



TOWN OF EXETER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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www.exeternh.gov

PUBLIC NOTICE EXETER CONSERVATION COMMISSION Monthly Meeting

The Exeter Conservation Commission will meet in the Nowak Room, Exeter Town Offices at 10 Front Street, Exeter on **Tuesday, January 9th, 2024 at 7:00 P.M.**

Call to Order:

1. Introduction of Members Present
2. Public Comment

Action Items:

1. Connect to Protect Grant/Support Opportunity
2. Request for Letter of Support from TPL for the Community Forest grant application
3. Committee Reports
 - a. Property Management
 - b. Trails
 - c. Outreach Events
 - i. February Full Moon Snowshoe (2/24 is full moon, event date TBD)
 - ii. [Heard Bird Contest Ongoing](#)
 - d. Other Committee Reports (River Study, Sustainability, Energy, Tree, CC Roundtable)
4. Approval of Minutes: 12/12/23 Meeting
5. Correspondence

Other Business

6. Next Meeting: Date Scheduled 2/13/24, Submission Deadline 2/2/24

Andrew Koff

Exeter Conservation Commission

Posted January 5th, 2024 Exeter Town Website www.exeternh.gov and Town Office kiosk.

ZOOM Public Access Information:

Virtual Meetings can be watched on Ch 22 or Ch 98 and YouTube.

To access the meeting, click this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84098227220>

To access the meeting via telephone, call: +1 646 558 8656 and enter the Webinar ID: 840 9822 7220

Please join the meeting with your full name if you want to speak.

Use the "Raise Hand" button to alert the chair you wish to speak. On the phone, press *9.

More instructions for how to access the meeting can be found here:

<https://www.exeternh.gov/townmanager/virtual-town-meetings>

Contact us at extvg@exeternh.gov or 603-418-6425 with any technical issues.



Kristen Murphy <kmurphy@exeternh.gov>

Connect to Protect - application opportunity

1 message

Lisa Wise <lisa.wise@unh.edu>

Tue, Dec 19, 2023 at 7:25 AM

To: Emma Tutein <Emma.Tutein@unh.edu>, "Vaccaro, Lynn" <Lynn.E.Vaccaro@wildlife.nh.gov>

Cc: Abigail Lyon <Abigail.Lyon@unh.edu>, "psteckler@neconservation.com" <psteckler@neconservation.com>

Dear Conservation Champions,

Over the past two years, the **Connect to Protect** team has been working to support municipalities and land trusts to use the 2021

NH Coastal Watershed Conservation Plan. We are interested in identifying a new set of communities or organizations interested in collaborating to advance conservation planning and land protection in their community.

Are you interested in collaborating? Read more below and [Apply Here](#).

Why: Land conservation is one of the most impactful ways to protect wildlife and water quality, promote climate resilience, and preserve our agricultural heritage. The Connect to Protect team can help your group access, interpret, and integrate spatial data into conservation planning and align efforts with other communities and funders.

What: Connect to Protect assistance typically involves 2 – 4 meetings to collaborate on a discrete task, such as:

- Developing a presentation and discussion prompts for a key group
- Developing a new planning tool (e.g., parcel evaluation checklist)
- Supporting inclusion of the Coastal Plan into planning efforts (e.g., master plan/comprehensive plan, open space plan)
- Refining a map to assist with planning or a grant application
- Updating layers on a community GIS portal
- Updating conservation lands GIS info on GRANIT
- Connecting you with other resources

Who: Municipal staff and boards (e.g., conservation commissions, open space committees, master planning teams), land trusts or other organizations involved in promoting land conservation, along with two members of the Connect to Protect team (Lisa Wise, Emma Tutein, Abigail Lyon, Lynn Vaccaro, with GIS assistance from Pete Steckler). For reference, here is a

[map](#) of the geographic focus area of the *NH Coastal Watershed Conservation Plan*.

When: During a 3 – 4 month window within 2024. Exact timing is flexible.

How to apply: Confirm interest of others in your community or organization and clarify goals and tasks that could benefit your current work. A word version of the application form is also attached so you can get a sense of the questions before you respond to the online form. We have two rounds of application deadlines for 2024 assistance -

First round: applications are due Friday, February 3. Second round: applications are due Friday, May 31.
We will confirm next steps within one month of submitting the application. Please note, we may not be able to accommodate all interested groups immediately.

Learn more: Visit the [Connect to Protect website](#), watch this [introductory video](#) about the NH Coastal Watershed Conservation Plan or review this [webinar recording](#) explaining a few of the technical assistance projects conducted in 2023.

Feel free to reach out with any questions! We're happy to discuss project ideas to inform your application if helpful.

