

MFNA Subcommittee Minutes for 9/5/24 meeting

Members present in person: Lynnwood Andrews, Chris Rimmer

Members present online: Chrissy Morley, Lindsay Putnam, Brie Swenson

No members of the public attended.

Vernal pool. Lynnwood reported that the pool is dry and in need of leaves. Lindsay and Chrissy discussed possibility of getting leaves during Fall Clean-up to put in the pool. Lynnwood stated that the pool could use a large number of leaves, and that they should be evenly strewn about the bowl of the pool.

School Projects. Chrissy listed a number of projects that she anticipates that could be collaborations with the Conservation Commission. They include continued planting of milkweed and other wildflowers in the field, creating art for the Historical Society mural project featuring things from the nature area, collecting wood for the wood racks near the pavilion, visiting the spring ephemerals, and invasives. Lynnwood and Lindsay can assist in identifying good locations in the woods that need work and supervising the students.

Biodiveristy project. Lynnwood reported that she did not create a large area for planting this year because she wanted to evaluate the success of last year's planting before doing more. There is a very lush growth of wildflowers in last year's plot, so she would like to expand the wildflower plantings. A smothering approach is the best method for the area, and Lynnwood needs clean cardboard and wood chips. Brie and Chrissy indicated they could organize getting cardboard from the transfer station and a work day to transport a pile of wood chips currently at St Barnabas church. This work would be done in mid-October, before the 18th. Lynnwood will organize getting the area ready for the cardboard and wood chips.

Invasives. The treatment of chervil seems to have been successful, but we need to see next spring. Lynnwood reported that the southeastern end of the field is becoming very overrun with buckthorn. She would like to investigate a cut-stump treatment approach as pulling, and cutting are not viable methods for this level of infestation. Cut-stump treatments use very little herbicide. She will initiate discussion with the Conservation Commission and the Upper Valley Land Trust about both the chervil, buckthorn and other invasives. There is also an increasing problem with oriental bittersweet, buckthorn and euonymus in the woods. Because of the jumping worms, much of the soil in the woods is loose enough to make pulling fairly easy. Brie emphasized being prepared with data about the efficacy of treatment methods. Chrissy asked about anything that could be done about the worms. Lynnwood had not heard about any new promising developments. Chrissy hopes to contact Dr. Josef Gorres, a worm researcher at UVM.

Forest Health. Lynnwood expressed concern about the lack of forest regeneration and biodiversity in the MFNA woods due primarily to deer overbrowse. She would like to initiate a project to protect tree saplings. The Conservation Commission already has tree tubes and stakes that can be used along the field edge where there is sufficient light. Deer fencing and stakes are needed in the forest interior. Brie suggested making this a project families could participate in by "adopting" or protecting specific trees or trees in locations meaningful to their children. They

could pay for the materials and help install them. In future, bare-root tree saplings could be included in the project to increase the diversity of tree species. Brie said she could help with advertising during mud season. Planting would take place in mid spring.

Submitted by Lynnwood Andrews