

**CONWAY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
December 14, 2016**

The December monthly meeting of the Conway Conservation Commission convened at 6:32 P.M. at the Whitaker Home Site Meeting House in North Conway.

Present: Chairman Rob Adair, Vice Chairman Larry Huemmler, Linda Kearney, Karla Allen, Theresa Gallagher, Recording Secretary

Absent: Carol Lyman, Treasurer; Dan Lucy, Pat Ferland, Alternate; Nat Lucy, Alternate; Selectmen Representative Dave Weathers,

Also Attending: Tyler Ray, Granite Backcountry Alliance; Chris McKay, Granite Backcountry Alliance

1. **Approval of the Minutes 11/9/2016: Chairman Rob Adair asked for a motion to accept the November 9, 2016 meeting minutes; Linda Kearney made a motion to accept the minutes of the November 9, 2016 CCC meeting minutes; seconded by Karla Allen. Rob Adair asked if there was any discussion or corrections; there were none. Rob Adair called for a vote to approve the minutes of the November 9, 2016 meeting minutes. Motion passed (3-0-1). Larry Huemmler abstained, since he was not at the meeting.**

2. Public Comment:

Chairman Rob Adair introduced Tyler Ray and Chris McKay, members of the Granite Backcountry Alliance, who introduced their organization. The goal of Granite Backcountry Alliance is to promote the sport of backcountry skiing in New Hampshire and Western Maine. The organization provides low-impact human-powered backcountry skiing opportunities to the public through the creation, improvement and maintenance of ski glades. Back country skiing is the fastest growing ski industry for which there is a high demand. Vermont is very involved in this industry, working with their local communities, and state and federal government. Being the first of its kind they work with the Green Mountain National Forest. The results have been very beneficial, and the Granite Backcountry Alliance would like to replicate that in New Hampshire and Western Maine. The biggest challenge for them is the density of trees, so it will take manpower to open up some trails for glade skiing. Currently mountain biking has become a popular sport in the Conway area and they would like proceed using that as their example. They partner with other state and local organizations that have an interest in outside sports and activities, and they also collaborate with local clubs, such as the White Mountains Chapter of NEMBA. Their initiative is to promote and maintain multi-sport trails using the same sport terrain, and to increase the local workforce. Their projects include Federal, State, Municipal and Private land use, and revival of CCC ski trails. Another one of the challenges is getting approvals to use the lands on all levels. The Granite Backcountry Alliance has been meeting with members of the State Legislation, State Regulation and Forest Management to advocate their cause. They also plan to meet with NH TOA. The Granite Backcountry Alliance plans to educate users in order to help them make good decisions regarding ecological awareness, avalanche safety, preparedness and land conservation. They have over a thousand likes on Facebook. Chairman Rob Adair agreed that it's a great concept; there are many slopes that could be good trails if branches were cut from trees, without doing any environmental damage.

Tyler Ray mentioned that this sport would greatly benefit the local economy because the Conway area has much potential in this sport. Their plan is to scout good areas for glade skiing and to first focus on those. Linda Kearny suggested starting with private land owners to glade the trails. Black Cap terrain in Chatham is a good area to start with.

3. Reports and Other Business:

No report from Forester Don Johnson; he has completed his work for the year.

Gift of Land – Tax Map Lot 21577 (just across the tracks, .2 acre) North Conway Land Preservation Association is buying the property and will demolish the house and restore the ground, and then give the property to the Town. By State Law the Planning Board and Conservation Commission have to approve the offer. Discussion included land donations and the impact it has on Town Revenue/Taxes, and also the liability of the Town regarding safety of the property being located next to the railroad tracks. **Chairman Rob Adair asked the Committee for a motion to accept the property being offered to the Town as a gift; Larry Huemmler made a motion in favor of accept the property being offered to the Town as a gift; seconded by Karla Allen. Rob Adair called for a vote to accept the motion. All in favor. (4-0)**

Trail Committee Reports:

Whitaker Woods – Nat Lucy has been doing a tremendous amount of work in Whitaker Woods, on the powerline trail on the Kearsarge Road side, which is a huge improvement for skiing this winter. The downhill trail on Hurricane Mountain Common Lands has been flagged and scoped, so it will be ready to be looked at in the spring.

Marshall Conservation Area – Rob Adair would like to lay out the connection to get to the Old Location Road.

4. Selectmen's Report: Dave Weathers reported that there is one wetlands application for a beach improvement on Conway Lake. It's all within the Shore Land Protection Regulations and has been signed by Dave and returned to DES..
5. Round Table Discussion: Nothing has been reported about the Center Conway land donation discussed at last month's meeting.

Next Meeting – The next meeting will be January 11, 2016 at 6:30 at the Whitaker Home Site Meeting House in North Conway.

Adjourn: Karla Allen made a motion to adjourn at 7:02 P.M.; seconded by Linda Kearney. Passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Theresa Ann Gallagher

Recording Secretary