

Andrews Community Forest Committee

Minutes Monday July 22, 2024 ACFC 6pm to 8pm

- Roll call and confirm Quorum.
- Present: Ian Stokes, Daniel Schmidt, Wright Preston, Melissa Wolaver, Chase Rosenberg, Julian Portilla
- Absent: Brad Elliot, Cecelia Danks
- Public: Dan Wolfson online for part of the meeting
- Minutes: Julian Portilla

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- **May minutes approved**
- **Update on AFC trails and maintenance:** Trees down across the farm road. Warning to the public. Process question: what to do when the trail committee? When the AFC wants to go out and do some work, that would be ideal. Daniel will coordinate the cutting of the trees for early August.
- **Update on Web site:** Site is published and running. Julian Portilla will post on FPF that the new site is up and invite people to have a look.
- **Vision and mission discussion:** Moved to approve by Wright Preston, second by JP. Approved unanimously. Will be incorporated into the management plan.
- **Wildlife management plan:** Chase, Sam and Brad reviewing earlier introductory texts. Andrea Shortsleeve will be invited to comment on integrity and connectivity of the forest. Hoping to have a draft for the August meeting.
- **Velco update from Wright Preston:** Letter with highlights of meeting between Wright Preston and Brad Elliot. Highlights included that the concrete bridge abutments will remain, ATVs will still be used by VELCO but “gently”. There was a discussion about increased contributions to the town for trail maintenance, primarily for installation and maintenance of water bars and other water drainage methods. They have currently offered to pay 8k. The cost of a week of VYCC maintenance is 10k. The proposal is that they make a one-time payment is 18k. Waiting for the revised easement from VELCO. May vote on the revised easement at the next meeting.
- **Management revision and timelines:** DS prepared a list of tasks completed and to be completed for the MP.
 - Highlights of tasks completed included: formatting and organization corrections, Indigenous land use and history, recreation section 10 updated, integration of mission and vision statement to the MP.
 - Highlights of tasks to be completed:

- Reorder the document according to a nested approach of goals, objectives and tasks. ACFC would act according to the tasks, add or delete them to create annual work plans.
 - Natural resources descriptions: There is information specific to ACF and information that is more general. Would be good to make more specific connections with features and what is known about ACF. Would also be good to have objective measures of the condition of the forest. Will need to hire an expert (wetland ecologist, for eg) for some of the information.
 - Integrate TSP and CMP.
 - Update the maps that have been brought to the committee.
 - Integrate and Indigenous history and land use into relevant sections of the MP.
 - Integrate wildlife stewardship plan.
 - Integrate hot spot document.
 - Discussion:
 - Will we need to hire a consultant to write the plan?
 - Daniel Schmidt can write it.
 - What about BE's effort to write the wildlife MP?
 - How do we include the sentiment of the public comments and feedback into the MP?
 - No, but we could include some rationale sections to explain how the ACF came to its decisions.
 - **Tasks for August meeting:**
 - DS will submit the nested list of goals, objectives, and tasks and integrating TSP and CMP.
 - CR and WP will look over the maps to be included.
- **Vermont Conservation Design**
 - With LiDar allows scanning of territories and landscape mapping.
 - Bob Lowe submitted biofinder maps of the ACF
 - Many maps included in the new document using biofinder has a great deal of new information about where to put trails.
 - Could consider a new East-West trail network to start rather than N-S
 - Reviewed the new maps in light of the existing trail plans. Trying to understand the differences between the maps and the implications of the existing trail proposals.
- **Hot spot document**
 - Lots of advancement on pros and cons on everything EXCEPT trail plan.
 - Some possibilities for reconciliation of competing conservation and recreation uses that would include extended trail closures, minimizing overlaps of incompatible uses.
 - Proposal to do a phased development of trails that might start around the old VAST trail East to West.
- **Bylaws change:** Changes proposed regarding membership.

- Confusion as to whether selectboard or committee approves and selects membership. Changes proposed.
- Repetition of the voting rules for regular business and for procedure. May be ok if it's meant to refer to different kinds of decisions or could be repetitive if there is no difference.
- IS will check w Josh Arneson to review language and make changes as necessary.
- **Motion to adjourn:** JP, 2nd WP