

Washington Conservation Commission
Minutes – January 17, 2013

Assembly time: 7:00 PM.

Members present: Jed Schwartz, Sandy Robinson, Nan Schwartz, Arin Mills, Johanna Young and Tom Taylor.

- 1.0 Approval of Minutes: Minutes from December meeting, Sandy made a motion to approve all as written, Johanna seconded, all voted in favor.
- 2.0 Permits Committee – None.
- 3.0 Committee and Board reports:
 - 3.1 Land Protection Committee – Jed said that Forest Society is doing a story on the Farnsworth Hill Forest Reservation project in their Forest Notes magazine. They spoke with him, John Brighton and Jim Crandall about the project.
Nan mentioned that she got email about a big donation that was made to the Q2C initiative recently. They will be using the money for grants for land protection and trails. Tom was interested in the trails program and will look into getting a grant for creating a trail connecting the Farnsworth Hill Town Forest, the new Forest Reservation and the Ashuelot Headwaters Forest Reservation in Lempster.
 - 3.2 Energy Committee – Johanna reported that the Solar movie night has been rescheduled to Monday, January 28th at 7PM at the Congregational Church Fellowship Hall. They are showing “Here Comes the Sun”, with demonstrations, with industry professionals, of solar installations and comparisons of electric and hot water systems to follow. It is free admission and they are serving light snacks afterward. Please let anyone who might be interested know about this new date. They have a snow date of Feb. 11th.
 - 3.3 Planning Board – No new news.
 - 3.4 Forestry Committee – Tom reported that they held a Forestry Committee last week and they discussed being at a stand still on moving forward with management of the Town Forests. They would like to some cutting in the forests to create openings for wildlife and hunting and do trail maintenance. They need money to bring in a forester to spend time in the forests and council them on where to cut. They are using the document created by Lionel Chute in 1999 but they need someone to take a look now using his document as a guide. They have met with the Selectmen about a warrant article for \$3000 but he just received an estimate for \$4500 from Anita Blakney. He thought he might have to ask the CC to help with the cost but he found that the Forestry Committee has around \$5000 in their fund. They will use this money and not have to raise money at Town Meeting, they will only need to get the approval of the town. We all expressed our support of this plan. Sandy spoke about the conservation fund and what we can use our funds for. Jed asked Tom about their long term plans for surveying the forests and protecting them permanently. Tom said they have perambulated all of the lots and found the corner markers. They have used a GPS unit and pinpointed the corners, making surveying in the future much easier. He also mentioned they are trying to get someone from the State to come in and look at the Nuthatch Way Forest to give some advice on replanting the lot.
 - 3.5 Legislative update – Carol sent Jed an email about some relevant bills that will go before the legislature this year. Michelle gave us a copy of a bill that has been introduced by our local representatives to create an integrated land development permit. It would combine the permits needed from DES and other organizations for development. There were several other bills she is

watching and she will keep us up to date on things as they progress.

4.0 Public Presentations and workshops:

4.1 We discussed our planning for the winter snowshoe hike and presentation at the school on tracking. The school presentation is on Friday, February 1st and we will speak with all three groups. The older kids will go at 9-10, the younger kids from 10:15 to 11:15 and the first graders from 11:30 to 12. We will do the inside Information first and then go outside. We will only have a half hour with the littlest kids so we will only do the inside stuff with them. Arin will pick up the kit supplies from Fish and Game. Nan made information sheets for the school kids showing animals and their tracks. She also had a sheet about tracks and gaits that we can use for the outside portion. Nan has the mold making materials and she and Jed will practice making a mold prior to the presentation to see if it will work doing it with the kids. Jed, Nan and Arin will meet this Sunday at 3PM to scope out the field and trail at CM.

The hike will be February 2nd and for the general public. We will meet at Camp Morgan Lodge and do part of the CM trail. We will meet at 10AM and go until noon. Arin had a great idea to have people bring an ingredient to make trail mix to share. We will also get the ingredients to make hot cocoa for everyone after the hike. Arin will make up a poster and send to Nan who will print them out and put them up. She will do some half sheet handouts to send home with the school kids.

5.0 New business:

Jed spoke briefly about our website.

Nan brought up that we got an email renewal form from New Hampshire Association of Natural Resource Scientists about our membership. The cost is \$20 for the year. Sandy made a motion to renew our membership for 2013, Johanna seconded the motion, all voted in favor.

7.0 What's Happening in Nature?

Arin saw and heard a Peregrine Falcon, from a distance, in LAE right before Christmas. She was very excited to spot it. There haven't been any sightings in this part of the state.

Jed saw an ermine (which is the white/winter phase of the weasel) cross the yard, he has seen it once before running along a stone wall.

Johanna has seen a few deer recently.

Arin saw a Bull Moose in LAE. Sandy commented that the Marshalls had a young moose hanging around their yard with only one antler. He had already shed the other one. Sheds are hard to find but if you are lucky and know where to look you can locate them.

Arin saw some Snowshoe hare tracks. Johanna said she had snowshoe hares but she has noticed that they are not as numerous as they once were. She has a bobcat nearby and thinks that could have something to do with it. She has seen her otters recently and sees their slides in the snow near her pond.

Jed reported that Sandy Eccard said she has seen some pairs of wild boars around the farm. They can be very destructive and aggressive.

Johanna asked if anyone has seen any Blue Jays recently and everyone comment that they hadn't. This is strange because usually at this time of year the Blue Jay is abundant and seen often bullying the little birds at the bird feeder.

Arin said she has had more flocks of Redpolls at her feeder. They make the birdseed disappear fast!

Click here for more information about in Redpolls in New Hampshire:

http://www.washingtonnh.org/WCC_Html/NewinNature.html

8.0 Correspondence:

NHDES notice that Ruggieros are now in compliance.

Email from NH Association of Natural Resource Scientists, time to renew our membership

10.0 Adjourned at 8:05 PM, our next scheduled meeting is February 20th at 7 PM in the Town Hall.
Respectfully submitted,

Nan Schwartz, Secretary