

**DRAFT**

**THE RANDOLPH FOREST COMMISSION**

**April 1, 2014**

**Members Present:** John Scarinza, Walter Graff and Doug Mayer

**Alternates Present:** David Willcox

**Others Present:** Elise Lawson

The chairman called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

He asked if anyone had any suggestions to make with regard to the minutes of the March meeting. No one had and the minutes were approved.

He then noted that David had invited Elise Lawson to come to this meeting to discuss a continuing role for her as a wildlife consultant in the management of the RCF going forward.

Elise said that she and John Severance had closed their partnership, *Watershed to Wildlife*, because John wanted to retire and she had moved to Burke Mountain in Vermont. But, she said, she would be interested in undertaking some smaller projects on an *ad hoc* basis.

The Commission discussed the possibility of starting with a wildlife action plan for the Israel's River corridor, including the adjacent and recently acquired Rollo Falls tract, which contains the headwaters of the Moose River. The idea would be to build upon the notations in the Action section of the Second Stewardship Plan which refer to the Israel's River and develop a series of specific recommendations for actions that the Commission might take to protect the water quality, to improve habitats for the wildlife species inhabiting the River and its adjacent swamplands and to facilitate public access to locations for viewing wildlife activity.

The recommendations should explain what they are intended to achieve and why and to indicate whether the goal is likely to be achieved in the short, medium or long term. It would also be useful to include methods for assessing the effectiveness of measures adopted by the Commission.

The Commission has already started to participate in two initiatives which might be useful for a wetlands action plan. John described a proposal to dedicate a plot of land on the lower meadow of the Farrar property as an experimental plot for the growing of native willow trees, which can be used to stabilize the banks of rivers in New Hampshire. Experiments with other native shrubs valuable to wetland management might follow.

He also explained the Commission's support of the *Dirt to Trees to Wildlife* project and what that would mean for forest management going forward.

Elise said that she could undertake the task, that she already had a good deal of information about the area, since she had worked with John Severance on the Israel's River study for the Randolph Conservation Commission. She thought it would involve a couple of days of fieldwork and some writing time. It was agreed that she could bring a draft report to discuss with the Commission and finalize it in light of member's comments.

Elise added that she had been hired to teach an environmental studies course at the Vermont Community College in Newport and she would be using her experiences on the RCF as material for the course. She would like to bring her students to Randolph for a day long study tour of the Forest.

Turning to other business, the Commission looked at two optional signs and chose the one having a green background with yellow lettering. It was agreed that this color scheme would be used for all the signs on the RCF put up by the Commission. This would include trail signs for trails established by the Commission, such as the new interpretative trail at the Randolph Hill parking lot and the crystal mine trail from the Farrar property to the mine.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by general consent at 8.05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

David L. Willcox  
Acting Secretary

Posted at Town Hall on April 6, 2015

