CMP = Julian, Ian, Melissa

**July 7 and updated July 19, 2023**

* Monitoring impact of human presence in forest – TSP, CMP
1. Proxy measures of cumulative impact by monitoring human traffic
[Methodology:](https://www.bikepeddocumentation.org/)A simple method for interpolating from sample monitoring to estimate longer term traffic volume.
[Monitoring Traffic on Hinesburg Town Forest](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uUC0Vwym_BjyvSnyVy58z4Qp40p6ElBT/view) (2017)
[Monitoring traffic on Johnnie Brook Trail](https://infoacf.files.wordpress.com/2023/04/jbt-kh.pdf)
2. Monitoring erosion, etc. of trails
3. Periodic monitoring of *Zones of Impact* for flora and fauna numbers and health (how?)

**Recommendation on monitoring**

Monitoring efforts should be designed and implemented periodically. Monitoring should include such elements as counting visits, doing periodic surveys of plants and animals and to establish baselines and then monitor changes over time.

We suggest getting guidance from Judy Rosofsky and/or John Cart, on methods to monitor plants and animals through participatory methodologies. provided by Judy Rosofsky. Works for the state as an insect biology. And/or John Cart.

To the extent possible, methods should build on the baseline established by the Arrowood studies that have already defined some sensitive areas both in terms of plants and places.

In the monitoring efforts, we should seek a balance between cost and efficiency. Perhaps engaging in an annual or twice annual survey.

* Add description of trail-based recreation / wildlife / ecology research / design integration + something related benefits of outdoor recreation and nature exposure – CMP
- See [Conservation and Recreation](https://infoacf.wordpress.com/literature-and-science/) – Published information and Literature. Human activity effects on the planet and biological diversity. Ecological Research on the Impacts of Trail Traffic on Wildlife. Focus on cumulative effects of humans.
- Literature about human mental and physical health affected by physical activity and outdoor activity. (Need to research – Ian has information about benefits of active transportation).

**Recommendation**

Not sure what the intent of this section is. Need to get more information from the group. Ian thinks perhaps it’s what’s known about the human impacts on the forest is?

* Alignment with conservation easement – CMP
See annotated Conservation Easement in attached EasementHighLight.doc

**Recommendation on non-mechanized recreation**

While the easement states that hiking is allowed, it also states (section III, permitted uses) that “mechanized recreation such as mountain biking...may be permitted in the discretion of the Grantors.” We interpret this to mean that the ACF can designate trails for non-mechanized use. We believe that it would be a meaningful contribution to the quality of the recreation experience to have trails for non-mechanized use.

This brings up the question of what criteria to use when designating a trail multi-use or non-mechanized. We believe the committee should seek a blend of recreational opportunities in the forest. In the case of non-mechanized use trails, there should be trails that provide easy to moderate walking for 45 to 60 minutes. We believe this would be adequate for school trips, families with young children or older relatives.

Trails of any sort should take into account sensitive habitat and ecological concerns.

* Dogs (related to wildlife) – TSP, CMP
<https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Archive/2014/03/IIa-Ordinance-2015-02-2015-Animal-Control-Ordinance-and-Procedures.pdf>
Oregon State University guidance on verbal control:
<https://infoacf.files.wordpress.com/2023/06/dogs-on-trail-rules-corvallis-2019.jpg>
Specify on-leash required in ACF?

**Recommendation on dogs**

Following the model of the Audubon, in order to protect the forest wildlife, we suggest establishing rules that require dogs to be leashed below the power lines and prohibit dogs on the upper trails, above the power lines.

* Include references when reasonable and helpful – CMP
Add citations (page # etc.) to Conservation Easement - see attached annotated EasementHighLight.doc
Also add references about human impacts (see above) and Original people culture (below). Ensure that references in the text of history and existing conditions are linked to citations in References section.

Ian is volunteering to find the relevant easement citations.

* Clarity (signage?) at property boundaries with trails / establish liaison with adjacent owners – CMP
1. Signage: Short version of ‘Permitted Uses’ from MP at all entrances to the ACF: State open dawn to dusk, except for hunting; bikes on trails designated for that use; dogs; horses; stay on trails when possible?
2. Obtain written permissions from adjacent landowners with clarification about conservation easements and permitted uses provisions (where applicable – VYCC and Sunshine); stipulations of current landowners in other case(s).

**Recommendations on connectivity**

JP will check w David Sunshine and w Breck Knauft of VYCC to figure out conservation easements and MPs.

Need to make clear signage and barriers between ACF and Prelco/Preston land.

Also need to make signage to note sensitive areas to keep people from wandering off trail in those areas.

* Invasive species management – TSP (maybe CMP)
Yes CMP - (See monitoring above)

See monitoring plan from above. Maybe we need a foot wash and/or bike tire wash station.

* Events/permitting – CMP
Specify application process, fee structure.

**Recommendations on events and permitting**

People and organizations wishing to hold events in the ACF should apply to the ACF at least two ACF meetings in advance of the event date.

