

SELECTBOARD MEETING
Approved Minutes

March 21, 2016

7pm Calais Town Office

Attending: Denise Wheeler, John Brabant, Scott Bassage, Rose Pelchuck, Drew Lamb, Eric Sorenson and Matt Peters.

Actions:

This was a continued meeting from the March 14, 2016 Selectboard meeting. Denise Wheeler again expressed appreciation to Matt Peters, Consulting Ecologist and Botanist, for the presentation last month on Phase 1 of the Calais Natural Resources Inventory. Denise noted we are hoping the presentation can be given again possibly in Maple Corner and/or the East Calais Recreation Center.

The Conservation Commission has developed a Preliminary Proposal for Phase 2 of the Calais Natural Resource Inventory that includes three parts as follows:

- 1) Continuation of the Significant Natural Features Inventory
- 2) Minor revisions of the wetlands mapping based on newly available imagery, and
- 3) Contiguous forests, connecting habitat and wildlife habitat assessment

The initial cost projection for Phase 2 was \$7,500.00 that was approved on Town Meeting Day. The current cost projection for Phase 2 is \$10,500.00, therefore the Selectboard will have to come up with the additional \$3,000.00 if it is determined to cover all in Matt Peters detailed description of the Phase 2 Natural Resources Inventory Proposal.

The Conservation Commission provided a NRI Wish List having reviewed all of the stated goals in the Town Plan relating to wildlife habitat, wetlands, natural communities, deer wintering habitat to name a few. Not all of the items on the Wish List are included in the proposed Phase 2 inventory. Matt Peters noted the main focus is the big forests, how they connect and to assess the wildlife corridors. After a brief clean up on the wetlands component, Matt will submit the data to the State.

Scott Bassage made a motion to send the wetlands mapping data from the Natural Resources Inventory done by Matt Peters to the State Agency of Natural Resources and the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 4-0. John Brabant would like the town to request the ANR Wetlands Map of Calais be updated to include this new work from Matt Peters. Matt will check with ANR when he hands off the data.

Other components of Phase 2 were discussed. Habitat blocks, seen on the Fish & Wildlife Department maps, will be further identified in this inventory. Eric Sorenson noted it is most important to identify them, we don't need to ramble around in there, it's most important that they exist. Matt Peters will "ground troop" some Conservation Commission members to assist. John Brabant suggested coming up with a list of higher priority land areas to conserve based on natural resources. Matt Peters said he could do that without looking at landowner boundaries.

Denise Wheeler spoke about landowner concerns heard at Town Meeting regarding invading privacy. Matt Peters again stated he will not go on any property without landowner permission. Eric Sorenson stated in the 25 plus years he has lived in Calais, he has heard about and known about the need for a Natural Resources Inventory but it has never happened until now. Eric went on to say that Matt Peters is uniquely qualified to do this work and the town should not be short-sighted in approving the funds to complete the work. The Selectboard was in agreement. John Brabant made a motion to fund Phase 2 of the Natural Resources Inventory for \$10,500.00 and the Selectboard will pursue funding sources, grants, etc. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 4-0.

Scott Bassage made a motion to adjourn at 8:00pm. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Rose Pelchuck, Selectboard Member