Canterbury Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes – June 10, 2019 **DRAFT**

Members Present: Tom Osmer (Chair), Ken Stern (Vice Chair), Bob Steenson , Bob Fife, Linda Fife, Steve Seron, Kelly Short, Charlie Krautmann, Teresa Wyman.

Absent: Chris Blair

Guests: Gerald & Theresa Williams, Michael & Peggy Bezanson, Diane Clough, Chuck Sanborn, Dan & Mahrheahnnah Ostroth, Sylvie & Marc Russeau, Ruth Smith

The Chair opened the meeting at 7 PM.

**Item 1: Approval of May 13, 2019 meeting minutes.**

The minutes were approved. Linda Fife suggested that the work tasks not be underlined in the body of the minutes.

**Item 2: Public information meeting on Sawyers Ferry Conservation Area Management Plan.**

* Tom invited the guests. Members and guests introduced themselves.
* Kelly provided background on the CCC conservation commission role and land management activities. She then proceeded to provide specific information on the work we have done to understand the natural resources characteristics and possible future management activities on the Sawyers Ferry Conservation Area. She presented information from the natural resources inventory. The priority uses of the property identified in the plan are Wildlife Habitat, Outdoor Recreation, and Forestry.
* The meeting was opened to comments from the public. Those in attendance were all abutters or neighbors. They were all supportive of the Town taking a more active role in managing the property. They know the area well, enjoy it, and recreate there in different ways.
* There was widespread concern over inappropriate use of the area and dumping. Some discussion focused on the discontinued Sawyers Ferry Road. It appears the road was discontinued by town meeting in 1948. The Williams and Ostroths abut this old road bed. They indicate many people drive down the lane assuming it is a road and then turning around in their yards. It appears that this road has been discontinued which means it reverts back to the abutters. It was noted that if this is the situation, they are free to block it off with boulders, a gate or other obstacles.
* Two of the neighbors have grown sons who are active outdoors and may be interested in trail maintenance.
* There was concern over off road vehicle use. There are both people driving trucks and ATV use. It appeared that there was greater concern over trucks and dumping. Some of the ATV use is by abutters and does not negatively impact the property. The power line is the most actively used area. Some of the problematic activities may be occurring on the abutting property to the south west.
* There was support for having a good, well maintained recreational trail on the property.
* There was discussion of potential access sites to the property if there is forest management activity. There was a desire to not open up the discontinued Sawyers Ferry Road.
* Ruth Smith indicated the site is home to significant bird activity.
* Some positive signage was suggested. Tom indicated that we would be marking the boundaries, mostly with blazes and paint but also with some tags indicating it is a town conservation area.
* Blocking off the power line will require cooperation from Eversource.
* There are some fire pits and partying going on. The specific locations were not identified.
* It was recommended that the neighbors call the police directly when there is troublesome activity on the property. Even if there is no immediate response, the issue is logged into their records. Some of their concerns may be more appropriately addressed to the Selectmen.

**Item 3: Updates** Tom indicated that he is receiving intent to cut forms now.

**Item 4: Big Meadow** Tom reported that he had been contacted by Megan Scanlon. She was directed to Tom by the Selectmen relative to their possible acquisition of the town owned land. Tom will write to the selectmen, with some drafting guidance from Bob Steenson, relative to the process and our recommendation.

**Item 5: Conservation Lands Map.** The conservation lands map has been updated by the Regional Planning Commission. Tom and Ken will be proofreading it.

**Item 6: Valerie Fife.** Bob Fife reported that, Valerie Fife, is interested in selling her property in the big meadow to the town. It was suggested that she write a letter to the CCC indicating her intent and expectations.

**Item 7: Improvements to RSFCA.**

Ken reported that he has not been out to the site with a contractor yet to evaluate boulder removal.

Charlie asked about applying for the wetlands permit to cross the poorly drained area near the causeway. It was suggested that he apply for the permit so we have it in hand when we are ready to do the work. The permit will be good for several years.

**Item 6: Other Business -** None

Meeting adjourned, 9 PM

Respectfully submitted, Ken Stern

**Task list**

Tom will finalize the Sawyers Ferry Management Plan

Tom will write to the Selectmen about the Big Meadow Lot

Ken and Tom will proof read the updated conservation lands map.

Ken will talk with John Carr about the scope of work for removal and potential disposal of rocks at RSFCA.

Charlie agreed to prepare a minimum impact wetlands application for crossing the soft area at RSFCA.

Chris and Kelly will continue working on getting minutes and documents on the Town web site.