CMP = Julian, Ian, Melissa

**Our ‘Deliverable’ as requested by Nick (email of Jun 27)
Document history - July 7 and updated July 19 and July 23, 2023**

Yellow highlights: Our assignments, per June 2023 ACFC meeting.

Green highlights: New or otherwise to be discussed by subcommittee

* Monitoring impact of human presence in forest – TSP, CMP

**Recommendation on monitoring**

Monitoring of human impacts on the Forest shall be conducted annually or seasonally, the financial costs will be included in the Management Budget (*to be established*). Monitoring shall include the following:

**1**. Obtain proxy estimates of cumulative impact by monitoring human traffic.
A simple method for extrapolating from sample monitoring to estimate longer term traffic volume: <https://www.bikepeddocumentation.org/>.
Examples: [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 surveys of trails’ *Zones of Impact* and Protected Zones to assess numbers and health of plants and animals and to establish baselines and then monitor changes over time. Guidance will be obtained from Richmond Conservation Commission and State agencies (current contacts are Judy Rosovsky and Jon Kart). Protected Zones and species will include those established by the Arrowwood studies.

* Add description of trail-based recreation / wildlife / ecology research / design integration + something related benefits of outdoor recreation and nature exposure – CMP
**Recommendation**MP should include a referenced summary of recent published scientific and popular press information and literature. This should include quantitative information about human activity (including trail traffic) effects on wildlife, biological diversity, ecological and habitat impacts on wildlife, focusing on cumulative effects.
- Literature about ffects of human activity including trail traffic on forest ecology and habitats - a source [here](https://infoacf.wordpress.com/literature-and-science/).
- Literature about human mental and physical health affected by physical activity and outdoor activity.
Sources:
1. *The wellness benefits of the great outdoors*. Andrew Avitt, USDA Forest Service, Office of Communication <https://www.fs.usda.gov/features/wellness-benefits-great-outdoors>
2. *Benefits of Outdoor Sports for Society. A Systematic Literature Review and Reflections on Evidence*. Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2019 Mar; 16(6): 937. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6466442/>
* Alignment with conservation easement – CMP
See annotated Conservation Easement in EasementHighLight.doc

About motorized mobility by persons with mobility disabilities (Page 5, Section G)
*Grantors may permit motorized personal assistive mobility devices for use by persons with mobility disabilities on the Protected Property if consistent with the Purposes of this Grant, and as may be required by state or federal law.*

**Mechanized and non-mechanized recreation**

While dispersed recreation (‘pedestrian’) is permitted by the Easement, it also states (*section III, Page 6, Section A permitted uses*) that “mechanized recreation such as mountain biking...may be permitted in the discretion of the Grantors.”

**Recommendation:**Trails shall be indicated on a map posted at Forest access points and key locations on trails, and identifying those that have been designated for mechanized (bicycle) use. Designation of trails for mechanized travel should recognize the contribution to the quality of the recreation experience for non-mechanized trail users, and that bicycles permit a greater range of travel (hence impact), and that mountain biking is currently is a very popular activity.

Criteria for designating a trail as multi-use or non-mechanized:
 - Existing trail trails (Urbanik Way, Dana Climb, etc., VAST and Logging Roads): (criteria, for pedestrian and mechanized use respectively. )
 - The ‘Zones of Influence’ of all trails (at least 100 feet on either side) shall avoid overlapping with areas of sensitive habitat and other ecological concerns.
 - In order to accommodate different recreational opportunities in the forest, some trails (criteria, locations?) shall be designated for non-mechanized use only, these being trails that provide easy to moderate walking for 45 to 60 minutes and suitable for school trips, families with young children or older relatives.
 - Trails designated for mechanized use shall (criteria, locations?)

* Dogs (related to wildlife) – TSP, CMP
**Recommendation on dogs**Following the model of the Audubon Center (Huntington), in order to protect the forest wildlife, dogs shall be leashed below the power lines and dogs prohibited above the power lines, in addition to provisions in Richmond’s Animal Control Ordinance:
Sources:  [Animal-Control-Ordinance-and-Procedures.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Archive/2014/03/IIa-Ordinance-2015-02-2015-Animal-Control-Ordinance-and-Procedures.pdf)
(So not applicable?) Oregon State University guidance on verbal control:
<https://infoacf.files.wordpress.com/2023/06/dogs-on-trail-rules-corvallis-2019.jpg>
* Include references when reasonable and helpful – CMP
Add citations (page # etc.) to Conservation Easement – see above under attached “Alignment with conservation easement – CMP”
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.

Clarity (signage?) at property boundaries with trails / establish liaison with adjacent owners – CMP
**1. Signage:** Include a short version of ‘Permitted Uses’ from MP at all entrances to the ACF including from trails on adjacent lands: State open dawn to dusk, except for hunting; bikes on trails designated for that use; dogs leashed and only below powerlines; no horses; pedestrians: stay on trails when possible?

