Orford Conservation Commission

Minutes of November 21, 2013 Meeting

Members Present: Harry Pease, Bry Beeson, Tom Bubolz, Carl Schmidt, Emily Bryant, Carl Cassel, Jeff MacQueen and Craig Putnam; Selectboard Representative: Anne Duncan Cooley

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

The minutes of the October 21 meeting were unanimously approved after a motion by Carl Schmidt and a second by Carl Cassel.

Old Business:

Conservation Fund Spending History Update: Carl Cassel reported that he has discovered some discrepancies regarding legal fees for Orford Conservation Land and Indian Pond Conservation Projects which have been corrected. Carl noted that communication between the Commission and Selectboard has improved, which should help prevent future issues.

Water Testing Program Update: Harry said that the public needs to continue to be informed when e-coli levels are above safe levels, and also notified when levels return to safe levels. He will discuss this with the Selectboard and Health Officer. Tom provided a summary of water test results over the past year.

Eck Woodlands Encroachment Update: The Selectboard is drafting a letter to Larry Sargent. The materials in question have not yet been removed.

Invasive Plants Demonstration Project Update: The project is to take place on the Orford Conservation Land. Craig reported that the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is a possible source of funding for the project. Beth Anne Finlay is the NRCS contact persona nd the next funding cycle begins in February. A site visit needs to be set up with NRCS. Impact on the farmer (Tullando Farm) was discussed as well as how to involve them. Anne will check into the applicability of the Town’s Purchasing Policy to the agreement with Tullando Farm and report back. Craig will talk to Beth Ann and Harry will talk to Rendall Tullar.

Outreach Update: There has been no new communication from UVLT regarding the request from an owner of large acreage in town for assistance with a conservation easement request. The Soper property has been divided into two lots, but there has been no new information about their desire to conserve the land. The Upper Valley Land Trust (UVLT) will send a letter to the Perilman’s since they have not returned phone calls. Trinity Farm is still on hold. UVLT has been in conversations about the Bischoff property (formerly Billy Brown’s) in Quinttown.

New Business:

Annual Monitoring of Richardson and Schwaegler Easement Properties: Emily Bryant organized the annual monitoring, which was completed. There was some discussion about whether or not to share information about private easements on the Town Website. It was agreed that information about easements on Town-owned land, such as Eck Woodlands, could be made public, but private easements should not be.

Website Contents: Harry reminded the Commissioners that we need to pull together the information that we agreed to provide for the Town Website. Jeff will provide the eBird hotspot link, Emily is nearly done with the walking trail map, Craig provided information on invasive plants, and Tom is preparing a spreadsheet on the results of water testing over the past several years.

Anne reminded us that a second Orford representative is needed for the Upper Valley River Subcommittee of the Connecticut River Joint Commissions. The Subcommittee consists of two representatives from each of the five towns on the New Hampshire and Vermont sides of this segment of the river. We suggested the Selectboard consider a landowner along the river who has strong interests, such as Rob O’Donnell or Rendell Tullar.

Tom moved, and Bry seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m.