

### **C. Update on Hidden Valley Boy Scouts of America Conservation Easement**

Ms. Boisvert updated CORD members on negotiations to amend the Hidden Valley conservation easement on LCIP property in Gilmanton, Gilford and Alton. She has been working on the amendment with the Boy Scouts of America, the Charitable Trust Division of the Department of Justice and the Department of Fish and Game. Ms. Boisvert and Mr. Cook explained that the agreement will permit the Boy Scouts to re-draw various use zones within the conservation easement property, taking some land out of the Tenting zone and allowing it to be in the Camping zone, in return for putting more acreage from the Camping and Tenting zones into the Forestry zone. The result improves the conservation value of the easement while permitting the Boy Scouts to construct a pavilion that can be used as a needed emergency shelter.

Ms. Boisvert and Mr. Cook said that CORD would be asked to vote to authorize the easement amendment at a later time, but were being informed now of the negotiations to determine if CORD members had any concerns or objections before a final agreement is reached. No objections were expressed.

### **D. Nash Stream State Forest – ATV Trail Proposals**

Mr. Carpenter and Mr. Gamache presented a proposal for two ATV trails in the Nash Stream State Forest, one in the northern end of the Forest and one in the southern end. Both trails would serve as connectors to the larger existing ATV trail system, mostly on private property, in Coos County. Mr. Carpenter explained that ATV use was not included in the original management plan for Nash Stream, but in 2002 the West Side Road ATV trail was the first one approved by the Nash Stream Advisory Committee as a pilot project. Mr. Carpenter said the northern route, the Kelsey Notch trail, had been reviewed within DRED and other agencies for environmental and wildlife concerns and approved by the Nash Stream Advisory Committee. He said the southern loop trail had not yet been approved by the Nash Stream Advisory Committee.

Mr. Gamache said the proposed northern trail is an existing gravel trail, and the southern trail is an existing gravel haul road. He said the state property is a vital link in the larger ATV trail system that would allow a loop throughout Coos County. The Kelsey Notch trail would connect trails in the eastern Androscoggin area northwest to Colebrook, and the southern trail would connect with Stark. The effort is being promoted by local ATV clubs and chambers of commerce, which are planning a June kickoff of the trial loop.

Ms. Hatfield asked if a northern and southern ATV trail would then allow ATVs to cross all of the Nash Stream property. Mr. Gamache said there is an existing north-south snowmobile trail through Nash Stream that is gated at either end and is not open to ATV use. Ms. Hatfield also asked about enforcing ATV restrictions and the staff capacity to carry out enforcement responsibilities. Mr. Cook said the Department of Fish and Game is concerned about the expansion of ATV trails because the funding of enforcement hasn't kept pace.

Mr. Cook asked if it was possible to connect trails systems over private property, rather than through state land. Mr. Gamache said attempts to do that haven't been successful. Mr. Cook said an overall plan is needed, rather than an incremental accumulation of ATV trails on state land, and that the overall impact of adding ATV trails is not considered. Mr. Gamache said he thought this would be the last request for a number of years and because funds for trail maintenance would run out. Mr. Cook commended the Trails Bureau for proposing trails that use existing roads. Ms. Muzzey asked whether there were alternative routes that would not impact the Nash Stream land. Mr. Gamache said that the Stark connection (southern end) is needed for fueling, explaining that there is no alternative for ATVs to get gas. He said a refueling station is planned as part of the Stark connector trail. Mr. Hinds said gas is not available for 60 to 70 miles, a full day's ride.

Mr. Washburn questioned the process for obtaining approval of the proposed ATV trails. He said the ATV clubs have been working on these proposals since 2011 with the goal of 1000 miles of interconnecting ATV trails throughout the North Country. He said it was the most unique trail system in the United States.

Mr. Drew asked about the master plan for the Nash Stream property. Mr. Carpenter said it was first created in 1995 and updated in 2002 to allow the West Side ATV trail as a pilot project. The plan is to be updated every 10 years.

Ms. Hatfield expressed that there seemed to be a need for more information to ensure that any decision that CORD makes is properly supported. Ms. Modigliani said she'd like to see the Nash Stream LCIP deed language. Mr. Sanborn said he was ready to decide. Ms. Muzzey asked if there was a survey or better map that CORD could review. Mr. Cook said CORD needs to decide on the issue of ATV use, but not about how DRED manages the property day-to-day.

After a discussion about what additional information was needed, it was decided that another CORD meeting would be scheduled in April. Additional information requested for that meeting included: a written description of the two trail proposals, color maps of the two routes, the Nash Stream deed, and other project needs.

## **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

**ACTION: MOTION** by Beaulac, second by Mr. Drew to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting closed at 12:22 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Meredith Hatfield, Chair  
Director, Office of Energy & Planning

MH/ss