

Randolph Forest Commission
April 3, 2019

Members Present: John Scarinza, Laura Brockett, Walter Graff

Alternates Present: David Willcox

Others Present: David Degruttola, David Falkenham and Michele Cormier

The chairman opened the meeting at 7:08 pm. He asked if any changes were needed to the minutes of the March meeting. There were none. Walter moved that the minutes be adopted as written, Laura seconded the motion and it was adopted.

The chairman then asked David Degruttola for a report on the winter timber harvesting activity. David said that it had been a good winter for timber harvesting, and he thought at a rough estimate it would bring the Town around \$60,000 in profits. About 2000 cords were cut, 76% of it was low grade pulp and 15% was pallet grade. Most of it was sent to the chipping mill in Shelburne, which meant shorter hauling. There is one more section of this approved project still unfinished and David thought that it might be possible to cut it during the summer, if the weather cooperates. The ground appears to be dry and hard and might lend itself to a summer treatment.

In answer to a question, David said that although there were abutting tracts of softwoods and mixed hard and softwoods, this project involved hardwoods almost exclusively. Where the soils are favorable, the plan is to try to encourage the re-introduction of softwoods, which once characterized much of what is now the Community Forest, because they provide better wildlife habitat.

David Falkenham, a member of the LandVest staff working on the RCF, said that during the timber harvesting activity, Maggie Machinist and Will Staats visited the site. Maggie was carrying out

a survey as part of her on-going responsibility to monitor the RCF conservation easement for DRED, and Will was there to offer advice from the NH Fish and Game Department with regard to wildlife management.

David Degruttola added that Chris Nelson, the logger working for the Brooks family, which has an in-holding largely within the RCF, finished his work and pulled out before our crew were done. The Commission had allowed them to use logging roads on the RCF to transport their logs and David said that Chris had done a good job of cleaning up and had been nice to work with. John read a letter from one of the Brooks brothers thanking the Commission for its help in allowing the use of the RCF forest roads.

John reported that the Nature Conservancy of the State of Washington will be making a visit to the area around the beginning of May and would probably plan a visit to the RCF. He will keep Commission members informed of the schedule.

John also reported on a meeting with the Randolph Foundation, which has agreed to act as a pass-through for funds granted by NRCS for projects in the RCF. These funds would be a replacement for the WHIP grant we had during the first stewardship plan period. Because of a change in the law, they are no longer available to publicly entities (such as the Town of Randolph) and therefore we would need a non-profit pass-through to access them.

There was some discussion of the possibility of focusing on wildlife habitat management as a theme for this year's Annual Forest Day event. Where it can, LandVest is protecting tracts of woodland which are used by different species of birds and animals and we will try to design a tour that demonstrates some of these sites. There is also an on-going conversation with Trout Unlimited

(TU) about the need to replace a couple of large culverts over streams flowing through the RCF to enable amphibian species easy passage. TU might have someone who can speak at Forest Day about the value of this kind of work.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed by general consent at 8:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

David Willcox
Acting Secretary

Posted at Town Hall on April 4, 2019