

Stranahan Stewardship Committee 23rd Meeting

Decisions taken are underlined.

April 16, 2012

Members Attending: Jim Brimblecombe, John Domey, Ed Jalbert and Jenny Warshow

Visitors: Dan Kilborn, forester from the Vermont Land Trust

Activities: Members and visitor met at the old landing area on the west side of the Jake Martin Rd.

1. Dan Kilborn, Stewardship Forester from the Vermont Land Trust, met with members to talk about the easement language vis-à-vis structures. Dan said there is no language in the easement that allows for construction of the structures such as Jim's pump shack. This was an oversight that we can correct by putting a clause that allows necessary temporary structures into the management plan. Ed agreed to write the clause and send a rough of it to all the members and Dan Kilborn as well. Once the committee agrees to a final draft it will be sent to the Select Board for their approval.

2. Ed agreed to send Dan Kilborn a copy of the sugaring lease.

3. Ed agreed to go up to stand 5 and put a small waterbar in the skid road above the water crossing. He will also mulch and seed the same area.

4. Members and Dan walked through stand 23 to discuss a possible timber harvest. Members talked about using the old landing area by the town road as a landing for any future harvests. Ed and Dan thought it might be best to have the harvest take place before the area is turned into a parking area. Dan mentioned having the loggers upgrade the spot to a parking area as part of the timber sale. Ed and Dan talked about the how a possible harvest would proceed. Ed talked about group selection cutting to harvest small groups of declining fir and thought that a timber sale might gross \$8-10,000. Dan mentioned the 100' total width buffer strip along the stream that runs through the stand. Stocking in this buffer strip must remain at or above the A-line for the mixedwood type. Dan and Ed both talked about the advantages of leaving large low-quality trees for wildlife.

5. The need for future timber harvesting was discussed. Jenny said that most harvesting should be used to improve forest health and not for income generation since the haying and sugaring leases are paying for any lost property taxes. Both John and Jim thought any money available to put into the general fund was a good thing since some in town were struggling to pay their taxes. Jenny said that money gained from timber sales would reduce most people's taxes by only a small amount. Members discussed putting the matter of timber harvesting on the Stranahan in front of the voters in the form of a referendum. All agreed that this should be done. The concept of forest health was discussed. Dan said that harvesting could improve forest health if it brought the forest back to a more balanced pre-disturbance state. Ed talked about the concept of "capturing mortality"; harvesting trees, such as the fir, that were going to blow over anyway to gain income for the town. Ed discussed the idea of uneven-aged management which is recommended for this stand by Russ Barrett the Washington County forester. Jim talked about installation of the main line that runs from the sugar bush to the pump shack and gathering tank on the Jake Martin Road.

6. Jenny said that some of the money gained from selling stumpage last winter should be used to improve the Thompson Road and all other members agreed. Jim and John discussed solutions to halting erosion on the big ditch in the south end of the Thompson Road. Jim said that rip rap might be the best solution and that road agent Dan Teatreault might have a used culvert available sometime this summer. John Domey said Johnny Schmidt had offered to do some of the work on the rip rap and culvert installation. Johnny might also have time to fill the pothole over the culvert at the Gurnsey Brook crossing on the Thompson Road. Jenny mentioned that the log which had been placed across the trail at the Moon Field landing had been moved during last winter's harvest and that this spot was vulnerable to entry by illegal 4WD vehicles. Jenny thought that a log was now not enough and that a gate was required. She thought the old gate up on the Pitkin's could serve here.

7. Members agreed to meet at the old landing on the west side of the Jake Martin Road at 6PM on May 21, 2012 if the weather was good and at the Old Schoolhouse Common if raining.

Submitted by: Ed Jalbert

Submitted On: April 30, 2012

Approved On: April 30, 2012

