

## 2012 TOWN FOREST REPORT

Over 2 dozen people attended our spring meeting on April 26. The main topics on the agenda were to go over the results of the survey conducted during 2011 and to perform the 10-year review of the management plan. The plan was updated with minor additions, the main one being to make a natural resource inventory of the forest, in conjunction with the town wide inventory. Other changes were allowing the management committee to close gates to the forest as needed to prevent soil damage (not just in the March to June time frame) and reducing the required yearly management committee meetings from 4 to 3. The updated plan also documents events in the forest such as construction of the lean to, blow downs and the survey and will be posted on the town website.

A student intern from Antioch began the natural resources inventory but was recalled to the university for unrelated reasons, so this work is still pending.

Linda Fuerst replaced Loel Callahan as our representative from the conservation commission.

Ed Woodbury and Ginny Prince completed spring roadside trash pick up.

The trails were in excellent shape again this year. Ginny finally completed remarking the blue trail so all trails are now marked with plastic disks. Ginny mowed the loop road and associated clearings and desired trees such as apple and spruce were released in conjunction with trail work. A timber harvest may be carried out when conditions and wood prices allow.

The summer workday was August 11. Doug Miller, Jim Fitch, Ed, Charlotte Hitchcock and Ginny replaced bridges on the yellow trail and white trails. Small hemlocks were cut on site for stringers, and Dale Rook, Lavalley Building Supply and Ed Woodbury donated scraps of Trex decking.

Many hands made light work for the fall workday on Oct 21. We finished the new bridge on the white trail, marked the red trail with rock cairns at the power line crossing, cleaned water bars, clipped brush at the lookout and removed survey boxes. Special thanks to Leo Maslan for bringing his equipment and making big improvements to erosion control on lower Root Hill Road. Thank you Doug Miller, Doug Freeland, Linda Fuerst, Ed, Liz and Karl Brewer, Jim Fitch and Leo.

Invasive buckthorn and autumn olive are increasing in the forest, especially on the power line right of way. The committee is discussing how to control these difficult plants, and decided to proceed with hand cutting and focused spot spraying of the stumps on the power line right of way. Using glyphosate in the late fall prevents absorption by other plants because the leaves have fallen.

The town forest continues to be very popular for hunting, mountain biking, hiking, snowshoeing and skiing. Maps are posted near the start of each trail and are also available on the trail from Tandy Brook Rd., at the town office, online in the appendix of the management plan or by contacting Ginny Prince. Please contribute to the logbook at the lookout. In addition the Eagles Ledge lean-to is available for anyone to use.

As in past years, the town forest budget includes no tax money. State law requires that spending any funds, donation or payment or otherwise, must be authorized in the warrant, so the committee is requesting permission to spend up to \$1500 for trail marking materials and other miscellaneous items for repair and construction of signs, bridges, gates etc.

For more information, if you're interested in youth or community projects or to share thoughts about the town forest contact any committee member:

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