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## Belknap County Conservation District (BCCD) 2016 Activity Overview

### Accomplishments To Date:

1,700 → Number of people assisted	\$31,883 → Value of volunteer hours generated
202 → Number of acres benefited	1,382 → Number of volunteer hours
92 → Number of volunteers	5,800 → Pounds of food donated via NH Gleans-Belknap County
\$719,414 → Value of Federal in-kind services and contracts in Belknap County working with BCCD	\$23,200 → Value of food donated via NH Gleans-Belknap County
\$20,300 Value of year 2016 funding for projects from grants and general fundraising	
\$206,789 Value of other BCCD projects and services.	

**BCCD's estimated value to Belknap County is \$1,001,586. For every \$1 dollar invested by Belknap County, BCCD generates approximately \$12.50 dollars in products or services for our citizens.** BCCD strengthens the economy of Belknap County by leveraging the county funds it receives to generate projects funded through federal, state, and private sources. These funds are used to hire local and regional contractors, purchase materials locally whenever possible, and maintain the health of our natural resource assets.

BCCD is addressing the publics' identified concerns by:

#### Community Assistance & Water Quality

- In 2014 BCCD submitted a resolution to the NH Association of Conservation Districts to amend the federal Food Security Act of 1985 to exempt agricultural producers and/or landowners eligible to participate in USDA conservation programs from specific reporting requirements prescribed in the federal System for Award Management (SAM). BCCD took this action in response to an outcry from agricultural producers that the reporting process was overly time consuming, convoluted, and obstructive to effectively implementing on-the-ground conservation practices. By September of 2016 this BCCD resolution has been to the US House of Representatives, the US Senate, and is now awaiting review by the Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs. BCCD is resource and advocate for landowners in Belknap County.
- Obtained funding through a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation - New England Forest and Rivers grant to assist Gunstock Mountain Resort with an update to its forest management plan, repair the Wetlands Walk, develop conservation based outreach activities that will enhance recreational opportunities at Gunstock, and provide support funding to BCCD's Clean Water Act (319) grant to help repair a mass stream bank failure on Gunstock Brook in Gilford.
- Assisted the Town of Belmont and the Town of Gilford in authoring and submitting funding proposals to the NH Conservation License Plate program (Mooseplate). The Belmont project will enhance native plantings along the WOW Trail, and the Gilford project will dredge and repair a severely impaired fire pond adjacent to Gunstock Brook. These proposals are awaiting review.
- Hosted Aquifer & Groundwater Protection workshops in Alton for residents in the watersheds of Merry Meeting Lake and Lake Winnepesaukee, and in Northfield for those residents in the Belmont, Tilton, Northfield aquifer overlay district. Both areas use their aquifer as a drinking water source.
- Active member of the citizens' group Winnisquam Watershed Network, and member of the Winnisquam Planners Group organized by the municipal planners of towns in the Lake Winnisquam watershed.
- Serving as a partner on the development and implementation of public outreach for the Lake Winnepesaukee Watershed Management Plan, and serving as a member on the Lake Waukegan and Winona Lake Advisory Committee

### (Community Assistance & Water Quality continued)

- Project Manager for informational outreach and site-specific streambank restoration construction to be installed on Gunstock Brook in the Town of Gilford. These tasks are funded by an EPA - 319 Watershed Assistance Grant, the NH Charitable Foundation, and BCCD.
- BCCD Supervisors Donna Hepp, Ken Kettenring and Earle Chase served as judges in the natural resources themed high school extra-curricular program/competition NH Envirothon .
- Provided public information and displays related to soil and water health, resource conservation and development, and local food promotion for several public events including, but not limited to, the Belknap County Fair, Gilford Farmers Market, School to Farm at Ramblin' Vewe Farm, Prescott Farm Heritage Days, and Belknap County Days at Gunstock Mountain Resort.
- Partnering and coordinating with other organizations/agencies on programming such as a Soil Erosion Control Training, Winter Construction Workshop, and the NRCS Client Gateway training.
- Providing customers with aerial photos, computer generated soil maps and reports, and Soil Potential Index calculations to assist in land use planning

