

Dummerston Conservation Commission

Meeting minutes: August 14, 2014

Members present: John Anderson, Ed Anthes, Mary Ellen Copeland, Lynn Levine, Jane Michaud, Bill Schmidt

1. *Minutes*. A motion was made and seconded to accept the July minutes as submitted.
2. *Finances*. The DCC account carries a negative balance of \$189. Program donations have been decreasing. Fundraising ideas were discussed. Mary Ellen will draft a letter to prospective donors to be sent in September.
3. *Letter review*. Members approved John's letter to the Selectboard re DCC services.
4. *Trail map*. Lynn provided members with copies of the local trails map she created. The map can be updated as needed and is downloadable. Betsy will add a link on the DCC website and Jane will include a link in the DCC newsletter. Maps will be available at the two local campgrounds and at the Dummerston town office.
5. *Prospect Hill*. Lynn has located a contractor, Gerry Hawkes, with machinery capable of removing invasive plants from the top of Prospect Hill. She has requested a quote, and will send a link with information about this equipment to DCC members. Gerry will bring it on September 30th, at 6 pm before DCC's barberry program, to further explain its use. If this method of invasives control is deemed advisable, a proposal will be presented to the Prospect Hill Trustees.
6. *West River Trail (WRT)*. John, Murray McHugh from The Nature Conservancy, and Bob Popp from VT Fish & Wildlife surveyed a section of the WRT along Rice Farm Road and proposed a rerouting that avoids the destruction of rare/endangered plants.
7. *Dutton Pines*. A grant proposal will be submitted for interpretive plaques and other improvements. John will contact Fred Taylor to write up the July 25th picnic for the "Views."
8. *Wildflower inventory*. John had added about two-dozen wildflowers since the last update. Protection of rare plants when a property changes ownership is an issue to be resolved.
9. *Energy Committee meeting*. Ed reported on the Committee's July meeting on increasing solar energy in Dummerston. DCC will publicize their solar project through our website and newsletter.
10. *Erosion control*. John has noticed serious erosion from logging on the Maple Valley property, which could pose a threat to public safety. He will contact Bill Gunther and Sam Schneski from the VT Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation.
11. *Program suggestions*
Sarah Berg: Local walk, September or October
Lynn: Mammal tracks & scat, end of October
Patti Smith: Beavers of Popple's Pond, December
Also proposed: Program on forest protection, timber harvest tour

12. *Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) program*. Margaret Skinner from UVM has agreed to present a program on HWA in November. Ed will confirm with her the date of November 18. Regional CCs will be invited to the program.
13. *Open Farms Days, August 23rd*. Bill provided a spreadsheet of tasks and asked for volunteers for the upcoming farm tour. It was suggested that video interviews be taped at each of the participating farms to be shown on bctv.
14. *Public Health Risk for Lyme Disease in a Complex Forest Ecosystem, September 30th*. Area CCs and BEEC will co-sponsor this program. Mary Ellen will invite the department head of Fish & Wildlife; other invitees will include Gov. Shumlin, our state reps, and highway department personnel.
15. *Other scheduled events*
August 19th: Elysian Hills walk with Bill Schmidt, 6-7:30 pm
16. *Sightings*. Monarch caterpillars, gray fox, raccoon, merlin, milk snake, brown snake, good oak tree mast

Next meeting: September 11

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Michaud