

Town of Northfield, Vermont
Town Forest Stewardship Committee
Minutes of August 19, 2025

- I. **ROLL CALL:** Ginny Kunkel, Andrew Padilla, Bill Dell’Isola, Jeremy Whalen, Nelson Hoffman, Russ Barrett
- II. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SCHEDULED):** None
- III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** July 15th, 2025: Motion by Andrew, 2nd by Bill passed 3-0-2
- IV. **Agenda updates or additions:** None
- V. **UPDATES AND DISCUSSION**
 - a. **Shaw Center update:** Disc golf course plan should be available by the end of the month. Rotary asked Andrew to close the Shaw Center during the hours of the parade due to increased traffic and congestion. Andrew will post that Shaw will be open to Pedestrian and bike traffic only on the morning of the parade. The Day of Service is November 8th. TFSC will request projects from Norwich, including work at Hawk Watch and relocating the Paine Mountain trail mileage markers to the correct location. PMT originally started at the wood line in Cheney field, and after the VOREC grant and map project, it now starts at Shaw. The mileage markers were a Boy Scout project from years ago; the TFSC would like to maintain the markers. **Kingston Rd is in poor condition and requires grading, ditching, and crown work. There is a lot of attention to access to the town forest at multiple locations in town. The town manager said he would get the road crew to look at it a months ago, and nothing has happened to date. Maintaining the current access points by the town is essential for access to the Town Forest.** Andrew offered to mow the trail across the top of Cheney over to PMT.
 - b. **VYCC work update:** The VYCC has finished work in the Town Forest. They rerouted a trail near Butternut Junction and built an overlook vista with benches at the Beaver Pond. They also cleared blowdowns on Garvey Hill. Then they spent another week on Garvey doing trail work, including trail clearing and water bar installation, to name a few tasks. The TFSC thanks the Select Board for the approval of ARPA funds to make this important work possible.

- c. **Cheney Field parking update from the Select Board meeting:** Jeremy felt that the topic is largely out of the hands of the TFSC. Ginny requested we try to brainstorm solutions for better access to Cheney Field. Jeremy suggested a monthly “Cheney Field Day” where the town, NCC, and TFSC would host shuttles into Cheney on a predetermined day throughout the summer and potentially around larger town events. The TFSC would also investigate applying for an AARP Community Grant to provide shade tents, chairs, and water. Bill noted he has seen these types of planned access be successful in other towns and added that permanent parking adds a large stewardship burden to towns. Andrew also talked about an “Easy up trail” he has worked on with a trail builder. This trail would start at the Shaw Center and wind its way up the anchor. The trail would meander near Cheney, providing access to those who can't handle the steep terrain. The easy up trail also maintains slopes that are steeper than what is currently seen from the Shaw Center. Ginny asked if we could draft another motion to state the TFSC position. The motion is as follows:

- i. ***The TFSC is in favor of permanent parking access to the Northfield Town Forest in areas other than Cheney Field. The TFSC is in favor of temporary vehicular access during special events and designated times to Cheney Field. Motion passed 6-0***

- d. **Town Forest plan:** Tabled for next meeting

- e. **Community trail workday:** Tabled for next meeting

VI. Public Participation (Unscheduled): None

- VII. Other Business:** Jeremy and Andrew met earlier with Deb Zuaro and Colin Bright to discuss a second round of Town Forest signage. The VOREC committee had largely ended; however, there are some ARPA funds that were obligated to finish the signage project. The small working group will complete the remaining priorities for the VOREC signage. Jeremy asked Russ if there is work at Hawk Watch that needs to be completed. Russ said yes, more invasive control work is needed. Jeremy asks Russ to email Deb and Colin more details.

VIII. Adjourn 7:40