

# CF Natural Resources Stewardship Committee News

Keeping Wildlife Wild, Protecting Water Quality, and Protecting Native Habitats

## An Anniversary Celebration

It has been four years since the CFPOA Board established the Natural Resources Stewardship Committee (NRSC) as a permanent committee on November 3, 2021 with the authority to “develop, update, communicate and implement a Natural Resources Stewardship Plan. The Stewardship Plan will be used by the Board, management, and all committees, clubs, and organizations within the community as the basis of planning and decision making to ensure the long-term sustainability of these important natural resources. Natural resources include plant communities, freshwater communities, and terrestrial/aquatic wildlife.” ([NRSC Chartered Responsibilities and Duties](#))



*The NRSC On Lake Ticoa 2025  
AJ Longware, Roger Witmer, Graham Smith,  
Kathryn Hill, Ray Jackson, Janet Saucier,  
and Paco Candal.*

The NRSC worked with Equinox to conduct an inventory to identify the hundreds of species of flora, fauna and special natural features within Connestee. The [Natural Resources Inventory \(NRI\)](#), which was completed in February 2023 served as a baseline assessment of forested natural communities. The NRI included age, health assessment, notable components, a description of the type, quantity, and quality of forest, stream and wetland habitats, as well as species of wildlife present and absent. This information provided the committee with a better understanding of what needed to be considered while developing a long term stewardship plan.

The NRSC accomplished a major goal in March 2024 when the Board approved the Natural Resources Stewardship Plan (NRSP), which is a strategic framework to promote the responsible management and conservation of our natural resources. Its development was and will continue to be a collaborative effort between the Natural Resources Stewardship Committee (NRSC) and outside experts, as well as CF stakeholders, including administration and staff, permanent committees, clubs, organizations, and the general membership. ([NRSP Overview](#) and [NRSP Document](#))

One primary goal of the NRSP is to protect native habitats, both land and water. Beginning in the fall of 2023, the committee worked with EcoForesters to conduct a [CF Forest Study](#), who then completed a [CF Forest Management Plan](#) in August, 2025. The NRSC anticipates the work that was recommended in the FMP will begin in early 2026. Also to protect water quality and habitat, the NRSC Lake Management Subcommittee worked with Clemson University to begin a [Lake Management Study](#) to collect data that will be used to develop a long term Lake Management Plan.

The NRSC thanks both past and present committee members, for their time and commitment to the committee’s stewardship efforts. There are three members serving on the committee from the start, who have met their term limits and are retiring. We thank Graham Smith, for his steadfast leadership and “getting us out of the weeds” when necessary; AJ Longware for her dedication to organizing natural resources educational publications and events; and Roger Witmer for his commitment to treating hundreds of Hemlocks and organizing the Lake Management Subcommittee Initiatives. We also thank Kathryn Hill, for her time writing critical outreach materials.

# BEARS IN NOVEMBER

## From the NRSC and BearWise

### Bears Still Eating More, Sleeping Less

Hyperphagia is in full swing as bears may be awake and searching for food for up to 20 hours a day. Many bears also look for den sites. Even bears that won't hibernate until December still industriously look for food practically around the clock and eat as much as they can find. For a bear, there's no such thing as "too fat." All those pounds of fat reserves will keep bears healthy all winter long. Food and food odors attract bears, so don't reward them with easily available food, liquids or garbage.

### Den-Up Isn't Predictable

The bear calendar is driven less by dates and more by available food, weather and the general health and condition of the bear. In poor food years female bears may den-up by late October or November; big males may stay out of their dens and search for food until late December or early January. If you don't take that bird feeder down, they will and they do not care if they destroy it.

### Climate Matters

Bears in northern climates generally enter their dens earlier than bears in the more temperate South or the warmer regions of the Southwest. In areas and at elevations where winter is knocking on the door, bears are seriously looking for winter quarters and may enter their dens by the end of October.

### You can help to prevent problems for the hard-working bears in your area.

- Review the [BearWise Basics for Home](#) and [Outdoors](#).
- Make sure anything that might attract a bear is safely out of sight, smell and reach.
- Be extra alert when driving or walking at night.
- Check the yard before letting out your pets.
- Know what to do if you encounter a bear.
- Share what you know with neighbors and others in your community.

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