### Agricultural Conservation

- BCCD staff coordinates the NH Gleans - Belknap County local food donation program. The NH Gleans-Belknap County Coordinator and volunteers will glean (harvest) approximately 5,000 pounds of fruit and produce donated to the program by local farmers and home gardeners. Gleaned product is donated to local food pantries, soup kitchens, and senior centers.
- BCCD Board Member, Ken Kettenring, working to organize a fundraiser for the NH Gleans – Belknap County program to take place at the New Hampton School in spring 2017.
- Providing resources and staff support to the grassroots efforts of the Lakes Region Food Network.
- Developed and installing a Pollinator Garden to increase produce yields at the BCCD purchased and installed a seasonal high tunnel for the Belknap County Corrections Department's garden program. This project is a collaborative effort between the Lakes Region Food Network (LRFN), UNH Cooperative Extension (UNHCE), Belknap County Corrections, and BCCD.
- Entered into a management agreement with the Small and Beginner Farmers to improve the quality of the hay harvested from the Opechee Bay Forest Tract field. This field is part of a network that provides affordable hay for livestock to farmers in central New Hampshire.
- BCCD co-hosted a Drought Disaster Emergency Conservation Program with the Farm Service Agency and UNH Cooperative Extension with the goal of assisting the agricultural community impacted by drought. BCCD is following up with some of the meeting attendees requesting assistance.
- Working with agricultural producers interested in conservation and management of their land.
- Providing assistance to the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) on federal cost-share contracts held in Belknap County.
- On a quarterly basis BCCD Supervisors honor local citizens and groups that have demonstrated a commitment to conservation of our natural resources by awarding them the Belknap County Conservation Champion Award. Recent recipients include Fran Wendelboe of Belknap County 4-H, Petal Pushers Farm, and the Town of New Hampton for the New Hampton Nature-Fitness Trail.
- Participating in the NH Association of Conservation Districts (NHACD) grant driven agricultural demonstration projects. BCCD will continue to perform outreach and establish demonstration sites in Belknap County. The most recent project incorporates a pollinator planting along a stabilized stream bank abutting crop fields at Moulton Farm in Meredith. The plantings will keep the stream waters cool (important to the health of beneficial micro-organisms and larger wildlife) and enhance pollinator habitat to improve crop yields. BCCD volunteers for this project included inmates from the Belknap County Jail.
- Managing the BCCD Community Gardens, and the Opechee Bay Forest Tract in Laconia.

### Wildlife & Woodlands

- BCCD annual holds Tree Sale fundraiser offering plants chosen for their conservation, wildlife or home food production qualities; special attention is given to offer winter hardy, native varieties
- BCCD is a member of the Belknap Range Conservation Coalition and assists them with programming whenever appropriate

### Funding in 2016

- In 2015 the Belknap County Delegation voted to reduce BCCD's budget by \$4,865. In 2016 they voted to reduce BCCD's budget by an additional \$12,400. This resulted in a budget cut of \$17,020 over a two year period. These cuts severely impacted BCCD's ability to assist municipalities and landowners with non-federally funded technical assistance and grant proposal development.

(Funding in 2016 continued)

- BCCD receives a portion of its funding from the county. County funds pay the salary and benefits of one full-time staff member, the wages of a part-time staff member, and to have a financial review performed by a Certified Public Accountant. Grant funds and other monies are secured through fundraising, service fees or donations to pay for project expenses and other operational costs. The county's contribution is vital to the ability of the District to apply for grants that bring additional dollars into Belknap County.
- BCCD works with the U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service to bring federal dollars into the county. These dollars are used for conservation projects and are dispersed throughout the county via the purchase of materials and services.
- BCCD extends a Thank You to the New Hampshire Association of Conservation Districts, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, public and private grantors, private donors, and customers for financially assisting us in our service to Belknap County.