Fees may be determined in proportion and in accordance with the events.

Approval of events will be determined by the ACFC according to criteria including but not limited to: Appropriateness of use per the objectives of the MP and the easement, density of the event, parking, ecological impact on the trails (for eg, deer wintering, spring vernal pools, etc.).

* Education re: land and original people recognition – CMP (maybe TSP re: trail signage, interpretation, etc.)
Identify sources such *as Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants Paperback* – Robin Wall Kimmerer. Milkweed Editions, 2015.
Ask Richmond Racial Justice for other suggestions (and Cecelia Danks too). Others?

**Recommendation on indigenous land and practices**

Reserve a portion of the kiosk to share history of Abenaki use of the land.

Look for opportunities to host educational programs provided by people who can speak knowledgeably about Abenaki uses and care of the land.

Melissa will consult with Cecilia Danks to get a more precise idea of what is possible on this topic.

* Allowance of future trails / designating no-trail zones (related to wildlife) / Expanding trails currently proposed beyond proposed route in the future – TSP, CMP

- No trail Zones - See Easement …. (only pedestrian trails in EPZs)
1. Existing trails (Urbanik Way, Dana Climb, etc., VAST and Logging Roads): criteria for pedestrian and mechanized use respectively.

See section above about non-mechanized trails.

2. Not yet existing Trails as proposed by Arrowwwood/Sinuosity – criteria for pedestrian and mechanized use respectively.
3. Other future trails (other than Arrowwwood/Sinuosity proposed).

* Request for more trails than currently proposed – CMP
See #3 immediately above

**Recommendations governing new trails**

New proposals for trails should be brought before the committee. The committee will evaluate the appropriateness of the trail based on an ecological review that is consistent with the easement and that using the most current best practices.

Evaluation of suitability of new trail proposals should take into account the results of monitoring of impacts of prior trails.

* Role of ACF within larger landscape of recreation and habitat – CMP
Identify special considerations for ACF management because of connection with Chittenden County Uplands.
Agreements with adjacent landowners (*see above, re signage*):
 Easement provisions in conserved lands (VYCC, Sunshine)
 Other adjacent properties
* Language adjustments in management plan – CMP
See suggestions in <https://infoacf.files.wordpress.com/2023/03/mp2_plus.pdf>

Melisa and Julian will comment.

* Alignment with town plan/zoning regulations – CMP
Issues are (1) Development above 900’ and steep slopes; (2) Connectivity of trails.
See [2018 Richmond Town Plan](https://infoacf.files.wordpress.com/2023/01/2018-richmond-town-planhighlights.pdf) (with highlights relating to Economic Development, Future Land Use, and Natural Resources.) and [2018 Richmond Town Plan](https://infoacf.files.wordpress.com/2023/02/town-plan-natural-resources-highlighted.pdf) (with highlights relating to Natural Resources.)

**Recommendation with alignment of regulations**

Melissa will contact Keith Osborne to get his interpretation of what “development” means, what restrictions exist above 900’ and the hierarchy of documents (does the town plan still apply to the easement?).

* Night use – CMP, TSP
See above (permitted uses) and Easement

We propose the following language for the general rule section:

**Recommendations on night usage**

Except where otherwise noted in the plan (seasonal trail closures in certain areas, or exceptions for hunting, for example), the ACF is open year-round to the public from dawn to dusk.

Other exceptions with approval of the AFC.

* Parking – CMP, TSP
- Existing parking (across from Maplewind Farm)
- Temporary Parking (landing, accessible via access road).

**Recommendations on parking**

No new car parking shall be designated without ACFC approval. Maintaining low parking capacity is a passive way of controlling density of use.

Bike parking should be made available.

Check w VYCC about how they feel about parking?

* Plan naming (e.g, comprehensive management plan) – CMP
?????

**Recommendation on naming:** One plan to rule them all

* Structural revision to plan to make easier to read – CMP
Organize existing material into the following sections:
1. History and Existing Conditions
2. Permitted (human) uses (and not-permitted uses)
3. Forestry Management Plan
4. Recreation Management Plan
 Consumptive (hunting, non-commercial foraging and harvesting)
 Non-consumptive pedestrian recreation (hiking, trail running, skiing, snowshoeing, wildlife observation)
 Non-consumptive mechanized recreation
5. Education Plan

TSP = Caitlin, Chase, Paul (after Selectboard appointment)

* Phased trail development – TSP
* Pedestrian only trail(s) (related to wildlife) - TSP
* Seasonal trail closures (related to wildlife) - TSP
* Horses (related to wildlife) - TSP
* Trail use policy enforcement - TSP
* Existing roads and trails – Close? Treat as trails? Etc. - TSP
* Trail maintenance - TSP
* Ebikes or other motorized travel - TSP
* Trail route: potential modifications, document reason for routing (related to wildlife, discuss buffers) – TSP including the trail map etc.
* Designate specific activities allowed on each trail - TSP