



Town of Warner, New Hampshire
Mink Hills Recreation Committee
Wednesday, April 20, 2022

MINUTES -Draft
IN-PERSON MEETING
Warner Town Hall, 7:00 pm

Attending: Christine Frost, Craig Tufts, Sarah Allen, Rebecca Courser, David Minton, Peter Bates, Gerald Courser, Nancy Martin, and Arlon Chaffee.

March meeting minutes were amended to change “heck” to “check.” Rebecca motioned to approve amended March minutes; Peter seconded. March minutes approved.

Craig presented Mink Hills maps with numbered and colored road/trail sections along with the committee’s updated spreadsheet detailing minimal road/trail conditions that can support sustainable recreational activity. Dark Green describes maintained road(s) that can support most recreational activities (eg. Henniker Rd.) Blue describes a road/trail section that is wet but not steep; Orange color describes a road/trail that is wet and steep. (Steep is not broken down to describe degree of steepness.)

We considered revised map #2 and discussed “What does “wet” mean?” We can use a turquoise color to identify areas with drainage issues that might benefit from water bars.

Sarah and Rebecca described their 20 miles of walks in the Minks with Rich Cook with a camera and GIYA trail app. They described sections of Class VI roads for the purposes of the committee’s maps and spreadsheet. Road section conditions were categorized based on criteria developed by the Bradford Mink Hills road committee as poor, fair, good or excellent. Photos taken in April ‘22 can be compared to future photos to be taken in October 2022. It seems apparent to the group that steep grades are associated with water and drainage that degrade slopes. Bottoms of slopes have accumulated water. Puddles can be fixed but wetlands cannot be drained. Sarah has all the data collected on a disc. Rebecca has the photos. Rebecca and Sarah asked that they be allowed several more weeks to complete the walks needed to cover the rest of the Minks. They plan to walk Horne St., Collins and Page Rd. on Friday. The projected total walking distance is estimated at 30 miles. The committee thanked Rebecca and Sarah for their ambitious undertaking.

Once the walks are complete, Craig will translate their road section evaluations onto the map and spreadsheet. Nancy referenced the Trails for Wildlife and People publication

that promotes building better trails. Does the trail have value? Should it offer a destination or should it be a loop? Can it be part of a larger network? Where can enhancements be placed to make a trail? Priorities will determine, based on what needs to be protected. Seasonal uses also will change. Winter activities are likely to increase when the ground is less wet.

Craig will digitize the data before our next meeting.

Committee comments:

- Steep slopes might be improved with water bars.
- What trails can be updated to make them green on the map?
- Photos show steepness and boulders on fair and poor roads.
- Bradford criteria are all based on use by 4WDs. (see page 2 Rebecca's notes. How do we translate categories into "uses." Look at each section. "Is it walkable? Use the weak link approach. Is the section suitable for an activity?)
- Springfield has Gates and Bars. Nancy will research how and where. Bow has gates.
- Some places are too expensive to maintain over time. Section #2 beaver habitat. Expensive maintenance will eliminate sections 1, 3, and 6.
- Look at sections that are useable. Section #50 Daisy Hollow is private property.
- What's left? Are those areas viable and for what purpose? Feasibility = conditions, engineering, cost, ecological impact.

Next steps:

Look over sections and red spots to set aside or think of what to do with them. Decisions are easier with fewer sections to consider. Grant money is available for some repairs.

Suggested objective: Improve drainage to expand uses.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, May 18 @ 7:00. Town Hall Lower Meeting Room