

Bolton Conservation Commission  
Monday, March 16, 2015  
Bolton Town Office

**Members present:** Lars Botzjorns (chair), Amy Ludwin, Ken Remsen, Larissa Urban, Ali Kosiba, Jerry Mullen. **Not present:** Steve McLeod.

**Guests:** Jason Nerenberg, VT Dep't. of Forests, Parks and Recreation; Tony Barbagallo.

The meeting came to order at 6:08 p.m.

1. **Minutes of the January 26, 2015 meeting.** Accepted as written.

2. **State Land management** - State forester Jason Nerenberg attended to introduce himself and to discuss the status of planning on state lands in Bolton. He provided a written summary prior to the meeting.

Jay is the Stewardship Forester for the region. He provided a brief outline of management of state lands in Bolton, a portion of the Mount Mansfield State Forest and Camel's Hump Management Unit, including the CH State Park (which most of the Bolton lands are part of), Robbins Mountain WMA, Huntington Gap WMA, and the CH State Forest; to provide landscape context for Preston Pond management. The 1992 management plan for Camel's Hump is currently being revised and should be available for comment this summer. For the Mt Mansfield State Forest, most of the land in Bolton that is part of a management unit that has been acquired since the last plan revision (in 2002). As such, these are not currently operating under a management plan. This means that trail work and general maintenance can occur, but not active forestry management. The amendment to the current plan to include these lands should occur in the next year or so.

The Bolton Nordic acquisition can be managed but there are no plans to manage this parcel at this time. Around the Long Trail on newly acquired land there is a ~500' buffer of no to minimal management. Jay mentioned that for the most part management on state lands involves single tree selection, group selection, and patch cuts (1-2 acres), often with wildlife management goals. Are there certain wildlife species that deserve manage attention in Bolton? Jay is going to ask Fish and Wildlife biologists about the moose population in Bolton.

Lars mentioned that he wants to organize some field walks for the Conservation Commission this summer. He is going to connect with Jay about locations and timing.

Lars updated the commission on the state of the Uplands project, after he talked to Vermont Land Trust. As of recently, there have been fewer land acquisitions for this project, due to lack of funding and also to the original success of the program, but a second phase may focus on fostering wildlife movement across the Winooski River transportation corridor.

3. **Green Up Day** - New coordinator Tony Barbagallo informed the Commission that he will lead the promotion of the event (May 2) in Bolton and make sure that the bags will get delivered and that the posters will be posted. He will also post information in the town gazette and on FPF. He is going to talk to Amy Grover about a BBQ at the town garage, which has occurred in the past. There is the feeling by the Commission that this was well attended and acts to bring folks together.

Lars asked the commission if there are places in town that are not as well represented in Green Up Day. The general feeling is that the side roads are cleaned more during the event than Route 2. There are funds available by Chittenden Solid Waste for larger cleanup projects; we can let people know that if they find dumping sites (esp. tires, etc) during Green-Up Day they should contact Tony or the Conservation Commission.

#### **Wheeler Field**

Tony mentioned that Wheeler Field may be for sale. He didn't have a lot of details on the parcel, but the Commission will look into this and bring it to the Selectboard. Tony also offered that if the Conservation Commission has special projects, such as acquiring Wheeler Field, he would be interested in helping.

#### **4. Preston Pond Conservation Area**

##### **4a. Vermont Trails Program grant status and plan**

We received this grant in the fall (2014). One of the projects that fell under that grant was a new kiosk on Stage Road. This was installed successfully and was cost effective (~\$100). The remaining projects under the grant are the boardwalk (above the northern shore of Preston Pond), which involves materials and assemblage, and new signage. The boy scout troops in Richmond and Waterbury are still interested. Hopefully these projects can happen this summer. Jerry offered the use of his tractor with trailer to haul materials, which could be staged on his property. We could also use his canoes to ferry the materials across the pond. It was noted that some of the trail bridges need repair. We may be able to use the Preston Pond Stewards Group to work on these repairs.

##### **4b. Trail map revision**

Leslie Pelch, who works for VCGI, offered to map the area. Amy is going to arrange an outing with her and will let the Commission know. Jerry also had the idea of including natural history interpretation of the Preston Pond area. Perhaps we could include information signage.

Amy asked if we should consider labeling the parking areas for Preston Pond for the purpose of emergency rescue (e.g., E991). Amy is going to ask Amy Grover about this from the town's standpoint. We may want to connect with Richmond Rescue about this as well.

##### **4c. Forest and Wildlife Management Plan**

County Forester Keith Thompson is hoping to get the updated plan to us by May. Keith, VLT, and the Commission are reviewing the Ecological Protection Zones. The boundaries are not ecologically delimited. Lars will inform the Commission on additional outings to remap these zones. This information will benefit the planning process for the Area.

**5. Conservation Fund** - A discussion was held on future priorities for these funds. Do we want to start emphasizing it as a source of support for habitat restoration (e.g., floodplain restoration and tree planting) and stewardship (e.g. wildlife corridor monitoring using game cams, forest pest education)?

The Conservation Fund was not funded by voters this year. Currently we have ~\$14,000 in this fund. When we purchased Preston Pond, we used this fund as leverage to acquire significantly more funding for the purchase. Looking at the Conservation Fund Policies, there is a broad range of activities that qualify. We may also want to use this fund as leverage for Wheeler

Field, if this is available for sale. We all were in agreement that Wheeler Field is a strong community asset that should be retained if possible. The Conservation Fund may want to focus, however, on stewardship and restoration in the future, especially to restore and manage Bolton's floodplains. Lars will find out more information from Jeff Brown/WBGC about Wheeler Field.

## 6. Elect officers

The Commission unanimously nominated and elected Lars as chair and Amy as vice chair. There is no secretary position as we rotate the job of taking minutes.

## 7. Old Business

### 7a. Green Mountain Club activities

The new bridge across the Winooski will open this spring. The new reroute by the Lower Bolton Cliffs up to Stimson Mtn. and to the current Long Trail (North) will open this summer. GMC still has work to do on that trail section. On the southern side, the trail is being rerouted with a possible parking area where the new trail will cross Duxbury Road (about halfway from the new bridge to the current Long Trail parking area for Bamforth Ridge). Lars will find out the status of the pedestrian warning light for the tunnel on Notch Road. The current section from Notch Road to Stage Road will be maintained as a side trail to be maintained by GMC's Burlington Section. Bolton Lodge and Bryant Camp, acquired with the recent Bolton Nordic purchase, will both have side trails to the Long Trail. Lars will also find out more information on the future of the fire tower on Stimson.

This was Ken's and Larissa's last meeting on the Commission as their terms expired. We are grateful for their service to the Town.

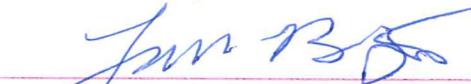
Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Ali Kosiba and Lars Botzjoorns

These minutes were read and approved by the Bolton Conservation Commission on:

June 1, 2015

  
Lars Botzjoorns, Chair, For the Board

