

“Stewarding Our Lands” LSS Working Group

5/15/23 meeting summary

In attendance: Ann Welsh (Zoom), Gale Carey, Sara Callaghan, Mike Drooker (Zoom)

- 1) We reviewed the first draft of the **Thompson Forest** Questionnaire Findings. Of note were:
 - a. 50% of respondents learned of the property from the town web site.
 - b. One comment prompted the questions: Should horseback riding be allowed on the trails? Is bicycle riding destructive to trails?
 - c. Two other comments addressed the need to clarify trail signage and distances.
 - d. We drafted 3 recommendations to add to the Findings.
- 2) We reviewed the second draft of **Jackson Landing** Questionnaire Findings. Of note were:
 - a. How best to eradicate poison ivy on the trail alongside the playground?
 - b. How best to improve dog signage?
- 3) Swimming is an allowed activity at **Packers Falls Park**, according to signage at the park’s parking area, and the description on the town web site. This should be added to “Recreational Opportunities” in the Property Summary on the Town web site.
- 4) We introduced Sara to the most recent version of the Property Inventory Spreadsheet (from 2021!) and discussed how it might be helpful to her and future Land Stewardship Coordinators. Suggestions for changes include:
 - a. Under “Parking”, list # of parking spaces at each property
 - b. Add the following columns: “Kiosk”, “Amenities” (picnic tables, boat launches, bathrooms, handicapped parking, pedestrian access from downtown, trash can), “Historic Resources”, “Natural Attributes (beaver dams), “Infrastructure” (gates, benches, boardwalks, picnic tables) and populate them.
- 5) We started a “Global Gleans” list of things we are learning from the Questionnaires that apply to many/most properties, and should be discussed at future LSC meetings.

Action Items:

1. Sara will share 2 comments about need for better trail signage with John Natchilly (steward of Thompson Forest) and ask that he walk property and let her know what improvements should be made and where.
2. Gale will update Recommendations on the **Thompson Forest** and **Jackson Landing** Questionnaire Findings.
3. Ann will go through kiosk maps for each property and list those with trail mileage vs. those without.
4. Ann will put on the next LSC meeting agenda the need to discuss best way to eradicate poison ivy from Jackson Landing near playground – suggestions from DPW?
5. Sara will look at dog signage at Jackson Landing and how it can be improved, for our next meeting.
6. Sara will amend information on town web site about Packers Falls Park, to include swimming as a recreational activity, and correct the directions to the property (currently directions are to Milne Sanctuary). Sara will check with Todd re: language needed.
7. Ann will create new columns for the Property Inventory spreadsheet, and we will populate with appropriate information:
 - a. Mike: Wagon Hill, Doe Farm, Jackson Landing, Stolworthy

- b. Ann: Longmarsh, Thompson Forest, Weeks, The Meadows
- c. Gale: ORF/SHB, Milne/Mill Pond/Town Landing, Packers Falls/Wiswall, Stevens Woods

“Global Gleans” from our Questionnaires:

1. Horseback riding vs. bike riding on Durham trails – consequences?
2. Clarify hunting regulations on town properties, especially on Longmarsh and ORF/SHB.
3. Publish a list of town properties and priority order for plowing parking lots in the winter. Put this in *Friday Updates* each winter?
4. Include trail lengths on all kiosk maps, so that town knows total mileage on each property and hikers know trail lengths.
5. Increase trail steward from 1 to 2 per property.

Next meeting:

June 12, 2023, Monday, 10 AM in Town Hall first Floor Conference Room