

Meeting Notes
Burke Conservation Commission
Wednesday, July 16, 2025 at 6 pm
Burke Community Building

In attendance: Cathie Wheeler, Chris Manges, Diane Wells (Chair), Elise Lawson, Hank Butler (Treasurer), Brandon Mapes.

1. Approve May Minutes- Elise made a motion and all approved
2. The BCC discussed the 2nd annual butterfly atlas workshop that will be held on Aug 2nd from 10am to 1pm at the Burke Mountain Club. This event will be with the staff from Vermont Center for Ecostudies.
3. Forest Subcommittee will be meeting with game warden Cody Jackman on September 9th. Diane Wells proposed this being a combined meeting to see if the Forest Subcommittee and the BCC have any questions regarding activities that will be allowed within the town forests.
4. The coyote guest speaker that Hank has been looking at scheduling was cancelled.
5. The road and parking area at the Willey Woods community forest have been massively improved. Don Hale wrote thank you letters to the select board and road crew.
6. The trails have been named at Willey Woods. Signs will be going up including signs along VAST trail that say "Multi Use Trail."
7. Elise proposed that we get an email setup for the BCC and the Forest Subcommittee. The email could be placed on the kiosks at the town forests to help answer any questions people may have. Elise will check with the town to see if the town would like the groups to use an official town email for this purpose.
8. Treasurer's report from Hank. Only update: Bob Gondar will be paid for the materials he has provided for the kiosk.
9. The BCC reviewed the draft spending policy proposed by the forest subcommittee. The BCC approved the forest subcommittee spending up to \$1,500 dollars before they need to seek approval from the BCC.
10. The forest subcommittee also proposed \$1,500 per day for Mike Bickford to help with apple tree release and thinning an area for woodcock habitat. This work will last for 1-4 days. The BCC approved this. Work will be assessed at the end of each day by members of the BCC and Forest Subcommittee and Matt Langlais, County Forester..
11. Matt Langlais secured a Landscape Scale Restoration grant from the State for Willey Woods. A portion will pay for Northwoods Stewardship Center work crew to thin balsams in a three acre area of Willey Woods. This will help with balsam regeneration in the area and make it more passable for wildlife.

12. The forest subcommittee discussed the idea of a potential "story map" that could be used with a QR code placed at the Willey Woods kiosk for added information about the forest.

13. NRI update: Elise has done two days of field work on this project. She has been updating the maps in town based on field work and recent aerial photos. Elise has two more days of field work in August for the NRI work. After the field work, creating the updated maps is the next step.

14. Diane is representing the BCC and is working on the new town plan with the Planning Commission. When enacted, the plan will be in place for 8 years. There are only three people on the Planning Commission currently.

15. Chris mentioned the idea of trying to have a community event to help gain ideas for the new town plan.

16. Elise will send Diane a sample report, she suggested three ideas that the plan may consider: climate resiliency, a dark sky ordinance, and an awareness of crypto mining and its effects on our rural setting and natural resources.

17. Diane shared info regarding a Vermont Conservation Planning listening session that is happening at Burke Mountain on July 29th at 6:00pm.

Brandon Mapes-Burke Conservation Commission