

Meeting Minutes: Dummerston Conservation Commission

October 13, 2016, 7:00pm

Dummerston Town Office

Members Present: Bill Johnson, Lynn Levine, Ed Anthes, Mary Ellen Copeland, Deborah Ayer, Bill Schmidt

Community Coordination

Discussion of improving coordination with local and regional environmental/conservation organizations: There's been a growth of organizations and educational events, creating a wealth of activity, and coordination would improve efficacy of events and activities. VT Agency of Natural Resources has a newsletter. Propose a meeting of local conservation committees and organizations/associations to discuss creating a shared calendar all can post events to (in order to avoid cross-fire of events and to foster mutual support). Consider a list serve. Limit to Windham County. BEEC has offered to host a shared calendar.

Soils Meeting:

Panelists are excited and have been busy preparing materials (photos, soil samples) for the event. DCC members will arrive early to help set-up.

Invasive's Meeting:

Follow-up discussion: A number of attendees thanked Cliff Adler for his work at Dutton State Park. There has been some follow-through from attendees regarding contacting recommended resources.

Regional Conservation Commission Meeting:

Follow-up discussion: Commissioners felt this was a useful and successful meeting. Mary Ellen will put key items in power-point online.

Educational Events:

Wolf talk and an educational series are still being scheduled. Porcupine event with Patti Smith is set and will be co-sponsored by DCC. Lynn will be scheduled to do a tracks OR trees event (trees as a no-snow contingency plan). Lynn will provide a pocket-guide and suggests a fee to encourage investment in the program. Proposed panel discussion on drought impacts on our environment/economy/landscape.

Biodiversity:

White Pine watch: 3 kinds of fungus attacks are creating die-back. Moist, late spring followed by drought, creates die-off in the following year. Drought, combined with a canker and rust disease is creating more trouble. No projections yet on future impacts or threats to tree stands (there are multiple weather, soil, light, and disease factors, along with unknowns about tree resiliency). This problem is currently being watched/monitored.

Prospect Hill:

Trail has now been marked/blazed to clarify path.

Dutton Pines:

All State Foresters met to hear a presentation from Cliff Adler on his work on invasives at Dutton Pines. Bill Gunther (county forester) organized this event, feeling there's been turn-over/new foresters who would benefit from Cliff's experience. Suggestion of signage with info., as there are many visitors who use the trails.

Tiny Grants:

Lynne has touched-base with Dummerston Principal regarding Art of Seeing project. School will match the grant so Lynne will be able to visit a number of times.

Sightings:

25 turkeys seen on lawns; great blue heron in Crosby Brook; great blue heron at man-made pond off Bunker road; 2 bears crossing East West Road, during one week, on different parts of roads; loggers have been reporting seeing bears; huge skunk and woodchuck on road; snapping turtle on Camp Arden Road; Monarchs spotted in late Aug/Sept several together.