

## Minutes of the Norwich Trails Committee for November 4, 2015

Present: George Clark, Eric Dole, Jim Faughnan, Bob Fiskien, Peter Griggs, Doug Hardy, Nick Krembs, Steve Liu

Eric Dole reported having cleared parts of Norwich Farms Trails above the power line. He suggested using what is apparently an old wagon trail as part of a wide link between trails on Parcel 5 and those on Norwich Farms.

Liz Russell reported by email on recent achievements in committee assisted efforts to maintain and improve the Cossingham Road Farm Trails. Two major completed projects included 1) replacing a wooden bridge and 2) reworking stone steps up from the parking area using large stones provided by Shep Butler and Byron Haynes.

Additional work was completed at five other locations. Names of 15 volunteers who assisted in the recent work at the Cossingham Road Farm Trails were read at the meeting. The committee greatly appreciates the help given by all.

The committee also greatly appreciates extensive work done by Cathie Redpath in keeping trails clear on Parcel 5, the Ballard Trail, and elsewhere.

Great progress has been made during 2015 on improving the Gile Mountain Trail, including construction of many yards of stone steps. Towards the end of October, major quantities of materials, including hard pack, small rocks, and stone steps, were moved onto Gile Mountain using a large tracked dump truck. It is anticipated that these materials will be sufficient in quantity to complete all planned trail work on the Gile Mountain Trail. These materials will still need to be moved from the present storage piles to work sites along the trail itself. Having all these materials close at hand will enable a relatively rapid resumption of trail building when conditions again become favorable in 2016.

Stone work by two skilled trail builders on the Gile Mountain Trail has been at a standstill for about a week because of lack of stones at the building site. Therefore, a Trails Committee work session to move stones is to be held from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM on Sunday November 8. Belgian horses will again be helping in this work. Announcements to recruit additional volunteer helpers are to be sent to two list serves. Volunteers for November 8 should bring work gloves, drinking water, and a snack if desired. It is hoped that conditions this month will continue to be favorable to facilitate additional days of trail construction by the skilled trail builders.

Substantial progress was reported in fund raising to support the continuing work on the Gile Mountain Trail.

A question was raised about whether or not trail markings, and especially signage, in the vicinity of the Gile Mountain tower are adequate to avoid disorientation by inexperienced trail users. This important issue is to receive further study.

It was pointed out that another exceptionally severe storm could adversely affect drainage through the area of Brown Schoolhouse Road so as to jeopardize continued existence of the bridge over Charles Brown Brook. Although no immediate action is planned, the committee intends to revisit this issue in the future. Pick and shovel work to modify drainage along Brown Schoolhouse Road might suffice to avert major damage to the bridge.

The status of the deteriorated wooden benches formerly on the Ballard Trail just west of Brown Schoolhouse Road was reviewed. At present, there are no plans to replace those benches because necessary funds have not been available.

Initial use of the trail conditions email alert system was reported. Some additional minor adjustment of that system may be needed.

Respectfully submitted,  
George Clark