

Town of Warner
Mink Hills Recreation Study Committee
Meeting Minutes
December 14, 2021,
Sugar River Bank Meeting Room

Attendees: Nancy Martin, Christine Frost, David Minton, Gerry Courser (representing Chandler Reservation), Rebecca Courser, Peter Bates, Andy Duncan, Craig Tufts (Central NH Regional Planning Commission-CNHRPC), Sarah Allen - Recording

The November 15, 2021 minutes were approved unanimously.

The agenda was circulated.

The group began discussing how to tackle assessing and prioritizing roads and trails in the Minks.

David Minton asked how the MH priority conservation areas were ranked in the 2011 MH Conservation Plan. The plan was briefly reviewed and the methods for ranking were read aloud.

A summary was circulated of existing data and maps of the Minks – developed by Nancy and Sarah

Craig (CNHRPC) explained some of the map sources and constraints/advantages of the layers

- Base map – shows Mink Hills topography, hydrology, lot lines, conservation lands, etc
- The group discussed the map developed by NH Fish and Game (NHFG) identifying culverts in the Warner River watershed that are vulnerable to flooding and are barriers to movement of aquatic life. The map only covers northern half of Minks
- Historic – 184 historic points shown in the Mink Hills Conservation Plan, including cellar holes, stone culverts, neighborhoods, and schools.
- Trails – Class VI roads and Chandler Mink trails. If we choose to, we can add 400' buffer as recommended by NHFG

Discussed the value of developing concurrence maps of valuable resources to identify hot spots for protection.

Decided to start with one section of Cunningham Pond Rd. to work on using ranking criteria.

A mix of criteria and known features

- Class VI road
- Snowmobile trail
- ATVs not allowed
- Lower section is flooded by beaver pond
- At least 3 failed culverts
- Erosion – high in sloping sections, puddles on flats
- Potential to convert this Class VI road to a Class A trail is low due to numerous abutting landowners

Christine recommended the committee approach the MH review by defining the important site criteria for each major type of recreation – OHRV, biking, horseback, hiking, etc. Then use those criteria to develop rationale for ranking.

After more discussion, the specifics emerged as:

- Break the Minks into short sections of Class VI roads – e.g. Cunningham Pond could be broken into 3 sections – town line to Sisco, Sisco to Page Trace, Page Trace to Colby
- Layer on environmental and historic conditions to identify priorities for each sections
- Also identify high priority areas for maintenance and repair

Nancy, Andy and Christine volunteered to work on criteria for each type of recreation.

The group agreed to do a site walk Dec 20 from Judytown Rd to Bear Pond Connector to Loud Lane to discuss issues on the ground – at least Peter, Rebecca, Sarah, Nancy to attend.

Next meeting, Jan 19, 7PM, Sugar River Bank Community Room.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00.