

Pisgah State Park Steering Committee
 May 11, 2010; 4:00 - 6:00 pm
 Location: Antioch University

Attendees		
Name	Affiliation	Representing
Rep. Timothy Butterworth	New Hampshire State Representative	Chesterfield, Winchester and Hinsdale
Ken Desmarais	Forest Management Bureau	Division of Forests and Lands
Chris Gamache	Trails Bureau	Division of Parks and Recreation
Emily Hague	Monadnock Conservancy	Local Land Trusts
Tim Hill	Forester - Cheshire County	Forestry/Timber Harvesting
Don Kent	Natural Heritage Bureau	State Agency
Tim Murphy	Southwest Regional Planning Commission	Regional Planning
Robert Smith	Friends of Pisgah	Friends of Pisgah
Kathy Thatcher	Friends of Pisgah	Non-motorized Recreation
Ted Whippie	Town of Winchester	Local Community
Mark Zankel	The Nature Conservancy	Conservation Organizations

Meeting Chair:

- Ken Desmarais - Administrator, Forest Management Bureau, Division of Forest and Lands
- Minutes recorded by Cynthia Nichols - Pisgah State Park Technical Team Coordinator

Orders of Business

Next Steering Committee Meeting Dates

June 29th, 2010; 4-6 pm

Agenda:

Review Management Plan chapters

Chapters are posted at:

<http://www.nhdfi.org/new-hampshire-state-lands/state-owned-reservations/pisgah-plan.aspx>

December 17th, 2009 Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes were reviewed.

Ken Desmarais noted that all minutes are available online at:

<http://www.nhdfi.org/new-hampshire-state-lands/state-owned-reservations/pisgah-state-park.aspx>

Hardcopies are available on request and posted at the Winchester Town Hall
Comments on the minutes:

Emily Hague made a motion to include the following on page 2 of the December 17th minutes. The minutes currently read:

"The Bureau of Trails will commit to developing an access plan for park users. Most of it would be done in house over the next year; and then come to the public with that plan for public review and comments".

Emily requested adding the following to the end of the sentence:

"including information currently being gathered about existing division of parks management."

The Committee moved and seconded the motion to accept the Dec.17th 2009 minutes with this addition.

Agenda Items and Discussion

1 - Parks and Recreation - Chris Gamache

The Division of Parks and Recreation will work toward having the Recreation and Public Access section of the Pisgah Management Plan completed so that it can be included at the same time as the Natural and Cultural Resources section.

They will bring the draft information to the June 29th Steering Committee Meeting. The information will be posted in advance of the meeting for review and will likely include a general outline, chapter outlines and draft chapters.

The focus of the chapters will be to review the current conditions in the park and the plans for the future. Parks is also looking at alternative management strategies and will ask for feedback.

There are four major areas that the Division wants to address in the future

- Enforcement - as of Dec. 31st, the Trails Bureau will no longer have a law enforcement authority. Division of Forest and Lands does have full enforcement

capacity in their purview but there is currently no Forest Ranger assigned to District 10, in which Pisgah occurs. Two police departments have been given law enforcement grants

- Building Management - Multiple alternatives include: (1) Management of the visitor center and barn managed under an MOA with the Friends of Pisgah; (2) Selling the Visitor Center and barn back to Friends of Pisgah; (3) Have a caretaker person living on site for a full time presence.
- Park Staffing - It is likely that there will not be a full time Park Manager there in the future and it will likely be a part-time presence from DRED staff in the future. A caretaker could provide a full time presence on the property.
- Trails - The current discussion is focusing on maintaining status quo. Equestrian and mountain bike loops that have been proposed but decisions on them have not been made yet. Some gates may be closed and some other gates may be opened, for example: opening Old Chesterfield road to have access across the property.

The intention is to provide an outline of the alternatives for review prior to the June 29th Steering Committee meeting for discussion at the meeting.

Discussion followed and covered these items:

Drafts will be prepared in-house and brought to Friends of Pisgah via the Steering Committee.

Police Departments will need to be part of the discussion since a lot of the overview will be on their shoulders.

