

Notice of Regular Meeting of the Hogback Management Plan Update Committee
7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan 24, 2024
Town Office, Marlboro, Vermont and via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82119973527>

Meeting ID: 821 1997 3527

To join by phone: 1-646-558-8656
no password required

Agenda

1. Preliminaries
 - a. choose a secretary to take minutes
 - b. choose a Zoom host
 - c. start Zoom recording
2. Approve minutes of previous meeting (Dec 13, 2023).
3. Add any new topics that have come up or that people have thought of to the master list of issues to consider during the update.
 - a. Is it OK to pack the snow on trails for use by fat bikes?
4. Forest Management
5. Informational review of Act 59, aka "30x30 and 50s50"
6. Review portions of first draft, as time permits:
 - a. Previously reviewed sections
 - b. Revised sections:
 - i. Special Use Permits – No Permit Is Required
 - ii. Uses (permitted, restricted, prohibited)
 - iii. Hunting, fishing, trapping
 - c. New sections: TBD
7. Develop plans for next several meetings.
8. Adjourn

Attachments

- summary of Act 59 "30x30 and 50s50" attached as separate pdf document
- draft Management Plan sections for review as specified above are attached below

Sections below were revised to reflect Jan 10 meeting – pertinent language shown in red.

No Permit is Required

Organizations that fully understand the goals and purposes of the Conservation Area do not need a permit.

1. HMCA events do not need an FUA **unless the event includes a Prohibited Use as listed in section XXX.**
 - a. Events co-hosted by HMCA where HMCA is not the lead organization are still considered an HMCA event for the purposes of this section.
 - b. Marlboro School Hogback Day is considered a co-hosted event and doesn't need an FUA. If the school stops collaborating with HMCA and does the planning on their own, they would need to get an FUA.
2. Southern Vermont Natural History Museum (SVNHM) events do not need an FUA **unless the event includes a Prohibited Use as listed in section XXX.**
3. HPC, with input from HMCA, may decide to grant other organizations the right to host events without requiring an FUA, but those orgs must coordinate their scheduled events with HMCA.

Recreation Management

Uses

Free use by the public for non-motorized recreational activity is one of the primary purposes of the conservation easement. Use by groups, by researchers and educators, by commercial enterprises, and by others may require a permit. Additionally, any proposed use that is restricted or prohibited as listed below would need a permit. See Section XX of this plan for more information on permits.

Permitted Uses

Non-motorized, non-commercial recreational use by the public is allowed, including, but not limited to, hiking, trail running, snowshoeing, cross-country and backcountry skiing, mountain biking, horseback riding, and dog walking.

- Horseback riding – None of the trails are currently maintained for horseback riding.
- Dog walking – **All town policies regarding dogs apply, including (but not limited to) "No dog shall run at large," meaning dogs must be under the control of the owner at all times.** Use of a leash is strongly encouraged. Dog waste must be picked up and removed from the Conservation Area. There are no trash cans provided for disposal of dog waste.

Hunting is allowed **with certain restrictions**. See section XX below for details.

Restricted Uses

- Snowmobile use: Snowmobiles may use designated VAST trails only.
- **Horseback riding is not allowed on single-track trails.**

Prohibited Uses

- overnight camping
- fires of any kind
- paint-ball or similar games
- target shooting, by firearm, bow and arrow, or other weapon
- use of metal detectors
- use of drones
- use of wildlife cameras or other unattended motion-activated cameras
- motorized vehicles – see more detail below

Note that it may be possible to be granted an exemption from these prohibitions for special events. Applying for a Facility Use Agreement is the method to use for seeking an exemption. See Section XXX on Special Use Permits.

Motorized vehicles are not allowed, including but not limited to:

- cars, trucks, and motorcycles
- ATV's, UTV's and other vehicles designed for off-road use
- dirt bikes (motorcycles designed for off-road use)
- e-bikes (electronic bikes)
 - Some e-bikes only give the user an assist, while others can fully power the bike, even uphill. Electronic engines are beginning to be used in other off-road vehicles such as dirt bikes. Trying to draw a line between these many different types of vehicles would be hard to define and impossible to enforce. It is within the spirit and the letter of the conservation easement to prohibit e-bikes of all kinds.

Exceptions: The following motorized vehicle use is allowed:

- emergency vehicles
- trail and building/structure maintenance vehicles
- trail grooming equipment
- snowmobiles – on designated VAST trails only
- National Grid maintenance vehicles
 - as authorized under the lease signed with the town to allow access to the communication tower on Mount Olga
 - on the Tower Trail only
 - for more detail, see Section XXX (in Trail Maintenance)
- forestry vehicles, for approved forest management projects

Uses not specifically addressed

If questions arise about uses not specified here, the HPC should make a judgement based on general principles laid out in the conservation easement.

Hunting, trapping, fishing

Hunting is allowed, with the following restrictions.

- All Vermont hunting and firearms regulations must be followed.

- Hunting is allowed only in the following areas, when at least 25 feet from a trail or road:
 - north of Route 9 and west of the VAST trail
 - south of Route 9 and east of the VAST trail
- No permanent tree stands or blinds may be erected.
- Hunting with dogs
 - Hunting with dogs that point and/or retrieve, such as bird hunting, is allowed.
 - Hunting with dogs that chase or pursue prey is not allowed.
- *Discussion needed about whether to tell hunters to ask for permission at the town office.*

Trapping is not allowed.

Fishing is allowed. Anglers must hold a valid Vermont fishing license and adhere to all Vermont fishing regulations.

