

## **Monkton Town Forest**

### **Community Meeting - Town Forest Management Plan**

Monkton Town Hall & ZOOM

3/19/25 7:00pm

Notes taken by Jess Demeritt

(Approved 4/2/2025)

**Attendees:** Callie Brynn, Jaime Schulte, John McNerney, Molly Parren, CJ Buzzy and Jess Demeritt (Town Forest Committee). Tammy Parker, Adam Miller, Susan Stasny, Deb Gaynor, Steve Parren, Barb Crandall, Walt Crandall, Ken Wolpin, Morgan Gunderson, Louise Watson, Jane Lindholm, George (Addison County Bike Club). Terry Payea & Lauren Parren (Zoom)

**Purpose:** to join the Town Forest Committee for an overview and discussion of the Town Forest Management Plan. The plan describes the land, allowed and restricted uses, trails, management priorities, and the like. The Committee gathered feedback from the community in a survey and series of meetings in Fall 2024 and published a draft of the management plan to reflect those priorities on 3/14/2025. The next step will be gathering feedback from the community on that resulting plan before seeking final approval from the Selectboard and the conservation easement holders.

The meeting began at 7:00pm with introductions and light refreshments.

### **Discussion notes:**

#### **ACCESSIBILITY/GENERAL GUIDELINES**

- Limit parking places
  - Suggestion to park on hardscrabble near pond and across closer to dam
  - Concern about muddy parking off OAR
  - Concern about OLL parking
    - School bus turnaround
- Visible parking on the main road. Reduce dumping and safety
- Draft limits use, was used different as AJCO land
  - Limits most the people who would use it the most
  - Did survey results reflect the users or others?
- Fewer rules are easier/more likely to be followed
- Relying on people to follow the rules
- Using forest before and after dawn/dusk
  - Historically has been ok recently
  - Establish QUIET HOURS instead?
- Town forest = compromise
  - A lot of different perspectives ex. Love dogs, fear of dogs
- Hard to roll back "allowed"
- Concern about restricting land use for a popular use

#### **DOGS**

- Restrictions on dogs make some feel safer
- Dogs need exercises and places to roam
- Common sense to keep vicious dogs leashed
- Safe to have dogs off leash away from home? Lost dog concern

- Compromise with times for off leash dogs, or off leash location/trails.
- Is horse waste an issue?
- Dogs are part of ecosystem/dogs are pets not wild animals
- Provide poop bags & collection
- Wants dog to follow town ordinance - concern about safety with retractable leash

## HUNTING

- Suggest no hunting bear with hounds, be clear that there's no bear hounding
- Dependency on wildlife surveys to guide hunting
  - Wildlife management areas are survey by VT F&W
  - Include language that guidelines will constantly adjust due to VT F&W
- Discussion about enforcement/posting/permission
- Spring wildflowers vs. turkey hunting
  - Timing? No hunting after 12pm?
- Local warden - working with VT F&W enforcement

## FORAGING

- Language is confusing
  - Fruiting bodies, or plants/both?
    - Also Ostrich fern is very robust and prolific

## USE

- How do we know use will increase?
- How are we monitoring current use? Could trail counters be added

## BIKES

- Is there a report of a snake being run over by a bike? Molly will ask Jim Andrews
- Evidence of snake deaths due to bikes
- In 20 years, never seen a snake on trail
- Bikes can stop in time
- Can Monkton provide a corner to bikers?
- Bikers have been maintaining trails
  - Without their support, more maintenance required, or trails go away
- Bike - trail use, bikers report snake data
- Signs in watershed to report snake sightings
- Car vs snake// bike vs snake
- No winter biking will happen without grooming, rare to have right condition for winter biking
- If saying no to bikes, should also say no to other wheeled vehicles

## TRAILS

- Who will do trail maintenance?
- Where did ecological trail standards come from? VT Forest & Parks might have some they are developing
- Controlling additive risks

No one spoke up to provide their feedback on: snowmobiling, fishing, trapping.  
The meeting concluded just after 9:00pm.