

**Town of Northwood  
Conservation Commission Minutes  
June 4, 2013**

Chairman Steve Roy calls the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Present:** Chairman Stephen Roy, Vice Chairman Steven Hampl, James Ryan, Thomas Chase, Board Administrator Linda Smith, and Board Secretary Lisa Fellows-Weaver.

**Absent:** Wini Young, Paul Lussier, Alternate Loren O'Neil, and Alternate Michael Matson.

Others in attendance are Selectmen Hadley, Town Forester Charles Moreno, and Tracy Degnan from Rockingham County Conservation District.

**MINUTES**

**May 7, 2013**

**Mr. Chase makes a motion, second by Mr. Ryan, to defer the minutes of May 7, 2013. Motion passes unanimously; 4/0.**

**Town Forester-Charlie Moreno**

Mr. Roy welcomes Mr. Moreno. Mr. Roy states that when the forester and commission last met, discussion was held regarding the forester visiting the town's newest properties, to view the properties and report back to the commission on his recommendations on the existing timber and future forest management.

Mr. Roy states that there was a forestry notification for the Guptill Lamprey Pasture back in 2002.

Mr. Moreno states that he has looked at four parcels: Giles lot of 30 acres; Guptill Lamprey Pasture which is approximately 100 acres; the back portion of the town's recreation field with 12 acres of woodlands left; and Low property of 70 acres. He states that he will note the access for each of the parcels and comment on the composition of the forest, and the outlook for management. He adds that some discussion could be held regarding the financial aspects of management. He adds that he will also mention other points such as recreational uses, invasive plants, water resources, and boundary line conditions.

**Giles Lot**

Mr. Moreno states that with the Giles lot, there is substantial road frontage on Upper Deerfield Rd. He states that he was involved with the thinning of the Giles lot; as part of the first management plan, approximately about 20 years ago. He explains that there is a good landing site right off of Upper Deerfield Rd.; it is set up to be worked from again without any major investment needed. He states that there is a larger area that was more heavily harvested. He states

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that there are still small diameter trees; however, the forest is growing very well. There are some larger diameter trees that are good standing trees, such as Oak.

Mr. Moreno asks if this land is land that will be held by the town long term. Mr. Roy replies yes. Mr. Moreno states that the best outlook is a long term outlook for the land. He explains that the oak was left so it would grow, and there are some oak trees that are now 18" – 24" in diameter making a nice stand of trees. He recommends another thinning to allow for the good quality larger trees to continue growing. He explains that it is also important to begin to make small openings, openings that are less than an acre. He notes that there is some pine and hemlock. Mr. Moreno explains that to try to get regeneration of trees, there needs to be a seed source, and light. He states that the Giles lot is now set up to regenerate oak; white pine exists. He states that these small openings should be approximately 2-3 accumulative acres and expand in 15 years. He adds that this is a slow process.

Mr. Moreno states that the boundary lines of the Giles parcel are good with stone walls and the stream. He states that the boundary lines could be blazed and painted. Recreationally, the Giles lot has a skidder trail that was marked; however, has since grown in. As far as water resources, there is a wetland on the eastern end and there are small pockets of wetlands and seasonal drainage. With habitat, this is a part of a larger block with the oak being a larger mass.

***DeMerritt Lot***

Mr. Roy mentions the DeMerritt easement, approximately 15 acres, which is across the street, that was donated to the town. This property was thinned a few years ago.

Mr. Moreno explains that in the time frame of 1900-1930 field abandonment was common and occurred often. When land is abandoned all trees grow at the same time and are all the same age. With the help of visual aids, Mr. Moreno draws a single age forest and a closed canopy, which shows all trees being near the same height and the tree canopy shading all younger saplings inhibiting mature growth. He adds that this growth pattern also occurs when there is a clear cut or a heavy cutting. He states that the Giles lot is this type of lot. He notes that there is still work to be done as there is potential for the trees to triple their value as every inch of growth is value growth; however, in time, the lot will still become a single age forest as the larger trees grow and the canopy continues to cover the undergrowth.

