



Annual Report 2007 / 2008

Promoting the conservation and sustainable use of our natural resources for the people of Cheshire County by bringing individuals and groups with common environmental interests together to share ideas, resources, and information.

11 Industrial Park Dr - Walpole NH 03608 - 603.756.2988 ext.116

Board of Supervisors and Staff

Supervisors

Bruce Bickford, Chair - Walpole
Kathy Thatcher, Vice-Chair - Chesterfield
Emily Hague, Treasurer - Keene
Michele Chalice Throop - Keene

Associate Supervisors

Paul Crosby - Stoddard
Marcus Lovell Smith - Walpole
Tracie Smith - Fitzwilliam

CCCD Staff

Amanda Costello, 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.

Heidi Konesko -Soil Conservationist
Wendy Ward - Soil Conservation Technician
Deb Weymouth - District Conservationist

The CCCD Board of Supervisors meet on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 6:30pm at the CCCD Office. These meetings are open to the public, please call the District office if you would like to attend a meeting.

The Board guides the Conservation District through a strategic plan and sets priorities for staff. Board members are volunteers, appointed by the NH State Conservation Committee.

2008 Cooperator of the Year

Siegfried and Margritt Richter of Spofford NH

Each year the Cheshire County Conservation District honors an individual, business, or organization with a “Cooperator of the Year” award at the Annual Meeting. This is done to reward the recipient for cooperating with the Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to conserve the natural resources on their land. This year we are happy to announce that Siegfried and Margritt Richter are the 2008 Cooperator of the Year.

Both Margritt and Siegfried have stewarded the natural resources on their property in Spofford New Hampshire for many years. They participated in two NRCS programs: Environmental Quality Incentives Program and the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program. The Richters have completed many conservation practices including managing for shrubland habitat, liming of fields, managing for early successional habitat for grassland birds, forest stand improvement,



forest trails and landings, and a forest management plan on 106 acres. Siegfried and Margritt have been active and eager contract participants and good stewards of the land.

“ Siegfried has lived on the property his entire life, and he and Margritt are active and eager contract participants and good stewards of the land”

- Wendy Ward , NRCS

2007 Highlights

New Board for the CCCD

2007 was a year of transition for the CCCD. A Board of Supervisors was re-established and each individual currently on the board is a new addition to the Conservation District. We are very happy to welcome Bruce Bickford, Kathy Thatcher, Emily Hague, Michele Chalice Throop, and Paul Crosby. Each Supervisor offers great enthusiasm and experience that has guided the CCCD in an exciting new direction.



USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Grant

The Cheshire County Conservation District was awarded a SARE grant to look at the feasibility of a Food Cooperative in Downtown Keene that sourced from local food producers. We tackled this with a three pronged approach. We interviewed 28 farms in Cheshire County to understand barriers to growing and selling, we interviewed 5 area food cooperatives, and held 2 community forums to gain the public's feedback on ways our community can pull together in support of local agriculture.



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.

US Fish and Wildlife Service Cooperative Agreement



The CCCD initiated a Cooperative Agreement with the US Fish and Wildlife Service in 2001 for \$5,000. During 2007 we closed this agreement by contributing funds to the Chesterfield Conservation Commission to work on shrubland habitat enhancement in the Freidsam Town Forest, and to the Ashuelot Valley Environmental Observatory for their work restoring Common Nighthawk nesting habitat by installing gravel nest patches on Keene rooftops for their Project Nighthawk.

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Alstead Flood Symposium

The conservation district sponsored this event that was hosted by the NH and VT chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society. The meeting examined the 2005 flooding of Alstead, including the hydrologic and geologic perspectives of the flood, an analysis of the geomorphology of the Warren Brook and Cold River as the basis for the flood restoration plan, river bank stabilization efforts, problems related road repairs and bridge replacement, and the impacts of the flood on the aquatic environment. This was a great opportunity to explore the work done through the NRCS Emergency Watershed Program.

Source to Sea Clean Up

We partnered with the City of Keene, Keene State College, Ashuelot River Local Advisory Council, Ashuelot Valley Environmental Observatory, Moosewood Ecological, and Trout Unlimited to create the 3rd largest clean-up team in the Connecticut River Watershed. This is a program that is organized by the Connecticut River Watershed Council.



2008 Highlights

The CCCD reached 688 individuals in 2008 with educational programs regarding resource conservation. Some of these programs are highlighted below.

Monadnock Farm and Community Connection



The The Monadnock Farm and Community Connection is a volunteer network driven by community defined needs. It is a program of the Cheshire County Conservation District (CCCD) designed to increase public knowledge about the value of local agriculture while supporting the farmers of the region.

Our objectives are to:

- Foster regional independence and interdependence throughout our farm community
- Shorten the distance - both actual and ideological - between
- producer and consumer
- Create a vibrant network of people and organizations connecting farms and community
- Enable collective action and economic collaboration within our Monadnock constituency.

