

Town Forest Committee Mission Statement Review

Accomplishments:

The nine member Town Forest Committee continued to manage the LaPlatte Headwaters Town Forest (LHTF) and the original Hinesburg Town Forest (HTF). The most significant project for 2012 was the submission of the Hinesburg Town Forest management plan to the Selectboard and final adoption on September 24th, 2012. This was a multi-year effort that included many hours of committee time and public forums. The plan will continue to evolve but many thanks to all that participated and helped us put together a solid management plan. Other projects that we have been involved in for 2012 include:

- Identification of vernal pools, wetlands near selected trails in the Hinesburg Town Forest
- Erosion control work on the Eagles Trail in the HTF, including reconstruction of part of the Economou Road Extension from the top of the hill toward the Hayden Hill West trailhead
- Endorsement a Fellowship of the Wheel application for and acceptance of an \$18,000 grant to improve the surface and control erosion on three FOTW trails in the Hinesburg Town Forest.
- Salvage and clearing of July blow down near the Economou Road trailhead in the Hinesburg Town Forest
- Salvage and trail clearing of July blow down in the Laplatte Headwaters Town Forest.

The committee's work in 2013 will likely focus on the action items from the Laplatte Headwaters Town Forest Management Plan and the high priority action items (Section 5.1 and 5.2) from the Hinesburg Town Forest Management Plan. We will also be continuing to oversee the salvage operation in the LHTF and HTF.

Committee Work:

County Forester, Keith Thompson, has been a tremendous asset to our committee. He provides useful information and problem solving and moves projects along. He reliably works to help the committee find middle ground and at times reach consensus.

There are strong opinions expressed during meetings and at times this has led to more time required to come to a decision. It may be useful for the committee to spend a meeting with a professional that can help us with the fine art of constructive dialog.

Better attendance by committee members may also an area that could be improved.

We look forward to working with the new members on the committee and a very productive 2013.