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Mr. Moreno explains that in order for younger growth to mature, an additional opening will need to be made that would be large enough so that the canopy would not reclose over the next 10-15 years. He indicates that perhaps a few trees may need to be removed to allow for the smaller trees underneath to come up through the opening and get the light needed to grow. Mr. Moreno shows that the forest is now a two age forest as the original single age mature trees are there along with the opening that will allow for a second age class of trees to grow.

***Guptill Lamprey Pasture***

Mr. Moreno explains that the Guptill lot of 100 acres is similar to the Giles lot in that the Guptill property is a multi-generation forest. He states that there was a cutting approximately 30 years ago and there is growth occurring from that cut with 30 year old trees. In addition, he refers to the 2002 cutting, which also was a heavy cut removing many valuable trees. However, the 2002 cut seeded in very well with pine and 10 years later the pine is coming up and growing well. He states that this is a viable generation of trees as the opening is large; there is a future of new growth and it is good.

Mr. Moreno suggests that there be another cutting done to the Guptill lot to remove some of the larger trees; however, the pine should not be cut; it should be left as a seed source. He adds that another option is to do nothing to the lot at this time and the smaller pines will continue to grow; however, there will be some overtops and coverage. Mr. Moreno estimates that there are 100,000 white pine seedlings on the Guptill property; 1,000 per acre.

Further discussion ensues regarding cuttings and the values of cuts.

Mr. Moreno states that the Guptill property is not heavily traveled at this time. He suggests opening the area up more to allow full sunlight to the smaller pine, the forest will continue to flourish. He adds that there are still some areas that have not been thinned and could be addressed; then there is the option to do nothing to the property at this time.

Mr. Moreno states that this property is not going to be a money maker as any cutting would leave the valuable trees to set in. He notes that there could be some timber stand improvement (TSI) work to the property. Mr. Roy states that the value will be in the future when the pine sets in.

Mr. Moreno states that as far as invasive plants on this property there are some, deep in the woods. He feels that they are not an issue.

A brief discussion is held regarding grants for management and other resources. Mr. Moreno explains that it is better to work with what there is for valuable trees and make sure they seed in well; this lot will be here for the long

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term and if these lands are to remain as forests then future generations will have something to work with. Mr. Moreno states that there is so much wildlife habitat work that can be worked in. He adds that there is still the option to do nothing.

Mr. Roy asks about the water resources relative to the Guptill property. He states that it is a large part of the Lamprey River headwaters. Mr. Moreno states that there are two great water features on this property. He states that Demon Pond is a nice area and is large enough to have water fowl, and animals. Further discussion is held regarding the other pond area that is at the southwest end. Mr. Roy states that this is the source pond for the Lamprey River. Mr. Moreno states that both of these ponds are secluded. He notes some heavy logging on the other side on adjacent property.

Mr. Moreno states that the access for the Guptill property would need work. It is a long, narrow strip to Rte. 4 with a woods road that has become overgrown. He states that it appears that the Lombards, abutting property owners, have allowed access in the past over their property.

***Mead Lot***

Mr. Moreno refers to the Mead Lot-CBNA area. He states that this lot has grown up well since the 1950's; however, could use some work. He suggests access through the state park or perhaps a joint access could be done through the Guptill lot and cost share. Mr. Roy notes that Bear Paw holds an easement on the Mead Lot.

Mr. Moreno states that the boundary lines for the Guptill lot are marked because of the Meadows. He states that the common boundary with CBNA is also marked well. He states that some markers are faded on the Binder lot and he suggests there be some attention.

As far as recreation, the lot is set up for back county recreation mostly due to the Meadows State Park and the town's recreation fields. He mentions that the commission was viewing the area also for the possibilities of a linked trail system. He adds that the trail system may conflict with management work as small trails have been lost in the logging shuffle; they may need to be re-established. He states that if there were a trail project done he suggests waiting to put the trails in within the next few years.

