

The Habitat

A newsletter of the Connecticut Association of
Conservation & Inland Wetlands Commissions, Inc.

Fall 2024
volume 36 number 3

Special Conference Issue



CACIWC's 47th Annual Meeting & Environmental Conference Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of CACIWC!

To help celebrate the 50th Anniversary of CACIWC, we are offering our most elaborate Annual Meeting and Environmental Conference yet, with three keynote speakers, twelve multi-speaker breakout workshops, and one our largest number of nonprofit and commercial exhibitors.

CACIWC continues with an in-person format, which allows easier speaker questions and discussions along with networking opportunities among our members. We are returning to the **Bristol Event Center**, located at 112 Century Drive Bristol, CT 06010, which now provides newly completed adjacent conference rooms for all our breakout sessions within a short walk of the prefunction entrance area and ballroom.

We are pleased to welcome all three keynote speakers, **retired Judge Marshall Berger, Jr., State Representative Mary Mushinsky, and Director of the Connecticut Agriculture Experiment Station, Jason White, PhD**, who will help us review the five decades of progress in environmental regulation, conservation, and habitat protection since CACIWC was first organized. Information from their presentations will also help CACIWC and our member commissions prepare for future times when their efforts to preserve wetlands and other important habitats may be impacted by climate change and other challenges.

Judge Marshall K. Berger Biography:

Judge Marshall Berger graduated from the University of Vermont with a BA degree in 1969 and from George Washington University in 1972 with a JD with honors. He was appointed a Superior Court Judge in September 1988 and has served in a variety of capacities. Most notably Judge Berger created and served as the Presiding Judge for the Land Use Docket from 2012 to 2020.



Marshall K. Berger, Jr., CT Superior Court Judge, (retired)

Prior to his elevation to the bench, he practiced environmental, land use, and municipal law. He served as Chief Counsel for the Department of Environmental Protection's Office of General Counsel, Air Compliance Unit.

Judge Berger taught land use law as an adjunct faculty member at the University of Connecticut School of Law from 1987 to 1994 and over the years has served on several judicial and governmental task forces. In 2009,

conference, continued on page 4

We Are Returning to Our New Conference Venue!

Bristol Event Center
112 Century Drive, Bristol, CT 06010

The CACIWC Annual Meeting Committee has again selected this facility for a second year to provide us with banquet and workshop rooms, space for display viewing and networking, and its highly rated luncheon. Please join us again this year!

Note Our Early Morning Agenda!

Registration & Breakfast - 8:00 AM
Business Meeting - 8:45 AM
Keynote Speaker Panel - 9:00 AM

CACIWC is again scheduling our keynote speaker panel at 9:00 AM immediately following the 8:45 AM Business Meeting and before the workshop sessions. This will allow our members to network with other attendees during the luncheon, free from any presentations.

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Interim Editor: *Alan Siniscalchi*
Associate Editor: *Ann Letendre*

Correspondence to the editor, manuscripts, inquiries, etc. should be sent to Alan Siniscalchi at TheHabitat@caciwc.org.

www.caciwc.org

CACIWC News

As the CACIWC Board of Directors makes the final preparations for our 2024 annual conference, the **47th Annual Meeting and Environmental Conference** offered by our organization, we are reminded of the significance of this year's conference theme, *Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of CACIWC*.

We have reviewed our early history going back to when the Connecticut Association of Conservation Commissions (CACC) was organized in 1964. We remember our 2022 annual conference which celebrated the approval of the Connecticut Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Act (IWWA) by the Connecticut General Assembly (CGA) in May 1972. We have reviewed how this act led to the formation of local inland wetlands commissions to work alongside existing conservation commissions in towns throughout Connecticut, and how two years later in 1974, CACC became our organization CACIWC to also provide support to these newly formed land use commissions.

We think about the many conservation and inland wetlands commissioners and staff who have served their towns during these past decades and the important impact that they have had preserving local habitat within their communities. Starting with this special 50th anniversary conference, we will continue our role in providing all of you with key updates on conservation science, inland wetlands regulations, and other important information. We pledge to help enable our member commissions and staff to face any new issues, ranging from changing climate, regulations, and other emerging threats that will challenge your ongoing efforts to preserve habitats within your community and throughout our great State of Connecticut.

