

1 November 2013

**Minutes of Alexandria Conservation Commission / Alexandria Board of Selectmen
Field Trip Meeting with Grafton County District Commissioners 10/31/2013***

A special meeting was convened at 9:32 AM on 31 October 2013 by the Alexandria Conservation Commission with representative(s) from the Alexandria Board of Selectmen, the Alexandria Road Agent, the District Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Grafton County Conservation District. The purpose of the meeting was to review the options for controlling flooding over several areas of Bog Rd, thought to be caused by beaver activity in the area; and to review the status of the washed out embankment just west of the bridge on Washburn Rd.

Present: Kate Barrett, ACC; Steve Whitman, ACC; Donald Sharp, Alexandria BOS; Kenneth Hall, Alexandria BOS; Gary Patten, Alexandria Road Agent; Mike Dannehy, Resource Consultant Field & Forest; Beth Ann Finlay, District Conservationist, NRCS; and Pamela Gilbert, Grafton County Conservation District. Also present was Jenny Tuthill, resident of Alexandria.

The meeting began at the town Municipal Bldg. with an overview presented by Kate outlining the concerns of the Conservation Commission with respect to flood control, maintenance of Bog Rd. and the potential danger of harming the aquifer which supplies water to a number of local residents and the town of Bristol. Maps of the area were reviewed and there was discussion about consideration of placing a gate on Bog Rd. either side of the areas that flood which could be closed at times of 'high water'. During the discussion it was noted that the current weight limit on the road is 26,000 lbs (which is below the weight of most commercial carriers), the bridge weight limit has recently been reduced from 10 tons to 6 tons and that Bog Rd. was at one time a seasonal road.

The meeting then moved to the 20 acre site owned by the town on Bog Rd. where beaver dams were observed and indications of recent beaver activity in the area were present. The help of beaver deterrent experts has recently been sought and the ACC has been presented with a plan to 'control' the beaver, which has been shared with the BOS and the Highway Agent. After further review of the area, it was the opinion of Mike Dannehy and Beth Ann Finlay [as well as Gary Patten and Don Sharp] that due to the size of the area involved, the beavers would probably simply 'work around' any attempts to curtail their activity and that any attempts to control them would probably be only temporary. Wildlife activity is considered a natural occurrence and the feeling seemed to be that, in this case, we are better off learning how to live with it vs. trying to control it – again a brief discussion about restricted use of the road when conditions are unsafe or pose a threat to maintaining water quality of the bog and aquifer. The group also visited 2 other areas along Bog Rd. where the road frequently floods.

The group then moved on to the washed out area just west of the bridge on Washburn Rd. The intent here was to provide an update, with pictures, to the state officials in the hopes of initiating some state or federal action to avoid an impending disaster. This is a state road safety issue; however, the impact to the town if the road and/or bridge wash out would have major consequences to property and the environment.

After the meeting on Washburn Rd., participants departed with the understanding that Beth Ann Finlay would send suggestions for maintaining the integrity of the aquifer and Pamela would notify Shane Csiki, Fluvial Geomorphology Specialist with the NH DES, about the ongoing deterioration of the Washburn bank/slope into the Patten brook. It would be our initiative to invite Shane to Alexandria for further review. Through an e-mail forwarded by Pamela, there is an opportunity for financial support for remediation of the Washburn site to prevent a far costlier repair should a major storm hit the area.

Respectfully Submitted

Steve Whitman, Secretary
Alexandria Conservation Commission

*The above minutes have been attested to by Kate Barrett and Steve Whitman and will go into the record without further vote by ACC members.