Fayston Conservation Commission Minutes
Wednesday, May 27, 2026
Fayston Municipal Office

1. **Meeting called to order at 5:47pm** - In attendance - Andrea Henderson, Brian Litmans, Peter Colgan, Woody Dugan and Kim Phelan
2. **April minutes approved** unanimously, except for Brian, who was absent from the last meeting.
3. **McCullough Barn Rental Policy and Application** recommended updates - some discussion of rental deposit fees and marking Porta-let locations. Decided to leave as is. Updated remainder for Leave No Trace usage. Will send to Madi and Selectboard for approval.
4. **Project updates**
    a. **MRV Bear Initiative** –
        - Green Valley Rally/Bear Fair. - about 125 people attended and checked out lower level stations (electric fencing, bear-proof dumpsters, native plants); more looked at general bear info/handouts at upper level. MRVBI's suggestion for next year is to have one tabling location rather than upper and lower, as this year. There was a suggestion to move the entire Green Valley Rally/Bear Fair event next year to the lower level behind the MRVCC, as the front area feels crowded. There could be a greeting station up top.
        - MRVBI will be tabling at Farmer's Markets along with Knotweed. The Bear Baiting petition was voted down almost unanimously by Fish and Wildlife, and they will be voting at the June meeting on shooting sows with cubs. Lots of CC input against the petition from across the state.
    b. **Invasives/Knotweed** – Andrea participated in the 3rd Vermont Introduced Species Collaborative Gathering in Montpelier on May 8th.
        - UVM advisors Mariano Rodriguez-Cabal and Noelia Barrios-Garcia will provide an overview of invasive species ecology, invasive species management, and habitat restoration to Susannah Cowden's Earth Sciences Harwood students on May 28th at Harwood, followed by an outdoor class on June 1 with students and interns for hands-on work.

UVM project coordinator measurement plot work started May 25th, and interns' first day is June 1st; new knotweed sickles will be ordered for the season.

- Knotweed removal is focused on select areas where we can make an impact - certain spots are dangerous with traffic. Measurement metrics involve mapping of plots that are staked with rebar, where we take annual measurements - presence of knotweed, biomass of knotweed, presence of other natives/invasives, diameter of knotweed stems, amount of time to manage infestations, etc.
- Upcoming Wednesday Knot Work Party dates are below and will be posted on the Bee app, FPF, and in the summer newsletter.
    1. June 3 - 12-6pm, including Knot Work Party 4-6pm
    2. June 17 - 12-6pm, including Knot Work Party 4-6pm
    3. June 24 - Fayston 8am-2pm (no Knot Work Party)
    4. July 8 - 8am-2pm, incl midday Knot Work Party 12-2pm
    5. July 22 - 8am-2pm, incl midday Knot Work Party 12-2pm
    6. Aug 5 - 12-6pm, including Knot Work Party 4-6pm
    7. **Interns will table with us at 3+ Farmers Markets** - dates TBD, likely June 13, July 11, Aug 1

c. **Boyce Hill –** The goats were at Boyce Hill for 6-7 days. The outcome was slightly different than what we expected - we had hoped a little more woody material would be eaten, and the timing for Reed Canary Grass was perhaps off. We were surprised at how quickly the goats moved from one area to another. There is leftover hay we can use to mulch problem areas. Unfortunately, there were immediate problems with the belts on the new brush mower. New belts have been ordered, and a complaint was filed. We will coordinate with James Patterson of LD Trailworks on ideas for the Spur Trail in the fall when he is available.

d. **Chase Brook Mgmt Plan** - Not many updates. Need to finalize the Management Recs. Brian will set up a schedule for completion to get a full CC review of the plan in early fall and be ready to go public in late fall.

e. **Chase Brook Maintenance** - New pollinator garden weeding, seeding, and planting scheduled for Sunday, May 31, at 9 am. Andrea purchased Native Northeast Wildflower Seed Mix from

American Meadows. CCs and the Vermont Master Naturalist 23/24 Pollinator Project cohort are donating native plants.
McCullough Barn Powder Post Beetle treatment dates are scheduled for June 10th, 9-10 am, and August 5th, 9-10am, around the Fayston Forest Camp dates. FES principal Justina Boyden was notified to confirm there were no conflicts with planned student use of the barn. Mowing is ongoing.

f. **Wildlife Corridors** - Community wildlife program info on wildlife corridors. Woody attended the last Planning Commission meeting to check on sections and edits to the Town Plan that would be appropriate for us to comment on. We need ways to engage - Brian to check in. Suggestion to act as individuals on the Fayston survey - no listed closing date. Fayston Town Plan Survey.

g. **Conservation and Recreation Visioning** - Attitude of Gratitude Event is June 11 at 6 pm at the Big Pic, where the film will be screened, and there will be opportunities for folks to discuss what groups are doing with CRV. The next CRV meeting is June 3. An issue is that there is no funding for CRV. The big question is what comes next - the group needs to determine priorities/share upcoming activities.

5. **Other business**
   a. **Summer Newsletter** - would like to get out Knotweed Knot Work Party dates, etc., in the next 2 weeks with goat updates, and plug the Fayston Town Plan Survey. Could also include a link to the CRV video. Goal: get the newsletter to Madi by Tuesday, June 9, for emailing on June 10.
   b. **Knotweed Project Group** will meet regularly to integrate with FOMR and other groups. There is a meeting scheduled on June 15 and one TBD.
   c. **Conservation Easements/Land Trusts** - There is a June 4 gathering organized by Curt Lindberg, Jito Coleman, and Andrea at Lareau Farm Inn, hosted by George Schenk, to discuss ideas for creating a local land trust. Curt and Jito have been meeting with VT Land Trust and various organizations. Andrea and Brian will attend.
   Suggestion to pull together what is very confusing info about Land Trusts into a table explaining requirements/benefits. That way, people could find info easily and perhaps coordinate with neighbors to link properties, for example, in similar conservation units.
6. **Next Meeting: June 24, 2026 at 5:45pm**
7. **Meeting adjourned at 7:02pm.**