Keene Rain Garden

Offered a workshop with the City of Keene to teach citizens about the value of rain gardens in protecting surface water quality, and how to design and install them on their property.



We were awarded a Conservation Plate Grant by the NH State Conservation Committee to design and install rain gardens in downtown Keene. Partners on this grant include the City of Keene, UNH Co-operative Extension, and Antioch University New England.

Educational Events

USDA Rural Development Grant Workshop

Steve Epstein of Rural Development educated our group on the value added producer grants and renewable energy and energy efficiency programs.

Current Use Workshop

Partnered with UNH Cooperative Extension to offer this workshop for landowners.

First Course Open House

Worked with First Course to notify farmers and food producers of the exciting food processing opportunities in First Course's new facility.

Cooperative Development

The Cooperative Development Institute delivered a workshop on coop start up and the principles of cooperative businesses.

Floodplain Soils Workshop

The CCCD and New Hampshire Association of Natural Resource Scientists offered a workshop to explore issues with flood plain soils on the County Farm in Westmoreland NH.

Feast on This Film Festival

In partnership with Spirited Nutrition MFCC offered a Film Festival over the course of 5 days throughout the Monadnock Region celebrating farms, community, sustainability and health.

Farmland Stewardship Workshop

Offered this workshop at Windyhurst Farm in cooperation with the Monadnock Conservancy and UNH Cooperative Extension as part of their Friday afternoon Conservation Workshop Series.





Localvore Project



In partnership with Hannah Grimes we sponsored the Localvore Project, a program that encourages people in the Monadnock Region to eat food grown within 150 miles in order to strengthen a thriving economy and vibrant community in our local agricultural traditions.

Conservation Planning Forums

- Working with the Marlow Conservation Commission and Moosewood Ecological, LLC to offer a Conservation and Community Planning Forum as part of a NH Office of Energy and Planning Housing and Conservation Planning Program Grant.
- Working with Moosewood Ecological and the Chesterfield Conservation Commission in an effort gain community input for the Natural Resource Inventory and town-wide conservation plan.



Source to Sea Clean Up



Partnered for the 2nd year with the City of Keene, Keene State College, Ashuelot River Local Advisory Council, and Moosewood Ecological. We had approximately 200 volunteers out on the Ashuelot River and Beaver Brook in both Keene and Swanzey.

Services

Offered **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 **educational and informational 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.

Fundraisers

Offered 3 fundraisers during 2008 to provide additional funds for CCCD educational programs.

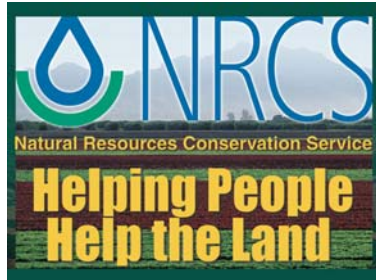
- Conservation Plant Sale
- Compost Bin Sale
- Flowering Bulb Sale



Organizational Membership

Membership established to the
Monadnock Sustainability Network
Keene Cities for Climate Protection Committee

Continued membership to the
New Hampshire Association of Conservation Districts
Conservation District Employees Association of New Hampshire



Natural Resources Conservation Service Cheshire County Fiscal Year 2007 Report

With the 2002 Farm Bill coming to a close, Cheshire County's farmers, private landowners and forestland owners continued to show an interest in conservation programs offered through the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service. Over \$139,700 was awarded in 2007 and invested in conservation. Funded practices involved fencing for wetland/stream protection and rotational grazing, nutrient management plans, pest management for invasive plant control, timber stand improvement, erosion and sediment control on forest trails, and early successional habitat creation for wildlife habitat improvement.

In addition to serving Cheshire County residents through conservation programs, NRCS continues to make available technical assistance for its residents and units of government to improve soil erosion, water quality and wildlife habitat.

As a result of Hurricane Tammy in 2005, NRCS secured additional federal funding under our Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP) which enabled debris removal and bank stabilization projects to occur in the towns of Alstead, Gilsum, Hinsdale, Marlow, Stoddard, Walpole, and Westmoreland. Under town sponsorship, NRCS provided engineering and technical assistance, construction oversight and a minimum of 75% funding which moved projects forward providing the necessary bank protection at costs of over \$1.5 million. In addition, with areas along the Cold River and Warren Brook corridor, NRCS was able to receive an unprecedented 100% cost share for the town of Alstead, totaling over \$6 million dollars.

A Year in Review:

Conservation Highlights: Over 4,600 acres of conservation was applied in Cheshire County.

▲ **Farmstead and Water resources** were improved on over 360 acres with nutrient management, waste utilization and conservation buffers.

▲ **Cropland resources** were improved on over 420 acres through residue management, cover cropping, crop rotation and increased irrigation efficiency.

