

## Conservation Committee Report - 2003

On July 2, 2002 the Selectboard resolved to establish the Conservation Committee by adopting the Conservation Reserve Fund Charter. The creation of this committee continues the momentum initiated by the Warren Voters at the 1999 Town Meeting when the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Reserve Fund and the Blueberry Lake Conservation Reserve Fund were combined into the Conservation Reserve Fund.

As established in the Charter the responsibilities of the Conservation Committee include: recommend actions on land conservation projects and any expenditure of funds from the Conservation Reserve Fund to the Selectboard; stay abreast of, and evaluate prospective land conservation projects as they are brought to the Town for consideration; work closely with the Mad River Valley Planning District, the Mad River Watershed Conservation Partnership, and the Vermont Land Trust and other organizations with land conservation goals and objectives consistent with those of the Conservation Committee and the Warren Town Plan; identify desired parcels or land areas for conservation; and be guided by the goals and objectives of the Warren Town Plan.

The following protection priorities are established in the Town Plan:

- productive farmland, especially land currently under farm management or with the potential for active farm management;
- productive forest, especially lands which are contiguous to other undeveloped tracts of forest;
- scenic properties, including high elevation forest (ridgelines and prominent knolls) and farmland and meadows visible from well-traveled Town roads and Route 100;
- Blueberry Lake and associated wetlands and surrounding forest;
- land with identified wildlife values, including critical habitat for endangered species, black bear (including the Slide Brook basin), and identified wildlife corridors;
- resources which would protect or enhance water quality, such as wetlands, headwater areas, and riparian buffers along the Mad River and its tributaries;
- land that contributes to the Town's historic settlement patterns, including upland areas with poor access to Town centers;
- undeveloped parcels which define the contrast between an open countryside and village centers; and, open space that contributes to the character of Warren Village;
- land with outdoor recreation resources, including parcels with existing or potential trails, river accesses and hunting areas, and potential playing fields and recreation areas; and,
- lands identified by State and private funding sources as priorities and therefore are eligible for other funding programs.

In July 2003 the Selectboard, with recommendations from the Planning Commission, appointed five Warren residents to the Committee – Tara Hamilton, Erin Russell Story, Matt Sargent, Glenn Thomas and Margo Wade. Unfortunately Matt Sargent stepped down from his seat in December.

Thus far the Committee has developed a tasks list (approved by the Selectboard), monitored the Forest Plan Revision process currently under way by the Green Mountain National Forest, and worked on developing conservation priorities.

The Committee began meeting in August 2003 and meets the first Tuesday of the month from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM at the Municipal Building. As always, these are open meetings and the public is welcome to attend and participate in the discussions. Meeting agendas are posted in advance of the meeting at the Municipal Building, the Warren Post Office and on the Town of Warren web page accessible from [www.madrivervalley.com](http://www.madrivervalley.com) web site. Approved meeting minutes are also posted on the web page.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tara Hamilton  
Erin Russell Story  
Glenn Thomas  
Margo Wade, Chair