

**Special Meeting of the Hogback Preservation Commission
With the Hogback Mountain Conservation Association
5 p.m. Wednesday, January 27, 2016
Marlboro, Vermont Town Office
Minutes**

Call to Order – 5:10pm

Attendees: Mike Purcell, Lauren MacArthur, David Elliott, Hal Himmelstein, Phil Howe, Bob Anderson, Nancy Anderson, Diana Todd, Amanda Whiting, Patti Smith, Staley McDermet, Tim Hayes, Andy Healy

This meeting was called to discuss embarking on a biodiversity and/or habitat study/inventory of the conservation area, and to ascertain what resources we already have available (in terms of research, studies, maps, etc.) about Hogback and to look at other studies that have been done in surrounding towns/town forests/conservation areas.

Lauren MacArthur made a few opening comments reviewing the purpose of the meeting and the context of the desire to complete a biodiversity study. In the past and present, when considering questions surrounding logging, trails, recreation, etc., we've often wished we had a more detailed inventory/map/description of the existing animals, plants and habitat types on Hogback. We met with Bill Guenther in late 2014, which generated a lot of enthusiasm for a study, but we realized we needed to take a step by to decide what our specific desires and goals were for such a study and where funds would come from to pay for it.

Possible Strategies

Diana Todd gave a presentation based on her research of strategies for completing biodiversity/habitat studies, based on the following:

- 1) National Forest Service Study (zones)
- 2) State Park Management strategy (dividing land into management categories: Highly Sensitive, Special, General, Intensive)
- 3) Wetland, Woodland, Wildland field guide strategy (ID natural communities- 80 categories!)
- 4) Conserving Vermont's Natural Heritage strategy

Diana presented information about other towns in Vermont that have done

Biodiversity/Habitat studies:

- 1) West Windsor: They hired a consulting ecologist (also a forester) who used the Wetland, Woodland, Wildland study strategy. The study resulted in the designation on 2 zones (one for timber harvest, the other for no timber harvest)
- 2) Hinesburg: UVM grad students did a landscape inventory and assessment. The study resulted in 3 zones (Low Intensity Use, Intermediate Use, Intensive Use)
- 3) Dummerston: Study completed by Patti Smith with a \$3000 grant

Resources That We Already Have

Diana also gave a presentation of the resources that we currently have on hand concerning Hogback.

Resources that we have on hand already:

- 1) Invasives study by Vermont Land Trust (fairly limited in scope and info.
- 2) Audobon bird study
- 3) Early Successional Habitat Project proposal
- 4) Puhlick's Timber Report (partial)
- 5) Bob Engel's bird list
- 6) State databases (e.g. uncommon species)
- 7) Ramstetter/McNeice plant study
- 8) Marlboro College student projects (Soil Micro-Invertebrate Diversity and Hay-Scented Fern Studies)
- 9) Amy Schiller (UVM student project)
- 10) Maps and surveys, including right-of-way map
- 11) George Leoniak paper on wildlife movement on Hogback
- 12) Town Plan
- 13) Land Appraisal (includes 2005 timber cruise) from previous owner of property

Some questions/ideas that came up at the meeting:

- 1) Would a town-wide study of Marlboro be helpful to us, the Conservation Commission, Planning Commission, and Town?
- 2) Do we need to hire someone or can we rely on volunteers?
- 3) How can we utilize volunteers (from the college, junior high, community)?
- 4) Some studies that would be interesting on Hogback: Mast stands, endangered species, vernal pools and wetland communities (All suggested by Patti Smith)
- 5) We need a clear sense of what we want the study to look like!

Next Meeting will be a joint HPC/HMCA Special Meeting: date TBD (Diana will email the groups to schedule a time) Purpose will be to set goals for Biodiversity Study.

Adjournment – 6:45 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Lauren MacArthur
9/21/15