



Randolph Community Forest

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

Date: October 4, 2023
Location: Randolph Town Hall
Members Present: Mark Kelley, Laura Brockett, Walter Graff, Tim Mather, and David Willcox
Guests Present: Michelle Cormier, David DeGruttola from LandVest, Sam Trombley, Stuart Hickey, and Shelli Fortin, Minutes

Mark Kelley called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

David Willcox was the alternate filling in for Nate Reid, who was absent.

I. Backcountry Ski Area – Discussion

Sam Trombley, Marketing Manager, and Stuart Hickey, Glade Chief, from GBA were in attendance to present an update to the RFC. Ms. Trombley noted that this is the sixth season that GBA has been managing Crescent Ridge Glade. Ms. Trombley stated that GBA has been working hard to mitigate any issues. In October of 2022 they held a glade day to work on the area, with an after-party at the Kelley's barn. They are not planning a glade day this year. GBA has worked to control parking, by encouraging carpooling and parking at Big Day Brewing. GBA has also worked with commercial groups, encouraging the use of overflow parking or taking avalanche courses to other spots. GBA reported that signage has repeatedly been removed, with arrows being turned on some of the signs which lead skiers in the wrong direction. There have also been defamatory stickers placed in the glade zone about GBA and Tyler Ray. GBA has implemented a trailhead ambassador program, and have someone available at the site on weekends and holidays.

The Commission suggested that the number of parking spaces available be noted on the website, along with the suggestion of carpooling. David Willcox stated that GBA has addressed the complaints they have put forward, and advised Ms. Trombley and Mr. Hickey that there will be a public hearing scheduled in the spring to discuss the management of the glade, and whether GBA's business model is compatible with the town. The Commission shared concerns about the area being actively promoted, and overuse of the area. Ms. Trombley stated that they would be sad if the glade was not part of their network, but stated that they do not want to disrupt the local community. Mr. Hickey noted that overuse is a bigger issue, and is happening in other areas as well. GBA advised they are expanding their glade zone, adding two areas this year, which should

alleviate some of the congestion. A designated parking area for residents was suggested, however it would be difficult to enforce. Mr. Hickey stated that they would add some additional signs for motorists to slow down and respect the neighborhood.

II. Financial Review

A. Invoices Received

Mark Kelley advised that they received an invoice for \$2,600 from LandVest.

B. Payments Received

A check was received from LandVest in the amount of \$65.00.

Mark Kelley advised that a Certificate of Insurance was received from the mower.

Mark Kelley advised that the check from NRCS for the bridge project was given to the Randolph Foundation, and the Randolph Foundation issued a check back to the Community Forest.

III. Third Stewardship Plan Update

David DeGruttola advised he is still working on boilerplate stuff and will hit the ground shortly.

Mr. DeGruttola advised that he spoke with Steven Roberge from the UNH Cooperative Extension, who is doing a maple tap study in the forest. They will do measurements in the next year, which will be incorporated into the plan. The study is unique, as this area had never been tapped before. The purpose is to see if smaller trees could be tapped. Vermont allows 9" trees to be tapped, but NH only allows 10" or larger.

When asked if there would be any changes to the philosophy or goals, Mr. DeGruttola advised there were not be. The goal is to improve, maintain, and create wildlife habitat, and they do this by managing timber. The treatment schedule will be based on the new data. Stand descriptions and prescriptions guide how the forest is managed. Walt Wintturi worked toward 8-10% of early successional habitat. The bridge project will make the watershed healthier. It was noted that there is money available from the US government for stream openings.

IV. Forester's Report

A. Pond of Safety Bridge Project

David DeGruttola advised that he has a meeting scheduled with Dirigo on October 16 at 8:30 am at the office in Bethel to voice issues. Board members are welcome to attend.

B. Shankar Property

Mr. DeGruttola advised that the timber capital value is a small component of the overall property value. The Conservation Fund and another group are spearheading the project. If this project moves forward, it would possibly be a year away and require help from the Randolph Foundation with a fund raising campaign.

The current owner plans to keep two parcels, one in Gorham, and one in Randolph, and would grant a right-of-way. The total parcel is 516 acres, and the landowner would retain 54.7 acres.

V. Other Business

A. Randolph Ramble

Tim Mather asked for permission to be granted for the Randolph Ramble on October 28. The Commission granted permission. Mr. Mather advised that the Ramble is the biggest fundraiser for the RMC.

B. Webpage Updates

Laura Brockett requested that Mr. DeGruttola send her a short paragraph with information about LandVest to be added to the website.

C. Signs – Update

Mark Kelley will attempt to contact George Brown at the AMC about the signs. It was suggested that the RMC could possibly help with signs if he is unable to. Mr. Kelley also advised that David Doyle apologized for the delay on the kiosk signs, and will be in touch in 3-4 weeks. It was suggested that the back of the sign have a plexiglass shield to protect maps that could be added.

D. Yurt

Mark Kelley asked if they could contract with White Mountain Lumber to remove the yurt and couch, as the person he hoped would do the work is not available. This way, White Mountain Lumber could provide a Certificate of Insurance.

E. Critter Crossing

Walter Graff advised that there will be a press release from NHDOT or the Audubon Society about the Critter Crossing. They are looking at the Farrar site, as the location by Bowman would require raising the road and that is not feasible.

VI. Review Minutes of September Meeting

On a motion by Walter Graff, seconded by Laura Brockett, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the September 2023 meeting.

VII. Executive Session

There was no executive session needed.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 6:30 pm at the Randolph Town Hall.