

**Bear Brook State Park Management Plan Revision
Steering Committee Meeting - 6/27/19**

Meeting was called to order at 5:00pm by Chair Tom DiMaggio

Steering Committee Members Present

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Avis Rosenfield	Non-Motorized Recreation
Sandra McKenney	Town of Allenstown
Carol Foss	Non-Game Wildlife
Armand Verville	Cultural and Historic Resources
Tom St. Martin	Town of Candia
Eric Orff	Game and Sportsmen
Dan Dwyer	Non-Motorized Recreation
Wendy Weisiger	Forest Management
Tom DiMaggio	Recreation at Large
Steve Hampl	Motorized Recreation
Matthew Lavoie	Town of Hooksett

Steering Committee Members Absent

Brian Adams, Town of Deerfield
Suzanne Smith, State Park System Advisory Council
Jeffrey Eames, Forest Products Industry

Chairperson Tom DiMaggio asked for a motion to accept the minutes; there were no corrections and the committee approved them.

Welcome and Meeting Format - Johanna Lyons

Johanna offered that there is a sign up sheet to join the plan revision mailing list at the entrance table. Five people signed up in advance to speak tonight, all were asked to consider six questions.

1. What is working well at the park?
2. Does your organization have any concerns about existing recreational uses or natural resource management practices?
3. Is there a need for improvements or additional facilities for existing uses? If so, for what purpose, and where?
4. What potential new activities/management would your organization like to see implemented? How and where?
5. What facility improvements or additional facilities would be needed/ desired to support this new activity and where should they be located?
6. What conflicts with existing uses/users might result at Bear Brook State Park if the new activity was permitted? What other uses can your activity best be paired?

Speaker 1: Maria Groves – Citizen

- Homeowner in park area, user of park
- Appreciates low cost of park fee, no wheeled vehicles allowed in park.
- Wants to see trail signage improved. Noted that it has improved some, some trails that are not noted on current map.
- Says that trails are getting accommodated for mountain bikers which are taking away from the hikers, they are cutting in trails without the parks involved.
- Says that signage during hunting season should improve to make hikers and bikers aware of hunting. Signage so hunters are aware where hikers may be walking throughout the park.
- Park could implement self-pay centers, such as iron rangers and used the northern parks as examples.
- Park could use more out houses placed throughout the park specifically near day use during the winter season. Understands the environmental affect and cost as people from the road may use the outhouses as well. Specifically stated she has hiked many time and runs across human feces on a regular basis especially during hunting season.

Speaker 2: Craig Tufts – Central NH Regional Planning Commission

- Central NH RPC is working with local communities to designating an old railroad corridor as a rail-trail, attending meeting to hear what people have to say about the idea. What is important to people in the area? What trails are important to them?
- Trail would pass through Bear Brook State Park along the old Blueberry Railroad track.
- Looking to hear what the communities have to say.
- Draft plan available online (<http://cnhrpc.org/suncook-valley-trails-plan/>)
- Plans to focus on Bear Brook in the next couple years, if this project is worth pursuing in the eyes of the public.
- Distance in the park? Would be a few miles of trail.

Speaker 3: Gail Guertin – NH mushers association

- Bear Brook use to be the place to train dogs back in the 70's and 80's, use to hold a Rig Race
- Mushers use to maintain trails during winters
- Biggest draw for mushers was the large parking areas.
- The plowing of campground road limited use for dogs during the winter training, created challenges and dangers of collision of snowmobiles on trails
- Ask to consider improvements and changes to trails for safety
- A trail should provide 20-30 yards of visibility ahead, should be at least 8 feet wide. Biggest need for this is the camp trail.
- Park lacks trails for fall training – low land trail and ferret trail. Hopes to create trails to bring fall Rig Race back
- Larger parking area near Spruce Pond Camps if possible
- More “pet on leash signs”

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- Asks for hiker biker lot to remain unlocked, not plowed in, allow trailer parking for escort snowmobiles.
- Someone brought up the problem of underground utilities, regarding the straightening of many trails as well as the parking lot.
- She asks that this be included in the management plan, work with snowmobile, equestrian clubs to get a good loop of 5-8 miles for mushers to safely navigate with their teams.
- Used to have over 130 members in the club, now down to 95-100 mushers today. Limited amount of large dog teams currently.
- Crushed rock on roads was questioned and did not seem like a problem the mushers were concerned about.
- Major water bars become an issue, Lowland trail needs water bar improvement.

Speaker 4: Karen Wood - Derry Trail Riders, President

- Having education on how trails can be used by all (signage) for trail etiquette.
- Maintain Hayes Field pit toilets; provide water for drinking water for animals (non-potable).
- Women's pit toilet door does not fully lock when in use.
- Allow gates on forest roads to be open at times for carriage riders
- Staff more Park Rangers to be out on the trail enforcing trail etiquette and being there in case of emergencies out on the trail.
- Very excited for the potential Catamount Camping location for horses.

Speaker 5: Dan Dwyer, NEMBA, Mountain biking

- Promote responsible and ethical mountain biking
- 18 New England Chapters 4600 + user members
- The park is considered a destination to mountain bikers due to its variety of trails
- Fat biking has become big in the park
- Requesting that the club be allowed to groom trails for fat bikes in the winter months when snow fall allows.
- Request that they have a storage area on site, possibly located in the hiker biker lot.
- Request an enhancement to the facilities near the hiker biker lot
- Made the Rabbit and Raptor trails (Moose and Squirrel)
- Bear Hill Re-route near Podunk Road
- Asking for an additional single track trail that parallels Camp Trail.
- NEMBA's annual event: Bear Brook Boogie- a fundraiser for the park.
- Fat biking is becoming increasingly popular to the Park and would like to develop a good relationship with the other users.
- Would like to see more trail access to the southern side of the park, including new trails and renewal of old past trails.
- Wants to be able to groom at Bear Brook State Park for the winter season of fat biking. Made a point the grooming for fat biking is about 18 inches wide and would work very well for the cross-country skiers also.

- The Park should put in place an E-Bike policy whether to support them or not allow them, do they count as a motorized vehicle? There is concern they may rip up the trails more than the average bike. The difference between a trail bike and an E-Bike is the power in the motor where the trail bike is like a chainsaw motor.
- Would like to see improvement of the facilities.
- When will the new map be released?

Public comments:

Debbie Briscoe

- Request that the park have a basic trail management plan, include a trail evaluation each year, yearly trail maintenance project.
- Trail projects that account for donations
- Staff should meet with groups, going over what they can do/work on.
- Work on trail signage most importantly.
- Event schedules posted on kiosks throughout the park, along with how to donate to the Park.

Jim Mackenzie

- Retired game warden says to update archery hunting area signs, where in the park archery versus is rifle permitted. Currently incorrect, and has caused some mishaps between hunters.
- Where is the correct line for archery? Signs are in need of relocation.
- Call Fish and Game for moving and updating of the Archery signs.
- Take down old UNH camp, he has noticed it is in great disrepair with logs on top and has become dangerous.
- Spoke on the mishaps of finding hunters shooting up Hayes Field. As well as across the trail at the campground.
- Says to rethink the Cystic Fibrosis Ride weekend in June. Trails were destroyed beyond full repair, causing thousands of years of erosion in a single day.
- July first will start no motorized use on Chester Turnpike
- Possible Lawsuit will be coming out against Park event for damages on the trail. Specifically, due to the lack of communication and permission for the riders to use the sections of private property.

Tom St. Martin, Candia Committee Representative: Notes the great websites and minute notes.

Next Meeting date to be decided at a later date.

Meeting Ends: 6:37 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, Christina Barton, Park Manager

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