

## **Ian's Statement for October 28<sup>th</sup> ACFC meeting.**

Clearly there is frustration with the lack of productivity and progress by the ACFC - primarily, though not exclusively, in establishing a plan for constructing new trails in the Forest and the desire to establish multi-use trails, including a connection with trails on the Sunshine land.

Most substantial actions in the Forest must be based on documentation in the 2018 Management Plan and pending revisions to it. Much of our work is now directed at establishing consensus for revising components of the Management Plan, including a Trails Plan. It is very apparent to this Committee, though probably not to everyone, that we have to function under the constraints imposed on all Town committees: with the result that substantial discussions and all decisions must be made during our monthly two-hour-long meetings.

Most of us are accustomed to very different work styles, where things can progress without interruptions until they are complete and approved in a hierarchical management structure. We probably all get frustrated by working within the constraints of monthly meetings - a couple of hours per month in Committee are much less productive than the work methods we are familiar with. However, in addition to Committee time I believe that our responsibility to the Town also requires making time individually to study documentation and literature on which objective decision-making depends, in addition to being as aware as possible of the 'pulse' of public opinions.

So, it has also become apparent that decisions about a trail plan cannot be made independently of other parts of the Management Plan, which in turn has required some major revisions and updates addressing the often conflicting expectations of natural resource conservation in the Forest and human activities including recreation.

First, let's not forget that our work has been progressing in many areas,

### Among the many achievements:

- Obtaining formal solicitation and documentation of public/citizen opinions;
- Approval of a Vision and Mission statements that provide a basis for decision-making;
- Bylaws updates to clarify what constitutes a quorum, and formalization of the process for recruiting ACFC members and for working with the Trails Committee and Conservation Commission;
- A new, improved website;
- Clarification of the Easement provisions with VELCO;
- Improved understanding of compliance with procedures consistent with Zoning, the Town Plan, Public Meeting Law, reporting to the Selectboard and public;
- Establishing working groups to draft important components of a revised Management Plan. Some significant progress has been made there, though much of that work remains 'in limbo' pending individuals' work and Committee consensus.

An immediate priority in order to conduct the business of our monthly meetings is a new chairperson or co-chair. You know that my serious hearing loss makes it essential that we immediately fill the loss of Daniel's key role with an interim or long-term volunteer replacement. Cecilia and I effectively adopted the arrangement whereby she would run meetings, while I acted before, after and during meetings as 'Administrative Assistant'. Daniel and I continued that arrangement, and it was also a real pleasure to work with him in agenda planning and implementation of our collegial decision-making.

So, let's work collaboratively and collegially to make much called-for progress!