- NH Fish and Game will be providing local police departments with grants of approximately \$1800 - \$2000.
- In the future, if budgets get better and staffing is increased, it could be explored whether Forest Rangers would have the time to patrol more often at Pisgah.
- There are two types of police activity, (1) responding to emergencies and (2) patrolling. It would be good to discuss the ATV patrol needs with the police departments. OHRV user groups will sometimes volunteer to patrol. A group in Hinsdale did this in the past.
- Potential resources will be noted with each alternative in the draft

The Recreation portion of the plan will tie back to the Natural Resources portion of the plan. There will be a summary section in the plan that will focus on tying the plan items back to the Steering Committee Vision Statement

2. Hemlock Woolly Adelgid - Ken Desmarais

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) has now been found in the park in a small approx. 1/10th acre area about 15 minutes from the Kilburn trail entrance.

The infected trees will be cut in late May or early June. The cut trees and brush will then be covered by tarps. Once the foliage desiccates, the HWA dies. This treatment method has been found to be effective. An area around the infection will be treated with Dinoteferan which is a pesticide that is sprayed on the bark.

Because the soils within Pisgah are conducive to supporting Hemlock, the area is vulnerable to infestation. If the area is left alone, it could create the potential for spread. Biological controls using predatory beetles are not an option right now because the HWA population isn't large enough to support a viable population of beetles.

There are other infestations that were identified all around the park. Some are treated and some are not depending on which state they occur in and whether they are on private property.

HWA Workshop -

May 19th from 12:00 noon - 3:00 pm

Pisgah Visitor Center

Jen Weimer and Inge Seaboyer will discuss identification of HWA and treatment with a site visit to the infested area.

It was suggested that a Risk Analysis assessment be done for future treatment decision making.

3. Timber Sale - Compartment 14 - Inge Seaboyer

A natural and cultural resource inventory of Compartment 14 has been completed and a timber harvest is being planned for part of the area. Forester Inge Seaboyer outlined each prescription area.

The cuts will focus on approximately 100 acres just north, west and south of the Visitor Center. Goals include field regeneration and expansion for wildlife habitat, removal of hazardous trees within striking distance of the Visitor Center, maintenance and expansion of early successional habitat and vista improvement. After the harvest, the area will look a lot like it did prior to Park establishment.

Estimated volume total is approximately 250,000 board feet of sawtimber and 1,141 tons of pulp and biomass. The harvest is expected to be offered to bidders in July of this year. The income goes partly to the state's general fund, partly to the Forest Management and Protection Fund and partly to the Fuelwood account. These funds are used to lower state

taxes, help cover the cost of ownership and management of state reservations and to forestry law enforcement.

The PowerPoint presentation will be available online at:

<http://www.nhdfi.org/new-hampshire-state-lands/state-owned-reservations/pisgah-plan.aspx>

The Division of Forests and Lands would be happy to answer any questions and provide a public education walk if there is interest.

4. Park Use, Funding and Income Questions - Representative Timothy Butterworth

Representative Butterworth passed around a list of questions that he would like to have more information about. It will be helpful to making decisions and reviewing the information for the Management Plan.

It was noted that some of the questions could be answered directly from the agencies, some is included in the Forest Management Chapters, and then efforts will need to be coordinated to gather the rest in the future.

There was support for trying to answer many of the questions for the next meeting.

Some discussion focused on:

- Park Use - Some of the information could be gathered with surveys in parking lots. Rep. Butterworth would like to see if Friends of Pisgah could get volunteers in the parking lots in the summer and get some of this information.
- Funding Questions – Pertaining to timber harvesting, there are general benefits to the local economy beyond the direct income from the sale of stumpage. Some information addressing this has been provided by the Division of Forests and Lands some information is in the Forest Management chapter.
- Cost of trail building versus income from ATV and snowmobile registration. Is there a way to get income from hikers?

PUBLIC COMMENT – Public comment was received at the conclusion of the meeting. It is currently not available but will be made available to the public as soon as it is transcribed.