

Washington Conservation Commission
Minutes – March 21, 2012

Assembly time: 7:00 PM.

Present: Jed Schwartz, Sandy Robinson, Nan Schwartz, Johanna Young

- 1.0 Approval of Minutes: Minutes from February meeting, Sandy made a motion to approve, Jed seconded, all voted in favor.
- 2.0 Old Business:
 - 2.1 Permits Committee – No new permits to consider.
- 3.0 Committee and Board reports:
 - 3.1 Land Protection Committee – We are looking into ARM funds that have become available to help fund land conservation projects.
 - 3.2 Energy Committee – Johanna reports that the Energy Committee hoped to hold a “Button Up” presentation but funding is ending in April so they are trying for a fall date. She reported that three EC members are attending the Energy Conference on March 30th, in Penacook. They have an extra place for someone to attend if anyone is interested. They talked about the wood boiler for the town garage at their meeting.
 - 3.3 Planning Board – Nan reported the 2 items on a special ballot at town meeting both passed.
 - 3.4 Forestry Committee – Jed mentioned the warrant article at town meeting concerning the Town Forest additions also passed.
- 4.0 Reappointment of members:

Nan said that several members need reappointment this year. Sandy made a motion to send a letter to the Selectmen for Arin Mills, Carol Andrews and Tom Taylor to be reappointed for 3 year terms. All voted in favor. After discussion Sandy made a motion to move Carol to an Alternate position and move Don Richard into

the full member position, Johanna seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

We decided to wait until next month to hold our election of officers, when there are more members present.

5.0 Public Presentation possibilities:

5.1 Arin wasn't able to attend the meeting but Nan showed the Watershed on Wheels power point presentation to the group. WoW is scheduled to visit the Elementary School on May 21st. More information on WoW here: http://www.fws.gov/r5soc/educational_resources/watershed-on-wheels.html. We will ask Arin how many chaperones and helpers will be needed at the visit. We will discuss whether we want to make a supplemental presentation to the kids at next month's meeting.

5.2 Nan spoke about the possibility of getting someone from UNH's Speaking for Wildlife group or a Fish and Wildlife Steward to come do a presentation. We will continue the discussion next month.

6.0 ARLAC request for funds for Ashuelot River water testing – We received a request from Barbara Skully for a \$100 donation for water testing for the 2012 season. We have given in the past years to help fund this important water testing. Sandy made a motion to send \$100 for water testing, Johanna seconded the motion, all voted in favor. Nan will contact Barbara and ask her to send us an invoice for that amount that we can give it to Lynda for payment.

7.0 New Business: Nan spoke about an article she read about National Wildlife Federation's Schoolyard Habitats program. This could be something we might consider doing with the Washington Elementary School. More information about the program can be found here: <http://www.nwf.org/Get-Outside/Outdoor-Activities/Garden-for-Wildlife/Schoolyard-Habitats.aspx>
The school would be perfect for this sort of project, which involves creating a wildlife habitat where students can learn about wildlife species and ecosystems in an outdoor classroom. We will discuss

again next month.

8.0 Other business – Nan mentioned the “Saving Special Places” conference on Saturday, April 14th, at John Stark High School, Weare, 8AM-3:45PM, sign up by April 6 for \$60, register online at www.savingspecialplaces.org Sandy said we can offer to pay if someone wants to attend.

We will need to schedule our trash pickup days, next month, for April, June, August and October. We received the forms from DOT for this year.

We received two emails that might be of interest to members:

1. The Forest Society is offering training for becoming a Land Steward. Land Stewards help to monitor and maintain forest reservations for the Forest Society. The training covers forest management, trail maintenance, boundary monitoring, map & compass navigation, community engagement and recreation management. They are also looking for someone to monitor the Rassmussen Forest, which is 533 acres in Washington and Marlow after receiving the training. The training is two days, May 11 and 12, from 8 to 4 in Greenfield. Nan will send the email to all members to see if they are interested.
2. The Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission will be hosting the first of three meetings of organizations and citizens interested in a possible long-distance hiking “Quabbin-to-Cardigan” trail in western New Hampshire from the Massachusetts/New Hampshire border to Mt. Cardigan and beyond to the White Mountains. The meeting is a key part of a trail study being managed by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests and the Appalachian Mountain Club, with assistance from the National Park Service’s Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance program. The goal of the study is to take a first look at the feasibility of, and local interest in, a long-distance trail in the region. The study is NOT aimed at creating any new federal or state designation of trails in the area. The first meeting is this Thursday, March 29th, from

6-8PM in Canaan. Nan will send the email to all members to see if they are interested.

9.0 What's Happening in Nature?

Spring seems to have arrived in Washington extremely early this year! What little snow we had has melted and the ice is off the ponds. Sandy, Jed and Nan heard wood frogs croaking when they arrived at the Town Hall tonight, they are in the pond next to the TH.

Sandy mentioned seeing wild turkeys, a woodcock, a woodchuck, a fox, a porcupine and blue birds recently. It is very early to be seeing all these creatures. Nan saw a Robin in her yard late in February.

Jed has active pollywogs, frogs and lots of bugs (waterstriders, waterboatmen and caddisflies) in his little frog pond. He also saw about 100 Canada geese in the Mill Pond a few days ago. Tom Marshall had seen them in the cornfield earlier that day. They took off in the morning and flew away.

Johanna said she has kept a monthly blog since 2006 and she is going to go back and check for how early everything is this year in comparison to all the other years. Her brother has kept a log of nighttime temperatures for 30 years. It is evident that our climate is changing.

Nan said that pussywillows are out and trees and bushes are budding out. Sandy said Linda Marshall's snowdrops have already gone by and her crocuses are almost done.

We discussed climate change and Sandy said she read a great article about global warming by William D. Nordhaus, the link is here: <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2012/mar/22/why-global-warming-skeptics-are-wrong/?pagination=false>

We seem to be seeing extremes of weather all over the country. Our recent 80-degree days have hurried everything along.

Jed mentioned the short maple sugaring season.

Johanna said her beavers cut a lot more trees this year and they seemed to be more active this winter. They weren't impeded by the usual snow and cold. She said that lilacs are fully budded in Concord.

Jed found 2 ticks on himself in that last few days. With the mild

winter, ticks haven't died off and are still active. For more information about ticks and the dangers they carry click here: http://www.washingtonnh.org/WCC_Html/NewinNature.html

10. Correspondence:

Letter from NH DOT District 4, Adopt-a-Highway forms for 1012 season
Copy of Forest Notes
LGC brochure for Local Officials workshops
Brochure for 2012 Cottrell-Baldwin Environmental Lecture Series at Fox State Forest
Brochure for UNH Municipal Turf and Grounds Conference
Letter from ARLAC, Barbara Skully requesting \$100 for Ashuelot River water testing
Letter from DES invitation to Annual Drinking Water Source protection Workshop, May 2nd
Package from NH Assoc. of Natural Resource Scientists notifying us that we were approved for membership and a copy of their newsletter.

11.0 Adjourned at 7:45 PM, our next scheduled meeting is April 18th at 7 PM in the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Nan Schwartz
Secretary