

CONWAY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES - Revised
September 14, 2016

The September monthly meeting of the Conway Conservation Commission convened at 6:30 P.M. at the Whitaker Home Site Meeting House in North Conway.

Present: Chairman Rob Adair, Vice Chairman Larry Huemmler, Carol Lyman, Treasurer; Dan Lucy, Selectmen Representative Dave Weathers, Pat Ferland, Alternate; Forester Don Johnson, Theresa Gallagher, Recording Secretary

Absent: Linda Kearney, Karla Allen, Nat Lucy, Alternate

Also Attending: Chris Lewando, Alex Leich, NEMBA, Attorney Randall Cooper

1. **Approval of the Minutes 8/10/2016. Dan Lucy made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 10, 2016 CCC meeting as written; seconded by Dave Weathers. Chairperson Rob Adair asked for any discussion; None. He called for a vote to accept the minutes as written. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).**

2. Public Comment:

Proposed Boundary Line Adjustment w/ North Conway Community Center - Attorney Randy Cooper announced that according to RSA 41.14 (a) the Board of Selectmen can agree to convey acquired land as long as it gets input from the Conway Conservation Commission and the Planning Board. On a map of the North Conway Community Center he pointed out the parcels of land in discussion. There are three parcels of land that are jointly owned by the Town of Conway and the Community Center. The part that makes up the Norcross Circle is being offered to the Town of Conway; the Community Center will deed its interest in Parcel A to the Town. The Town will also be conveying its interest in Parcel C because that land has always been used. Parcel B will remain in both names. **Larry Huemmler made a motion to approve a parcel exchange, where the Town of Conway is solely acquiring Parcel A and the Community Center is solely acquiring Parcel C; seconded by Pat Ferland. Chairman Rob Adair called for a vote. Passed unanimously (5-0).**

3. Forester Don Johnson reported that the East Conway Common Lands timber cut went well. They cut about 25 acres of the 150 acres, and the Town received \$16,000 from the sale and \$2,000 from timber tax. The woodland is in good shape, but it is very dry. At the big landing he suggests seeding it with warm season grass rather than cool season grass. Dave Weathers said he has not seen warm seed grass do well and suggested the first week of September as the best time to do cool season grass; however, there is no moisture this year. He is willing to walk the area with Don Johnson.

4. Trail Committee Reports:

Chairman Rob Adair introduced NEMBA members, Chris Lewando and Alex Leich, to the Committee. They have done volunteer work on local trails in the area and have worked as professional trail builders. The proposed plan is to do some work on Hurricane Mountain

Common Lands. An agreement is in place with the Town of Conway and NEMBA to have multiple trails. Rob passed around NEMBA's proposal for work to be done on the trails. The first phase would be to remodel the Red Tail Trail at the landing, An excavator would be brought in to realign the trail through the landing and build tabletop mounds and bermed corners. The second phase would be to work on a technical expert level trail. Rob is asking for approval of the concept for this work. Red Tail Trail is mixed usage, but it is not easy. It's difficult to calculate how many people use the trails. Currently Chris has time to do the work on the first phase. Chris said that Red Tail Trail is an old trail and has some erosion on the bottom section. Doing the work on it would make it fun for expert riders and manageable for intermediate riders. Bringing in a trail that is specific for downhill will bring in more expert concentration and it would avoid conflicts with hikers. The plan is to maintain the trails with drainage and switchbacks. Grant money would be needed to do the phase three "flow trail" work. Right now there is good usage on the trails, but in the future overuse may become a problem; the Marshall Conservation Area has a growing number of hikers. **Rob Adair asked for approval for the proposed concept, and also for beginning the first stage of work on the bottom of Red Tail Trail. He has insurance on a volunteer using the excavation machine. Dan Lucy made a motion to accept the two concepts for work to be done as proposed, and to begin the work this Fall: The first phase is to remodel the Red Tail Trail through the landing. The second phase is to layout a technical expert level trail. Motion was seconded by Larry Huemmler. Chairman Rob Adair asked for further discussion; there was none. Passed unanimously (5-0).**

5. Marshall Conservation Area – Rob Adair discussed the T-bone connector trail being named "The Muzzy Trail" after Greg Muzerall. **He asked for a motion. Dan Lucy made a motion to name the trail after Greg, calling it "The Muzzy Trail"; seconded by Pat Ferland. Chairman Rob Adair asked for further discussion; there was none. Five voted in favor, one abstained. (5-1-0) Dave Weathers did not know Mr. Muzerall.**
6. The 2017 Budget was discussed. Dave Weathers would like to add to the budget doing more cutting at the scenic view on Route 16 by the Elks Club. It was agreed that the overgrowth is starting to block the view. Rob Adair will get an estimate for the work to be included in next year's budget.

Rob presented a proposed budget plan for 2017. The Town portion remains the same. After discussion Don Johnson's Forestry budget items were added.:

\$2,000 Nature Conservancy
750 Minutes
500 Dues to the NH Conservation Association
50 DOT Railroad crossing on West Side Road
12,650 Forest and Wetlands Management
\$15,950 Total

Forest and Wetlands Management Detail

- 550 DJ Brush saw on Shedd Woods (more because of the fencing that needs repairs)
- 2,100 DJ [White Pine Release](#) on Common Lands in East Conway
- 5,000 DJ [Hurricane Mountain Road wildlife openings](#)
- (4,000) Fish and Game Grant Revenue
- 500 DJ [Bowling Alley Hill Vista work](#)
- 350 DJ Checking boundaries on Pudding Pond
- 6,000 [Trail Development Marshall Conservation Area and Other Trails \(see below\)](#)
- 200 DJ Brush saw on Abenaki Trail
- 450 DJ Paint property lines Whitaker Woods
- 1,500 FLI Consulting - Meeting and consultations
- \$12,650 Total**

Also included but not accepted by the committee are \$2,750 for re-opening the old vista on Hurricane Road, and \$3,970 for a Forest Management Plan for the Marshall Conservation Area. After discussion it was agreed to keep \$6,000 (which includes grant money) for trail development. Dave Weathers suggested to include the revenue from the timber cut when presenting the budget, which will offset the expenses. The budget will be submitted to the Town on October 7th.

