

Notes

Trails Volunteers Discussion Notes

7 pm, June 5, 2024

Norwich Historical Society

Attendees

Kit Burgin, George Clark, Jim Faughnan, Bob Fiskens, Peter Griggs, Nick Krembs, Craig Layne, John McCormick, Sean Ogle, Gerry Plummer, Aaron Sheldon, Cody Williams

The meeting began at 7:00p.

Comments from those present

None were made.

Updates from the Conservation Commission

Craig provided an update that the Conservation Commission has earmarked funds from the current budget year for materials for the Gile Mountain Tread replacement.

Updates from the UVTA

Two weeks back Sean and the UVTA completed excavation work to improve drainage on Bradley Hill and the end of Ladeau. He explained that one additional day of volunteer effort to smooth and improve drainage will be needed and will suggest possible dates in the near future.

A load of 3/4" stone was provided by the DPW to use for shoulder stabilization. One neighbor expressed concern about the use of this stone and the improvement of Ladeau Rd. Nick and Craig will talk to neighbors about the trail improvements and the remaining work we plan. The stone will not be moved until we have completed the necessary handwork of smoothing the trail above there.

Reports on recent trail blockages and actions taken or planned

Trails seem in good condition. Bob has handled brushing and mowing at Parcel 5 and the Heyl trail.

USFS Appalachian Trail Side & Corridor Crossing Trail Designations decision

Jason Pietrzak from the US Forest Service sent an email to some individuals (possibly only those who had provided feedback during their comment period in 2021) that they have reached a decision regarding the AT side and corridor crossings in Norwich (see

their documents here: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/gmfl/?project=59805>). The USFS decision was summarized for those who had not received the email from their. There has been some noted dissatisfaction regarding the USFS's decision from a number of regular trail users in town.

There has been no direct communication from the USFS regarding their intended next steps but the document indicates Norwich Trails Committee involvement (along with others) in the work they describe needs to take place. After some discussion it was decided Cody would draft a reply to the USFS to acknowledge receipt of the decision, thank them for the consideration around the matter, and try to get a better understanding of their intended next steps and recommendations for Norwich Trails.

AT and Cossingham junction marking

Elisabeth Hammer reported that the entrance to the AT, when coming from Cossingham Trail, is not well marked in either direction and suggested that a small marker to indicate the AT would be helpful. Nick suggested that since this is more within the purview of the AT it would be useful to contact Bob Hagen for advice on how they'd like the trail marked.

Trail projects for 2024

Ballard Trail relocation

The reroute has been getting steady use and has held up surprisingly well thanks in part to the dry weather of late. Some number of people have continued to use the original trail by working around the many downed trees in the washout; some additional brushing in may be necessary to discourage traffic along the washed out original route.

Gile Mountain hemlock bridge Eagle Scout project

Several Boy Scouts met to stage materials at the worksite yesterday. Saturday morning at 8a they will meet under the direction of Jim to disassemble the old bridge and construct a new one. Any interested volunteers are encouraged to join.

Kids Bridge access ramps

Bob, Jim, Nick, Peter, and Bridge McDowell all met to complete this work. There is a planned potluck for this Sunday, June 9 to officially open and dedicate the bridge. Don McCabe very kindly donated the remaining un-used PT lumber from the project to the trails committee for future use.

Gile Mountain fire tower treads

There has so far been no communication from the Norwich Women's Club regarding the status of the grant, Gerry will follow up. Jim reports that the mill providing the white oak was supposed to have had the lumber prepped last week and will follow up. Signage will be placed at the trailhead that the fire tower will be closed while the tread work is carried out. Several days before work is to begin, an email to the local listserve will be made to give trail users a heads up to the closure of the tower.

Mud season trail kiosk signage

Will revisit next March.

Website updates

Nothing to report.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45p.