Lisa Wise, NH Sea Grant and UNH Cooperative Extension,
Lisa.Wise@unh.edu

Emma Tutein, UNH Cooperative Extension,
Emma.Tutein@unh.edu

Lynn Vaccaro, Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve,
Lynn.E.Vaccaro@wildlife.nh.gov

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Lisa Wise

Climate Adaptation Program Manager

NH Sea Grant | UNH Extension

Lisa.Wise@unh.edu | (603) 696-4078

Pronouns: she/her/hers



2024 Connect to Protect Assistance Application_word version.docx
23K



Kristen Murphy <kmurphy@exeternh.gov>

RE: [External] Re: Newfields-Exeter CF- Letter of Support

1 message

Anne Read <Anne.Read@tpl.org>

Wed, Jan 3, 2024 at 1:56 PM

To: Andrew Koff <drewkoff@gmail.com>, Lynnette Batt <lynnette.batt@tpl.org>

Cc: Kristen Murphy <kmurphy@exeternh.gov>

Hi Drew,

Thank you so much for your Letter of Support for the LWCF grant. This endorsement will strengthen our application significantly, and provide a helpful prospective on how a Community Forest Project could expand public recreation opportunities in the area.

We are now starting the process of applying for US Forest Service Community Forest and Open Space Program (CFP) funding, and are hoping to provide similar letters of support for this opportunity. **Would you be willing to provide that as well?** I'm attaching a LOS template, with a section that you can fill out on "why this project is important to our organization". This application is due on January 12, so if you could complete this by the beginning of next week (1/8) that would be so appreciated.

Thank you so much for your continued support of this project.

Best,

Anne

Anne Read (she/her)

Maine Land Protection Project Manager



The Trust for Public Land
30 Danforth Street, Suite 106

Portland, ME 04101

P: 207.772.7424 ext. 3 | C: 207.468.1425

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[add letterhead/ address/ logo]

January____, 2024

New Hampshire Division of Forests and Lands

172 Pembroke Rd
Concord, NH 03301
P.O. Box 1856

Re: Support for Newfields-Exeter Community Forest Project

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of _____, I am writing to express our support for the Newfields-Exeter Community Forest Project, and application to the US Forest Service Community Forest and Open Space Program (CFP). The project's proximity to town, large network of well-maintained and popular multi-use trails, expansion of two adjacent town forests, and future public access improvements will provide substantial recreation and local community engagement opportunities.

The 101-acre property in Newfields, proposed for CFP funding, would increase the size of the existing Newfields town forest and trail network by 250%, connect the town forest to the regional 40-mile Fort Rock trail network, and permanently conserve 20% (8 miles) of that trail network.

Together with the 47-acre property in Exeter, the larger 148-acre Newfields-Exeter Community Forest project would expand existing town forest land in Newfields and Exeter by 33%, creating a nearly 600-acre block of town forest lands, and protect 30% (12 miles) of the Fort Rock trail network. The vision is for the two properties to be managed in collaboration between the two towns with input from the local community through a joint Community Forest process.

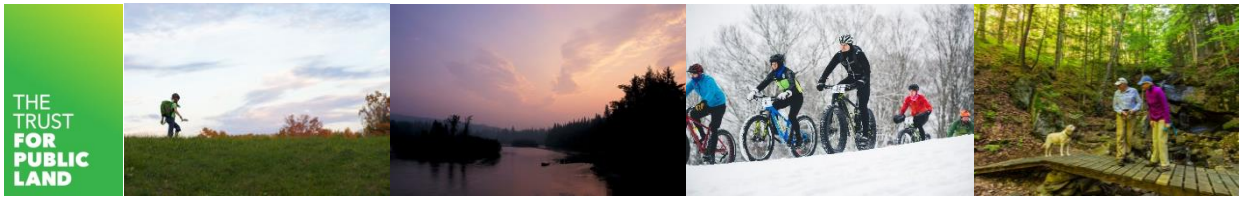
This project is important to us/our organization because_____

The towns are being asked to pass significant bonds/ loans to cover approximately 50% of the cost of the project. State and federal funding is critical to covering the remaining half, and full grant awards are needed to succeed. We strongly encourage a full funding award for this project.

Thank you for your consideration of funding for this important project.

Sincerely,

Title



THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND'S COMMUNITY FOREST PROGRAM

Helping Communities Create a Shared Resource

The Trust for Public Land's Community Forest program helps rural communities acquire, create, and fully activate Community Forests to protect local natural resources, enhance community economic development, build social capital, and promote healthy communities.

