

Request for Conservation Reserve Funds for an educational speaker series concerning conservation and recreation

January 10, 2023

The Richmond Conservation Commission respectfully requests an amount not to exceed \$1000 from the Conservation Reserve Fund (CRF) to provide compensation to speakers invited to an educational series on the intersection of conservation and recreation, and related expenses. This series will start with a panel discussion with representatives of various perspectives who are knowledgeable about their fields.

The discussions taking place around the planned recreational trails at the Andrews Community Forest in Richmond Vermont have engendered some good debates but have veered into contentiousness. The Conservation Commission thought it might be productive to have recognized experts in conservation and recreation come and discuss some of the issues associated with town forest recreation in a public forum. We wish to compensate the speakers and panelists and believe that the CRF is an appropriate funding source.

The commission voted unanimously to recommend that the Selectboard approve the following motion: “The Richmond Conservation Commission recommends that the Selectboard approve a motion to use up to \$1000 from the Conservation Reserve Fund for costs associated with assembling a panel of experts for a discussion on the theme of balancing conservation and trail-based recreation. Monies would be used to compensate speakers for their time and should be used by 3/15/2026.” This motion meets Conservation Reserve Fund criteria A2, A3 and B9 – (improving wildlife and recreation; help with natural resource planning goals – see Town Plan Natural Resources section; and “...preserves forest resources ...by means of a sustainable management plan”).