A brief discussion is held regarding prevention and what can be done to protect trees from invasive species. Mr. Moreno reviews some types of invasive species that New Hampshire has had infestations of. He explains that years ago extensive clear cutting would occur to treat the problem. He now feels that letting time take its course is best and to be ready to respond if needed. Mr.

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Roy states that about 5 years ago a heavy cutting of hemlock took place on the Peters lot but left the density as an experiment to watch the woolly adelgid move in to the area and watch the rate of advancement on the thinned area.

Mr. Moreno indicates that there is some steep topography on the Guptill parcel that comes to a small brook and then to the boundary line of the town's recreational fields. He adds that the recreational fields have about 12 acres left that are forested; there has been some thinning, most likely in conjunction with the field clearing work. He noticed in the cut area that there is a seed source. He suggests that over time there be some very minor activity done to open the area up, within 2-5 years. He states that this area has many little oaks, whereas, the Guptill lot has many pines. He notes that any work should be done together with access through the Guptill lot for the forest management. He feels that this would be an opportunistic time to contact the abutter and work together to do very light work that would allow the existing seedlings to grow. In addition, he notes that there is not much damage to this area and feels that approximately \$2,000 would be sufficient for the access.

***Low***

Mr. Moreno states that the access is a 90 degree turn from the cell tower and is indistinct from everything else nearby. He states that when it is time for management work to be done, there would be some type of a temporary agreement needed with the owner of the abutting property for a landing.

A discussion is held regarding the parking area. Ms. Smith asks if the parking area could serve as a landing site and she believes that there was some type of an agreement relative to that. Mr. Moreno states that if that area was able to be used it would save some money. Mr. Roy states that the commission may need to work with the water district for a landing site.

Mr. Moreno describes the condition of the lot being heavily cut around 1980 and removing a good portion of the pine, and some hemlock. He states that it was a good, solid, even aged, forest. He states that now the forest has wide open areas of nothing and over the past 30 years all of the openings have filled in with white, grey, and black birch, red maple, beech, and a little bit of oak. He states that there is also some red oak, very little white ash, and not much of anything else. He continues to describe some pockets of larger trees; however, they are of a very low value. He states that there are scenic values and wildlife values but the value is low from a management standpoint. He adds that there are a few small pockets of hemlock; however, what has grown is too young to manage, 3"-8" trees, which are called "polling".

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Mr. Moreno states that the payback for the Low lot would be very long term and he feels that it would be better to invest into the Guptill lot at this time because of all the pine coming in. He suggests allowing the Low lot continue to grow and do a commercial cutting for firewood, low quality trees. He recommends waiting.

Mr. Ryan asks if there would be anything to gain if the area were seeded. Mr. Moreno replies that it would be tough to do any kind of seeding or planting. He explains that openings will need to be made so there would still be some cutting required. He adds that there is some value; however, the turnaround for the investment is very long term.

Mr. Hampl asks about the height of the trees right now. Mr. Moreno replies that the younger growth are on an average of 40' with a 3"-8" diameter. He adds that there are some hemlocks that have been left with a diameter of 22"-26". He notes that the value of hemlock is low with regards to lumber; however, it has a high scenic and wildlife value.

Mr. Moreno states that the access into the lot, once past the cell tower, includes two shrub/marsh wetlands and the old road passed through these two wetlands. He explains that these wetlands have expanded so now the road is in the wetlands. He states that it may be possible to alter the road or it will require going all the way around; it's not an easy access into the property.

Relative to recreation, Mr. Moreno states that the access could be a problem for residents unless they are willing to walk in. He is unsure as to how easy it would be for other recreational use. He mentions that there is plenty of wildlife on this large parcel; turkey, deer, moose, fox, and coyote.

