



MILTON MUNICIPAL FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

Submitted by

MILTON CONSERVATION and RECREATION COMMISSIONS

October 6, 2008

VISION STATEMENT

The vision for the Milton Municipal Forest is to preserve the ecological integrity for plants, wildlife and other cultural and natural features, including Milton Pond, while enhancing the town's recreational opportunities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. RARE PLANT AND COMMUNITY PROTECTION

- ❖ Encourage hiring a qualified botanist to conduct a survey of rare plant species during the growing season.
- ❖ Avoid clearing timber near the West Side Trail to prevent the spread of non-native, invasive Japanese knotweed.
- ❖ Become informed about and involved in the Vermont Watershed Basin Planning Process:
 - Work with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (VTDEC) to determine a Water Quality Classification for Milton Pond.
 - Develop watershed-based strategies to maintain the level of water quality required by the classification.
- ❖ Consider working with the VTDEC to perform yearly Spring Phosphorus and Biocriteria Monitoring on Milton Pond. Volunteer efforts could be coordinated to perform this monitoring in partnership with VTDEC staff.

B. RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

- ❖ Allow and encourage low impact recreational activities. These can include:
 - Hiking
 - Bird Watching
 - Snowshoeing
 - Cross Country skiing
 - Hunting
 - Fishing
- ❖ Allow only non-motorized activities with the exception of trail maintenance and emergency service vehicles.
- ❖ Allow carry-in boat access for treated, non-motorized watercraft.
- ❖ Allow mountain biking on designated trails on a seasonal basis.
- ❖ Allow horseback riding on designated trails on a seasonal basis.
- ❖ Encourage people to stay on trails to protect sensitive species.

- ❖ Organize periodic volunteer efforts to remove litter from the forest.
- ❖ Consider developing ordinances regarding accepted recreational uses.

C. NATURAL RESOURCE AND WILDLIFE RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ Plan any timber harvest in consultation with the Chittenden County Forester to minimize soil compaction and erosion. Use only a certified logger who will carefully follow Vermont's Acceptable Management Practices (AMPs) for timber harvesting.
- ❖ Preserve cavity trees, mast trees and snags.
- ❖ Establish a wildlife monitoring system.
- ❖ Permit clearing around old apple trees.
- ❖ Encourage keeping pets on leashes to prevent wildlife harassment and to protect pets from the abundant porcupine population at the MMF.

D. TRAIL SYSTEM RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ Repair and relocate trails with reference to the Trail Repair Map (Map 9) found in The Milton Municipal Forest Inventory, Assessment, and Recommendations prepared by LIA Consultants.
 - Plan trails to connect with existing trails on adjoining property.
- ❖ Keep trails away from dens, vernal pools, riparian areas, and other fragile habitat features.
- ❖ Maintain a well-designed trail system to encourage users to stay on trails and avoid disturbing cultural features.
- ❖ Re-blaze boundary lines and replace missing iron posts at boundary corners.

E. EDUCATION

- ❖ Develop an educational brochure for circulation in the community and distribution at the trailhead.
- ❖ Post signage at the trailhead with brochures, maps, rules and regulations, etc.
- ❖ Consider creating education programs.
- ❖ Foster connections with local environmental education centers, local schools, Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, etc.
- ❖ Provide information to users about the transmission of zebra mussels and Eurasian water milfoil in bait buckets and on boats.
- ❖ Require users to pack out their trash.
- ❖ Encourage users to bury human waste more than 200 feet from any water source in a 6-8 inch deep hole.
- ❖ Encourage 'Leave No Trace' principles.

F. PUBLIC SAFETY

- ❖ In accordance with Title 10 Chapter 113 § 4707 of the Vermont State Statutes, a person who intends to set a trap for any animal on the property of another shall, prior

to setting the trap, notify the owner of the property of his intention to set the trap and of the prospective location of the trap. The owner of the property may, at any time, refuse to grant permission to set a trap or revoke the permission if previously granted.

- ❖ Encourage all visitors to wear safety orange during hunting season.
- ❖ Discourage swimming as elevated levels of *E. coli* and giardia are suspected.
- ❖ Monitor the integrity of the dam to prevent dam failure; consultation with an engineer is recommended.
- ❖ Research an access with a designated parking area.
- ❖ Encourage users to keep dogs on leashes at all times and pack out dog waste.