2. **Recommendations on connectivity**ACFC shall obtain written permissions from adjacent landowners with clarification about conservation easements and permitted uses provisions, where applicable (VYCC, Prelco and Sunshine); or stipulations of current landowners in other case(s).

* Invasive species management – TSP (maybe CMP)
Yes CMP - (See monitoring plan from above. Maybe we need a foot wash and/or bike tire wash station if invasives evident next to trails.)
* Events/permitting – CMP

**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. (See Easement, Events (Page 7, Section J)

Fees may be determined in proportion and in accordance with costs incurred by the events. (Easement, (Page 7, Section I))

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 e.g., deer wintering, spring vernal pools, etc.).

* Education re: land and original people recognition – CMP (maybe TSP re: trail signage, interpretation, etc.)
**Recommendation on Education about indigenous land and practices**

1. Identify educational sources (books) such as:
 - *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants Paperback* – Robin Wall Kimmerer. Milkweed Editions, 2015.
 - *The Voice of the Dawn: An Autohistory of the Abenaki Nation.* Frederick Matthew Wiseman. University Press of New England, 2001.
 - Ask Richmond Racial Justice for other suggestions. Others?

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

3. Identify 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

See also section “Criteria for designating a trail as multi-use or non-mechanized:” under Alignment with conservation easement – CMP (above)

- 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 Arrowwood/Sinuosity – criteria for pedestrian and mechanized use respectively.

3. Other future trails (other than Arrowwood/Sinuosity proposed).

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

**Recommendations governing new trails**

New proposals for trails must be brought before the ACFC. 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.

Relevant Easement text:
About landscape connectivity (Page 1, para 5): *WHEREAS, this property is located within an area that has been identified as important for regional landscape connectivity by the "Staying Connected in the Northern Appalachians" initiative, a collaboration of 21 public and private entities working together to protect and restore landscape connectivity in key habitat linkages across the U.S. portion of the Northern Appalachians region;*About landscape connectivity (Page 2, para 10): *It is a relatively natural and unfragmented forest block that advances the effort to conserve landscape connectivity and wildlife habitat corridors within large forested blocks in the Northern Appalachian ecoregion;*About landscape connectivity (Page 3, para 2): *It is within one of Vermont's largest blocks of unfragmented interior forest, with between this forest block and the extensive riparian features of the Winooski River corridor;*

Agreements with adjacent landowners (*see above, re signage*):
 - Easement provisions in conserved lands (VYCC, Prelco, 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 about alignment with Town regulations (Town Plan, etc.)**

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
We propose the following language change in Permitted Uses: “The ACF is open year-round to the public from dawn to dusk, except night-time use permitted for hunting. Other exceptions with approval of the ACFC.

-> Seasonal trail closures in certain areas: Is that purview of TSP?

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

**Recommendations on parking**

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

Bike parking (a bike rack near the kiosk) shall be installed.

Check w VYCC about how they feel about parking?

* Plan naming (e.g, comprehensive management plan) – CMP
**Recommendation on naming:** One name only for Management Plan - Easement specifies ‘Management Plan’.
* Structural revision to plan to make easier to read – CMP

**1.** One other point about the general format and content of MP2: I find most of the text that lists public input and consultations with others to be redundant or unnecessary - if the outcome or content of those meetings is not stated then they provide no guidance for \*management\*. In two cases - public trails comments in spring last year and the Melissa Levy report - there is a written record, so that should be cited and referenced. That said, there is a 'hierarchy' - the Easement supersedes popular desires for the Forest if those two are incompatible.

**2.** Organize existing material into the following sections:

1. Table of Contents and Executive Summary

2. History and Existing Conditions

 Geology, Topography and Climate

 Cultural History

 Water Resources

 Forest

 Wildlife Habitat

3. Legal Agreements on the Property

 Agricultural, Powerline ROWs

4. Governance of the Andrews Community Forest

5. Development of the Management Plan.

6. Land and Original People Recognition

7. Permitted (human) uses (and not-permitted uses, from Easement)

 Public Access

8. Forestry Management Plan

 Provisions in Easement

 Health and diversity in the Forest

 Forest products harvesting

 Forest Management Objectives and Associated Management Actions

9. Wildlife Habitat Management Plan

10. Recreation Management Plan

 Consumptive (hunting, non-commercial foraging and harvesting)

 Trails: Non-consumptive pedestrian recreation

 (hiking, trail running, skiing, snowshoeing, wildlife observation)

 Trails: Non-consumptive mechanized recreation

 Hunting and foraging.

 Recreation Management Objectives and Associated Management Actions

11. Education Plan

 Learning about Original People culture and use of the forest.

 Wildlife, Fauna and Flora and their protection

 Responsible recreation

 Education Management Objectives and Associated Management Actions

12. References

 Cited sources

 Further Reading

Appendices:

 Conservation Easement

 Maps

 Indigenous (Original?) People Appendix

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