**The Fryeburg Conservation Committee Annual Report 2022**

We are a group of people that care about the natural resources of Fryeburg and especially the opportunities for finding a balance to promote both outdoor recreation and natural resource conservation. We meet on the 4th Wednesday of the month at 7pm at the American Legion to work the following mission:

*The Mission of the Fryeburg Conservation Committee is to restore, protect, and improve public access to Fryeburg’s publicly owned spaces by working with town departments, boards, and committees, and by enlisting volunteers. Through cooperation with landowners, we hope to encourage these same goals on private property. We work to create opportunities for all citizens to learn about and enjoy our natural resources.*

One accomplishment that we would like to highlight is the ***Fryeburg Town Forest Biodiversity Project***, freely hosted on the iNaturalist platform\*. This citizen science project allows visitors to the Fryeburg Town Forest to contribution photographic observations of flora and fauna encountered while enjoying the trails. It serves as an ongoing bioblitz, which is a biological survey to record a comprehensive inventory of the fungi, plants and animals that utilize the forest, fields, and aquatic habitats of the property. To date, seven observers have contributed 74 observations for a total of 44 species (full list presented in appendix)

To support this project the committee purchased three digital trail cameras which have been deployed to document wildlife in our forest. Using these wildlife research tools, 47 of the 74 observations noted above, representing 21 species, have been contributed to the project.

**Other Projects and Accomplishments of 2022**

* Collaborated with town manager, select board and public works department to develop a parking lot at the Town Forest.
* Improved a portion of the Town Forest Trail by having the path leveled and widened to allow easier access for all.
* Coordinated student volunteers from the Pequawket Alternative School and Recon Trail LLC to complete the 3rd Bridge.
* Seeded a pollinator garden in the Town Forest Parking Lot with hand collected seeds collected from neighborhood properties.
* Stumped, graded, seeded, and mulched the footprint of an open-air learning center, and installed three rustic benches.
* Held a *Name the Chestnut Trees Contest* with prizes for local schools & the greater community.
* Facilitated Fryeburg’s contribution to Valley Pride Day.
* Hosted a community brainstorm event at Saco River Brewing as a requirement towards joining Maine’s Community Resiliency Partnership allowing us to apply for and win substantial grant money for project implementation.
* Partnered with Upper Saco Valley Land Trust on securing a conservation easement for the Jockey Cap property.

The Fryeburg Conservation Committee is dedicating this year’s accomplishments to Gena Spencer. She especially loved to be in the forest when the student volunteers were making trail improvements. Her enthusiasm for the work supercharged our committee and we will miss her very much.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherri Billings ∙ Donna Girard ∙ Allison Leach ∙ Nels Liljedahl ∙ Jennifer Rullman ∙ Stan Rullman

**Appendix 1**

**Fryeburg Town Forest Biodiversity Project Species List**

\*[**https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/fryeburg-town-forest-biodiversity-project**](https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/fryeburg-town-forest-biodiversity-project)

**(iNaturalist records only listed here)**

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| --- | --- |
| **Mammals** White-tailed deer Moose North American porcupineAmerican red squirrelEastern gray squirrelEastern chipmunkSnowshoe hareCommon raccoonAmerican black bearCoyoteRed foxLong-tailed weasel Virginia opossum **Birds** Wild turkey Northern flickerAmerican crowBlue jay Black-capped chickadee Gray catbirdAmerican robin Hermit thrushCommon grackle**Amphibians** American toad | **Invertebrates** River jewelwing (damselfly) Carolina grasshopper Willow pinecone gall midge Polyphaga (beetle) Sculptured pine borer (beetle) Rosy maple mothSpongy mothOrbweaver (spider)**Trees** Silky dogwood Staghorn sumac Silver maple Striped maple Gray birch**Herbaceous plants**Sheep laurel Flat-topped goldenrod Asters Flat top white aster Virgin’s bower Sunflowers  Common yarrow American groundnut Trailing arbutus**Fungi** Witch’s butter (fungi) |