▲ **Grazing and Forest resources** were improved on over 560 acres with the development of forest management and grazing plans, the installation of erosion and sediment controls and fencing for rotational grazing, improved access for long term management of the forest, pasture and hay planting and forage harvest management.

▲ **Wildlife habitat** on over 220 acres was created or improved in upland and wetland areas.

▲ **Conservation planning**, our cornerstone for success, was completed on over 3,030 acres assisting customers with identifying best management practices for forestland, cropland, grazing, wildlife, water and farmstead resource issues.

The new Farm Bill will offer further opportunities for us to work with our partners; the Cheshire County Conservation District, the Farm Service Agency, and the UNH Cooperative Extension Service in rolling out the new programs and helping us put quality conservation on the land. Together we are making a difference.

Deborah S. Weymouth
District Conservationist



Natural Resources Conservation Service Cheshire County Fiscal Year 2008 Report

With the signing of the new Farm Bill, Cheshire County's farmers, private landowners and forestland owners have continued to show an interest in conservation programs offered through the USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service. Over \$40,900 was awarded in 2008 and invested in conservation. Funded practices involve pest management for invasive plant control, nutrient management plans, forest management plans, timber stand improvement, erosion and sediment control on forest trails, stream crossings, and early successional habitat creation for wildlife habitat improvement. In addition, three participants received funding under the Conservation Security Program totaling over \$7,000 which rewards those who follow good land stewardship and best management practices for agriculture.

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.

A Year in Review:

Conservation Highlights: Over 11,360 acres of conservation was applied in Cheshire County.

▲ **Farmstead and Water resources** were improved on over 5,130 acres with nutrient management, waste utilization and conservation buffers.

▲ **Cropland resources** were improved on over 820 acres through residue management, cover cropping, crop rotation and increased irrigation efficiency.

▲ **Grazing and Forest resources** were improved on over 4,740 acres with the development of forest management and grazing plans, the installation of erosion and sediment controls and fencing for rotational grazing, improved access for long term management of the forest, pasture and hay planting and forage harvest management.

▲ **Wildlife habitat** on over 850 acres was created or improved in upland and wetland areas.

▲ **Conservation planning**, our cornerstone for success, was completed on over 1,490 acres assisting customers by identifying best management practices for forestland, cropland, grazing, wildlife, water and farmstead resource issues.

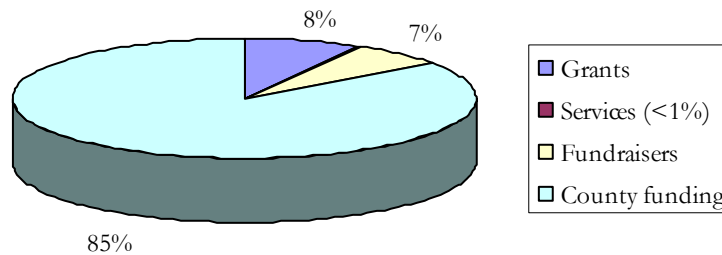
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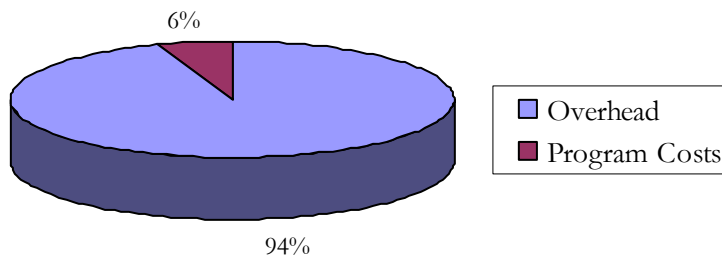
Financials - 2008 Treasurer's Report

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.

CCCD Income



CCCD Expenses



Income

Grants	\$3,684
Services (<1%)	\$94
Fundraisers	\$3,106
County funding	\$39,127
<u>Total</u>	\$46,011

Expenses

Overhead	\$39,518
Program Costs	\$2,376
<u>Total</u>	\$41,894

Contributed Support

Special Thanks to the following businesses who have made donations during 2007 & 2008

Agway of Walpole
Alyson's Orchard
Borders
C&S Wholesale Grocers
Hannaford
Horse and Buggy Feeds of Keene
Panera Bread
Pricechopper
Prime Roast
Shaws Supermarket
Starbucks
The Works Bakery and Café

Contribute Today!

Please make a tax deductible gift to the CCCD to ensure the continued success of our educational programs.



YES! I want to help the Cheshire County Conservation District promote the conservation and sustainable use of our natural resources .

I have enclosed a donation of:

\$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 Other \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

- Please make checks payable to the **Cheshire County Conservation District**,

Cheshire County Conservation District

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Walpole NH 03608

Phone: 603.756.2988 ext.116

Fax: 603.756.2978

E-mail: Amanda.costello@nh.nacdnct.net

Dedicated to Conservation Education and the
Responsible Use of Our Natural Resources.

