

Action Points: “From Planning to Action: Biodiversity Conservation in Connecticut Towns– Metropolitan Conservation Alliance Technical Paper No. 10”

as summarized and augmented by Farmington River Watershed Association (version 3)

Action Point	Details of action / reasoning	Refs to handbook/Statutes
Acquire and maintain appropriate natural resource data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make use of Farmington Valley Biodiversity Project recommendations. • Inventory and map natural resources - this may include using volunteers to collect data on special habitats such as vernal pool data etc. • Use technical resources to display & share data. • Incorporate data into town Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD) and incorporate results into goals, policies and land use regulations. • Establish priority areas for preservation or ecologically sensitive development. • Ideally Conservation Commission takes lead for town in considering and implementing recommendations. 	Ch1/pg7/q1 and Ch 12/pg33
Plan at an ecosystem scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider IMA (inter-municipal agreement) - states both values of resources and formal commitment to work together to achieve planning and protection goals across town boundaries. 	Ch 2/pg11 CGS 7-339a
Update POCD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be a roadmap to achieve conservation goals. • Incorporate specific findings, recommendations and goals concerning ecologically sensitive areas. • Outline site priorities for protection and how exactly the goals will be achieved. 	Ch 10/pg 29 CGS 8-23 and see P.A. 06-17
Align regulations with POCD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current regulations for consistency with POCD. • Prioritize updates. 	Pg 35
Implement zoning techniques to conserve ecologically sensitive and important areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use commissions broad authority to implement progressive zoning. , e.g., require or provide incentives for cluster development (perhaps combined with up-zoning) in sensitive areas. • Protect sensitive areas with overlay zones. • Transfer development rights away from priority conservation areas. • Establish conservation development zones that require ~50% open space set-asides (potentially combined with cluster options). 	Ch 3/pg14 CGS 8-18 Ch 9/pg 28 CGS 8-2e 8-2f Ch9/pg 28

<p>Expand Open Space Programs *</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize ecologically sensitive and important areas for open space acquisition. • Encourage the use of conservation easements/purchase of development rights or fee acquisition to protect important areas. • Use/increase conservation subdivision options and increase open space set-aside requirements/incentives. • Seek alternate sources of open space funding – e.g. state, federal or regional programs, real estate transaction tax (if/when state legislation allows), local bonds, etc. 	
<p>Institute Separate IWWC and Conservation Commissions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separate commission for regulating land use vs. conservation of resources/ • <i>Time commitments prevent coverage of conservation issues (because Inland Wetlands Commissions are regulatory by law, regulatory matters tend to dominate in an all-in-one commission).</i> 	<p>Ch1/pg7 and CACIWC position papers</p>
<p>Adopt specific ecological review standards for applicants.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and incorporate standards for collection of natural resources data by applicants in order to facilitate design review. • <i>Would shorten most application times and serve the applicant as well as the public.</i> 	<p>Ch 5/pg18</p>
<p>Adopt provision for applicants to fund outside expert review</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pass town ordinance allowing for flexible fee schedule based on application size and complexity. • Encourage commissions to make use of these fees to hire outside/specialized consultants in order to obtain a comprehensive and expert review of the site/application at hand. • <i>The additional review made possible by these fees can greatly improve a site plan for applicant, town and environment.</i> • <i>Collection of these fees ultimately saves time and money for the applicant as well as saves significant tax dollars spent on private applications.</i> 	<p>Ch6/pg20 CGS 8-1c, 22a-42a(e),</p>

<p>Provide for pre-application review process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage pre-application meetings/collaboration between applicants, town staff and interested third parties (unbiased resource experts, local organizations etc). • Incorporate into POCD and individual regulations. • Establish incentives and standards for pre-application review - especially in conservation areas. • <i>A collaborative pre-application process tends to decrease the application timeline (red flag issues are often avoided), bring new/better ideas to the table and increase the quality of the site plan from the perspective of all interested parties.</i> 	<p>Ch4/pg16 CGS 7-159b</p>
<p>Incorporate BMP's and BDP's into standard application review and permitting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline relevant/desired BMP's and BDP's in POCD or regulations. • Provide easy access to information on these tools so that commissions and staff may guide site design review. 	<p>Pg 35</p>
<p>Reduce use of mitigation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce use of mitigation on site-by-site basis. • Look at big picture. • Rank preference for mitigation in regulations as low. 	<p>Ch 8/pg 24, pg 26</p>
<p>Train and Educate Land Use commissioners and Staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote/require initial and continued training for land use commissioners & staff (CACIWC, DEP, LULA, NEMO, etc). • Provide incentives to applicants and local land use professionals to do land use certification / LULA training. • <i>Technically proficient commissions have more latitude in guiding site plan review</i> • <i>Better education results in better process and outcome for both conservation and development issues.</i> 	<p>Ch 7/pg 22</p>
<p>Increase review, compliance and monitoring effort</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide adequate staff time for pre-application process as well as thorough site plan review. • Provide staff time to monitor and regulate permit compliance. • Specify how sites should be monitored. 	<p>Ch 11/pg 31</p>
<p>Reach out to landowners in conservation areas to promote ecologically friendly behavior</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with existing municipal programs, local schools and non-profit to foster "sustainable" behavior (e.g, organic fertilizer use, removal of invasive species etc). 	<p>Pg 35</p>
<p><i>NOTE: The "Action Points" content of this summary has primarily been taken from " From Planning to Action: Biodiversity Conservation in Connecticut Towns, WCS/MCA Technical Paper No. 10. By Michael W. Klemens, Marjorie F. Shansky and Henry J. Gruner, MCA 2006" except "Open Space". The "Details of Action / Reasoning" information has been adopted from both the MCA handbook and FRWA staff research and experience.</i></p>		