

Fayston Natural Resources Committee
September 11, 2012
Minutes

Present: Ky Koitzsch, Lisa Koitzsch, Cory Stephenson, Ned Kelley, Stan Button, Gene Fialkoff, Kristin Sharpless, Liza Walker

ACTION ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

Cory: Send Kristin's notes re: Chase Brook to FNRC members

EVERYONE: Read Chase Brook Town Forest Plan and review ACTION ITEMS compiled by Ky (sent via e-mail)

1. Forest Bird Habitat Initiative

Kristin Sharpless from Audubon Vermont spoke with FNRC about the group's Forest Bird Habitat Initiative. Audubon works with private landowners to assess, manage, enhance and protect forests for the "Birder's Dozen", a group of birds that represents a mix of habitat types in the northeastern forest. Kristin had conducted a survey with Cory and Lisa a few weeks ago and shared her findings with our group. Chase Brook is part of a larger 300 acre contiguous forested habitat parcel and is composed of mainly mature northern hardwood species. While the habitat is relatively uniform, there is a variety of structure (high canopy, lower shrub canopy, etc.) within the forest. Kristin noted that the easy access to the Chase Brook Forest will lead to great opportunities for educational programs and projects. She touched on a community firewood program, an enclosure project to show how deer browse impacts the lower levels of the forest structure, a series of transects for a spring bird count, and E-Bird, an on-line checklist for community members to document the birds they observe.

Kristin also spoke to FNRC about our current Forest Management Plan for Chase Brook. Several of the FNRC Board felt that the document is not accessible enough for the general public. Kristin mentioned that a guiding plan for management is missing from our plan and offered to help FNRC develop one. Ky said that he had developed an action item list that he extracted from information in the plan and the group decided to review this list before contracting with Kristin to do any outreach work at this time.

2. Bragg Farm

Liza Walker from the Vermont Land Trust provided an update on the conservation of the iconic Bragg Farm and the 40+ acres of surrounding farm land. Closing on the property was on August 30th and VLT will be entertaining proposals from farmers in the next month. There will be two open houses for interested parties to visit the barn, house and land. It was confirmed again that money from our Fayston Conservation Reserve Fund has been earmarked for this project.

3. Tri-town Conservation Meeting

The meeting will be held on September 17th, 2012 at the Knoll Farm. Lisa will follow-up with phone calls to Waitsfield and Warren CCs.

Draft Agenda

- 1) Introductions
- 2) Updates from each town
- 3) Discussion re: how conservation projects are selected by each town
- 4) Discussion on the Mad River Valley Trails collaborative
- 5) Discussion of posted land throughout the Valley

4. Fayston Town Plan

The Planning Commission has contacted FNRC for help on the natural resource section of the Town Plan. Since their meeting coincides with the tri-town conservation meeting on the 17th, Cory will contact them to ask for a little more

time. In the meantime FNRC will provide some basic feedback regarding the plan, most specifically the need to use the maps developed by the Forest Wildlife and Communities Project.

5. Minutes

Minutes were approved from the August 2012 meeting.

6. Next FNRC meeting will be on Tuesday, October 11, 2012 at 7:00pm at the offices of Alces Post & Beam.

ACTION ITEMS FROM AUGUST MEETING (not yet completed?)

- Ky: Ask Liza what the benefits are to granting a trail easement on your land
- Speak with Mike Marino about the possibility of allowing access to his land
- Talk to Karyn Alman about a window/door plan for the barn
- Speak to the Rotary Club about providing materials and labor for barn doors
- Follow-up with Fish & Wildlife re: posted property
- Help Stan dig a footing for post in the barn
- Stan: Mow perimeter of barn and help weed-whack property
- Set up a Google Calendar for the barn and FNRC activities
- Cory: Contact Stark Mountain Foundation re: conservation fund
- Lisa: Pick up trail map at the Wait House
- Talk to Fayston re: mowing along road near barn and in barn parking area
- Ned: Contact Mad River Path Association about mowing near the barn