A discussion is held regarding future plantings to increase values and breaking even. Mr. Hampl states that to there may not be any money being made right now, but it is the value for the future. He states that in the end it is better to have a healthy forest and not be costly. He feels that breaking even is not bad. Mr. Moreno replies that there will be a break-even with just removing the trees that are blocking the road. He adds that to thin the area today would cost the commission money; however, waiting for the next few decades the commission could break even.

Mr. Moreno notes that with seedlings there is a cost for the seedlings than double that for the labor. He explains that the area will still need attention; two treatments to remove the hardwood that grows around the seedlings. He states that this will occur twice during the next 5 – 10 years.

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***General Discussion***

Mr. Roy states that the Giles lot is the only lot that is a town forest. He explains that funds from the town forest go into the newly created town forest management fund. Any funds generated from other town lots would go into the general fund.

Mr. Hadley asks about the harvesting of the School Lots, another town forest. Mr. Roy states that the school lot was addressed a few years ago because of damages from the ice storm. He states that slash was removed and a light thinning was done. The funds from this project went to the general fund.

Mr. Hadley asks if the town forest management fund has been created. Ms. Smith explains that the fund has not been created because no money has been generated. Mr. Roy states that all funds from all cuts that have occurred on the towns lots have previously gone into the general fund.

Ms. Smith states that there was a warrant article that was approved to use the funds from the recreation fields cutting for these fields. Mr. Roy notes that funds from the school lots timber cuts was also used for the recreation fields upgrades through this warrant article.

Mr. Moreno notes that with the Low lot, the land has been surveyed. He states that the boundaries have been blazed and painted; however, the marks are fading out and should be re-blazed.

Mr. Roy states that he feels that the commission should consider doing some work on the Giles lot and having any funds go into the forest management fund to allow work to begin on the Guptill lot.

A discussion is held regarding the Northern Pass project. Mr. Roy explains that the town's recreation field property and the Guptill parcel both have utility easements owned by PSNH, over the top of them. He explains that the alternative route does go over these two parcels.

The commission thanks Mr. Moreno for coming in. Mr. Roy states that the presentation was very informative. Mr. Moreno states that he will be talking to CBNA regarding the Mead lot.

**CONSIDERATION of APPLICATIONS**

***Minimal Impact Application:***

Tracy Degnan, Rockingham County Conservation District, Jeff & Laurie Lalish, 351 Old Mountain Rd., wetlands restoration & recovery projects on their property.

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Ms. Degnan states that she is from the NH Rockingham Country Conservation District (RCCD). She is representing the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), acting as the land owner to assist them with wetland restorations. She distributes a topo map and a survey of the Lalish property.

Ms. Degnan explains that the application is a restoration project proposed to stabilize an existing stream crossing and 5 wetland crossings on an old woods road. She notes that there are 3,027 sq. ft. of jurisdictional impacts. She states that the one stream crossing is adjacent to a beaver dam. She states that they are shoring up the trail with stone and they will not be impacting the beaver dam. She states that the goal is to stabilize the road for forestry practices. Ms. Degnan explains that the land owner has the right to do forestry practices on their land; however, the trails in the current conditions lead to negative wetland impacts. She notes that they are not within the prime wetlands.

Ms. Degnan states that she only has one copy of the application. **Mr. Ryan makes a motion, second by Mr. Chase, to sign the application based on the recommendation. Motion passes unanimously; 4/0.**

Additional discussion is held and Ms. Degnan indicates that the abutter's notices have not been sent out and she only has one copy of the application with her tonight.

**Mr. Roy makes a motion, second by Mr. Chase, for the secretary to check that all abutters have been notified with the certified receipts included with the application, and all 5 application copies are provided. Motion passes unanimously; 4/0.**

**OLD BUSINESS**

***Land Acquisition***

Mr. Roy provides an update regarding the Yeaton property. He states that the survey on the property will proceed with Mr. Wormell.

**Mr. Chase makes a motion to adjourn, second by Mr. Ryan. Motion passes, 8:37 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Fellows-Weaver  
Board Secretary