

Minutes of the Norwich Trails Committee for August 2, 2017

Present: Sharon Bennett, George Clark, Gered Dunne, Jim Faughnan, Byron Haynes, Nick Krembs, Todd MacKenzie, Sean Ogle, Cathie Redpath, Craig Sanborn, Brie Swenson

On Friday August 4, Sean Ogle of the Upper Valley Trails Alliance is to lead a group of about 15 volunteers for work on the Ballard Trail. Work sites are at the uppermost bridge, at a washout area about a half mile downstream, and in the area of a July 23 reroute by the Trails Committee at the major washout on the lower part of the Ballard Trail. As of today, as reported by Doug Hardy, there are no blockages by fallen trees or other obstacles along either the Ballard Trail or Brown Schoolhouse Road. However, the severely dislodged uppermost bridge on the Ballard Trail should not be used. Although the entire trail can be traversed, substantial additional work will be needed to return the trail to a standard that prevailed before the July 1 flooding.

Sean Ogle reported that a reworked King Arthur Trail with associated trail loops should be completed by the end of August.

The Gile Mountain Trail remains closed to all potential users because of hazardous conditions along the outer, unpaved, part of Turnpike Road. Unfortunately, a number of unauthorized users have come to the Gile Mountain Trail even after its closure in July. Nick Krembs is to meet with Herb Durfee concerning the Gile Mountain Trail situation. It was suggested at this trails meeting that, during times when the Gile Mountain Trail is closed, signs be placed along Turnpike Road designating its outer section for use by local traffic only. The town, but not the committee, could take such action.

An automatic counter on the Gile Mountain Trail showed a notable drop in the number of users following closure of that trail after the July 1 flooding. Although such counter data may not give exact numbers of trail users, indications from June data are that the annual number of users has increased substantially over the several years since the last such data were recorded.

With the potential for use of one or two additional counters, there was discussion of the most useful locations for siting. Generally, sites might be places where a change in quantity of use is anticipated and data would be collected for perhaps three years for adequate sampling.

Because of the Gile Mountain Trail closure, the ANTS running program has had to change its routes for two sessions.

Planning continues for the projected trail from Main Street to the Dresden playing fields. A state environmental representative is to examine for potential approval a prospective site for crossing Blood Brook where landowner authorizations have already been given.

Volunteers are to be working on the Huntley Meadow mountain biking track starting at 6 PM on Thursday August 3.

The Trails Committee has agreed to prepare a proposal for a mountain biking trail roughly paralleling Charles Brown Brook. Cost estimates in that proposal are to cover numerous planned bridges.

Plans are moving ahead for arranging for a uniformity of signs for trails maintained by the Trails Committee. Kiosks are to be central points in a prospective master plan for signs.

Respectfully submitted.
George Clark