



Randolph Community Forest

Sustainable forestry & traditional uses on 10,000 acres in Randolph, NH

Date: July 5, 2023

Location: Randolph Town Hall

Members Present: Mark Kelley, Laura Brockett, Nate Reid, Tim Mather, and David Willcox

Guests Present: Michelle Cormier, David DeGruttola from LandVest, Jeremiah Hawkins, and Shelli Fortin, Minutes

Mark Kelley called the meeting to order at 7:11 pm.

The Commission discussed concerns, including overnight camping and the shooting of clay pigeons in the Pond of Safety parking area. David DeGruttola noted that there is a potential for lead contamination in the nearby stream from the shooting, and there are three camps who derive their water from the stream. Mr. DeGruttola also shared a concern about campers dumping waste, as there is a water supply behind the area. The Commission discussed putting up a No Overnight Camping sign. The Commission noted that as long as there is a safe back drop, shooting is allowed. The Commission discussed putting up a sign designating an area where shooting would be safe, however Mr. DeGruttola noted that designating an area may place more liability on the Town, and is something that should be brought to legal counsel for review. It was suggested that a temporary sign could be installed asking people to not shoot in that location to help protect the water supply.

I. Meeting Minutes

On a motion by Laura Brockett, seconded by Tim Mather, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the June 2023 meeting.

II. Mowing on RCF

- A. Brian Lamarre
- B. Leo "Chuck" Jellison

Mark Kelley advised that he spoke with Brian Lamarre and Check Jellison about mowing. Mr. Lamarre does most of the mowing, and had been rotating between

areas. This year will be the Pond of Safety, but he will not get to it until October or early November. Mr. Jellison does the wildlife openings and Deer Fly annually. The Farrar Farm and meadow are also mowed every year, but unsure who does this. Mark Kelley will go over this one more time with them.

Mark Kelley advised that when riding on Jimtown Road, he noticed that the culverts were exposed, which would make it tough to mow. The bridge also needs new decking. It was suggested that the cost of this could be shared with the snowmobile club.

Mark Kelley also noted that the gate that Gorham had, which is on the new property, should have a new lock and keys. Laura Brocket suggested that a parking lot could be considered at that area for those who hike Icy Gulch.

III. Financial Review

A. Invoices Received

Mark Kelley advised that two invoices were received from LandVest; one for the boundary line work in the amount of \$1,302.47, the other for the work related to the bridges in the amount of \$1,500.00.

B. Payments Received

A check was received from the winter timber sale in the amount of \$12,890.13.

David DeGruttola advised that prices have dropped significantly because of the reduced demand for lumber. Mr. DeGruttola advised that it does not make sense to set up a new sale when there is still work to do on the current one. It was noted that it will need to be mentioned in the new stewardship plan that they are carrying over what was not completed in the last plan, which was approved by the Planning Board.

Mark Kelley asked about the invoice for the bridges, which has not been received yet. The total is about \$180,000, and the initial payment was made by the Forest Commission from the Gifts and Grants account, which is designated for wildlife habitat work. The balance will be paid by the grant from NRCS through the Randolph Foundation, and the proceeds will be used to reimburse the Grants and Gifts account at that time.

IV. View Points on RCF (RMC)

Tim Mather advised that Randy Meiklejohn, who has worked with RMC in the past, suggested a view clearing in an area off of Four Soldiers near the Eye of the Needle. The RMC will investigate view options in the fall, when it is easier to see. They will follow up with a recommendation after their exploration is

complete. David Willcox advised that most of the land within Community forest is governed by a Federal Legacy Conservation Easement, which prohibits timber harvesting above 2500 feet, but does allow cutting for trail maintenance and improving recreational opportunities.

Laura Brockett asked about maintenance for the Interpretive Trail. Ms. Brockett noted that when it is mowed it is a decent walk, and suggested that the RMC should be paid to maintain it. It was also noted that Rollo Falls needs a sign, as it is gone. It was also suggested that the Crystal Mine Trail sign stating that any disturbance of the mine is a criminal offense as it is a natural area, be inspected.

