

Conservation Commission Meeting 9/18/14

Commissioners present: Laura Replier, Lillabeth Weiss, John Bell, Nick Feitz, and Carl Shreder

Staff present: Steve Przyjemski, Susan Flint-Vincent

7:12 pm Rear Hampshire Lane (GCC 2014-18) RDA - NEW

Blanding Turtle Nest Creation - Removal of trees, import soil and grade in order to enhance a safe and alternative nesting area (< 1 acre) for species listed as "Threatened" by the Massachusetts Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program.

George Comisky, PRCWA

Mark Gregorivich, Biologist, researching Blanding Turtles in Georgetown

George: Advocates for restoration of the Parker River, and the ecology of the Parker River. One is the River Herring Project - important feeder fish for our fishing fleet, in Georgetown we are doing a Blue Bird Nest Box Project, Rare Species Project - Blandings Turtles Adult females 135 down to 60 in 30 years. Don't start breeding until 14-15 yrs. old. Natural predators, birds and frogs. Starting Head-start Program this year. Nest creation project. On Parcel in Hampshire Woods that ConCom manages.

Mark has worked in W. Newbury with successful Blandings Turtle Nest Creation.

Close up of project, owner of Industrial Park in Groveland, they will allow them to come through. Lot of people and ATV traffic. 300' from Industrial Park, ideal spot for nesting 100' outside the buffer. Suggested conditions, CR from Greenbelt exists, we have a letter with their endorsement. Surrounded by wetlands.

Carl: What will you be doing to make it ideal for nesting?

Mark, Sandy soil mixed w/ gravel and mounding up, will make ideal nesting sites.

Lillabeth: What will you do to create a nesting site?

Mark: Use trees as barriers, leaving brush to deter ATVs, and give the turtles cover. Use washed sand and gravel, only 5% vegetation regrowth after 5 years. We know the majority of the female turtles are going to nest in the Industrial Park.

George: We consider this a Net environmental benefit.

Mark: Putting together a grant this October for radio tracking collars and in a couple years we would put in a grant for maintaining site.

George: Fish and Wildlife are thinking about doing something similar on their own land.

Lillabeth: What is condition of the area now?

Mark: Flat, forested area.

George: Mostly oak, a couple of large pine, red maple