In other news:

1. During this past year, the CACIWC Board of Directors and its Annual Meeting Committee reviewed the many comments and suggestions submitted as part of our 2023 conference

CACIWC news, continued on page 11

In This Issue

	PAGE
CACIWC News	2
How to Register for the 2024 Conference	3
Conference Workshops and Descriptions	6
CT DEEP State Wildlife Action Plan Survey	13
Initial Conference Sponsors	14

How to Register For Our 2024 Conference

Two methods are available to register for the conference:

1) You can register using the online form and pay by credit card, debit card, PayPal account or mail your check to our office. This form is located on our website, at:

[CACIWC Annual Meeting & Environmental Conference \(wufoo.com\)](https://www.wufoo.com)

2) You may also register the traditional way by completing and mailing the printed form to our office along with your check. This form is also located on our website at: [Registration Form \(caciwc.org\)](https://www.caciwc.org)

Please note that a major discount on the registration fee is available to current CACIWC members. Two methods are also available for you or your commission to renew your membership:

1) You can renew your membership using the online form and pay by credit card, debit card, PayPal account or mail your check to our office. This form is located on our website, at:

[CACIWC Membership Form 2024-25 \(wufoo.com\)](https://www.wufoo.com)

2) You may also renew your CACIWC membership the traditional way by completing and mailing the printed form to our office along with your check. This form is also located on our website at:

[CACIWC Dues Renewal 2024-25 printable form](https://www.caciwc.org)

The renewal of your membership dues will help us fund the conference and upcoming issues of *The Habitat*. Please also consider becoming a conference

sponsor this year. Your sponsorship at any level will also help us fund this in-person conference. Please see the sponsorship categories listed on our registration form and website:

[CACIWC_2024_AnnMtg sponsorship.pdf](https://www.caciwc.org)

Would your organization like to register to exhibit at our 2024 conference or advertise in our conference brochure? Please see additional information at:

[CACIWC_2024_AnnMtg sponsor exhibit advertise form.pdf](https://www.caciwc.org)

Nonprofit organizations can exhibit at a greatly reduced price, please see:

[Nonprofit Exhibitor Registration](https://www.caciwc.org)

We encourage you to periodically check our website for updates: www.caciwc.org. Feel free to contact us with any questions at: AnnualMtg@caciwc.org

Thank you, we look forward to seeing you at the conference! 🌱



conference, continued from page 1

he received the President's Award for Excellence from the Hartford County Bar Association.

Representative Mary Mushinsky Biography:

Mary Mushinsky was first elected to the Connecticut House of Representatives in 1980 on a platform of environmental activism, consumer advocacy and improved energy policies. She currently holds the leadership position of Deputy Speaker.



*Mary M. Mushinsky, CT State
Representative & Deputy Speaker*

Mary has held various other leadership positions including co-chair of the legislature's bipartisan Program Review and Investigations Committee, specializing in preparing workforce for a changing economy, retraining older and long-term unemployed workers, apprenticeships, and improving efficiency of state programs. The committee spotlighted and expanded the state's most successful apprenticeship program, Platform to Employment. Mary previously served as co-chair of the legislature's Select Committee on Children for ten years and passed the state's anti-bullying law. She is the recipient of numerous awards for adolescent pregnancy prevention and reduction of child poverty.

She also served for six years as co-chair of the legislature's Environment Committee. A biologist by training, Mary has been the chief proponent in the Connecticut legislature of major environmental legislation enacted during the 1980s and 1990s, including mandatory recycling, packaging reduction, open-space preservation, global warming mitigation and endangered species protection laws.

Mary served as a member of the Commission on Enhancing Agency Outcomes and the Results-Based Accountability Working Group to achieve greater efficiencies in taxpayer funded programs, as well as the Peak Oil Caucus to reduce the impact of high oil prices on residents and businesses. She currently serves on the Manufacturing Caucus and the Sportsmen's Caucus.

