

TRAILS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, June 28, 2022
141 Keyes Road, Conference Room
Concord, MA
8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

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

Members absent: None.

Stewards present: Alice Galinat, Wayne Lobb, Bill Robichaud

Visitors: Mark Gailus, Mary Hartman (Select Board liaison)

Chairman Bob White called the meeting to order at 8 a.m.

Minutes: On a motion made by Spencer Border and seconded by Jay Keyes, minutes from the May 31 meeting were unanimously approved as amended.

STEWARD REPORTS:

Annursnac-Baptist Book Conservation Land: The trails are in good shape. Bog bridge materials will be available the first week of August to fill the Annursnac community’s order.

Baker Avenue Boat Launch & Picnic Area: Steward Isabel Bailey and Committee Chair Bob White have been working on the issue of critters eating plants along the trail. For example, only stalks remain of the asters. Bob mixed up garlic and pepper and will apply it after every rain to dissuade the animals.

Barrett’s Mill Conservation Area: Steward Kirk Kinder has been removing the invasive knotweed from the area. Isabel suggested dropping a load of compost there. Kirk also reported some damage to the parking lot from a fallen tree.

Cousins Park: No report.

Emerson-Thoreau Amble: Steward Wayne Lobb said what was once an informal path along the Amble had been erased by the Appalachian Mountain Club, but has since reappeared. He pulled some brush over it to dissuade users but he doesn’t know if the diversion will hold. He also cut back knotweed on the site. Wayne will be away on vacation for a couple of weeks in July, but Land Manager Will Holden will substitute in his absence.

Mattison Field: The trails are in good shape.

Moses Pond/Ridge Trail: No report.

October Farm Riverfront: Committee member Ken Miller reported that some areas are impassable. Natural Resources Director Delia Kaye said Mass Audubon is working on trail improvements. Committee member Jay Keyes asked if there could be coordination among the multiple landowners on site to publish one unified trail map. Delia and Will said they will work on revising the map to do so.

Old Rifle Range: Steward Alice Galinat reported that all the trails are in good shape. She noted there are two new property fences she worries might have slipped onto conservation land. Delia mentioned that the property owner got a permit for the fences. Alice also worried about garlic mustard on the ridge. Delia suggested a vinegar solution to kill the seedlings.

Powder Mill Woods: Some blazes need to be replaced.

Punkatasset Preserve: Steward David Kirkwood reported no problems. The invasive bittersweet is present though and he hopes the summer crew can work to remove it.

Reformatory Branch Trail: Steward Bill Robichaud reported that there are some invasives on the trail including burning bush just beyond Butternut Circle and around Peter Spring Field.

Rivers Confluence: No report.

Hapgood-Wright Town Forest: Steward David Clancy reported that everything is fine.

West Concord Park: Kirk Kinder reported the trails are in good shape.

Westvale-Harrington: Steward Isabel Bailey has been busy with a pollinator garden. Gene Delsener has cleared brush from the boat landing in the Second Division Brook area.

White Pond Reservation: Bob and Will cleared two fallen trees. There is another down and ready for removal.

REGULAR BUSINESS:

Land Manager's Report:

- Regular summer maintenance is in full swing. The crew is currently on its third round of mowing of 16 regular areas. Five miles of trails are mowed regularly by the crew.
- Isabel Bailey is establishing a pollinator garden at Harrington Park. The town has assisted with a hookup for a 300-foot hose and wood chips.
- Fresh wood chips were delivered to West Concord Park off Conant Street.
- On June 30, there will be a volunteer project with seven people at Mattison Field from 1 to 5 p.m. to remove knotweed, install a split fence, remove trash and install a sign.
- Upcoming projects: Invasives removal projects are scheduled for Heyward Meadow, West Concord Park and Mattison Field along the field's edge.

Potential Trail Projects Discussion:

- West Concord Park: Bob mentioned the possibility of cleaning up the space between Domino Drive and the entrance trail from Conant Street.
- Emerson-Thoreau Amble: There is a project coming up in the first week of August involving 16 bog bridges, all 8 feet long. The AMC is coming in to help.
- Trail to Cambridge Turnpike near Fairyland Pond: Bob wondered if we could relocate the trail by benching it into the base of the hill so people can pass through. He also wondered about sourcing a volunteer group to help do this work.
- Reformatory Branch Trail: Bob said the town needs to conduct a survey to get a sense of what the issues are. Improving drainage north of Monument Street and near Butternut Circle are two examples. Delia also mentioned overhanging trees that could be pruned back. Delia said she's open to thoughts about scope. She plans to put in an application, due in September, to the CPA for some of this work.
- Assabet River tree removal: Delia mentioned that if trees are only three-quarters of the way across the river, they don't qualify for removal because boaters can still get by. She noted it's extremely difficult to remove fallen trees and debris from the river.
- Removal of porcelain berry: This is a plant that looks like a grape leaf but is invasive. It has purple, pink or lavender spotted berries in the fall. Delia noted the town is now finding it everywhere. The plant has a reddish stem whereas grapes stems are green. She said there is a very large stand of it at Willow Guzzle Reservation, which is town land - with trails – about a quarter mile before Verrill Farm on Sudbury Road.
- Baker Avenue parking lot: Concord Public Works is scheduled to drop off 1 ton of crushed stone to improve the path.
- Water chestnut removal from Fairhaven Bay: Delia notes that if there are people who have a canoe or a kayak and would like to help with this project, please send an email to inquire.
- Water bar installation on Punkatasset trail. Will said this could evolve into an Eagle Scout project.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 9:02 a.m.

Next Meeting: The next Trails Committee meeting is scheduled for 141 Keyes Road on July 26, 2022, at 8 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carlene Hempel