

## **Monkton Town Forest**

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

Monkton Town Hall & ZOOM

3/22/25 10:00am

Notes taken by CJ Buzzy

(Approved 4/2/2025)

**Attendees:** Callie Brynn, Jaime Schulte, John McNerney, Molly Parren & CJ Buzzy (Town Forest Committee). Chris Knapp, Stephen Pilcher, Bill Pelland, Cale Pelland, Mark Driscoll, Sue Isham, Bruce Isham, Hannah Baxter, John Howard, Dale Helms, Eugenie Doyle, Kerrie Garvey, Tom Mansfield, Linda Mansfield, Marilyn Cargill, Buzz Kuhns, Ann Miller, Tammy Parker.

**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 10:00am with introductions and light refreshments.

### **Discussion notes:**

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

- Different people have different passions
- More people = more complications
- How do we balance?
- Plan can be changed
- Trial period on restricted uses?
- Too much emphasis on negative impacts
- Concern about number of survey respondents
- Public input on data - more direct

#### **HUNTING & TRAPPING**

- There are safety systems in place for hunting/trapping
- How do you pick hunting seasons?
- Few issues during interim period
- Majority of town land(s) allow hunting
- Safety vs. ethical
- Lots of posted land in VT
- Can education ease fear around certain uses?
- People can be uncomfortable regardless of education
- Uncomfortable fear vs/ rights
- Personal accountability/relationships to avoid conflicts
- Signage to indicate seasons?
- Communicate with landowners
- Property boundaries add complications with varying rules/seasons

- How much are the seasons actually utilized?
- Hunters avoid people

#### **DOGS:**

- Dog waste is a huge problem

#### **FUNDING/TAXPAYERS:**

- Where did the funding come from? 19% town, 81% fed/state

#### **WILDLIFE:**

- Will impacts on wildlife and neighbors increase in the MTF?
- Revisit vision statement - wildlife management/rec, VLT easement

#### **BIKES:**

- Rare reptile, small population here, in decline
- Bike trails appreciated on property
- How do other activities impact rare snake predators?

#### **TRAILS:**

- Connections with the Watershed Center? Need to coordinate with them
- DATA! Trail counter, usage, etc
- How to avoid confusion around trails and property lines?

#### **HORSES:**

- Loss of horse trails in the area

#### **KAOLIN DAM**

- Kaolin dam considerations and maintenance

The meeting concluded shortly after Noon.