

## WSSC Meeting Minutes

04/16/2015 4:00-6:00 pm

### In attendance:

Al Futterman , Alicia Coleman, Betina Abe, Bill Taylor, Carol Gumbart , Cathy Rooney, Chris Pryor, Christa Collins, Dan Stimson, David McKinnon, Derek Saari, Don MacIver, Jacquie Goring, Joel Tedford, Karin Paquin, Katharine Messer, Jennifer Fish, Joan Ferguson, Laura Mattei, Laurie Bent, Lisa Vernegaard, Maeghan Walters, Marcella Stasa, Preston Holleman, Rich Couse, Rick Findlay, Rita Grossman, Robert McArthur, Ron Gemma, Samuel Bell, Sheri Brown, Scott Shumway, Steven Sussman, Sylvia Willard, Walter Bickford, Whit Beals

### Announcements:

**Alicia Coleman, SVT-** Google Group: promise to invite all members again. This is an interactive forum that will allow WSSC members to share documents or discussion topics between meetings. The invitation expires after **1 week**. We have had a few, but not all, issues with non-Google users- please advise if this happens, and Google will be contacted directly.

-Contact information of those present will be included in e-mail.

**Laura Mattei, SVT-** Reminder of the WSSC mission and priority issues ([protecting agricultural lands](#), [cooperative land protection projects](#), [deer management](#), [open field management](#))

-Introduced Rich Couse, SVT's Habitat Management Specialist for the 2015 field season. For the WSSC, Rich will help to convene and finalize various aspects of the deer management priority issue. Please speak with Laura with questions or more information.

**Christa Collins, SVT-** [Jesse B. Cox](#) Grant Opportunity (note: the website shows this year's application pool. We are anticipating one for 2016).

Donated Land and Easement Grant Program: eligible RCPs cover \$50,000 to \$100,000 transaction costs for land donations.

If think you have a project that falls within this timeline, we will be discussing this in greater depth at the Fall meeting. Please contact Christa for details.

**Karin Paquin, SVT Board member** – Karin Paquin and Alicia Coleman would like to hold a workshop on Chapter 61 conservation options for landowners. We are looking for a town that this would be most applicable in and useful to; such event would involve a panel of speakers (possibly an assessor, forester, and planner) and light snacks for guests. If you think this will be a good fit for your community, please contact Alicia. Here is an [example](#), see page 57.

## **Presentation 1: Lisa Vernegaard, Executive Director of SVT Overview of Forest Management – Goals, Values and Planning**

What are the values of a forest?: wildlife, lumber, recreation, water regulation, carbon sequestration.. the list goes on

How do you prioritize?: First, know what you have (important values, opportunities, and threats)

DCR example: preservation vs. access vs. economics

- Created reserves: for preservation
- Parklands: provide access
- Woodlands: working, active for products and economic function

Then protect and manage: doing nothing can be a management technique, as long as it's intentional

There's no right decision, except to manage for resilience: the ability to absorb disturbances while retaining the same basic structure and functioning for a healthy forest

Communicate & Educate!

Monitor and Adapt, especially with urbanization

## **Presentation 2: Scott Shumway *President, Westborough Community Land Trust* Forest Preservation Perspective**

1. What is it you are managing and for what purpose
2. What is it that you are doing and why

Conservationist vs. preservationist paradigm, can also be known as the forester vs. the ecologist

Conservation: Gifford Pinchot "The art of producing from the forest whatever it can yield for the service of man"

Preservation: Muir & Leopold, Scott notes, "passive management protects management that protects habitat in perpetuity"

Consider the setting: Urban v. suburban v. rural

What type of management is appropriate?

Scale: can the same management principles be applied to 1,000 acres? 200 acres?

