

JOHNSON CONSERVATION COMMISSION...Oct. 15, 2013...6:30 PM at the Library

Present: Lois Frey, Eric Nuse, Sue Lovering, Noel Dodge, Jeanne Engel, Carley Coolidge, Jackie Stanton

Absent: Ann Marie Bahr, Julia Stanton

Guests: Cynthia Perry, Doug Molde, Steve Libby

RE: GOMO TOWN FOREST

Roy Marble is in the process of brush hogging the fields at Gomo. Unfortunately, the only way he can access the field around the house foundation is from the Waterville side, due to the road damage caused by ATVs. Eric cut some trees in order to facilitate Roy's work. He reports that the apple and beechnut crop are good and that 27 deer rubbings were found on sprouts.

ATV riders have begun a third trail on woodland to replace the two roads already destroyed. A resident near the Gomo's entry recorded 70 ATVs on a game camera in a 24 hour period. We discussed with Doug Molde that actions could be taken by the Selectboard to curtail ATV misuse of the property and agreed that the riding on town land off the original road must stop.

Regarding the proposed loop trail connecting the existing trail with the Long Trail on Laraway: Eric drafted and will sign a letter with supporting documentation to Diana Fredericks of Forests, Parks, and Recreation explaining our intention to create this trail. This is the same trail identified by the LANDS students this past August. We may establish another connecting trail that would tie in cultural aspects and the view. Both of these would be unavailable to ATV use. The State's concern, as well, is that ATVs stay off the Long Trail. It's hoped that it will be possible to begin work in the spring of 2014.

Doug also suggested the Recreation Committee might get involved.

JOURNEY'S END

Steve Libby, from the River Conservancy, tells us that all final documents have been submitted to the Conservation Board and the closing should take place within three weeks. The Selectboard has designated Eric Osgood as the authority to deal with the closing.

A Baseline Documentation Report has been drafted as well as an Interim Management Plan. The Interim Plan can be amended over time but currently calls for realigning the entry trail to be within the new boundaries, creating a new parking area, and bridge building on the trail's wet areas. The town can help out with the parking area and providing fill. A finalized Management Plan will be emailed to us, with the Conservation Commission named as co-authors. We will let Eric know if we want changes made.

Lydia Menendez, of VRC, has been speaking with JSC about using students to steward the area and help develop the trail.

The closing package will be sent to Lois Frey and Duncan Hastings.

How to celebrate the closing was discussed, which included suggestions that the Studio Center might host a “do” or that a party could take place at the brook. Some thought that no party is necessary. At a minimum, donors need to be informed that the goal has been reached and perhaps a plaque can be erected on site that recognizes the bigger donors.

“READING VERMONT’S RIVERS”

Doug passed out copies of the VNRC’s newsletter which contained the article “Reading Vermont’s Rivers”. Doug realizes we’re some busy but thought we might like to read up on it and get involved. The jury is still out.

EAB PREPAREDNESS PLANNING

The Ash Borer Preparedness informational meeting happened on Oct. 2 and was attended by 19 people from Johnson, Cambridge, Hyde Park, Morrisville, and the Lamoille County Planning Commission. Good information was presented by Jay Lackey from Forest, Parks, and Recreation but not enough time was had for much discussion at the end. The next meeting will be held at the Municipal Building on Wed. The 23d of October.

Doug suggested sending pertinent information to the Selectboard before they meet again so they might be better prepared to discuss this issue. Sue will take care of that.

CYNTHIA GETS SUCKED IN

Cynthia Perry, mother of our own Shelby, would like to join us and we’d love to have her. As soon as an opening is available, she’ll apply. Can’t say she wasn’t warned.

MISC:

At the next meeting we’ll look at maps concerning wildlife connectivity.

Dave Marvin has bought the 120 acre Alexander property.

Butternut Mountain Farm will add 2000 taps on the Parker and Stearns property.

Adjourned at 8:45 PM. Next meeting is on Tuesday, Nov. 12 at the Municipal Building at 6:30 PM.

Submitted by Sue Lovering, Secretary.