In Wallingford, Mary initiated and serves as co-chair of the Quinnipiac River Linear Trail Advisory Committee, which works with local, state and federal officials and the community to expand the pedestrian/bicycle trail. She also served on the Wallingford Energy Conservation Commission, which promoted the energy audit and energy management recommendations now implemented by the Town of Wallingford school system. Mary is a member and legislative liaison for the Coalition for a Better Wallingford, which seeks to reduce drug and alcohol abuse.

Mary lives in Wallingford with her husband Martin J. Waters and has two adult sons, Martin and Edward Waters.

Jason C. White, PhD Biography:

Dr. Jason White is the Director of the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES), the oldest Agricultural Experiment Station in the country. In addition to managing the agency budget of \$12.5 million and approximately 100 scientific staff, Dr. White oversees a research program of \$5.1 million in competitive

conference, continued on page 5



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conference, continued from page 4

funding/research. He also serves as the Managing Editor for the *International Journal of Phytoremediation* and sits on the editorial boards of *Environmental Pollution* and *NanoImpact* as well as the Editorial Advisory Boards of *Environmental Science & Technology* and *Environmental Science & Technology Letters*. Dr. White is the Immediate Past President of the International Phytotechnology Society. His primary research program focuses food safety and security, with specific interests on the impact of nanomaterials on agricultural plants and on the use of nanotechnology to sustainably increase food production and promote global food security.



Jason C. White, PhD., Director,
Connecticut Agriculture Experiment Station

Dr. White received his PhD in Environmental Toxicology from Cornell University in 1997 and has secondary appointments at the Harvard University TH Chan School of Public Health, the University of Texas-El Paso, the University of Massachusetts, and Post University. He has published approximately 240 scientific papers that have been cited 11,991 times, as well as authoring eight book chapters. Jason lives in Prospect, Connecticut with his wife Michelle and six children.

On the morning of our conference, please arrive early to pick up your badge and registration materials in time to be in your seats for the 8:45 AM business meeting. Be certain to register soon to enable us to provide the early estimate of our attendees required by our venue. We anticipate a large crowd this year so register early to avoid disappointment! Look for additional conference news and information on our website. Please direct any questions on our annual conference to us at: AnnualMtg@caciwc.org.

Our 2024 Annual Meeting & Environmental Conference will include **four revised and updated workshop tracks** with twelve workshops that cover emerging new issues. Please see the workshop schedule and descriptions on page 6. 🍀

New England Wetland Plants, Inc.

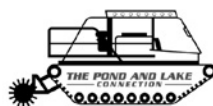
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CACIWC's Environmental Conference Schedule & Workshops

Conference Schedule & Workshop Descriptions: (Four Tracks, Three Sessions, 12 Workshops)

Tracks	Session 1 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Session 2 1:30 - 2:30 PM	Session 3 2:45 - 3:45 PM
Track A. Assessing & preserving our varied habitats, their wildlife and inhabitants	Workshop A1	Workshop A2	Workshop A3
Track B. IWWA application evaluation, enforcement and wetlands regulation	Workshop B1	Workshop B2	Workshop B3
Track C. Increasing climate resiliency and other emerging threats	Workshop C1	Workshop C2	Workshop C3
Track D. Assisting our commissions evaluate and respond to evolving threats & other issues	Workshop D1	Workshop D2	Workshop D3

Session 1 (11:00 AM - 12:00 PM)

A1. “Update on Invasive Aquatic Plants in CT including Hydrilla”

Gregory J. Bugbee, Associate Scientist & Head, Office of Aquatic Invasive Species, Department of Environmental Science and Forestry, The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES)

Invasive aquatic plants crowd out native vegetation, harm fisheries, degrade recreation, impede navigation, and reduce property values. A unique strain of hydrilla now occurs in the Connecticut River with many areas choked with the weed. Led by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), demonstration projects involving dye tests and herbicide use are underway. Management efforts entail many complications including river flow, tidal action, suspended sediment, numerous protected species, and large numbers of stakeholders. In 2023, CAES documented the spread of the CT River strain of hydrilla to East Twin Lake. In 2024, the number of lakes increased to nine with the locations associated with public boat launches.