V. Forester's Report

A. Pond of Safety Bridge Project

David DeGruttola advised that the last pieces arrived on Monday for the Pond of Safety bridge project and they will start to break ground this week.

Mr. DeGruttola also advised that the USFS put in cameras during the Rainbow Gathering.

Mr. DeGruttola noted that he has started on boilerplate information for the Stewardship Plan.

B. Padlocks

The Commission discussed the locks at the gates, and suggested it would be a good time to change the locks. The Forester would have one master key, along with the Fire Department, Sheriff, State Police, and Fish and Game. There are plans to put in a new gate and to move one. Mr. DeGruttola has contacted Jonathan Lane to quote building one for Bowman.

VI. 2023 Forest Day – August 5, 2023

David DeGruttola advised that he will speak about the bridge project, the timber sale, and the process for the stewardship plan. It was noted that the library has a projector available for a PowerPoint presentation.

For the field trip, they will stop at the memorial for John Scarinza and the bridges. The day will begin at the Town Hall at 9:00 am. The number of attendees varies with the weather, and it was suggested they should talk to state police about traffic. Mark Kelley will take care of getting the bench to be engraved for John Scarinza.

Laura Brockett advised that the Coos County Conservation District would still like to contribute to a memorial for John Scarinza. Ms. Brockett advised that Ann and David Forsyth do not think a bird blind is necessary, however a kiosk about birding or the history of the area might be a good idea. This will not be in place for Forest Day, and it was suggested that they be invited to the September meeting to discuss the ideas, and that they could visit the area before the meeting.

David Willcox also suggested that Tyler Ray be invited to the September meeting for a review.

Jeremiah Hawkins shared concerns with the Commission about the backcountry skiing and that it has turned into a for-profit entity, which is drawing more people to the area to get more donations. Mr. Hawkins suggested that a local group should be contracted to do the maintenance instead of GBA to pull it back a little. Mr. Hawkins also noted that the litter that was placed up there at the request of AVSAR has gone missing. It was noted that the RFC has an MOU with GBA to maintain the area. This MOU could be cancelled with notice. Mark Kelley noted that there is a problem with the glades being classified as trails, as the conservation easement requires 75 feet between trails. It was noted that the trails would not be visible in the summer. Michelle Cormier noted that it may be hard to pull back, as the area has been advertised and was included in a printed book. Mr. Hawkins suggested that it be managed in a different manner. David Willcox advised that they would need an agreement with a group for the management, as someone would need to be held responsible. The group would need to report to the RFC on their activity. The Commission noted that they will discuss this again at the September meeting. It was noted that Tyler Ray did address many of their concerns. It was noted that this area in Randolph is popular because they get enough snow, and many other areas have limited use due to parking.

Michelle Cormier mentioned that the Selectmen would like to see the couch and yurt removed, and Mark Kelley advised they plan to do this as soon as the ground dries up some.

VII. Other Business

- A. Alternate Candidates
- B. Webpage Updates
- C. Signs for POS Parking and Trailhead Parking - Update

They are working to have one of the signs done for August 5. They will work on the other after that. Laura Brockett suggested that the RMC trail map should be included on the sign, and Michelle Cormier suggested that they could consider putting it on the back of the sign.

VIII. Executive Session

On a motion by Nate Reid, seconded by Tim Mather, the Board voted unanimously to enter non-public session at 8:37 pm under RSA 91-A:3 II.

On a motion by Nate Reid, seconded by Laura Brockett, the Board voted unanimously to leave non-public session at 8:43 pm.

On a motion by Laura Brockett, seconded by Tim Mather, the Board voted unanimously to approve the rate adjustment request by LandVest.

This is the first rate adjustment request in their 10-year relationship. The new rate will go into effect when the August billing cycle begins.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 6, 2023 at 7:00 pm at the Randolph Town Hall.