

**MINUTES OF MEETING
CONWAY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
October 12, 2011**

The Oct. meeting of the Conway Conservation Commission convened at 6:30 p.m. at the Whitaker Homesite in North Conway, NH. Members present were: Paul Pinkham, David Weathers, Carol Lyman, Larry Huemmler, and Linda Kearney. Dan Lucy joined the meeting at 6:55 p.m. Also present was Forester, Donald Johnson.

1. Approval of Minutes 9/14/11: Notation was made by Ms. Kearney that on Pg. 3, Item 4, b., last sentence should have read “*He said there has been question....*” Mr. Weathers noted correction to Pg. 1, Item 3, d., 2nd sentence should have read “*...which will include the repair of the banking and scouring, and removing the trees.*” And on Pg. 2, 4th full para., 2nd sentence should have read “*...taking out the stuff that is sitting on the surface, and removing the gravel, making a smooth transition....*” **Motion by Ms. Kearney, second by Mr. Weathers, that the Minutes of the Sept. 14th meeting be approved as amended. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

2. Public Comment: None.

3. Reports:

a. Don Johnson- Mr. Johnson reported the Brontosaurus machine is doing the clearing on the common lands. He met with the operator on Tues. morning to guide them up the mountain; however, there was some concern where the bridge is to the old landing site - they did fine, but the bridge did not hold and broke in half. He noted ten years is beyond the useful limit of any log bridge in this area. He said the machine was able to keep going and made it up the mountain. Mr. Johnson shuttled the fuel to him. He reported there do not seem to be any more mountain bikes coming through which is good because the debris from the machine flies quite a distance. Mr. Johnson noted they have one more day to go as per the agreement (3 days); however, he could see that was not going to get done what had been planned.

He stated he reworked the budget to see if they could squeeze out another day with the budget we have. He noted to date the town has spent \$4475 out of a budget of \$14,550, leaving a balance of \$10,075. With additional expenses: Mr. Johnson’s supervision of the Bronto and fuel shuttle, ATV rental; one additional day (\$1500), removal of broken bridge (about \$1,000), removal of debris from Red Tail Trail (\$150), would be a total of \$8200, taking into account small grants (\$2,000) leaves \$6200, plus annual consulting (\$1,500).

Whitaker Woods Trail budgeted at \$2350, mowing Whitaker Woods Trail \$500. – total anticipated expenses \$10,550, leaving an overdraft of about \$475 on the budget. Mr. Johnson said Pudding Pond white pine release is not critical this year and he did not include it.

Mr. Johnson said he is requesting to know if it is O.K. with CCC to forego the release work in Pudding Pond, and whether they could approve the Bronto for an additional day. He stated Mr. Brown has agreed to do it for the same price (\$1500) - that still leaves money for trail rebuilding and mowing.

Mr. Pinkham commended Mr. Johnson for his creativity on the budget, noting we have spent thousands of dollars in Whitaker Woods in rebuilding, etc., and he wonders whether we need to spend \$2350 this year. He said we are getting a bill from The Nature Conservancy for \$2,000 (budgeted \$1500). He questioned whether Whitaker Woods could live with \$1500, pointing out we have been spending an average of \$5,000 per year for the last ten years there. He stated we have this opportunity to do something, getting the machine in and out of there is not a small achievement, we should ensure that we get done what was intended to be done. Mr. Pinkham said we have the ability to use money from the Hubbard-Davis Fund for forest management work in other forests as well - we would spend additional money, but it would come from the Hubbard-Davis Fund. Mr. Weathers he did not feel it would be an accounting problem. He added that he does not feel we should spend any more on Whitaker Woods Trail if we do not have to for a year. **Motion was made by Ms. Kearney, seconded by Mr. Huemmler, to keep the Brontosaurus machine for another day. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

As regards the disposition of the broken bridge, Mr. Johnson said unless we can find a home for it, we will need to leave it on the side of the channel. He feels it can be done with a log truck which would be the easiest and safest way to do it. Mr. Weathers questioned whether he is planning to replace it in the future. Mr. Pinkham noted that when we did the timber harvest there, the intent was to remove the bridge. Mr. Weathers said he would like to see it removed and hauled off. He noted once removed we may end up stone-foording the channel and use that in place of a new bridge to gain access into the wood lot.

Mr. Johnson stated the moose and deer have been really using these openings – the area is beaten down.

Mr. Johnson reported there seems to be new excavation still going on in there for minerals – holes 10' to 12' across, 4' to 5' deep within 40' of the Red Tail Trail. He feels they are blasting in there. He suggested putting up a game camera for surveillance. Mr. Weathers said he does not feel we would be able to stop it. He said he thinks there is something mentioned in the deeds about mining.

Mr. Johnson was advised to hold back on whatever he needs to do in Whitaker Woods and proceed with the Brontosaurus for an additional day.

