Gardens, Moosewood Ecological, and UNH Cooperative Extension.



The Cheshire County Conservation District welcomes your input on future educational programming and services that we can make available to landowners.



## USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service District Conservationist Fiscal Year 2017 Report for Cheshire County

The Cheshire County Conservation District (CCCD) continues to be the most instrumental partner with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) getting conservation on the ground at the grassroots level. The District provides assistance to NRCS on a daily basis including; conducting outreach, working with new Farm Bill program applicants, and providing technical assistance. Without the District's support and this strong partnership NRCS would not be nearly as successful fulfilling our mission. Over the past 5 years together we have been able to implement more and more conservation projects than we have ever achieved in the previous years. Throughout 2017 NRCS and the District have completed 171 individual conservation projects. This year NRCS obligated 41 new Farm Bill conservation program contracts totaling \$428,488 in financial assistance enrolling 3,374 acres. The District assisted with closing on 2 Farm Bill Agricultural Land Easements program totaling 87 acres, the Monadnock Conservancy is the lead partner holding the conservation easements.

### NRCS Key Performance Measures 2017

- Conservation applied to improve environmental quality: 9,210 acres on private agricultural land including forests a huge increase from 4,132 acres achieved in 2016.
- Land with conservation applied to improve water quality: 8,296 acres up from 3,085 acres in 2016.
- Cropland with conservation applied to improve soil quality: 759 acres
- Non-Federal land with conservation applied to improve fish and wildlife habitat quality: 6,983 acres

*The Natural Resources Conservation Service is a core partner of the Cheshire County Conservation District. The partnership between the NRCS and Conservation Districts is one that was carefully designed to foster a unique and productive relationship to get conservation on the ground and provide federal resources at a local level.*

The Farm Bill funding and NRCS programs have complemented the CCCD's mission and objectives very well and together this allows us to get more conservation on the ground. The District continues to focus on the Cheshire County Pollinator Initiative and funding from the NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant program has been vital in accomplishing this goal. Countless workshops and outreach events have been hosted by the District this year to provide public education on the decline of pollinators due to habitat loss and how to manage for pollinators on agricultural lands throughout the County. Many successful pollinator habitat projects were planted throughout the year including sites prepared organically, direct seeded, and established with live plugs.

Soil Health and Quality is also a priority for the CCCD and NRCS. The equipment rental program that the District offers including the no-till seeder,



aer-way aerator, roller crimper, wood ash spreader, sub-soiler, and skidder bridges gives producers the tools needed to implement soil erosion, soil health, and water quality conservation projects funded by the Farm Bill. Next year a large grain drill will be purchased to allow for direct seeding of cover crops. With this successful partnership Farm Bill conservation program participants utilized this equipment to plant over 668 acres of cover crops as well as pasture and hayland plantings throughout Cheshire County. With all these cover crops being planted the next step is to promote the adoption of



no-till and reduced till planting methods for annually tilled crops. Working with the New Hampshire Association of Conservation Districts through a Conservation Innovation Grant we are working with local dairy farmers in Cheshire County to try no-till corn planting into cover crops in the coming year.

The District and NRCS continue to partner on water quality and aquatic organism passage projects as well. We are currently assessing multiple sites for habitat restoration opportunities. Together the District and NRCS are partnering with the Harris Center for Conservation Education, Trout Unlimited, NH Fish and Game, NH Department of Environmental Services, and US Fish and Wildlife Service. This is a perfect example of how the District and NRCS have worked together with other partners to address the resource concerns identified at the local level while meeting our core mission objectives.

**Together we are “Helping People Help the Land”.**

**Sincerely,  
Steven D. Pytlik  
District Conservationist**



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## **NRCS 2017 Report continued**

Of the 171 NRCS funded conservation projects installed in Cheshire County throughout 2017 the top ten conservation practices were:



1. **Waste Storage Facility** – 1.7 million gallons of liquid manure stored
2. **Aquatic Organism Passage** – 5,726 acres of habitat have been restored
3. **Forest Management Plans** - 5 Plans developed for 726 acres
4. **Cover Crops** - 668 acres planted in improve water quality and soil health
5. **Conservation Crop Rotation** – 437 acres rotated
6. **Nutrient Management** – 193 acres applied
7. **Forest Stand Improvement** - 148 acres treated
8. **Fence** – 6,719 feet installed to facilitate rotational grazing
9. **Irrigation Pipeline** – 1138 feet installed for micro-irrigation systems
10. **Water Wells** – 3 wells drilled for irrigation systems



## *Financials - 2017 Treasurer's Report*

The Board of Supervisors appreciates the continued support of the District's conservation programs by the Cheshire County Commissioners and the Cheshire County Delegation.

