

Dear Selection Committee,

I would like to be considered for a 2 or 3 year term on the Richmond Town Forest Committee to help guide the management of the Andrews Community Forest in the coming years. I was pleased to serve on the interim town forest committee for Richmond, which developed the current management plan with a robust public input process. Much was learned over those months and I believe that a mix of new and old faces on the permanent committee would serve the town well. I, and others who have served on the interim committee, can bring institutional memory and help interpret the intent of that emerged from that public process, while new participants with fresh ideas can help further the evolution of this important town resource.

I value the Andrews Community Forests both personally and professionally. As a mom and 17 year resident of Richmond, I see the value of the Andrews Community Forest to many in this community -- young and old. I am also a professor at the University of Vermont, where I teach about governance in the Environmental Studies and Forestry programs and conduct research on many aspects of community-based forestry. This past semester, my service learning class in Community-based Conservation, created content for the new kiosk at the entrance of the Andrews Community Forest as their semester project. I would like to see such connections between the forests and students of all ages expanded and strengthened. I can also offer the committee my knowledge and connections to models of town forests elsewhere. I chair the Vermont state Urban and Community Forestry Council, on which I have served for over a decade. In the past, I have even co-authored an academic article comparing New England town forests and international examples of community-conserved areas. Community forests have been a personal and professional focus for much of my life. I would be honored to serve on the Richmond Town Forest committee as the future of the Andrews Community Forest continues to unfold.

Cecilia Danks