BACKGROUND

Communally owned forests are a long standing tradition in New England. For centuries, town forests have been shared resources; providing timber, firewood, and other benefits to residents. Today's Community Forest Model takes the tradition of the New England town forest and updates it to meet the most pressing issues facing our communities.

In 2006, The Trust for Public Land helped to found the Community Forest Collaborative. This group conducted foundational research and created the modern day Community Forest Model. Since then, The Trust for Public Land has been a national leader in the Community Forest movement; working to establish new Community Forest funding sources, including the U.S. Forest Service Community Forest Program, and providing technical assistance to towns interested in creating Community Forests. In Northern New England alone, we have helped 23 communities acquire and create their own Community Forests, totaling over 30,000 acres.

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY FOREST?

Though the term community forest is used widely, only a subset of properties meet the complete definition. The Community Forest Model has four key components:

1. Community Forests are locally owned and managed. The land is owned by town or another local entity (e.g. land trust) on behalf of the community.
2. Use and management of the land is driven by the community. The planning and management structure ensures community participation in and responsibility for management decisions.
3. The community realizes benefits from the land. The community has secure access to both monetary and nonmonetary benefits that can support and reinforce community priorities.
4. The land is permanently protected. The conservation values of the forest are protected forever through a conservation easement or other tool.

HOW DO TOWNS ACQUIRE AND CREATE COMMUNITY FORESTS?

The Trust for Public Land provides assistance to communities in every step of the process to ensure that the resulting Community Forest reflects local values and fulfills residents' vision for the future. As we engage people in creating their community forests, we seek out those who may face barriers to participation, to ensure that our work serves the whole community. This act of co-creation is in itself transformational as it empowers and builds community. Though the process is facilitated by Trust for Public Land, the community plays a key leadership role throughout the process.

1. **Property Prioritization:** The community identifies their core values and goals in creating a Community Forest. Trust for Public Land then helps to identify which local property or properties would best meet these goals.
2. **Secure Property:** Trust for Public Land negotiates with willing landowners to secure a binding agreement to purchase one of the identified properties.
3. **Secure Funding:** Trust for Public Land leads on securing public and private funding to acquire and activate the Community Forest.
4. **Community Planning:** The community planning process aims to involve all voices in the community to guide how the property should be used to best meet the community's needs and priorities. This step results in a comprehensive land management plan. The planning process also helps to establish the long term governance structure, to ensure that the management is implemented and the property is appropriately stewarded over the long term.
5. **Acquire Land:** Land is purchased, permanently protected and conveyed into local ownership.
6. **Activate:** The Community Forest is activated as a true, shared community asset through creation of trails, events, and other activities.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Community Forests help to reconnect communities to the forests that define and sustain them. Rural communities face a time of historic transition, containing both real and immediate challenges and significant opportunities. The Trust for Public Land's Community Forest program aims to address the most pressing challenges in rural communities including economic stress, personal and community health, changing demographics, and changing land use.

Community Forests can help create economic benefit for communities through income from forest management or support of tourism and recreation economies, they can address systemic health issues by creating close-to-home, accessible places for residents to get outside, and they can strengthen community by connecting residents to the land and to each other.

Community Forest Resources

Vermont Town Forests, many resources from Vermont Urban & Community Forestry, including the recent Recreation Planning Initiative
<https://vtcommunityforestry.org/places/town-forests>

Acquiring and Managing a Community-Owned Forest: A Manual for Communities

Communities Committee of the Seventh American Forest Congress.

Available online at [www.communitiescommittee.org/pdfs/Community-Owned Forests Manual.pdf](http://www.communitiescommittee.org/pdfs/Community-Owned_Forests_Manual.pdf)

The Vermont Town Forest Stewardship Guide: A Community Users' Manual for Town Forests

Jad Daley, Editor

Town Forest Project of the Northern Forest Alliance.

Available online at www.communitiescommittee.org/pdfs/TownForestStewardshipGuide.pdf

Community Forests: A Community Investment Strategy

Martha W. Lyman

The Community Forest Collaborative, 2007.

Available online at <http://www.tpl.org/community-forests-community-investment-strategy>

And http://www.northernforest.org/research_and_reports.html

Community Forests: Needs & Resources for Creating & Managing Community Forests

Martha W. Lyman, Julie R. Evans and Misha Mytar.

The Community Forest Collaborative, 2011

Available online at <http://www.tpl.org/needs-resources-creating-managing-community-forests-0>

http://www.northernforest.org/research_and_reports.html

Economic Impacts of the 13 Mile Woods Community Forest

Elizabeth Reaves and Marta Ceroni

The Community Forest Collaborative, 2013

Available online at <https://www.tpl.org/sites/default/files/economic-impacts-nh-forest.pdf> or

http://www.northernforest.org/research_and_reports.html

The Landscape of Community: A History of Communal Forests in New England

Robert McCullough

University Press of New England, Hanover, NH, 1995.

