

## **Hanover Conservation Commission Trails Committee**

### **Draft minutes, January 10, 2012**

Present: Tom Linell, Doug McIlroy, Bill Mlacak, Peter Shumway, John Taylor, Stan Udy (visitor)

#### **Short items**

*Marshall Brook.* McIlroy described a Conservation Commission site visit to the old snowmobile trail (#37 on the trails map) crossing of Marshall Brook in the Bear Hill preserve. Ken Milkie would like to build a new bridge there, and Bear Hill is willing for that to happen. This is a substantial stream, requiring a span of at least 20 feet. The previous bridge, presumably derelict, was removed during logging operations, so the skidder could ford the stream. The old steel beams still lie nearby. Wetland permissions from the state and town will be required, but the road is in good shape and no technical obstacles to construction were identified. Milkie asked whether the town had a preference for kind of bridge: wood, steel, or culvert. Culvert was discouraged. It was noted that the smaller bridge on the same trail on town land would be quite pointless if this bridge were not built.

*Tree removals.* Larry Litten has cleared downed trees that were previously reported at Indian Ridge and Tanzi Tract.

*Signage forum.* UVTA will sponsor a trail-sign forum at Tracy Hall, February 15, in response to ongoing discussions about sign standards in the Commission, this committee and the Conservancy. Taylor invited examples (good and bad) to show there; Mlacak has access to a portfolio of field photos from the Conservancy.

*Trails day project.* The Commission's biodiversity committee proposes to organize an invasive-plant survey of the AT as a potential Trails Day activity. This would be over and above any more classical Trails-Day activity under the umbrella of the trails committee, and was seen as a complement to, not a diversion from, any trails-committee plans.

*General Trail Conditions.* Linell has cleared or confirmed the openness of much of the Ridge Trail. A major subdivision has been proposed near its end opposite the roller rink in Enfield.

Pasture Road is being surveyed in connection with the Robes brothers proposal to divide the Dana parcel that they currently own 50-50 with the town. Jim Baum has been in contact with the town over possible alternatives.

#### **Potential budget items**

This discussion was prompted by a query from Jonathan Edwards about projects that a more substantial operational budget might enable. These items were mentioned.

Restoring a trail in the Steele Tract that is massively blocked by blowdowns.

Restoring the badly eroded roadbed of Pipers Lane.

Bridge on Slade Brook to reconnect the major trails on Huntington Hill and Old Spencer Road. This may be a candidate for a Recreational Trails Program grant.

Trailhead parking lot for Goodwin Tract bike trail.

Reinstitute brush-hogging on Fullington Farm Trail.

Stipends for summer student employment in conservation/trail work.

Mlacak said that there should be coordination with the Capital Improvement Program. He also advocated for making the printed trail maps free.

### **Other business**

Stan Udy brought a sketch map he has made of Storrs/Rinker/Oak Hill area that records a number of informal trails in addition to those that show on the town's map and the Oak Hill ski map. McIlroy said that Mike Silverman at Dartmouth has created a similar map from GPS data and suggested Stan meet with him to consolidate their information.

Udy is one of several Kendal residents who frequent these trails and do light clearing. He also appreciates the maintenance activities of mountain bikers. In connection with talk of various trails in the area, the committee encouraged him, perhaps with Tedd Osgood, to advocate at Kendal for ties with their trail system.

*UVTA equipment.* Taylor reminded the committee that UVTA has equipment that can be borrowed, including digging tools, pole saw and brush hog.

*Quabbin to Cardigan.* Linell pointed out that Hanover lies within the scope of the Quabbin to Cardigan Partnership and suggested that this might be a source of funding towards completing the protection of the Moose Mountain ridge.

*Volunteer group.* Taylor said that a group from King Arthur Flour, which has helped in Hanover before, is thinking of adopting a trail.

*Adjacent towns.* Linell said the newly complete natural resource inventory for Lebanon shows a number of interesting "high value" features near the town line, some of which may well extend into Hanover. Mlacak said that this illustrates a need for a "library" of resource information that transcends town boundaries.

### **Meeting schedule**

McIlroy asked whether the committee meetings could happen at a different time temporarily to allow the Commission's John Trummel to come on board promptly. He was delegated to check whether a lunchtime schedule would work, with fallback positions of scheduling the February, March, and April meetings for third Thursdays or Wednesdays at 4:30PM. depending on meeting-room availability. The current schedule will resume thereafter.