



Randolph Community Forest

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

- Date:** November 1, 2023
- Location:** Randolph Town Hall
- Members Present:** Mark Kelley, Laura Brockett, Walter Graff, Tim Mather, Nate Reid, and David Willcox
- Guests Present:** Michelle Cormier, David DeGruttola from LandVest, Mark Dubois, Roy Parkhurst, and Shelli Fortin, Minutes

Mark Kelley called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm.

- I. Waumbek Methna Snowmobile Club
Since May 6, 2004 Waumbek Methna Snowmobile Club has been appointed Activity Manager for snowmobile activity on and within the Randolph Community Forest. Roy Parkhurst and Mark Dubois were in attendance from the Waumbek Methna Snowmobile Club to touch base so that everyone knows what is going on. Mr. Parkhurst advised that they have not had a chance to check the trails yet, however he believes they are in good shape for this season. They would like to brush hog the Icy Gulch Trail, but it may be next year at this point. Laura Brockett noted a couple bridges that need work on the Lookout Ledge Trail. Mr. Parkhurst advised that they did replace two bridges in the last few years, one behind the Mt. Jefferson Motel and one on the other side of Lowe's. Mr. Parkhurst advised that the club would contact the Forest Commission if there were any work that needs to be done that they should be aware of. The snowmobile club had a work party last week, and will be looking at a couple of bridges along the pipeline. They have also used logging mats when needed in wet areas. Walter Graff asked about membership, and Mr. Parkhurst advised they currently have about 250 members, and usually have anywhere between 230-250. Mr. Parkhurst advised that they worked with the Federal government and the State Bureau of Trails to purchase a new groomer, and they will now have two, one that is 12 years old along with the new one. The club will get a map of the trails to the Commission. Mr. Parkhurst advised the only issue they

are having is with rentals, as those renting do not know how to ride and have accidents or get stuck on the trail. They have spoken with the rental agencies about their concerns.

David DeGruttola advised the club of the new bridges on the Pond of Safety Road, and noted that the concrete side skirts could be damaged if hit with the snow cat's plow. Mr. Degruttola noted that it would be worth the club reviewing this before the snow falls. Mr. Degruttola also advised that they are planning a timber sale on the Deer Fly Trail. A discussion was had about putting down something permanent over the bridge decking to prevent wear. Mr. DeGruttola and Mr. Parkhurst both advised they would talk with Clint Savage about options.

II. Review Minutes of October Meeting

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

III. Financial Review

A. Invoices Received

Mark Kelley advised that they received two invoices, one for \$762.44 from LandVest, and one from Leo Jellison for mowing in the amount of \$2,400. Mark Kelley advised that Brian Lamarre was also asked to mow the Berry's property to keep the old logging road from getting overgrown.

David Degruttola advised that he received the invoices for the four bridges. The invoice for bridge number one was for \$31,455, bridge two \$29,415, bridge three \$27,875, and bridge four \$23,710, for a total of \$112,455.

B. Payments Received

There were no payments received.

IV. Budget Discussion

Mark Kelley shared a draft of the 2024 budget, which listed this year's expenses through October 15, last year's budget, and the proposed 2024 budget. Mr. Kelley advised that the revenue from the maple sugar taps has been increased, and revenue from logging has been included. It was noted that the total was not added correctly, and this will be updated.

Expenses for the Water Wheel Right-of-Way maintenance will be included under Wildlife Habitat Improvement, as well as the permanent wildlife opening. The Commission will need to decide where the wildlife opening will be to plan for cost. This will need to be cut in the winter, and stumps removed in the summer.

Currently revenues are budgeted at \$127,000, and expenses at \$109,000, however there are other expenses to be added. Road Maintenance is budgeted at \$25,000, however they may not need all of it.

WHIP funds could be applied for through the Randolph Foundation if they have a project in mind. David DeGruttola advised that two other culverts could be replaced. Walter Graff suggested that forest projects be planned in conjunction with bridge replacements.

Laura Brockett noted that \$26,000 was budgeted to update the Stewardship Plan this year, but only \$1,500 is budgeted for next year. If this will not all be paid this year, next year's budget should be increased. Road Maintenance is budgeted at \$25,000 this year based on the Forester's notes that culverts on Jimtown Road will need to be replaced, along with erosion control in Hunter's Pass. It was noted that the amount for Brush Cutting was only budgeted for half of what it was, and Mark Kelley advised that part of this cost was applied to the Farrar Farm budget. Mr. Kelley requested that members review the budget and send any suggestions to him via email before the next meeting. The revised budget will be discussed at the next meeting and then presented at the Planning Board meeting in December.

V. Forester's Report

A. Third Stewardship Plan - Update

David DeGruttola advised that it is his goal to have this completed in December.

B. Boundary Line

Mr. DeGruttola advised that the landowner with the boundary line issue has agreed that the surveyor has put the line in the correct location, and they will be painting it and covering the incorrect blazes.

VI. Other Business

A. Signs

Mark Kelley advised that he did send an email to David Doyle and is still waiting to hear back. Mr. Kelley advised that it sounded like they are planning to make three signs, and one could possibly be installed at the Farrar Farm site.

A list of the other signs needed will be created to give to George Brown. A few Randolph Community Forest signs will be needed, along with signs for Rollo Falls.

B. Webpage Updates

Laura Brockett advised that she has updated the website.

C. Antenna for Repeater

A meeting for the repeater project was held, and it was noted that they are now looking to install an 80-foot tower, which would not be allowed as only 70' is allowed per regulations in Randolph. It was suggested that they should look to rent space on the cell tower. Michelle Cormier suggested that the Forest Commission should send a representative to the meetings to share concerns. The Farrar Farm is not under the conservation easement; however, all forest property should be managed as if it was. Mark Kelley advised that he did send an email to Phil Cloutier of the Gorham Fire Department to get information for the December meeting. It was suggested that Kevin Rousseau should also be included in the meeting.

D. Critter Crossing

Walter Graff advised that he received an email with updates. Over the next few months, they will be meeting to review design alternatives and are planning to meet with the Randolph Selectmen. Mark Kelley asked if there were enough accidents with animals to warrant to project, and Mr. Graff advised that this is part of the study. They are also looking at alternatives, such as lighting. Michelle Cormier added that Route 2 is a barrier to many animals for migration. It was noted that although this is still a study, NHDOT seems excited about the project as a model.

VII. Executive Session

There was no executive session needed.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:57 pm.

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