## Staff in 2016

- BCCD's activities are managed by Program Coordinator, Lisa Morin. Ms. Morin is a full time employee with benefits. She holds a degree in Environmental Conservation and has 18 years of employment experience with Conservation Districts in New Hampshire. Ms. Morin is a native of Belknap County.
- BCCD part-time staff positions consist of a Program Assistant, the NH Gleans-Belknap County Coordinator, and per diem staffing provided by private consultants as needed if funding is available. The NH Gleans-Belknap County Coordinator is a position funded in part by a grant and in part by BCCD. (In 2017 BCCD will access New England Forest and Rivers grant funds, matched by County funds, to hire a part-time Project Manager for its Gunstock Brook Restoration Project.)
- BCCD uses the services of certified professional consultants to provide payroll distribution, oversee financial record-keeping, and provide independent third-party financial reviews on an annual basis.
- BCCD's mission and activities are guided by the volunteer BCCD Board of Supervisors. BCCD Supervisors have professional expertise and career experience in the fields of in biochemistry, geology, forestry, wetlands/soil science, environmental engineering and hazardous waste bioremediation, culinary arts and farming, and computer science.
- VOLUNTEERS !!! Every year BCCD is indebted to its many volunteers who give their time and resources to Belknap County through our projects and programs.

## Financial Overview



*Respectfully Submitted by the BCCD Board of Supervisors and Staff,*

Donna Hepp, BCCD Chairman, Belmont

John Hodsdon, BCCD Supervisor, Meredith

Ken Kettenring, BCCD Supervisor, New Hampton

Dean Anson, BCCD Supervisor, Laconia

Earle Chase, BCCD Supervisor, Barnstead

Gary Maheu, BCCD Associate Supervisor, Laconia

Aaron Lichtenberg, BCCD Associate Supervisor, Alton

Lisa Morin, BCCD Program Coordinator

Russ Bailey, NH Gleans-Belknap County Coordinator (Grant funded position in 2016)

(Document created Nov. 7, 2016; updated Dec. 11, 2016) BCCD & NRCS programs and services are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis.

## Community Assistance & Water Quality:



*Soil Erosion Control Training at Gunstock*



*Pollinator and Water Quality Enhancement at Moulton Farm in Meredith*



*BCCD Volunteers repairing Wetlands Walk at Gunstock, more repairs planned for 2017*



*Gunstock Brook erosion site to be repaired*



*BCCD assists students with rain garden*



*BCCD Adopt-A-Spot volunteer in Laconia*

BCCD provides professional training and technical, administrative and financial assistance to landowners and municipalities with issues of storm water control, and soil erosion and sedimentation.

## Agricultural Conservation:

### **NH Glens – Belknap County**

Belknap County Conservation District (BCCD) coordinates the NH Glens program in Belknap County. Local producers and/or home gardeners call on BCCD to glean their fields, gardens and trees of unsold or unwanted produce so that it can be donated to local food pantries, soup kitchens and senior centers. In 2015 BCCD harvested over 2,400 pounds of produce, in 2016 over 5,800 pounds of produce and fruit was harvested.



*BCCD volunteers harvesting produce for donation to a local food pantry. Location: Winnepesaukee Woods Farm*



*Seniors at the Laconia Community Center pick up produce donated by BCCD to the LRPPH Harvest Box program.*



*BCCD donates to food pantries and/or senior centers all over Belknap County. Pictured: Pastor Aucoin, Vineyard Church*

### **Belknap County Jail Seasonal High Tunnel**

In 2015 BCCD purchased a seasonal high tunnel and provided oversight for its installation at the Belknap County Complex. The tunnel is used by the Belknap County Corrections Department and UNH Cooperative Extension to help inmates extend the season for vegetable production. BCCD incorporated a Pollinator Planting to enhance production efforts.



*BCCD planted flowers in the spring of 2016 in one section of the pollinator planting bed and broadcast a wildflower seed in another section in fall. BCCD participated in an UNH Cooperative Extension hosted 'open house' for the Seasonal High Tunnel.*