

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES
Regular Meeting of July 26, 2016 at 7:00 pm
Meeting Room #3, Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT

These Minutes are Subject to Approval by the Conservation Commission

In Attendance: Tom Philbrick, Karlyn Sturmer, Cindy Joyce, Mark Boland

Staff: Dawn Fried, Clerk

Mr. Philbrick opened the meeting at 7:05 pm.

Mr. Philbrick served as acting Chair in Mr. Ryan's absence.

Public Participation:

Jeremy Clark, Clark Forestry Services, and Lisa Wahle, CT Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection

Stone Bridge Forest Management Plan

Mr. Clark presented the proposed Stone Bridge forest management plan titled "Stone Bridge Forest Management Planning Process". Mr. Clark gave an extensive overview of the plan. The Commission, Mr. Clark and Ms. Wahle had a lengthy discussion regarding the project's goals, future concerns, animal habitats, considerations and overall process.

Various items discussed:

- The field work has been completed.
- Mr. Clark inquired about the Commission's management goals.
- 50% of the forest has low quality trees and is unacceptable.
- Oak regeneration in the understory could be encouraged for a future forest.
- An air-bridge will be built over the pipeline for heavy trucks i.e. skidders and harvesters.
- A landing area was discussed for parking trucks.
- A buffer of trees will be considered between the abutters and the cutting area.
- Cutting will take approximately 3 weeks
- Mr. Clark would like to harvest this winter
- The stump heights will be between 1 to 2 feet.
- There will be a tree buffer along the road ranging from 50 feet to 150 feet.
- The Oak trees will increase the value of the cutting which will increase the income
- Ideas to inform and include the public:
 - a. Ms. Wahle will give a presentation on animal habitats and the positive impacts a forest management plan will have on a mature forest. The presentation will be held at the library or at the municipal building.
 - b. The Commission will invite the public on a site walk. A special invitation will be sent to the abutters.
 - c. Information will be posted in the local papers
- Mr. Boland and Ms. Sturmer would like to present the forest management plan to the Board of Selectmen.
- Outreach ideas were discussed regarding educational components.
- Ms. Wahle discussed various ways to create understory habitats.
- Ms. Wahle made suggestions and offered advice on the safety of rabbits and their habitats.

- There was a discussion regarding the cost of the management plan, the use of the Iroquois grant money and the income from the clear cutting.
- The Commission discussed the advantages and disadvantages of brush piles.
- Mr. Clark will send the project out to bid to possibly thirty different contractors.
- The Commission discussed deer fences around new growth for protection.
- Logs will be used as deterrents for motorized recreational activities.

The Commission will review Mr. Clark's proposal and advise him of thier proposed revisions. The Commission, Mr. Clark and Ms. Wahle will meet again for a final review of the forest management plan and time line.

Adjournment

Mr. Philbrick requested a motion to adjourn the CC meeting. Mr. Boland so moved. Ms. Joyce seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:06 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dawn Fried, Clerk

Brief Description of Property and Process

- Delineated Forest Stands & Habitats – see Stand Map
- Overstocked Stand Conditions
- Roughly 50% Considered Unacceptable Growing Stock
- Oak Regeneration is Present; could be encouraged

Summary of Resource Concerns

- Limited understory and ground cover habitat
- Limited habitat diversity; fairly homogenous across Property
- Overstocked stand conditions impeding forest growth
- Oak uplands are transitioning to shade-tolerant maple/birch/beechn forest types without management
- The western portions of the Property have limited access; require a temporary pipeline crossing
- There are currently no existing landings or recently used trail network
- Un-authorized motor vehicle access causing site degradation
- Stone Bridge Trail would benefit from spreading of gravel
- Limited, scattered clumps of invasive plants presently (multiflora rose, Japanese barberry, Phragmites, Oriental bittersweet)
- Potential of further spread of invasives post-harvest

Management Recommendations & Considerations

- **Create proposed landing are for forest management activities**
 - o Improve as a future parking area
 - o Maintain as meadows/shrublands and block off access post-harvest
- **Young Forest Habitat Enhancement**
 - o Clear-cut: Remove all trees 2" and greater
 - May require additional measures to ensure oak regeneration success (fencing)
 - o Seed Tree: Leave 2-5 scattered trees/acre as seed source, cavity trees, and for aesthetics
 - o Shelterwood: Partially remove 40-60% overstory now, return in 5-8 years once adequate oak regeneration has become established and remove the majority of remaining overstory to release new sapling forest
- **Maintain 40-60% canopy cover along Stone Bridge Trail**
 - o Limits access onto Property from Road
 - o Will continue to partially shade Road
 - o Aesthetics

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- **Install a Temporary Pipeline Crossing**
 - o To access western portions of Property a temporary air bridge will be required to cross the Pipeline; to be installed by logging contractor
 - o Coordinate with Iroquois Field Staff for correct placement and installation requirements

- **Expand Regeneration Harvest to the Uplands West of ROW**
 - o Decrease shading and establish a feathered edge from ROW
 - o Suitable site for oak regeneration

- **Thin 40-50% of Canopy in Stand 2**
 - o Promote the continued growth of high quality red oak, black oak, and tulip poplar; thin
 - o Create small canopy gaps to establish tree regeneration and diversify understory habitat
 - o Expands feathered edge habitat from Stand 1

- **Thin 25-33% in Far Western Sections of Stand 2**
 - o Thin along proposed trails to establish and promote understory vegetation
 - o Maintains privacy and aesthetics for neighbors
 - o Remove potential hazard trees
 - o This area could also be left un-managed with no recommended management activities.