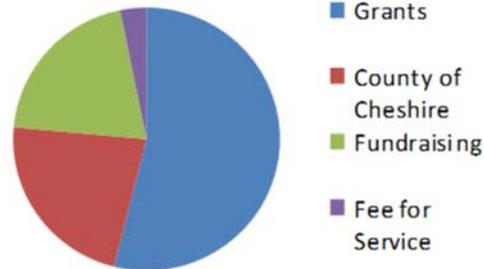
Also appreciated are the technical services offered by our "Partners in Conservation" the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, UNH Cooperative Extension, USDA Farm Service Agency and other cooperating agencies.



### 2017 Receipts, January-September.

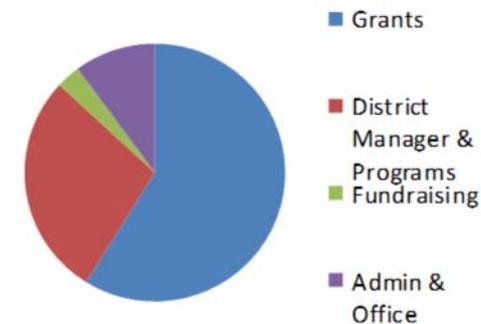
#### Income

Grants	139,484	54%
County of Cheshire	58,260	23%
Fundraising	52,687	20%
Fee for Service	8,224	3%
	<b>258,654</b>	<b>100%</b>



#### Expenses

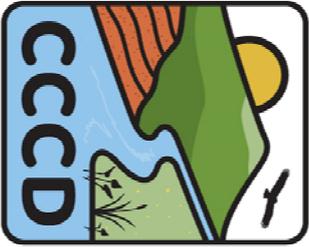
Grants	138,322	59%
District Manager & Programs	65,904	28%
Fundraising	7,066	3%
Admin & Office	23,743	10%
	<b>235,035</b>	<b>100%</b>



## *Contributed Support*

A special thank you is offered to the many people that contribute to the success of the CCCD by volunteering their time and energy! We extend our gratitude to the following individuals, organizations and businesses who have made donations or provided grants during 2017:

<b>Agrimark</b>	<b>Monadnock Food Coop</b>
<b>Alyson's Orchard</b>	<b>National Center for Appropriate Technology</b>
<b>Laura Andrews</b>	<b>NH Association of Conservation Districts</b>
<b>Antioch University New England</b>	<b>NH Charitable Foundation</b>
<b>Amy B. Bodwell &amp; Carol D. Saunders</b>	<b>NH Department of Agriculture Markets and Food</b>
<b>Susan Carlson</b>	<b>NH Food Bank</b>
<b>Eloise Clark &amp; John Treat</b>	<b>NH Humanities</b>
<b>Lawrence Conboy</b>	<b>NH State Conservation Committee</b>
<b>C&amp;S Wholesale Grocers</b>	<b>NH Timberland Owners Association</b>
<b>Cheshire County Farm Bureau</b>	<b>Nye Hill Farm</b>
<b>Cheshire Medical Center</b>	<b>Orchard Hill Breadworks</b>
<b>County of Cheshire</b>	<b>Peter Renzelman</b>
<b>Distant Hill Gardens</b>	<b>Resource Management, Inc</b>
<b>James Doyle</b>	<b>Savings Bank of Walpole</b>
<b>Ron Farina</b>	<b>L. William Slanetz</b>
<b>Cynthia &amp; Frederick Feiker</b>	<b>Dottie Smith</b>
<b>Janice Fiandaca</b>	<b>Society of Soil Scientists of Northern New England</b>
<b>Anne B. Francisco</b>	<b>Stonewall Farm</b>
<b>The Gallup Fund</b>	<b>Thomas W. Haas Fund</b>
<b>Garden Club of Dublin</b>	<b>USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service</b>
<b>Kimberly Gilligan</b>	<b>USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant</b>
<b>David Gruender</b>	<b>Walpole Creamery</b>
<b>HNH Foundation</b>	<b>Westmoreland Lions Club</b>
<b>Honey Meadow Farm</b>	<b>Wholesome Wave</b>
<b>Dan Irvine</b>	<b>W. S. Badger Co</b>
<b>Carl &amp; Ruth Jacobs</b>	<b>You Have Our Trust Fund</b>
<b>Keene Lions Club</b>	
<b>Catherine Koning</b>	
<b>Peter and Roberta Letourno</b>	
<b>Pierre Martinet</b>	
<b>The Monadnock Conservancy</b>	



**CHESHIRE COUNTY**  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT



SOIL

WATER

WILDLIFE

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Walpole NH 03608

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