TRAILS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
Via Zoom Meeting  
May 25, 2021, at 8:00 a.m.

Attending: Bob White (chair), Delia Kaye (Natural Resources Division), Spencer Borden, David Clarke, Carlene Hempel (scribe), Bill Kemeza, Jonathan “Jay” Keyes, Ken Miller

Members absent: None

Stewards present: Jim Balfour, Beth Baryiames, Alice Galinat, Pam Howell, Wayne Lobb, Polly Stadt, Ted Tyson, Amity (Mickey) Wilczek

Visitors: Susan Bates (liaison from the Select Board).

Minutes: On a motion made by Spencer Borden and seconded by Bill Kemeza, the minutes of the April 2021 meeting were unanimously approved by roll call vote.

STEWARD REPORTS:

**Annursnae-Baptist Book Conservation Land:** Steward Pam Howell reported the trails look good. There is a tree down across the lower red trail near the bog bridge. Also, the coyotes have attacked a few off-leash dogs. Director of Natural Resources Delia Kaye said this is the time of year coyotes are raising their pups and that dogs should be leashed for their safety. Trail committee member Carlene Hempel asked Delia if we could post signs that warn dog owners to leash up in the spring. Delia said a warning on the website might be more practical.

**Baker Ave. Boat Launch & Picnic Area:** Committee chair Bob White said he pulled out four bags of garlic mustard. More wood chips are to be delivered for the summer crew to finish covering the trail with. Trail Steward Polly Stadt says she’s seen a lot of people picnicking at the tables there.

**Emerson-Thoreau Amble:** A report was received from Wayne Lobb that invasive knotweed is growing by the bridge behind the Emerson House. Delia said she pointed it out to the summer crew last week when they started.

**Mattison Field:** A report was received from Joe Zizzo that there are some small trees down on the wooded trails.

**October Farm Riverfront:** A report was received from Joe Rigali that everything is in good shape, though partiers seem to be leaving trash in the parking lot. Delia said police are aware of the issue.
Old Rifle Range: Trail Steward Alice Galinat said she’s concerned that someone seems to be picking lady slipper flowers. She hasn’t witnessed it, but she is aware of where the flowers are blooming and she is certain some went missing. She’s been pulling garlic mustard off the trail as well. Also, Alice noted there is some dumping near the vernal pond along the red trail. Delia said there are three property owners doing this, and the Town is contacting them to ask that they remove anything they have dumped by early June.

Powder Mill Woods: A report was received from Gene Delsener that a tree leaning over the main trail needs to be cleared.

Reformatory Branch Trail: Ned Perry reported a 10-inch-thick log across the ridge trail. Also, he said it gets quite muddy around Gowing’s Swamp, though not on Concord property. Bob drove by one day to see trail Steward Bill Robichaud busily cleaning ditches on both sides of the trail, which is helpful because it keeps water from making mud at the top of the trail.

Rivers Confluence: A report was received from Jim Balfour that the red trail behind Old Calf Pasture is getting overgrown.

West Concord Park: Steward Beth Baryiames reports that bikers have been using the embankments at Domino Drive to access the trail, and in doing so are cutting up the plastic, which was installed there to control the knotweed. Bob said the Town hopes to put a split rail fence there to enforce entry only from Conant Street to stop such activity.

Westvale-Harrington: A report was received from Gene Delsener that dog waste bags, that he has removed, are being left on the trail behind Marshall Farm. Alice Galinat also reported a “tremendous amount of the invasive knotweed” along the river behind Marshall Farm at the top of the bank beyond the community gardens.

REGULAR BUSINESS:

Introduction of summer crew: Bob reported that Becca Solomon and Elizabeth Field have begun work as the summer crew.

Brochures and Maps at Trailhead Kiosks: At the last meeting, Delia agreed the committee could establish one-page maps at the kiosks. Bob has since drafted all 14 of them with committee member David Clarke’s help as an editor.

Bikes on Trails: Delia said she is aware that bikers use the trails, but she doesn’t want to invite them unconditionally. The Natural Resources Committee had started to consider the issue of bikes on trails, but that effort stalled. Delia will be working with new Land Manager Will Holden to evaluate which trails are appropriate for bikes. Committee member Carlene Hempel offered to help with that effort. Bob recommended Bill Robichaud, too.
Bay Circuit Trail Billerica-Tewksbury Gap Update: Bob attended a webinar about the gap in the Bay Circuit trail that takes an abrupt end at the Middlesex Community campus and picks up again in Andover. The webinar, “Mind the Gap - Closing the Bay Circuit Trail Gap in Tewksbury and Billerica,” was held to discuss the issue. (A video of the webinar is available [here](#).) The effort is progressing: Bruce Shick reported that the Tewksbury section has CPA funds to close the gap and REI has donated materials to build bridges and boardwalks. The group still needs National Grid’s approval to cross a power line. There are several points of interest along the stretch including a state hospital and cemetery that have been overgrown. There was also an amputee cemetery from the late 1800s.

Marlies Henderson reported that the Billerica section has defined the 7-mile corridor for the trail, built a switchback in a steep area and purchased the Cider Mill land. Points of interest along the route are the Middlesex Canal Towpath, Fox Hill summit with views of the Boston skyline and the narrow gauge “Yankee Doodle Line” railroad.

**Other Business:** Mention was made of an article in the Concord Discover magazine that included a foldout with information about nine conservation areas with walking trails and a promotion for the “Ecology along Concord Trails” book.

**Adjournment:** On a motion made by Jay Keyes and seconded by Bill Kemeza, the meeting adjourned at 9 a.m.

**Next Meeting:** The next Trails Committee meeting is scheduled for June 29, 2021, at 8 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carlene Hempel