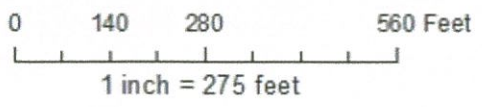
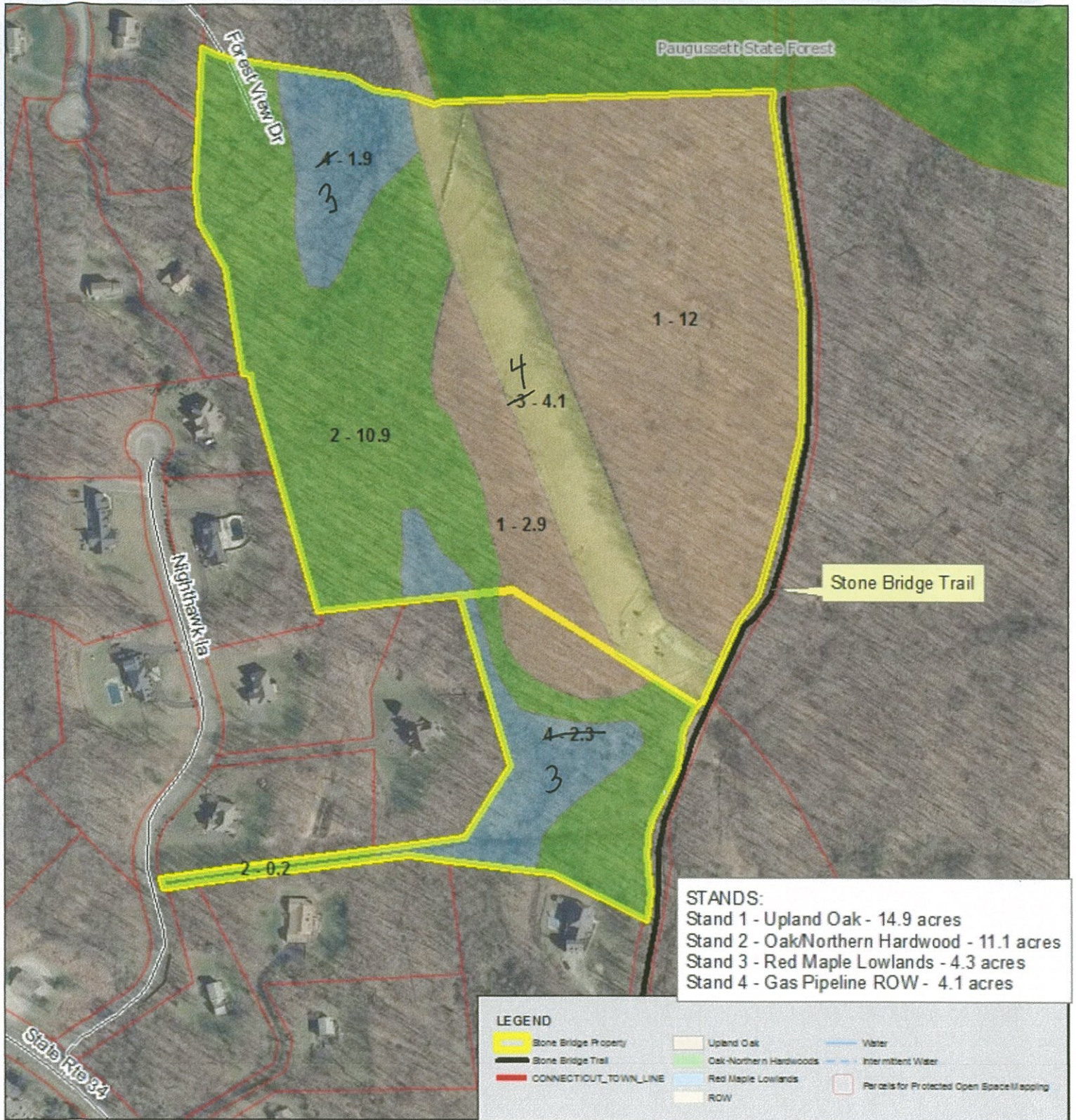
- **Potential Environmental Education Opportunities**
 - o Oak acorn collection, germination, and/or hand-planting
 - o Install several small deer fence enclosures
 - o Install wire mesh around cut oak stumps to promote stump sprout development
 - o Install forest research plots to track the progress of regeneration
 - Complete ourselves
 - Work with an undergraduate or graduate student
 - Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

Thank you! Questions? Comments?