The Status of Community-Based Forestry in the United States

Nils Christoffersen, Don Harker, Martha W. Lyman and Barbara Wycoff

U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities. 2008.

Available online at <http://www.usendowment.org/cbfhome.html> or

http://www.northernforest.org/research_and_reports.html

Example Community Forest Management Plans

Huntington Community Forest: <https://forest.huntingtonvt.org/plan/>

Catamount Community Forest: At <https://www.town.williston.vt.us/>, go to Natural Resources tab, then Protected Open Space tab, to link to Management Plan

Barre Town Community Forest:

[http://www.barretown.org/Budget And Plans/Town Forest Plan/Final BarreTownForest Management Plan Full.pdf](http://www.barretown.org/Budget_And_Plans/Town_Forest_Plan/Final_BarreTownForest_Management_Plan_Full.pdf)



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Contact Information

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Senior Project Manager
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3 Shipman Pl
Montpelier, VT 05602
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Kate.wanner@tpl.org

Exeter Conservation Commission
December 12, 2023
Novak Room
10 Front Street
7:00 PM
Draft Minutes

Call to Order

1. Introduction of Members Present (by Roll Call)

Present at tonight’s meeting were by roll call, Chair Andrew Koff, Vice-Chair Trevor Mattera, Dave Short, Connor Madison, Kyle Welch, Keith Whitehouse, and Alternate Michelle Crepeau.

Staff Present: Kristen Murphy, Conservation and Sustainability Planner

Mr. Koff called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, introduced the members and activated all of the alternates.

2. Public Comment

There was no one from the public present outside of agenda items.

Action Items

1. Commemorative Bench – Dedication and Selection Criteria

Mr. Short noted that a commemorative bench was discussed when Carlos Guindon passed away. Mr. Short noted that one of Mr. Guindon’s interests was birding at Rayne’s Farm and Mr. Short recommended something in that location. Mr. Short noted the purchase of materials to build a Leopold bench were approved and a friend and woodworker assembled them. The Commission discussed honoring Commission members by dedicating one large marker, and for each of those who have served for ten years with a placard with their name on it attached to the backs of the benches. The large marker would have the Aldo Leopold quote on it:

“When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.”

Mr. Short recommended sending a thank you to Jordan for assembling the benches. Mr. Koff recommended having a formal dedication on site.

MOTION: Mr. Short motioned to approve the plan presented. Mr. Mattera seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.

45 2. Underwater Camera – purchase request

46 Ms. Murphy noted that the proposal is to attach an underwater camera to a paver brick downstream
47 from the String Bridge where the Alewife pool and rest before traveling upstream. She checked with
48 Fish and Game and no permit would be required. She noted there was no estimate for connecting to
49 the library internet. There could be an interpretive sign in the children’s room or a visual display in the
50 spring. The livestream would be shared on the website.

51
52 Mr. Mattera asked about cleaning the camera. Mr. Short asked the length of the migration and Ms.
53 Murphy indicated a maximum of two months. Mr. Mattera noted the camera could be wiped down
54 occasionally or a camera with wiper could be purchased.

55
56 MOTION: Mr. Short motioned to authorize up to \$800 for the purchase of an underwater camera. Mr.
57 Welch seconded the motion. A motion was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.

58
59 3. Town Report Topics/Photo Request

60
61 Ms. Murphy noted that the Commission’s submission to the Town Report was due in January and
62 welcomed any feedback or photos on what to include. Mr. Koff recommended photos of the Leopold
63 benches and of Rayne’s Barn which are more core to what the Commission has been doing. Ms.
64 Crepeau offered to assist with writing the report.

65
66 4. Letter of Support from TPL for LWCF grant application – Rugg Property

67
68 Ms. Murphy noted that a letter of support for the Newfield’s grant for the Rugg Property was requested.
69 Ms. Crepeau expressed concerns that the letter stated it would not apply to the Exeter portion Mr. Koff
70 noted that Exeter did not receive the drinking water grant this year but would apply again next year.
71 Mr. Short questioned why the funds would not be applied proportionally in the partnership. Mr. Koff
72 noted the Newfields side would have access and parking, but he was not sure Exeter would be eligible
73 on its own. Ms. Crepeau requested clarification. Ms. Murphy noted Parks & Recreation are also
74 applying for LWCF grants. Mr. Koff noted he did not see Exeter applying separately. Mr. Mattera noted
75 that he would hope Newfields would support Exeter if they were applying. He noted Exeter was not
76 going to start its own project. Ms. Crepeau expressed concerns that there was no other funding for
77 Exeter. Mr. Koff noted the support letter was due tomorrow and Mr. Short agreed the Commission
78 could support without holding up the application and discuss that after. Mr. Koff noted TPL were
79 meeting with the Select Board next week.

