

Mt A Steering Committee

5/17/23 – York Water District Office

Attendees Present:

- Conservation Coordinator, Robin Kerr
- Great Works Regional Land Trust, Jordan Kelley
- Great Works Regional Land Trust, Jill Crosbie
- Maine Dept Inland Fisheries & Wildlife, Josh Matijas
- Town of York, Pete Murray
- York Water District, Assistant Superintendent, Gary Stevens
- York Water District, Zach Mein (Resource Protection)
- Kittery Water District, Bob Gray
- Kittery Water District, John Perry
- York Land Trust ED, Amelia Nadilo
- Town of South Berwick, GWRLT Board Member, John Branagan
- Mt A Outreach and Education Coordinator, Naomi Densmore
- Trails, Grounds, and Facilities Supervisor, Ben Jankowski

Minutes: Gary motion to accept, bob second, all in favor

Public Forum: N/A

Correspondence/Presentations/Requests: N/A

Discussion Items:

- Parking/restroom Update: bottom layer of paving is done. The base, summit, and satellite done – clean up and planting needs to happen. Goal is still to have parking areas completed June 1st. Restrooms will be coming afterwards – end of July. Parking and fee structure will all be set up. Roll out admission/access fee at same time of parking lot opening. Hiring park attendants to manage use free and custodial duties at restrooms. Day use only. People not allowed to park on mountain road (change in town ordinance). Need to set up meeting with SB, York, Mt A to discuss parking enforcing/ticketing, and patrolling.
 - Annual pass for York residents (beaches, Mt A, and other town parks)
 - Seasonal Pass for all (\$100) (Senior or Veteran - \$50)
 - Season pass for South Berwick residents (\$70) - available at York Parks & Rec, Mt A) No limit for capacity.
 - Hourly: \$2/hr via pay and go app
 - Parking ticket: \$30
 - Hike/Bike in: would still need to pay access fee
- Public Access and Trail Plan – final review
 - Good to move forward
 - Gary feedback: trail width and bridge width – would like primary trails wide 6.5’ for emergency access - search & rescue or fire. Trails are designated for different uses (hike, hike/bike, multi-use trails (includes ATVs, horses, dirt bikes, snowmobiles) Multi-use were old use woods. Manage them to narrow them down with some exceptions (Ring Trail, Accessible trail). Robin, Ben, and Gary to meet to map out emergency routes and will report back and share proposed emergency access routes to GWRLT and YLT
- York Police Natural Resource Protection Officer – position update: Gary patrolling watershed for 26 years and is planning to retire. Don N. would like York PD to do patrolling. YPD has agreed to take Gary on for 20

hours/week to strictly patrol once he retires. Both Water Districts will contribute to that position to the PD. Looking to Mt A to help out with it, and land trusts as well. Difficult to assign number of hours to property owner, but land trusts need proposals for what contribution NRPO is asking for. Contribution could be based on percentage of acreage or time on that property patrolling. Funding already allocated for throughout the year and contributions from other entities could start in 2024. York Wild & Scenic will have federal funding and this could be a potential funding source, as unauthorized recreation is the main threat to the drinking water supply. KWD in York Watershed, YWD in Cape Neddick Watershed. Discussion on statutory protection of watersheds.

- Mt A Parks Rules & Regulations – near final draft
 - Dillon, Town, and Town Attorney are reviewing. If approved by the Select Board, rules and ordinances for town owned or leased property in the Mt A area. In the past we had guidelines for use, no official rules, for summit and trails. As a group we discussed that these would apply on all trails in management area. Some things have changed as there are some things that may not necessarily apply. Would like interested parties to look through and see if they still apply to their land.
- Public Access Signs – workshop
 - Signs posted at all access points in hinterlands because they don't have trail boxes or brochures. Sign with basic rules that says land is managed for water quality, wildlife, and compatible recreation with list of general rules. Robin invited opportunity for feedback and input.
 - Notes: no unauthorized trail maintenance, trails cross private property.
 - Trail usage isn't posted at trailhead but directs people within the trail network
 - Parking lots going through this fall or early spring. Bennett Lot Road (connection between GW Checkerberry Trail and Norman Trail).
- Stewardship Update: Season crew starting next week – called conservation stewards. All paid for out of parks & rec. 1 returning and 2 new. First big project will be boardwalk improvements at Cedar and Notch Trail. Had unauthorized trails reopen – campout at 2nd hill and leaf blowing. Have funding from WD connecting parking lot to ring trail and improvements on water district property to make it user friendly and at road crossing at access road. Would like to get in WD budget for next year to do more on ring trail going east.
- Outreach/Education Update: big project is figuring out interpretive panels for new kiosks. Lodge opens next weekend. Few school groups scheduled first few weeks of June. Worked with CRES and spoke to them with pollinators. Has 500 common milkweed plants to distribute. Will be available at Garden Club's plant sale on June 3rd.
- Gary Steven's Report: Did 'imagine a day without water' event for York Village elementary school and was successful. Did Watershed tour with Robin, Ben, Pete, 2 people from water drinking program (funding source) – ATV issue at Middle Pond. Many washouts from heavy rain.
- Land Conservation Efforts: YLT will be doing ATV impact repairs along Great Marsh Trail. No activity with Zetterberg. Amelia asking if anyone knows about development of Knight Land 186 Ogunquit Road. GWRLT to hopefully acquire Bauneg Beg mountain in North Berwick (Thompson landowner).

Next meeting: July 26th at 9:30am at Mt Ag Summit

Bo Lambert doing mtn biking outreach