Forest Stand Type Map

Stone Bridge Property - 34.4 ac.

Stone Bridge Trail, Newtown, CT
Town of Newtown Conservation Commission



Orthophotographic Winter 2012
 Data Source: UConn MAGIC, CT DEEP
 Property boundaries displayed on map are
 approximate and are for planning purposes only

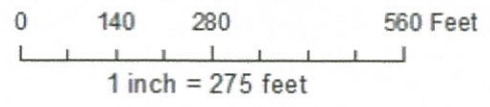
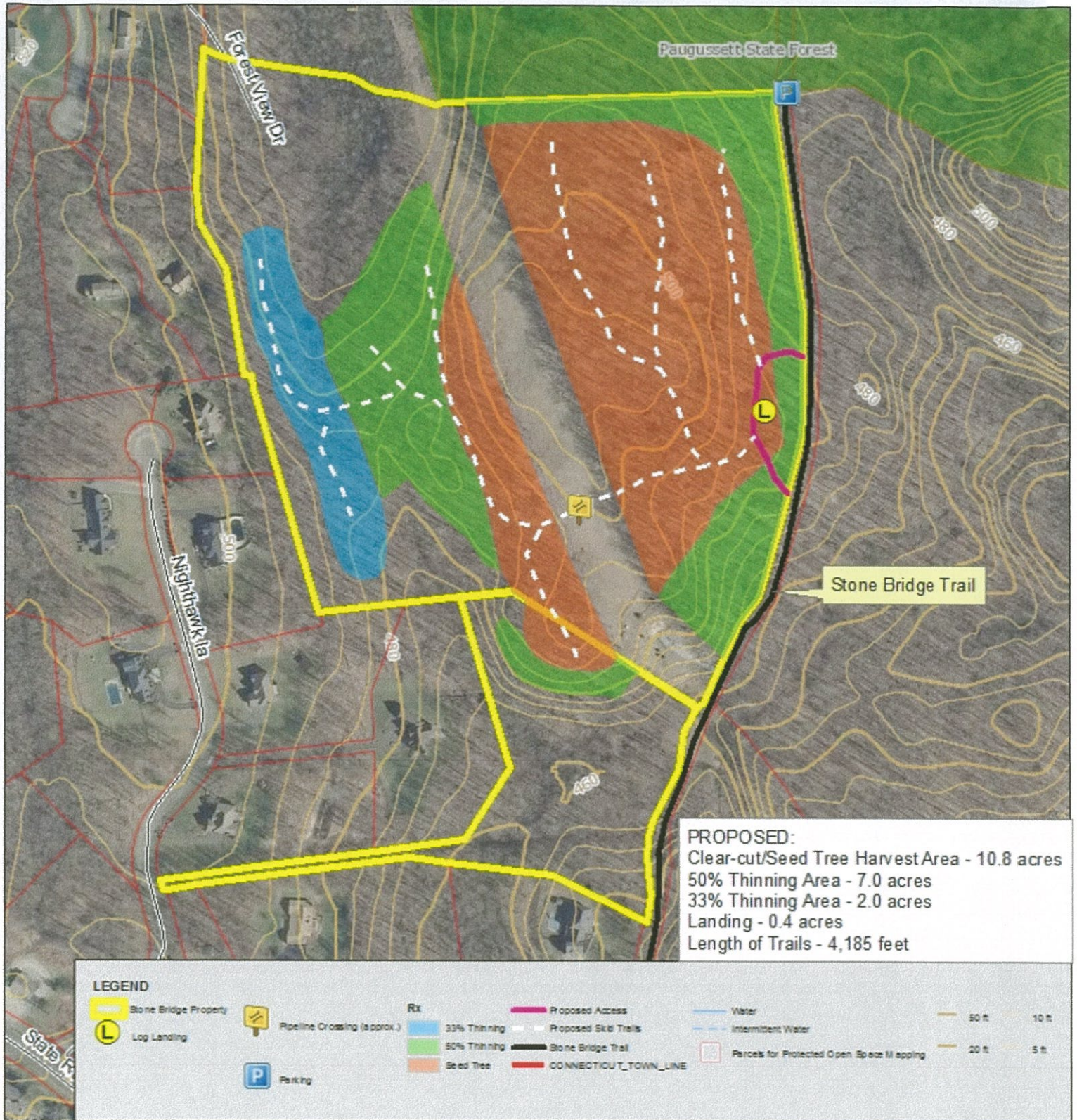
Prepared By:
 Jeremy Clark
 Clark Forestry Services
 July 23, 2016

Proposed Management Area and Forest Access Map

Stone Bridge Property - 34.4 ac.

Stone Bridge Trail, Newtown, CT

Town of Newtown Conservation Commission



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