

Dummerston Conservation Commission

Meeting minutes: August 13, 2015

Members present: John Anderson, Ed Anthes, Mary Ellen Copeland, Bill Johnson, Jane Michaud, Jonathan Royce, Bill Schmidt, Betsy Whittaker

1. *Minutes*. A motion was made and seconded to accept the July minutes as submitted.
2. *Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)*. Mary Ellen will speak with Jim Esden about the possibility of installing more purple EAB traps.
3. *Trails Committee*. The committee plans to meet this fall to discuss a loop trail near Prospect Hill that is part of a proposed connecting trail between Putney Mountain and Black Mountain.
4. *Prospect Hill*. The Trustees, after receiving bids in response to their RFP, have awarded a contract to Forest Savers to clear the top of overgrowth. The company has been given one-time access through the Hickens property. Plans for future maintenance TBD.
5. *Black Mountain*. Betsy will contact Murray McHugh about The Nature Conservancy's plans for trails on their newly acquired parcel.
6. *West River Trail*. Ed reported on the meeting between the Selectboard, homeowners abutting the trail, and Friends of the West River Trail re concerns about trail location and use.
7. *Dutton Pines*. Bill J., in collaboration with Transition Dummerston, would like to promote a Friends of Dutton Pines group to oversee maintenance of and encourage use of the state park. Members are asked to report any signs of habitation there to Tim Morton.
8. *Rain garden*. Mary Ellen has contacted Steve Glabach about removing poison ivy.
9. *Wildflower inventory*. John has added 30 flowering species to his local list. Betsy will type them up to include in the inventory. John has contacted Bob Popp at the VT Fish & Wildlife Dept. re protection of the trifora found in the area.
10. *Solarize Dummerston*. The deadline to join the project has been extended from September 1st to the 30th, to give more residents time to enroll.
11. *Scheduled programs*
Community Singing in the Pines, Aug. 28, 5:30 pm, Dutton Pines SP (with Transition Dummerston)
The Effect of Climate Change on Mammals, Sept. 10, 7 pm, the Learning Collaborative
12. *Future planning*. Members discussed the creation of a conservation plan to guide future DCC activity, based on Mary Ellen's draft. Suggested initiatives include:
 - Natural resources inventory update, including forest, wetlands, and riparian lands assessment. Mary Ellen will research a NEGEF grant.
 - Contiguous lands overlay for the zoning bylaw. Bill S. presented a draft proposal and will revise.
 - Invasives control program, with volunteers to clear their own homesites and roadsides

- Coordination with other organizations
- February course, possibly with Bob Engle (Mary Ellen will contact), Tom Wessels, Richard Little Bill J. will edit the planning draft further. Members were asked to re-read the Natural Resources section of the Town Plan for continuing discussion.

13. Public program suggestions

Sept. Invasives. Mary Ellen will contact Elizabeth Spinney, VT invasive plants coordinator

Oct. Wildflower inventory, John Anderson; land conservation, Joan Weir; Black Mountain hike

Nov. Mammals, Patti Smith

Jan. Tracking, Lynn Levine

Feb. First Detector Program

Mar. Managing land for biodiversity; salamander crossing, BEEC

Apr. Spring ephemerals hike

May History and geology of Prospect Hill, Roger Haydock

Additional proposed speakers include David Deen (Bill S. will contact) and Andrew Stein (Bill J. will contact)

14. *Sightings*

gray fox, bear sign, scarlet tanagers, goldfinches, cedar waxwings, Perseid meteor shower

Next meeting: September 17

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Michaud