

Nash Stream Advisory Meeting Tuesday 5-12-09

Rep. Fred King called meeting to order at 2:10pm

Meeting started with Maggie Machinist (Interim Regional Forester)

She presented information on the following items:

- Early summer road projects and fish habitat projects.
- Cohos trail proposals

Early summer road work and the status of the fish habitat

Maggie presented a slide show and answered related questions to road projects and fish habitat projects. Camp owners whom may be affected during any of the work will be notified by letter before the work begins. There will be general public notification as well.

Maggie will be on leave for most of the summer. She asked that any one with questions or concerns contact Captain John Accardi or the Concord office.

Questions were raised by Tom Bushey (Camp Owner's Association) about the width of the bridges and signage for such. Maggie answered that bridge width is cost related and sizes are appropriate. Signs warning of narrow bridges will be posted.

Cohos trail update/proposed new campsite.

Maggie presented on three issue associated with the Cohos trail;

- 1) Building the remaining approved campsite (tent platform and outhouse) on the Arm of the Sugarloaf trail. The Cohos trail association was wondering if the Sugarloaf Mt. trail would be more beneficial to the public, but would need to go through another approval process.
- 2) The association would like to move a section (1.9 miles) off of the road and upslope onto Long Mt. There were some wildlife concerns the last time this was proposed. They will have to be addressed and looked at by Fish and Game.
- 3) The association would like to restore Camp Kirk, which is John Lane's camp next to Silver Brook, and utilize it as a "headquarters" on Nash Stream. They would like to keep equipment there as well allow through hikers to stay there.
 - According to the lease "association" camps are not allowed. Also, they are not allowed to charge money for people to stay at the camp.

These issues will all need to be looked into in much greater detail. The Cohos trail association is at the beginning stages of planning many of these items and is aware that they need to provide more information.

ATV Trail Update (Ted Burns/Clint Savage)

17 Active Trail patrols
240 Hours spent on West Side Trails
Hand clearing and water diversion
Beaver are a problem
Trails weathered the winter basically good shape

Bridge – update and repairs are happening this week
Signage, water bars and clearing of trails should be ready for May 23rd opening.

There was a question on the length of the Pilot status of the ATV trail system made by Edith Tucker (reporter) which led to discussion. The status of the ATV trail is ongoing at this time. Edith stated that other communities were waiting evaluation on this pilot program before implementing ATV trails on their lands.

Ted Burns requested the state look into allowing an additional loop on the east side of Nash Stream, possibly allowing camp owners access to the trail system.

Fred King recommended the Camp Owners talk about the road/access issue and that it be on the agenda for next meeting.

Acquisition Activity

Bill Carpenter discussed many pieces of land which add value to the Nash Stream Tract, however there are no funds available for purchasing. Creative funding sources allows some of them to be added through easements and other means. There is activity but no actions at this time

Mary Sloat asked if the easements that are in place, cover additional lands added at a later date to those adjoining lands. Bill Carpenter replied that each easement is specific to the parcel of land purchased and not to additions.

Camp Fee Increase/Appraisal Results

Commissioner Bald spoke to the committee about camp appraisals and possible fee increases. He said that the agency is looking to be fair. Rep. Fred King said every 5 years is the standard that is generally accepted for re-appraising real estate and it is based on a court case from Nashua.

Bill Carpenter said a three tiered synopsis has been proposed based on work by the appraiser. Tom Bushey representing the Camp Owner's Association handed out a memo from the camp owners concerning this issue. Generally they do not support a tiered rent schedule.

Bill Carpenter mentioned time is of the essence since lease termination dates are coming up in July. There was discussion about favorability of some camps over others, locations and tax burdens associated with unincorporated towns which some camps are located in and the process of such a change being written into the management plan for Nash Stream area. There were also questions about the validity of appraisals and the CPI index being used for calculations of fees.

Tom Bushey said that a flat rate is desired by the camp owners. He asked state officials to keep in mind the whole picture and not look to raising the rent on camps to solve problems.

Commissioner Bald thanked all for the comments and any actions will follow a legal process and public hearings procedure. State has responsibility to all citizens and must do what is equitable with considerations for all sides of the issue.

Whitcomb Pond Access

Bill Carpenter – policy is currently a walk-in situation. Maggie Machinist mentioned that the road is .2 to .4 miles long and ¼ mile walk into pond. There is an informal boat landing at the east end of pond.

Tom Bushey owns the only camp on Whitcomb pond and said he has a hardship in getting repair materials and supplies in. This has been due to a problem in 2004 when a wet season and lots of use created road damage. There is a questionable section of road in which NHDES has determined a wetland exists. He handed out a packet of information and asked that the issue be looked into again. There was discussion with positions generally that Forest and Lands allows passage by the Bushey family on a case by case manner pending weather and road conditions.

The Division of Forests & Lands can ask DES to grant a permit. Fred King said that he feels we need to allow the camp owner to ask DES to grant access to the camp. Interim Director Simpkins said he can talk with DES about this issue. Forest & Lands has requested and received DES wetland permits on other lands and usually in conjunction with a timber management situation.

Commissioner Bald said that it is his job to look at issues from all angles and decide the best course of action that is in the best interest of the state on NH. He said that all NH laws must be complied with.

Maggie Machinist said there has been no timber cruise in that area because the pond area is protected and there are no timber management plans at this time.

No decision at this time.

Public Comment

Edith Tucker asked how the public will know when and how the camp leases are renewed in July when they expire. Bill Carpenter said it will be posted in local papers, with letters to camp owners and on the Forests and Lands website.

Fred King adjourned the meeting at 4:12 pm.

KMD/kvd 5/09

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