

**CRF application for Sue Morse presentation on June 7th - Richmond Free Library
(Application by 'Friends of the Forest' represented by Nancy Zimny and Ian Stokes)**

Summary

This application is for \$250 to support an educational community-wide talk by Susan Morse about the ecology and habitat of the Andrews Community Forest and its relationship to the Chittenden County Uplands. It will take place on June 7th, 2023, in the Richmond Free Library and will be illustrated with Sue Morse's acclaimed wildlife images of numerous animal species. Her presentation will focus on the challenges faced by these species as their territory is encroached by human activity, and the steps that can be taken to protect and conserve their habitat. Sue Morse would appreciate this support to her organization "Keeping Track" to offset expenses of her time, assistance, and resources for preparing her presentation.

The Presenter, Susan Morse is widely recognized for her work documenting wildlife in a wide range of North American wilderness and forests. She lives close to the Andrews Community Forest and is very knowledgeable about its terrain and wildlife. Through her organization "Keeping Track" [<https://keepingtrack.org>], she has provided many Richmond residents the opportunity to explore the forests to the north of Richmond and Jonesville and to learn about their habitats and ecology. Keeping Track is the recipient of numerous awards for its work.

This proposal meets Conservation Reserve Fund criteria A3-5 with respect to meeting natural resource goals, public access to natural resource and recreation areas and towards threatened resources. It meets criteria B4, B5, B7 and B9 regarding biodiversity, wildlife habitat corridors, low or no-cost recreational activities and preservation of resources via a sustainable natural resources plan.

Sunset date for allocated monies is June 7th 2024.

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1. Project Description

We are requesting a donation of 250\$ be made in support of an educational community-wide talk about the wildlife and habitat of the Andrews Community Forest, to be presented by Sue Morse, the founder and science director of the organization, Keeping Track on June 7, 2023 at Richmond Library.

2. Project Significance and Extent to which it addresses purposes of the fund and the criteria for its use

The Conservation Commission had anticipated supporting a speakers' series covering conservation and recreation topics. As the community is currently discussing details of the future use and management of the Andrews Community Forest, it is especially relevant and timely that we hear from someone who is intimately knowledgeable about the forest and the larger environmental context of which the ACF is a part.

- Sue Morse is a nationally known naturalist, wildlife tracker and photographer, hunter, and birder who lives locally in Jericho VT. She is the founder and science director of Keeping Track with decades of experience in conservation work in the Lake Champlain Basin region and beyond. She has published widely and received numerous awards for her work on wildlife habitat and is well known for the stunning wildlife photography that accompanies her presentations. Sue is one of the people who instigated the Chittenden County Uplands Conservation Project (CCUCP) of which the Andrews Community Forest is an integral part.
- This activity meets General Criterion A3-5: "Will help the Town of Richmond meet natural resources planning goals identified in the Richmond Town Plan or other representative planning forum;" "will...enhance...public access to a natural resource or recreation area"; and "Is directed at threatened resources". The educational community-wide talk will help by providing information to citizens to understand the issues addressed by the Andrews Community Forest Management Plan, and planning for other forest conservation consistent with provisions of the Town Plan.
- This activity meets Natural Resources Protection Criteria B4, B5, B7 and B9: B4 (*helps preserve biodiversity*), B5 (*helps provide wildlife corridors*), B7 (*supports no- or low-cost recreational activities*) and B9 (*helps preserve forest resources ... by means of a sustainable management plan*) because this educational community-wide talk will provide important information about what is required in the management of the Andrews Community Forest to maintain the forest ecology for wildlife, and how human activities in the Forest can affect the health of wildlife populations.

3. Project Schedule

Sue Morse's presentation is scheduled for June 7, 2023 @ 7 pm in the Richmond Free Library, Richmond, VT.

4. Project Partners

n/a

5. Financial Information

A donation to the Keeping Track organization of 250\$ is being requested to support this presentation.

6. Long term Plans

n/a

Sue Morse talk 050923

The Richmond Conservation Commission (RCC) enthusiastically recommends approval of the proposal from the Friends of the Forest dated June 7, 2023, requesting \$250 in Conservation Reserve Funds to support an educational talk by wildlife specialist Sue Morse and regarding the ecology and wildlife habitat of the Andrews Community Forest, June 7, 2023, to sunset June 7, 2024.

In doing so RCC recognizes responsiveness to CRF priorities as recognized in the proposal, including responsiveness to the natural resource planning goals of the Town Plan, providing appropriate public access to a natural resource and recreational area, promoting for the safety of threatened resources, providing for areas for wildlife to thrive, and preserving wildlife territorial linkages.