B1. “All Things Vegetative Considered: Enforcement & Regulation”

Janet Brooks, Attorney at Law, LLC, with Darcy Winther, State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP)

In this workshop we will discuss: (1) how to regulate the removal of vegetation (by permit), (2) how to add vegetation plantings to a permit, i.e. a vegetated buffer (by specific permit condition or by adopting a regulation), (3) how to take enforcement for unpermitted removal of vegetation (cutting/clearing of brush and trees), and (4) how to regulate the beneficial removal of invasive vegetation. This workshop is appropriate for new and experienced commission members. Bring your questions!

CACIWC's Environmental Conference Schedule & Workshops (con't.)

C1 "A Roadmap for Connecticut Climate Resilience"

John Truscinski, Director of Resilience Planning, Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation (CIRCA)

In this workshop John Truscinski of UConn's Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation (CIRCA) will discuss how CIRCA's work with Connecticut Coastal communities on climate resilience strategies has led to the development of a roadmap for Connecticut policy makers. Understanding climate vulnerabilities, and the actions towns can take to prepare, mitigate and adapt will require planning for future hazards, budgeting and coordination between municipal commissions, boards and authorities.



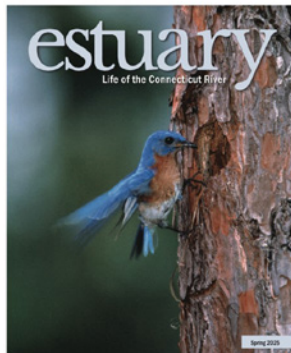
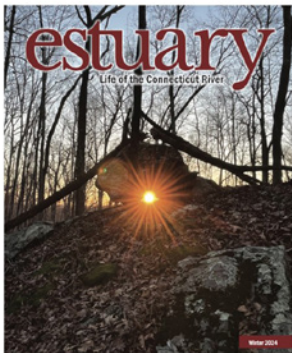
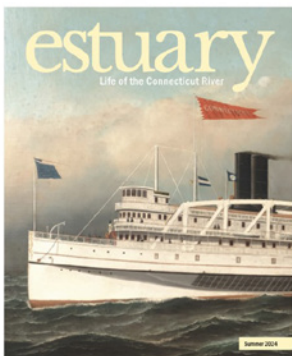
D1. "Conducting Natural Resource Inventories"

Hank Gruner, Herpetologist, Member of the Andover Conservation Commission, Erik Keller, Vice Chairman, Ridgefield Conservation Commission & others

While some conservation commissions have already completed a Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) for their town and others have been working to gather initial information and develop local information and databases, many commissions lack the resources or understanding of the steps needed to go beyond their initial stages of planning. Even when their NRI completed, a commission should recognize the additional steps and resources needed to best utilize the information obtained in their NRI to effectively carry out their conservation mandate. By presenting information on successful examples of new and revised NRI projects, attendees will gain useful information and insight on how to efficiently conduct their own NRI.

workshops, continued on page 8

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Session 2 (1:30 - 2:30 PM)

A2. "Sharing the Landscape with Amphibians and Reptiles"

Hank Gruner, Herpetologist, Member of the Andover Conservation Commission & Dennis Quinn, Owner of Quinn Ecological, LLC

Connecticut has a long-held public trust in the stewardship of natural resources, including, biological diversity. The long-term persistence of many populations of amphibians and reptiles will rely on a renewed commitment to this public trust. But what do we mean by stewardship? This session will explore the importance of stewardship at multiple scales, putting stewardship in action, and how stewardship of the land relates to changing environmental conditions and amphibian and reptile conservation.

B2. "2024 Wetlands Law & Regulations Update with Question & Answer Session"

Janet Brooks, Attorney at Law, LLC, Mark Branse, Halloran & Sage, LLP, with Darcy Winther & Kristen O'Neill, State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) *invited*

This always popular inland wetlands session has been brought back again to keep you current with the law. Bring your questions and any new suggestions of improvements to the Connecticut Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Act (IWWA) following our 2022 celebration of the Act's 50th Anniversary. There is still much to discuss! Come ready to pose questions as you try to stump the team!

