

From: Nancy Zimny <Nancy.Zimny@uvm.edu>
Sent: Friday, January 6, 2023 6:35 PM
To: Rosovsky, Judy
Cc: Daniel Schmidt; Kit Emery; ecwright1414@gmail.com
Subject: Upcoming RCC sponsored public forum planning

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Dear Judy and RCC public meeting sub-committee members,

I would like to comment on the RCC's plan to sponsor a public meeting (prior to and separate from the anticipated public presentation by the ACFC of their trail design and revised management plan for the Andrews Community Forest).

My understanding from attending recent ACFC and RCC meetings is that the idea to hold this additional, separate meeting was a result of committee members recognizing there was a 'clear desire' specifically for a public forum on conservation and recreation and that the RCC would be a 'good fit' as sponsor for this topic. I agree and applaud this effort.

As the specific speakers, topics, and format are now being discussed by the RCC, I suggest that the RCC consider the following as they make plans and seek speakers for this meeting:

1. A primary focus for the RCC meeting should be to provide outdoor enthusiasts of all kinds and the public in general an opportunity to learn about the effects of trail-based recreation on conservation.

To most people the obvious impact of things like housing developments, mining activities, and road construction on wildlife and natural resources are clear. However, the effects of trail-based recreation are less obvious and less known to the public.

Today, however, largely because of the massive boom in all types of outdoor recreation, understanding effects of trail-based recreation is a critical new issue we must consider. And here in VT where there is a large proportion of residents who enjoy the outdoors in various ways as well as the fact that VT is often marketed to others as an "outdoor recreation paradise", it behooves us to clearly understand and educate ourselves on what is known about the impact of trail-based recreational activities

on
conservation.

2. 2. This meeting is an opportunity for Richmond citizens to understand the latest science and technology from a conservation perspective that is relevant to trail-based recreation. There are several individuals in our relatively local area who have the qualifications and scientific background to present informative and enjoyable presentations that include up-to-date science and others who have experience in systems/technology for locating trails that are aimed at mitigating environmental effects. I understand the sub-committee is vetting a number of different individuals who may fulfill these criteria.

3. 3. The public should hear directly from those with expertise as noted above. Each speaker could give a short presentation to be followed by a moderated panel discussion 'of the whole' that includes giving the public the opportunity to ask "live" questions and participate in the discussion.

Recognizing the key role that the Conservation Commission plays in our town, I hope you will provide a forum that helps all of us in Richmond make fully informed decisions about the best way to proceed with ACF plans.

Judy, I hope these comments are helpful and I would appreciate it if you would please bring them to the attention of the full committee at your next meeting. Thank you.
Nancy Zimny