Example: Quabbin- clear cut patch work

Investigate fact vs. fiction- defining “forest health”, clearcutting to create early successional wildlife habitat, to improve and protect water supply quantity and quality

Article by D. Foster and D. Orwig (2006)- determine that doing nothing is the best approach, in many situations

Closing thought: there is no single correct answer for what to manage conservation land

The best strategy is the one that’s best for you particular site

Remember that doing nothing is a viable management practice- let nature take its course, intentionally

Question:

Rita Grossman: 1. Woolly Adelgid: what to do about it? (this is an invasive fungi on hemlocks)

- Scott- apply an horticultural oil on whole tree, or systemic pesticide on the base of the tree
- Lisa Vernegaard- woolly adelgid-ridden stand by TTOR- the stand was of such important cultural value that they undertook \$5,000/ year investment to control fungi

2) In 21E situations, how should it be approached to not disturb the hazardous material or the health of the forest

- Getting Licensed Site Professional involved, who represent the DEP
- Look for stressed vegetation, signs of oil

### **Presentation 3: Derek Saari Westborough Conservation Agent Westborough Bowman Conservation Area Forest Management Case Study**

Sandra Pond Watershed Forest Management Plan

- Town water supply- 40-50% (high yield) 20-30% low yield
- One of the most cherished areas of Westborough

Some of the land was taken by eminent domain- to protect the water supply and the conservation, promote and development of natural resources

10 year forest management plan in effect

- Not just cutting to account for other needs

Using forestry to cure other issues

2011: Finished harvest

2013: Pine is now dominant

Did not cut all red pine initially, now it's all dying and don't have the money to go cut

8-10 ac honeysuckle near kiosk "cured" with mowing

More information can be found at: [Westboroughtv.org](http://Westboroughtv.org), Under "Show Search", type Timber

Question:

Christa Collins: Why not leave fallen Red Pine? Derek- there is a bench (that encourages people) now, which can be a liability

#### **Presentation 4: Jennifer Fish Director of Service Forestry Program, DCR Forestry & Wildlife Management**

Graph: Forest stages through a wildlife management perspective

- Too much Sawtimber present in MA (will improve over time), not enough seedling or sapling to regenerate (priority action area)

### **Foresters for the Birds program & Working Forest Initiative**

Originated with VT Audubon (come up with recommendations for birds) and foresters (implement recommendations)

- MA train the foresters to maintain the habitat that the birds need
- Pilot (2014)- VT created for Northern Hardwood forest type, MA brought to western part of the state
- Foresters plan is reviewed by MassAudubon
- Looking to expand statewide- looking for 3 bird regions to cover central, NE, SE
  - o Similar forest types and following nesting habits/ habitat use
- Toolkit: landscape perspective
  - o Birder's Dozen – in decline/ at risk of being in decline, easy to identify by sight and sounds, represent different suites of birds that would use different forest types
  - o Will be helping something, no matter what the landowner decides
  - o Silviculture with birds in mind- to help foresters understand and create bird habitat, talk about various conditions and what species it will be helping

### Example: Red pine plantation

- 1- Little light reaching floor
  - 2- Some regeneration
  - 3- Ice storm
  - 4- Ice storm & downed trees
- Uneven age management to create a layered forest (vertical structure)
  - Even age management: to grow a particular species of tree

### White pine and oak are light-loving species (need to create light)

- From a bird perspective, sometimes not enough light reaching to the bottom of the ground to create a dense understory. Suggestion: leave some holes in places to create that light
- Larger openings (clear cuts)- example hear white throated sparrow (good thing!)

### Forest Bird Habitat Assessment

- Inventory
- Think about the strata and scale of habitat features
- Simple photo guide
- Integrated with field assessment form
- **Will be advertising for projects out this way next spring**

### Questions:

1. Landowner interest? – High. Outreach has taken longer than anticipated, but the foresters are trained and ready.
2. Bill Taylor: The Town of Upton has received a Forest Stewardship grant
  - Hired Audubon directly to get an assessment
  - Upton will share forest stewardship plan by Fall meeting
3. Are trainings geared for private or state foresters? - private

Lisa Vernegaard's closing remarks and take away- focus on the end game, there will always be a different way of doing things but not to let argument distract from development threats. What is success and what does it look like?