C2. "Climate Change Impact on Rural and Urban Areas"

Louanne Cooley & Kayla Vargas from the Connecticut Institute of Resilience and Climate Adaptation (UConn CIRCA), and Bill Gleason, West Hartford Tree Action Group (TAG)

Climate change continues to impact Connecticut, and rural and urban areas face both similar and distinctly different challenges. In this workshop we will discuss how heat and flooding can be addressed using the tools municipalities currently have and might need in the future with a focus on Zoning, Inland Wetlands Agency and Conservation Commission authority. The workshop will also review how West Hartford uses a combination of the town Tree Action Group, citizen volunteer action, and unique educational outreach programs to improve environmental resilience, diversity, and conservation.

D2. "Invasive Plant Updates and Prioritizing Management"

Lauren Kurtz, PhD, Invasive Species Outreach Specialist, UConn Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture

This presentation will review recent updates to the Connecticut Invasive Plant List including identification and control methods. Invasive plants are added to the list following a review by a Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group (CIPWG), which makes recommendations to the Invasive Plants Council (IPC). The IPC then recommends changes to the Connecticut Invasive Plant List. The recent additions are the first updates to the list since 2018. Additionally, the task of managing invasive plants can quickly become overwhelming due to the time, money, and persistence required for positive results. One practical approach is to use triage, an assessment practice that prioritizes invasive species management based on the degree of ecological damage to the site and economic criteria.

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Session 3 (2:45 - 3:45 PM)

A3. "Connecticut's Second Bird Atlas"

Min T. Huang, PhD, Migratory Bird Program Leader, State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP)

The second Connecticut Bird Atlas is complete and with its completion ushers the bird conservation community into the next phase of this vision for restoring our cherished birds. The Atlas provides Towns, Land Trusts, NGOs, and State and Federal Agencies with the information on the status of our birds to inform land management actions to benefit declining populations on both local and regional scales. However, as is often the case, funding to implement necessary conservation actions is lacking. The second objective of the CT Bird Atlas, after the data were collected and analyzed, was to galvanize the conservation community to develop a dedicated source of funding to implement the findings of the Atlas. We are now at that critical juncture.

B3. "River Systems: Riparian Corridors & Stormwater Management"

Alicea Charamut, Executive Director, Rivers Alliance of Connecticut, Christopher R. Field, PhD, Director Office of Planning and Resilience, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), & Bianca Beland, DEEP Land and Water Resources Division

Protecting riparian zones is important in maintaining the health and water quality of our rivers, streams, lakes, reservoirs, and other water bodies and is essential for source water protection. This workshop will focus on the functions and value of riparian zones in protecting water quality and aquatic habitats, along with helping to mitigate the impact of storms. The workshop will compare buffers and upland review areas and discuss the role of local land use agencies in protection of these critical areas. This workshop will also explore how Connecticut state agencies are continuing their efforts to improve management of stormwater as our state experiences increasing numbers of extreme rainfall events driven by climate change and other factors. The impacts of the catastrophic flooding event observed in southwestern Connecticut towns

this past August will be illustrated with images of the heavily damaged bridges, culverts and roads. Opportunities for towns to access federal climate resilience funding to improve infrastructure and keep communities safe from these events.

C3. "Light Pollution: Its Impact on Wildlife & Climate Change"

Leo Smith, Chair Connecticut Chapter, DarkSky International, Craig Repasz, Chair & Co-Founder, Lights Out Connecticut, and Margery C. B Winters, Chair, Simsbury Conservation Commission/Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency, President, Simsbury Land Trust & Assistant Director, Roaring Brook Nature Center

Light pollution adversely affects the health and quality of life of plants, animals and people. Discussion will focus on efforts to provide outdoor light when and where it's needed, while, to the highest degree reasonably possible, minimizing harm from light pollution. Discussion will include the Model Outdoor Lighting Regulations for Connecticut, intended to guide municipalities in reducing light pollution through their zoning amendment process. Using Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)-approved streetlight technologies, such as adaptive lighting, to reduce lighting levels from 11 PM until 5 AM will also be included in this discussion.

conference, continued on page 9

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CACIWC's Environmental Conference Schedule & Workshops (con't.)

