Hinesburg Town Forest Planning – Possible strategies for achieving goals in the HTF
Town Forest Committee
April 2011

<mark>*Note: The following are ideas currently being considered and discussed by the Town Forest Committee. They are not yet finalized.*</mark>

Key Opportunities
- Is a great forest in good condition – ecological systems and (bike/hike) trail network
- Rich history (pre-TF and since formation)
- Part of large forest block – not yet fragmented
- Lots of people know about, use, and care about the HTF
- Have knowledge (historical knowledge, 2006 inventory etc)
- Have cooperators/partners with expertise and resources (eg FOTW, Trails Committee, Country Forester)
- Great model, learning opportunity, demonstration site
- Open to the public

Key Threats
- Increased use – potential overuse
- Potential incompatible uses - conflicts between uses and other values
- Lack of education
- Resistance to change
- Tension and lack of coordination/trust between user groups and with neighbors
- Potential changes in surrounding landscape (parcelization and fragmentation)
- Threats to forest health (invasives, climate change, mis-management etc.)
- Limited resources for enforcing rules, maintaining infrastructure, monitoring etc.
- Not legally conserved
- Unknowns and uncertain future

Key Strategies

Goal	Research	Collaborate	Regulate	Educate
Culture, History, and Education	Use 2006 LIA inventory to identify sites and structures	Hinesburg Historical Society to care for sites	No trails, signs, etc. near sites	Engage schools and other groups Post educational information at kiosks
Ecological Processes	Use 2006 LIA inventory to identify sensitive areas Create a database of monitoring information	Identify potential resources (volunteers, students, funds, etc.) that could assist with a monitoring program	Use Hunter Triad philosophy to determine areas of high, moderate and low use	Post educational information at kiosks
Maintain Parcel Size and Configuration			Develop protection through zoning Conservation easement through organizations (Land Trust, Fish and Wildlife, etc.)	Educate residents about values of town forest
Sustainable Forestry	Ask Chris Olson to come up with a multi year plan for sustainable forestry that fits with Hunter's Triad philosophy and uses info from the 2006 LIA document	Build a good working relationship with Chris and whomever succeeds him Designate a committee member or two to monitor the work being done in the HTF on a regular basis	Develop guidelines for practice Designate zones of intensitiy of use: high, moderate, low/reserve	Regular articles in *The Hinesburg Record* and education and updates at trailhead kiosks Use harvest sites to demonstrate sustainable and innovative forestry practices

Goal	Research	Collaborate	Regulate	Educate
Wildlife and Habitat	Work with groups to develop more inventory of species. Use info to inform management decisions. Create a place for users to post information about wildlife sitings and signs.	Work with PC and DRB to protect areas along Texas Hill and Hayden Hill Roads where wildlife are likely to be crossing.	Make wildlife habitate protection/enhancement for game and non-game a priority for all activities. Continue to maintain clearly marked trails to keep human traffic out of sensitive/undisturbed areas. Limit Hollis Parcel to dispersed foot traffic and close trails to protect sensitive and important habitat Restrict trails on ridges to single tracks; restrict further development on ridges, through mast stands, or along wetlands Consider temporary seasonal trail closings	Regular articles in *The Hinesburg Record* and education and updates at trailhead kiosks
Rural Neighborhood	Research numbers of users, gather data over time	Invovle neighbors in ongoing planning and management Ensure neighbors are represented on TF Committee	Increase police involvement in slowing speed of vehicles on the town access roads Restructure parking access to direct volumn of use and minimize impact on neighbors	Educate through user groups, signs,*The Hinesburg Record*, Rec paper Post signs asking visitors to respect neighborhood as entering/leaving

Goal	Research	Collaborate	Regulate	Educate
Recreation	Examine existing trail network , decide on goals, consider expansion, contraction, relocation; make a Master Trail Plan with multi- and singl- use trails with consideration for wildlife and sensitive sites.	Collaborate with the Trails Committee and FOTW

Ask all user groups to organize and nominate local contact

Permit horses, motorized vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, hunting, etc, if there is a local group with an acceptable plan, for coordination, and maintenance | No growth in the number of trails, but there could be reroutes and improvements, for example connecting Hayden Hill West and Economou Rd

Consider planning for capacity

Improve and define parking- Use parking and amenities or lack of them to help manage use (E.g. bigger lot at Hayden in some places and restricted parking in others) | Information in *The Hinesburg Record* and Rec paper

Coordinate with FOTW and other organized groups to reach users |
| **Water Quality** | | Continue to apply for grants to address problem areas; also use Town Forest Committee funds | Make erosion control priority during trail construction and maintenance

Control the use of motorized vehicles | |
| **Education and Community Uses** | Monitor recreational use | Encourage use of HTF as an educational/research site by local schools, universities, and educational organizations

Prioritize forestry projects that have commuity benefit (i.e. community firewood) | Suggest a limit on the size of groups as they move through the forest

Make a larger parking lot at one of the enterances with a school bus turn-around

Build a pavillion for the use of scouts and other large groups | Use signs, articles, tours to educate community about sustainable forestry practices, wildlife habitat, etc. |