7. **Chairman Rob Adair asked for a motion to approve the 2017 Budget as proposed; Dave Weathers made the motion to approve the proposed 2017 Budget; seconded by Larry Huemmler. Chairman Rob Adair called for a vote. Passed unanimously (5-0).**

8. Selectmen's Report:

Dave Weathers said there is no report.

9. Round Table Discussion:

Larry Huemmler commented that the work done on the Marshall Conservation Area is excellent.

Carol Lyman will present the Treasurer's Report at the next meeting.

Next Meeting – The next meeting will be October 12, 2016 at 6:30 at the Whitaker Home Site Meeting House in North Conway.

Adjourn: Dan Lucy made a motion to adjourn at 8:06 P.M.; seconded by Rob Adair. Passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Theresa Ann Gallagher

Recording Secretary

Hurricane Mountain Road Common Lands Trails

Proposed Trail Plan

The 908-acre Hurricane Mountain Road Common Lands parcel currently contains one ~2.8-mile trail, the Red Tail Trail, constructed in 2001. A short portion of the Kettle Ridge trail (approximately ¼-mile) is also located within the Common Lands.

Proposed phases of trail construction are as follows:

- I. Red Tail Trail remodel – create a new alignment through and immediately above the landing area and machine-build “tabletop” mounds. Fall 2016
- II. Expert downhill-only technical trail – design and layout proposed one-way trail from Black Cap trail to landing. 2016-2017
- III. Bicycle-only access trail – create bicycle trail parallel to Black Cap hiking trail from Hurricane Mountain Road to Cranmore Trail to separate bike & pedestrian traffic. This would require State approval for lower section. 2 to 5 years depending on approval process
- IV. Downhill Flow Trail – Create machine-built one-way trail from Black Cap trail to landing. 3 to 5 years or as grant funding permits.
- V. Chatham access trail – The USVLT owns the Leita Monroe Lucas Preserve in Chatham, NH. USVLT has expressed an interest in connecting existing trails on the Lucas Preserve with Black Cap. 3 to 10 years or as USVLT schedule allows.

Design

Trails would be generally be built to U.S. Forest Service and the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) standards. Based on our walkthroughs and contour maps, there do not appear to be any wetlands or significant water drainage issues. Bridges may be required to cross gullies or ravines, depending on final layout.

Technical Trail Features

Trails would include optional technical trail features, consisting of natural obstacles (e.g. boulders, rocks & stumps) to provide interest and additional challenge for cyclists. These segments would be designed with alternates routes around them so users can avoid obstacles.

Maintenance & Signage

Trails would be designed and constructed to require minimal maintenance. NEMBA entered into a Memorandum of Understanding for the Red Tail Trail in 2001, which included provisions for multiple trails in this conservation area.

Trail signs be installed at each end of the new trail, as well as warning signs before technical trail features. NEMBA will be able to provide funding for such signs.

Cost

It is NEMBA's intention to not request funding from the town for these projects. Fund raising and trail grants would be sought as required.

Backcountry Skiing

1. Partner with Granite Backcountry Alliance, a local non-profit dedicated to developing a backcountry skiing trail network locally and statewide. Granite BC promotes the creation and development of ski “glades” which is a low-impact method for recreation. The group will focus on cutting brush, saplings and trees not larger than 3 inch diameter within a path of 20-40 feet. The larger trees and canopy remain ensuring the minimal ecological impact. Granite BC has volunteers available to perform glading under US Forest Service specification and code, to the extent applicable.
2. Develop the first “multi-sport” trail in the Valley on the Kettle Ridge Trail of approximately 600 vertical feet, some of which may run into Town Common Lands. Terrain is advanced-intermediate and is largely clear from prior cuttings although vegetation/bush/prickers may need to be removed in certain areas. Additional collaboration with USVLT and Cranmore (in addition to the Town and Granite BC) would make this a signature collaboration project and/or stepping stone to larger ‘multi-sport’ projects with the Town or other landowners such as the USFS.
3. Create ski glade and/or ‘multi-sport’ trail off Black Cap trail near summit on Town Common Lands toward Chatham. We explored the area last fall and there exists 400-500 vertical feet of east-facing thirty degree glade skiing opportunity. The existing forest is quite thin and dominated by saplings. The run then opens into more mellow areas recently logged by the Town which could serve as a connector to the second portion below the cut area turning to an intermediate pitch providing a runway to Corridor 19. Lots of interesting and exciting terrain above the corridor and an established exit in Corridor 19. Use of USVLT Leita Monroe Preserve for parking and trail connection will mitigate impact on Conway side of Hurricane and again add to the spirit of collaboration.
4. Create ski glade from the top of Hurricane Mountain summit north of the road approximately 500 vertical feet with existing run-out above The Nature Conservancy land. Light thinning and deadfall removal would clear the area for skiing.