Session 3 (2:45-3:45 PM)


D3. "Identifying Potential Vernal Pools"

Edward Pawlak, MS, Registered Soil Scientist & Certified Professional Wetland Scientist (PWS)

Many municipalities are interested in mapping potential vernal pools as a first step in protecting and conserving these critical habitats. Challenges to these efforts will be discussed. Two strategies for remotely identifying potential vernal pools will be presented. Tools available within Google Earth can be used to identify small, isolated water bodies on the landscape with varying degrees of reliability, depending largely on forest composition (deciduous versus coniferous). Several examples of how confirmed vernal pools appear on Google Earth aerial photos will be presented, along with examples of "false positive" vernal pool identifications on Google Earth. A resource for identifying property lines and ownership on Google Earth will be shared. Additionally, the strategy of using spring time evening "road running" as a clue to the location of vernal pools on the landscape will also be discussed.

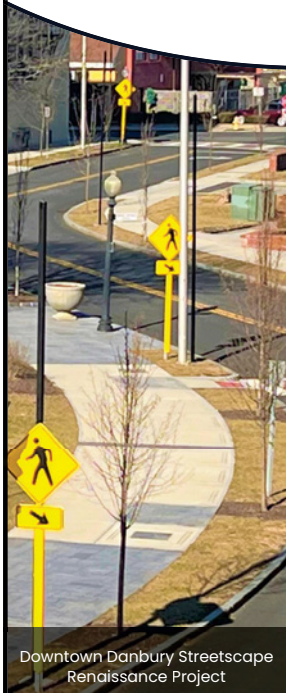
— SCHEDULE FOR THE DAY —

Registration & Breakfast	8:00 – 8:45 am
Welcome & Business Mtg.	8:45 – 9:00 am
Keynote Speaker	9:00 – 10:45 am
Break 1	10:45 – 11:00 am
Session 1 Workshops	11:00 am – 12:00 pm
Break 2	12:00 – 12:15 pm
Lunch	12:15 – 1:15 pm
Break 3	1:15 – 1:30 pm
Session 2 Workshops	1:30 – 2:30 pm
Break 4	2:30 – 2:45 pm
Session 3 Workshops	2:45 – 3:45 pm
Exhibits Close	4:00 pm
Conference Ends	4:30 pm



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evaluation. The topics and speakers selected for our **47th Annual Meeting and Environmental Conference** were based on your suggestions, and we encourage you to be certain to add your comments to our **2024 conference evaluation** again this year when we return to the **Bristol Event Center (BEC)** for this special conference to celebrate our 50th Anniversary on **Saturday, November 16, 2024**. Watch our website for the additional detailed conference news at www.caciwc.org. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions about our conference at AnnualMtg@caciwc.org

2. Since 2024 is also the 50th anniversary of this publication, *The Habitat*, we ask conference attendees to also add suggestions for article topics to **question 12 of our 2024 conference evaluation** again this year. You can also send suggestion for content in the habitat to us via email, at: TheHabitat@caciwc.org or at board@caciwc.org. We will appreciate all your suggestions for our publication, including topics for articles on various items of interest to both conservation and inland wetlands commissioners and other content that you would like to see. Help us strengthen the value of *The Habitat* for your needs!

All of us on the CACIWC Board of Directors continue to thank you and your fellow commissioners and staff for your local efforts and your ongoing support. We hope that you will help us celebrate our 50th anniversary by joining us at our 2024 Annual Meeting and Environmental Conference on Saturday, November 16, 2024!

Thank you,
Alan J. Siniscalchi, President, CACIWC 🍀



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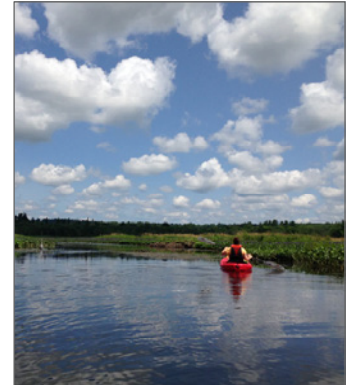
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Lunch break in the Bristol Event Center during our 2023 conference. Photo by Laura Magaraci. For our 2024 conference, the CACIWC Annual Meeting Committee has again selected this facility for a second year to provide our member commissioners and staff with its spacious banquet and workshop rooms, extra space for viewing our nonprofit and commercial exhibitor displays, opportunities for networking, and plenty of time to enjoy the Bristol Event Center's highly rated luncheon. Please join us again this year!



