



# Randolph Community Forest

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

- Date:** March 6, 2024
- Location:** Randolph Town Hall
- Members Present:** Mark Kelley, Laura Brockett, Tim Mather, Nate Reid, Walter Graff and David Willcox
- Guests Present:** David DeGruttola from LandVest, and Shelli Fortin, Minutes

Mark Kelley called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

I. Financial Review

A. Invoices Received

Mark Kelley advised that they received two invoices, one for \$139.19 from White Mountain Lumber, and one for \$6549.57 from LandVest.

B. Payments Received

One payment was received from LandVest in the amount of \$8,810.16 for the January cutting. David Degruttola advised that there will be another payment for February.

C. Communications to the Board

Mark Kelley advised they received a thank you letter from the Society for the Protection of NH Forests for their donation.

II. Forester's Report

Mark Kelley advised that the timber harvest ended on Saturday when they removed their equipment. The gate was closed today. David Degruttola advised that he is happy with the production, which is on par with the time they had.

a. Third Stewardship Plan

David Degruttola noted that a comparison was added in the new version of the Stewardship Plan, which breaks down what was harvested for saw timber, pulpwood, and fuel wood chips, and includes the timber cuts over the last six years.

The majority of the plan focuses on Forest Type Designation, which is description and prescription, grouping similar forest types together and listing how to treat the stands.

David Willcox suggested that a section be added for unforeseen circumstances, such as the caterpillar outbreak, which would allow for salvage without an amendment to the plan.

Walter Graff asked about the management objectives, and Mr. DeGruttola advised they are to enhance, maintain, and create wildlife habitat, and improve the overall quality of the forest. A healthy forest is resilient to climate change. Mr. Graff asked about upcoming projects, such as Jimtown Road, and Mr. DeGruttola advised that they are listed under the action section. Mr. DeGruttola advised that he will be looking at the culverts on Jimtown Road to see what should be there, and advised there are two more proposed bridge locations on Deerfly Road. Mr. Graff noted that Climate Resilience is an important topic and should be pointed out in the plan. The planting of trees such as oak, hickory, and chestnut was mentioned, which Dartmouth is doing now on their grant. Mr. DeGruttola noted that these plantings are expensive and have to be maintained. Mr. DeGruttola also noted that Memorial trees require irrigation or a bladder which needs to be filled.

Mr. DeGruttola suggested that a page in the Stewardship plan be added as a memorial to John Scarinza.

In discussing the management activities over the last six years, Mr. Degruttola noted that of the 1,350 acres, 40 were clear cut, 655 acres were shelterwood, and 655 acres were thinnings. There were 10,946 gross cords harvested, which is approximately 8 cords per acre. They could harvest 3,600-4,000 cords annually and not impact growth; however, they have struggled with the weather the last couple of years. On average, they have cut 1,749 cords per year, with one year being over 4,000 for the salvage.

In 2003, there were 96,452 gross cords in the Forest, in 2013 there were 111,477 gross cords, and in 2023 there were 185,220 gross cords. Differences in the numbers are attributed to young stands that have crossed over to pulp size, two different designs, a difference in programs to process the data, and the additional acres that have been added. They are now at 21 cords to the acre, which is healthy. The total capital value is \$8.4 million at the end of 2023.

David Willcox suggested that information be included in the plan as to why the inventory is important and what it is used for.

The acres added to the forest were reviewed, and include: 72 acres for Rollo Falls, 244.74 acres for the Potter tract, 200 acres from Gorham, 88 acres and 50 acres for the Brady parcel, and 32 acres for the Meiklejohn parcel. David Willcox noted that a good recreational opportunity project would be a riverwalk on the Meiklejohn property.

David Willcox suggested that in the Education section, since the annual Forest Day event provides opportunities for educating the public to aspects of forest management, examples from past Forest Days could be used; one of which might be "Dirt to Trees to Wildlife".

Mark Kelley asked about the first two pages, which Mr. DeGruttola noted would be redone in a similar format when the plan is complete. Mr. DeGruttola also asked for pictures, which will be incorporated into the plan.

Laura Brockett noted that dates are wrong under Purpose, and should list 2023-2033, as well as under the Timber Inventory which should state 2023.

It was noted that the wildlife cameras are mentioned in the plan, however it is not known if these are still out there, or whether they need to be in the plan. The Commission will attempt to find the location of the cameras.

Laura Brockett asked that her name be removed from the plan and have it just state that a member of the Forest Commission handles the website. Forest Commission member names are listed in the Town Annual Report and on the website, and do not need to be included in the plan as they do change.

Laura Brockett asked about the road networks, and since there are three, Jimtown, Pond of Safety, and Bowman, the section under Roads and Other Infrastructure will need to be updated to reflect that.

Laura Brockett suggested that knotweed control should begin this year.

It was noted that glade skiing should also be added, and it was suggested that someone write something to add.

David Degruttola stated that he will check formatting and numbers in the plan, as well as insert pictures and maps, along the additional properties that have been added. Mr. DeGruttola advised that he will plan to have the final draft to the Forest Commission at the end of next week.

Mark Kelley suggested that the Forest Commission hold a Work Session on March 20, 2024, to work on the plan.

III. Other Business

A. Wildlife Crossing

Mark Kelley noted that he has been in contact with the engineer, and this will be discussed at the May meeting.

IV. Executive Session

There was no executive session needed.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:35 pm.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 3, 2024, at 6:30 pm at the Randolph Town Hall.