

Meeting of the West Faire Conservation Commission

December 16, 2015

Members present: Peggy Willey, Cooley Kearns, Jim Totin, Rebecca Wurdak

**Secretary's Report deferred until January 26 2016 meeting**

**Treasurer's Report deferred until January 26 2016 meeting**

**Write-up for Town Report – Ann Stephens has volunteered to do this. Peg will find out deadline for reports to be in to Selectboard**

Brushwood

ROW update status: as per the opinion of Paul Gillies, there is no documented right of way across the landlocked piece at this time. No action needed.

**Cooley will follow up on state of play at Conte Fish and Game re preservation .**

Trails progress: Frank's Trail is done! Some select tree removal on Presidential Loop can await some future logging operation for tree removal, or possibly contract out for market to a specialty supplier.

Closeout on Brushwood North: under review

For our information, the standards for Vermont Tree Farms (of which West Fairlee as BCF is a member) are being upgraded, and we will review our Brushwood Tree Farm Plan with Dave this winter, in the light of these.

**John Boutin has offered to organize trail work plans for our CC group (and Friends of BCF) to move ahead on trail improvements, including scheduling 2 or 3 family/community service days in 2016 out on the trails.**

Education-theme for 2016 will be Back Yard Stewardship, highlighting activities and things we can all do in our own yards, no matter the size, that help steward the natural world, clean water, wildlife and much more. Since we are all connected, everything we do individually will add to the general health of "the commons".

**Cooley will develop a proposal for January on making invasive species our focal point for 2016.**

Conservation Projects

The state has held public get-togethers for presentation, questions, suggestions re the draft required agricultural practices (RAP's) released over the summer which will help improve Vermont's water quality. The State Ag Dept is taking input and suggestions now and thru winter from farmers and landholders. RAP's will be finalized by July 2016. Part of the State's program will provide education, monitoring and assistance for farmers so that all may achieve compliance. Many mid-size and large farms have already been working on this. Small farms that are of a certain size ( based on number of animals per acre and proximity to water) will be asked to do this also, and district ag folks will help smaller farmers with information and ideas to move ahead on this. Stormwater runoff from other sources will also be

ameliorated where larger areas of blacktop and rooftop affect runoff; forestry operations; also dirt roads where standards can be improved regarding runoff.

#### Lake, Stream and River Projects

The news about the water quality in the Pompy is not good. The state will send an executive summary, the results of which we will digest and disseminate through the listserv or via direct mail. **Cooley will bring a draft in January.**

We again discussed possible new candidates for the Conservation Commission.

The meeting closed at 8:00 pm. The next meeting is at 7:00 PM in the Town Offices on January 26.