**Second Stewardship Plan**

**Randolph Community Forest**

**Amendment #1**

**January, 2015**

**Background: In the spring of 2014, a commercial sugar maple syrup producer requested a permit to tap sugar maple trees in the area designated as Compartment 3A in the *Second Stewardship Plan – 2014 – 2023*. This request was made after the completion of the Plan and its adoption by the Randolph Planning Board, and that is why the possibility of commercial tapping was not reflected in the Plan which, as originally written, proposed a timber harvest for part of that area.**

**The Plan does cite the opportunity for tapping sugar maple trees under the heading *#11 - Future Opportunities*, but in the absence of any realistic proposals, tapping was not included as a scheduled action.**

 **Over the last year, the Randolph Forest Commission carried out an extensive review of the potential rewards of opening up all or part of the area for commercial tapping, including a thorough stand examination and a cost-benefit analysis. The conclusion was positive.**

**Stewardship Plan Amendment #1: The Plan is hereby amended to introduce commercial sugar tapping as an action to be carried out in Compartments 3A and 3B during the life of the Second Plan and beyond.**

 **It is proposed to begin by opening up ten stands in Compartment 3A, specifically Stands 3A01, 3A02, 3A03, 3A04, 3A07, 3A08, 3A22, 3A23, 3A25 and 3A55 for tapping. These stands comprise 723 acres of land and within them it is estimated that there are about 27,416 maple trees measuring 12” in diameter. There are some 41,153 additional trees which measure less than 12” but are greater than 10” in diameter. Should the New Hampshire standards be adjusted to follow the lead of Vermont, those additional trees would be available for tapping in future. Moreover, as they grow larger they can be added to the stock of eligible trees even if the standard does not change.**

 **The Town will initiate the process by publishing and mailing a Request for Proposals (RFP) from interested parties. The RFP will specify that the tapping on the Randolph Community Forest (RCF) will need to follow the *Best Practices for Maple Sugar Tapping* promulgated by the State. There will be some additional requirements arising out of circumstances specific to the site, such as the need to protect trails giving access to the crystal mine.**

 **In is anticipated that contracts will run for 15 to 20 years, reflecting the magnitude of the costs which will need to be incurred by commercial tappers. The requirements spelled out in the RFP will be included in such contracts. While it is not expected that processing should take place on the RCF, that possibility is open for negotiation. Should it be necessary to allow processing on the RCF, further contractual restrictions related to commercial processing plants will be required.**

 **Other stands in compartments 3A and 3B may be opened up for tapping in the future if the demand warrants such action.**