

Approval of 4/19/23 minutes - approved

- Crossing Study
  - Sophie recommends checking the cameras quarterly. That feels like a long interval.
    - Will the batteries run down? Can the memory card fill up before then?
    - Jens has a supply of cameras he can supply, Susan reached out to him and he says that he has some he can lend us.
    - Susan is leaning toward basing our study on the camera observations rather than tracking
      - Most of the info Sophie sent is based on winter tracking
      - The proposal Sophie sent feels like a lot to digest, but she did say that some pieces could be left out
      - Sophie estimated \$7000 for the whole project over 2 years
        - Adam: we would need to understand the value of the study to the community and understand the efficacy of our proposal
    - David: once you choose a camera location, there is a chance that the animal crossing would change seasonally. Therefore we may have a bias.
    - David: had talked about partnering with other conservation commissions in the area - was our objective trying to combine our efforts?
      - Susan: had an email exchange with Cornwall folks was to see if we wanted to meet up to see what everyone else is doing - but there was nothing collaborative that came out of that
      - Sophie had mentioned that she was working with Bristol, Kristen (?) reached out to us this summer about collaborating - they were basically updating a study they already had and it was quite larger than anything we've imagined. Our collaborative efforts with them fizzled out.
    - David: what are our thoughts on this project
      - Mary: should we try to involve more of the community and consider it a tracking study
      - Polly: need to focus some programs on it. We can't commit to Sophie because we don't have a budget
        - Susan thinks we have \$5000 that we can use, but does not want to commit that money until we have a plan
        - Polly: start with having a tracking workshop
        - Susan: may have people from other towns come?
          - Rhiannon: utilize consultants and other town members with experience to help the Commission to develop the programmatic work, but keep the community involvement focused on education

- Adam: have we talked to anyone to who has utilized Sophie's services?
    - Susan: South Burlington has used her services and that was how she was recommended to us
  - Polly: could we talk to the town of Monkton about their town forest process
    - Polly: what are the next steps?
      - Mary: put reminders in FPF now to talk about what we are doing and encourage people to reach out if they are interested in volunteering
      - Polly: what would our summer outing be? Should we incorporate this idea of the crossing and should we bring in Sophie?
      - Susan will respond to whomever got in touch about connecting with other conservation commissions?
- Mushroom Walk with Meg Madden
  - Dates available:
    - Saturday July 8th morning, afternoon, or evening.
    - Saturday July 22nd morning, afternoon, or evening.
    - Saturday August 5th morning, afternoon, or evening.
  - Generally Meg breaks down a day into 3 different time slots: morning 9-11:30, afternoon 1-3:30, evening 5-7:30. These times can be tweaked slightly...they're just a starting point, and helpful for Meg because she sometimes have more than one event in a day.
  - Meg's fee for a 2.5 hour walk is \$250 and I can accommodate a max of 15-20 participants.
  - Suggests we meet and walk at the Watershed
  - Adam: the Library may already be hosting a mushroom walk - may have already booked something on July 18 - currently posted at the library and will do FPF update
    - We will leave this to the library then
    - Polly: if it's over subscribed, we can step up and sponsor one as well
- Walking Trail Project
  - Mary was involved in this through the Master Naturalist program and deemed it too complicated
- Polly Reports back from the NENEC
  - Squirrel boxes available through the Charlotte library for flying squirrels
  - BioDiversity Vermont - a cooperative initiative
  - Thor Hansen was a speaker, has written a great book on seeds. Has new book called Plastic Squid and Hurricane Wizards about how species are adapting to climate change
  - Went to a session on bees - VT Center for Eco Studies reported on their findings. Pointed out that using honey bees as the poster example is the same as using chickens to save the birds because they are not native

species. Be sure to plant species that honey bees really like close to the hives so that they don't take over the territory of other native pollinators.

Action Items:

- Mary to write up the posting for Front Porch Forum to talk about what we are doing and encourage people to reach out if they are interested in volunteering and send it to us to approve
- Rhiannon to try to attend Monkton's next Town Forest planning meeting and report back next time