80
81 MOTION: Mr. Short motioned to authorize Mr. Koff to sign the letter of support to pursue the grant.
82 Mr. Welch seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.

83
84 5. Committee Reports

85
86 a. Property Management

87

88 Ms. Murphy reported the trail sign was damaged at Brickyard and Parks and Recreation put it back
89 out.

90 b. Trails

91
92 Ms. Murphy reported the work on the powerline was ongoing and should go through the end of
93 January. Mr. Koff noted the trail is still closed.

94
95 Ms. Murphy reported leaf blowing activity in the town forest, which is prohibited. She noted
96 concerns with trail erosion and noise and indicated the land use policy is on the website and
97 Conservation manages that property and it is up to them to decide. Mr. Short noted that he
98 believed whoever did it knew it was prohibited and Toby has attempted to make people aware. Ms.
99 Murphy noted she would provide more background information on why it is prohibited.

100
101 c. Outreach Events

102
103 Mr. Koff would like to schedule the Full Moon Snow Shoe event for February.

104
105 Mr. Koff recommended scheduling a planning meeting in January for the next Alewife Festival.

106
107 Ms. Murphy noted Mr. Welch is working on the birding event. Mr. Welch indicated the events could
108 be seasonal, in winter starting on January 1st and running through March 21st and start again in April.
109 People can post their results on the Commission's Facebook page. Ms. Murphy recommended
110 having some prizes and will post it after the holidays.

111
112 d. Other Committee Reports (River Study, Sustainability, Energy/CPAC, Tree, CC Roundtable)

113
114 Mr. Koff reported there was a presentation at the Word Barn last Wednesday with Newfields
115 concerning the proposed community forest which would be jointly managed. He noted they
116 discussed the benefits to the town in conserving the property. Mr. Short agreed they made good
117 arguments, not just for mountain biking.

118
119 Ms. Murphy noted there was a donation of 8-10 spruce seedlings from Mr. Short's mother-in-law.
120 He planted them near the Trestle parking lot on the slope which hasn't had anything growing since
121 the logging operation.

122
123 Ms. Murphy noted that Mr. Welch offered to help do the LCIP report.

124
125 Mr. Koff reported that there was a meeting regarding the donation of the 23 Water Street property
126 and Seacoast online wrote an article. There was a public hearing and will be another next week. A
127 design committee will be formed. Mr. Whitehouse is donating some time to the project. Ms.
128 Murphy noted the Select Board will vote to accept the donation at their December 18th meeting. Mr.
129 Koff noted that Mr. Champion expressed his support but offered concerns about long term
130 maintenance costs with Conservation and Parks & Recreation already having a long list of property to
131 maintain like Raynes, which has not been discussed yet.

132 Ms. Murphy reported there will be a presentation tomorrow (Wednesday 12/13) from 6:30 to 7:30 at
133 Town Hall concerning the downtown pedestrian and parking analysis and an open house from 7:30 to
134 8:30.

135
136 Ms. Murphy reported there will be a Board Commission Celebration held across the street on
137 Thursday 12/14 from 4 PM to 6:30 PM and the Select Board and Town Administration invite the
138 Commission to attend and thank you for your work throughout the year. She noted that Ms.
139 Belanger sent her holiday wishes.

140
141 6. Approval of Minutes

- 142
143 • November 10, 2023 Meeting

144
145 Ms. Crepeau recommended an edit to line 102.

146
147 MOTION: Mr. Koff motioned to approve the November 10, 2023 Minutes, as amended. Mr. Short
148 seconded the motion. A vote was taken: Mr. Mattera and Mr. Madison abstained, the motion
149 passed 5-0-2.

150
151 7. Correspondence

152
153 Ms. Murphy reported two letters of support were received regarding the Rugg property from Ray
154 Southworth who included pictures of black racer and spotted turtle he saw in the area. Nancy Belanger
155 received one from Janet Stevens.

156
157 Mr. Koff noted he received email correspondence regarding the Rugg property also.

158
159 8. Next Meeting; Date Scheduled 1/9/24, Submission Deadline 12/29/23

160
161 6. Adjournment

162
163 MOTION: Mr. Koff moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 PM seconded by Mr. Short. A vote was
164 taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

165
166 Respectfully submitted,

167
168 Daniel Hoijer, Recording Secretary
169 Via Exeter TV