



OLD VALUES - NEW HORIZONS

WINDHAM FORESTRY COMMITTEE

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www.WindhamNH.gov/committees/forestry-committee

The Windham Forestry Committee was established in 2014 by the Board of Selectmen following an affirmative Town Meeting vote to create a town forest. This new town forest is comprised of approximately 200 acres of conservation land now known as the McIlvaine Town Forest. The function of the Committee is to encourage proper management of the forest resources through timber stand improvements including thinning, harvesting, reforestation, and other multiple use programs consistent with a Forest Stewardship Management Plan.

Members have been meeting monthly with a primary focus on the steps necessary to conduct our first timber thinning harvest in the forest. This activity removes mature and low quality trees allowing new tree and brush growth to improve the health and bio-diversity of the forest. Forestry projects also supply raw materials to New Hampshire businesses and support jobs in the local economy. Revenue generated to the town from the sale of harvested wood products will be set aside in a special Windham Forestry Fund and used for ongoing town forest maintenance activities including property maintenance, recreational trail creation, wildlife habitat improvements, and historical site protection.

Committee activities in 2015 have included:

- Town Forest parcel consolidation and naming. Now known as the McIlvaine Town Forest in honor of the family associated with a historic cellar hole in the forest.
- Updated Forestry Committee Rules of Procedure.
- Published forestry related articles in the newspapers and on the town Forestry Committee web site.
- Participated in Community Development Department Technical Review of the planned timber thinning harvest.
- Presented harvest plan to the Windham Planning Board during a public hearing.
- Held a public information session to help residents become better informed about the Forestry Committee and the upcoming forest thinning and harvest.
- Members attended sponsored field walks at Londonderry's Musquash Conservation Area and Pelham's Gumpas Pond Conservation Area for information on managing a working forest and conserving its wildlife.
- Attended Windham Historic District and Heritage Commission site walk at the Windham Depot which included a state archeologist to discuss historic site preservation and documentation.
- Obtained permission from the Board of Selectmen to use the former town landfill property on Marblehead Road as the town forest access point in place of the originally planned access at the end of the Osgood Street cul-de-sac.
- Worked with our licensed forester Michael Powers of Baystate Forestry to receive competitive bids on the harvesting of the identified trees.

- Selected high bidder D. H. Hardwick and Sons to conduct the first town forest bio-mass thinning harvest.
- Harvest activities began in November 2015 and are scheduled to conclude in January 2016.
- Members of the committee have visited the property several times during the ongoing work to monitor progress and ensure the quality of work.
- Committee members removed invasive species brush found improperly disposed of in the town forest.
- Marked access trails to the town forest with “No Motorized Vehicles” signs and sent letters to town forest neighbors informing them that OHRV (Off Highway Recreational Vehicle) usage is not allowed in the McIlvaine Town Forest.
- Submitted warrant article to the Board of Selectmen to fund ongoing forest management activities in 2016 if approved by town ballot.

In 2016, the Committee will be working on the creation of a recreational trail network in the McIlvaine Town Forest. We hope to involve interested community members and groups in that process. In addition we will be developing long range plans for maintenance, wildlife habitat improvements, and other forest resource stewardship projects. Our goal is to maintain a healthy forest that provides renewable resources, clean air, clean water, and outdoor recreational opportunities to the residents of Windham.

Respectfully submitted,

Wanda Rice, Windham Forestry Committee Chair