Our Practice Areas:

- Wetlands Permitting and Enforcement
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- Zoning Enforcement
- Site Plans
- Subdivisions
- Administrative Appeals
- Siting Council Approvals
- Complex Land Use Litigation



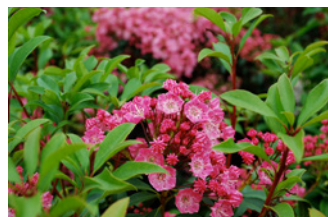
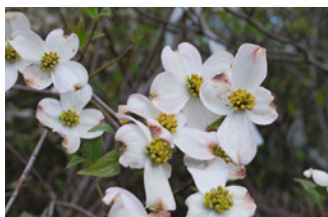
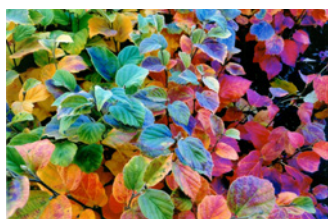
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Take the Latest CT DEEP State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) Survey!

Do you want to learn about and contribute to the 2025 revision of Connecticut's State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP)? These plans are developed to identify vulnerable species and habitats, threats affecting those species and habitats, and actions to address those threats. Many of you attended a workshop presented by Brian Hess of the DEEP Wildlife Division in our 2023 annual conference, entitled *"The Connecticut State Wildlife Action Plan: A Blueprint for Collaborative Conservation."* Brian will also be providing updates on Connecticut's Wildlife Action Plan to CACIWC members throughout 2025, including a detailed workshop at next year's Annual Meeting and Environmental Conference. We are encouraging all CACIWC members to participate in the latest SWAP survey, please see the invitation below and click on the links to participate!

Dear Colleagues,

As we continue to develop Connecticut's Wildlife Action Plan ([CT Wildlife Action Plan](#)), I can't help but reflect on how fortunate we are to have such a wealth of fish, wildlife and their habitats in our state. Given the issues that can impact those resources, however, there is much work for us to do together to ensure healthy, resilient ecosystems into the future. This is why I continue to pop up in your inbox.

I have asked a lot of you over the last year as Connecticut's Wildlife Action Plan has been taking shape. I assure you that the input received has been essential for developing Connecticut's Wildlife Action Plan. Recall that the first survey asked about your priorities related to Connecticut's Wildlife Action Plan and ways to engage you in the revision and implementation of the Plan. We reviewed all of the input and have incorporated many comments into the revised plan. For example, many partners felt that the Plan

should have a clear vision, goals and objectives, we agreed and so we asked you again in a second survey for specific feedback. That input resulted in changes to the vision, goals and objectives which you will see in the upcoming issue of the Connecticut Wildlife Action Plan Partners Newsletter.

Today, we are launching a third survey of key partners to help develop the Plan further. We are interested in your specific input about which habitats, issues, and actions you believe to be most important. Your completion of this survey ([CT SWAP Survey](#)) is needed to help identify highest priorities for the Plan.

If your organization doesn't work directly with fish, wildlife, or land management for the purpose of conservation and recreation, you may ask yourself "why does DEEP keep asking me for input?" Well, here's why. I believe wholeheartedly that the successful implementation of Connecticut's Wildlife Action Plan depends on the people of our state finding value in fish, wildlife and their habitats. The same issues that prevent wildlife from thriving often prevent people from thriving. Your collective insight into the needs, interests and concerns of the broad communities you serve is critical to connecting the Plan to those to whom it belongs.

Thank you in advance for taking approximately 15 minutes to complete this important survey ([CT SWAP Survey](#)) that closes on December 20. Please let me know if you have any questions or comments on this survey by contacting me at : Brian.Hess@ct.gov.

Brian Hess
Wildlife Biologist
Bureau of Natural Resources; Wildlife Division
Connecticut Department of Energy &
Environmental Protection 🌿



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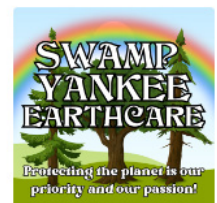
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