



## **SHP TRAIL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

### **MEETING MINUTES COMMITTEE MEETING**

**May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
7:00 P.M.**

**Hutton Room, Stratham Municipal Center  
10 Bunker Hill Avenue- Stratham, NH 03885**

- I. Call to order: Meeting was called to order at 7:01PM.
- II. Roll Call  
Committee members: Scott Zeller, Seth Hickey, Edie Barker, Greg Blood, Kevin O'Brien, Kate Dardinski, Patricia Weideman and Bill McCarthy. Guests: Jeremy Forest, Chris Boulbul, Ron Ellis, David Moore.
- III. Meeting minutes approved from April 21st by committee pending change to attendees.
- IV. Introduction of Lew Shelley, writer of the SHP Trail report
- V. **Background**

Lew is from Walpole, NH and the owner of SnowHawk LLC, doing trail inventory and assessments. He's been a consultant for 7 years. Prior work with Student Contractor Association. He works with Land trusts Parks and Recreation departments, mainly within 3 hours of location.

#### **VI. Reports and Presentations Trail Report**

Discussion of Report:

Lew used GaiaGPS to find/record trails. He also used waypoints for photos. Trails are overall in good shape in comparison, all fixable/repairable.

#### **Summary of Project Scope**

Spent many days total looking at the park, mapped it by bike then on foot.

#### **Challenges of the SHP Project**

Looked for what's working well and what's not working. Some issues include wildlife management, habitat, forestry. SHP was more than expected due to the amount of trails and easements/uses.

#### **Additional Areas to Explore**

AMC Book on hiking trails, IMBA for biking.

#### **Recommendations for a Path Forward**

The point was made that trails should not be added but definitely some closures would be beneficial. Lew does trail maintenance training, and wrote a book about trails called *Lightly on the Land*.

## VII. Discussion

Important Points of concern:

- Overuse (risky with proximity to wetlands, habitat issues, trail widening, prone to erosion, steep grades.)
- Wildlife proximity (wetlands/vulnerable species such as the Atlantic White Cedar)

FYI, 15% is sustainable for hiking and 10% for biking. Any trail over that percentage needs erosion control. Benching the trail is a good way to avoid erosion.

Another important focus area is to provide proper outreach and education and monitoring when closing trails. Signage is important. Outreach about the use of trails is important as well. Is there a possibility of a trail that prohibits certain types of use?

The group discussed the comparison to Fort Rock riders and using word of mouth and signage to help get buy in about trail use and stewardship.

Some other points discussed:

- The need to address stream crossings and wetlands/boardwalks.
- Confusion about signage and getting lost (more signage).
- Suggestions for more signage.
- Well marked trail junctions/closures of shortcuts.
- Rogue trail building is an issue.
- Issues of maintaining traffic coming into the park – neighbors.
- Emergency markers good for mapping/ identifying locations.
- Roping/flagging off a trail for closure with signage.
- Trail steward type program.
- Create a log of trail issues. – who is the keeper of the log?
- Open Space Plan – available online
- Questions around funds for trail maintenance
- Kiosks, with signage.
- Need to inform the public.
- Trail closure – security cameras in use as a suggestion.
- How to track use by volume? Counter on the trails – walkers vs bikers.
- Who might do the tracking? Boy scouts, also handing out informational brochures.
- Useful to see a demographic of users.
- Possible sticker for car?
- Land strategy about acquisition – conservation plans? Protection of the land is important.
- Discussion on who might help manage the trails. Volunteers, NEMBA, boy scouts, Timberland.
- Leaf blowing – No leaf blowing. No-leaf blowing, but occasional raking. Leaves are like shingles on a roof so they help protect the trail.

Lew offered a standard list of how to address issues – prioritized:

- Wildlife Habitat? Decision to make about sensitivity.
- Focus on stream crossings
- Erosion control
- Trail intersections

## **VII: Miscellaneous**

The group needs to develop an Interim report. Expectation of the report: A timeline on how long things will take.

A site walk is scheduled for next week, June 4th at noon.

Kate will make some maps based on ownership/reference rules.

Next meeting – 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month. June 16th, 2021.

VIII: Meeting adjourned at 8:42PM.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Kate Dardinski.