Budget Proposal: Mr. Pinkham noted the proposed budget is \$4760 less than the previous year total budget and reflects the details provided by Mr. Johnson on the management plan; with \$9290 for Mr. Johnson's work and \$2,000 for TNC, other things remain basically the same.

Ms. Lyman questioned what property lines are to be done. Mr. Johnson said East Conway Common Lands – they should be done every ten years. Mr. Pinkham said they budgeted several years ago \$3,000 for surveying work, have been deferring that, but can probably wait a little longer - maintaining them rather than recreating them is a better philosophy.

Mr. Weathers questioned clearing near the former Elks Club (Scenic Overlook). Mr. Johnson stated there is more that could be done. Mr. Weathers noted it is a popular spot and maybe we should remove some of the trail work from the budget, spending for that next year, and maintain the Overlook this year.

Ms. Lyman noted you are cutting out the white pine release work at Pudding Pond and it does not appear next year in the budget. Mr. Johnson said the management plan for the common lands in East Conway would bring that up to tree farm status. He suggested it might be a good place to trade off, suggesting they move the common lands management plan and put \$1700 into the Pudding Pond release. Mr. Johnson said he would still like to get into Pudding Pond this fall, we know where the State's corridor is, so there is no reason why the timber could not be marked and contact made with the two parties that would like to entertain bids on it. Mr. Pinkham said we have \$2040 budgeted for next year for the common lands management plan, suggestion is we go back into Pudding Pond as a replacement of that. Mr. Johnson stated you do not have to go in immediately after a harvest and do release work – you have a couple of years.

It was estimated the work Mr. Weathers suggested for the Scenic Overlook would be about \$1700. Mr. Weathers suggested even if they could get the crew in there for one day's work it would be a help. Mr. Johnson estimated that to be about \$750.

Summary: \$1600 for trail improvement; \$1750 for white pine release at Pudding Pond, \$750 for Scenic Overlook. **Motion made by Mr. Weathers, seconded by Ms. Kearney, to accept the revised budget as presented. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

Member Roundtable: Mr. Lucy questioned where we are at with the Hussey Field clean up. Mr. Weathers stated we have lost the seeding date so when the town crew finishes up fall projects they will go in there and remove trees, fixing the banking (if the river is not up), and pull that back. Mr. Lucy said he looked at the site after the last meeting and is confused as to where the seeding is going on. Mr. Weathers stated when they remove the gravel from the swale, anything that is exposed is still going to have to be seeded. Mr. Lucy feels they could go in with a light piece of equipment, get off what they can, and the grass will come back. Mr. Weathers said we do not know what it will look like until we get in there.

Mr. Lucy questioned where we stand with the \$50,000 proposal. Mr. Weathers stated two bids were submitted to do the work, nothing has been awarded. He said we were supposed to be reimbursed by FEMA, if we cannot come up with the money we are going to use the town crew to do the work. He said the \$50,000 contract is no longer on the table. Mr. Lucy summed up: The \$50,000 proposal is no longer, the town is to go in there and do what they can with light equipment.

Treasurer's Report – Ms. Lyman listed balances for four accounts as of August 31st. Printed copies will be distributed at the next meeting.

Return to Member Roundtable - Mr. Weathers noted Conway Scenic Railroad has been given a permit for Sawyer and Swift River work as follows: Stabilize Sawyer River Bridge abutments in Conway. The Swift River emergency work will include dredging approximately 400 linear feet of the channel to direct the alignment towards the bridge opening, and will include creating riverbanks adjacent to the newly dredged channel. In addition, stone armoring will be placed along the newly created banks and bridge abutments to further protect the bridge from additional scour. Due to the national and local disaster (Hurricane Irene) this work is allowed without a permit pursuant to Env Wt 503-01.

Mr. Weathers noted this was issued on Oct. 6th and will terminate Nov. 4th. He visited the site on Monday, his concern being how they are planning to stabilize that banking. He noted that what they were granted a permit for basically does not happen any more, but was an emergency declaration. His concern was they were not going to key it more. He told them if they were going to armor it they should get it 5' to 6' below brook bed to get a good base. They hope to be out of the main part of the river by today, it will take some time to do the rip rap. Mr. Weathers noted one of the twelve conditions of the permit is that appropriate siltation, erosion controls, turbidity, and sedimentation control shall be utilized.

Ms. Kearney said at the last meeting Mr. Adair was concerned about the trail behind the police station; she checked it out – Hurricane Irene did huge damage.

Mr. Huemmler said he has still not heard anything from the town regarding the Saco River Committee. Mr. Weathers said they have yet to set a date.

5. Next Meeting – November 9, 2011

6. Adjourn: Motion was made by Mr. Weathers, seconded by Mr. Huemmler and carried, that the meeting be adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gail T. Currier, Recording Secretary