

STRAFFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023

7:00-8:00 PM at the Morrill Education Center

Board members in attendance: Micki Colbeck, J.T. (James) Erbaugh, Kate Bass, Chuck Sherman, Courtney Potter, Anne Fayen, and Mike Hebb.

Absent: Steve Faccio

1. **Upper Valley Trails Alliance presentation:** Thank you to Chuck Sherman for putting together Upper Valley Trails Alliance presentation. This presentation brought in approximately twenty people from the community.

2. **Greg McHugo Resignation:**

- Greg has resigned from the board but will continue to be a trail manager.
- Kate will send an email to thank Greg for his services.

3. **Minutes:** Voted to approve the minutes of March 28, 2023, meeting. All in favor and approved.

4. **Commission Vacancy:** Discussed the new opening we have on the board. Micki will put a post on the Listserv. Courtney will talk to Jenevra Wetmore. Discussed the possibility of involving young people.

5. **Trail managers and land owners:** Discussion, whether we should host a thank-you celebration for trail property owners and trail managers.

- Micki suggests a gathering here. Mike will provide a list of trail managers. We can look up the landowners on the town site. Talked about possible dates. Kate will check the homestead calendar to find a good date for the fall. Finger food, entertainment, possibly Emerson Gayle. We will put the info on Facebook and on the listserv. Mike is concerned about putting the names out to the public. Should we invite the people who use the trails? We will continue to work on this.

- Mike needs more land managers; we will post a listing that Mike is looking for trail managers.

6. **Review of SCC Led Hikes:** Courtney is planning a new walk and will update at the next meeting. Kate points out that the dates online are jumbled, and Micki will correct them. The decision was made that everyone will do their own press release for their walk. Kate mentioned that Paul offered to lead a forest walk and will check the calendar to find a date.

7. **Follow up on mallard population:** Mallards have dispersed. We may suggest not to feed as much next year. Still concerned about avian flu and other illnesses that may spread to other birds locally.

8. **Long-Eared Bat status:** Kate mentioned that the Vermont Fish And Wildlife put out a [press release](#) with an update that the bats have been reclassified from threatened to endangered.

## **9. Ashley Community Forest invasives report by Anne:**

- Anne went to barberry pulling a few weeks ago. Not the approach she would like to take. She thinks it's better to focus on traveled areas, not so far into the woods. Around 10 people showed up and they pulled a lot. Dave Paganelli, county forester determined what was pulled. It was successful and they will continue.
- Michael Sacca from the Ashley Community Forest Board is putting together a panel to discuss invasives. Courtney, Anne, and Kate will work on this.
- Anne, Courtney and Kate are meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May to devise a plan for pulling invasive around the library.
- Anne's approach is work in areas close to people then it can be appreciated and easily followed up. Bigger areas can be daunting.

## **10. Upper Valley Trails Alliance:**

- Kate and Micki suggested becoming a member
- Proposal to join the Upper Valley Trails Alliance to be able to borrow trail tools and tools for pulling invasives. Would be nice to support them. If it's reasonable we will join. All in favor. Chuck confirmed the membership price is \$30 for a group.
- Mike suggests putting it out on listserv if we need to borrow tools.

## **11. Other Business:**

- Kate started putting out invasive fliers around town at Coburns, the post office and the town clerks. Kate needs more printed; JT suggests asking Lisa but he also may be able to print some. Kate would like to find a nice display rack for them.
- Mike is extending east loop board walks on the Cobb Trail because some areas were not covered last year. He is looking for help.

## **12. Next meeting confirmation:**

- We discussed May 30<sup>th</sup> for our next meeting. We will discuss at the next meeting if we want to skip some over the summer. Decided we will go back to 7pm time for May 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Micki made a motion to adjourn. Chuck seconded, all in favor.