SLIDES: Randolph Community Forest Partnerships

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Randolph Community Forest Partnerships
1995 - Hancock seeks conservation easement

- Randolph Planning Board spearheads support
  - Backing from Selectmen & Conservation commission
  - Jefferson follows with similar support
  - The “Gang of Three” emerges
NH – Dep’t of Resources & Economic Development [ DRED ] lends support but has no funds

- Letters to Congress urge increase in Legacy Funds
- Society for the Protection of NH Forests [ SPNHF ]
  - Lobbies for Legacy Funds
  - “Pond of Safety Project“ begins
- Forest Service desires land inside the Proclamation Boundary that includes the Pond of Safety
Pond of Safety
Jefferson supports Randolph

Planning Boards & Selectmen send letters to:

- Senators
- Subcommittee of the Interior of the Senate Appropriations Committee

NH Governor & a State Senator send letters to Senate Committee

Congressional Delegation Pursues Federal Legacy Funds

Forest Society adds support & directs the “Gang of Three” to

The Trust For Public Lands & meetings proceed

TPL begins negotiations with Hancock re: Conservation Easement
Ice Storm January 1998 damages hardwood forests of Northern NH

- Hancock decides to sell – abandons seeking easement
- TPL purchases 13,000 acres including the land within the Proclamation Boundary & including the Pond of Safety

TPL places conservation Easement on the land

Forest Legacy Funds become available winter 1998

It becomes possible for a small town to purchase the fee

Towns hold many public hearings in 1999

Results in community wide decision to have Randolph purchase the underlying fee to 10,000 acres
TPL aids Forest Service in buying the land inside the Proclamation Boundary

Land & Water Conservation Funds provide the Money

Gang of Three, Forest Service, & Forest Society consult

Results in stipulation that the Forest Service manage the land in consultation with elected officials of Randolph

Community reassured of access to the Pond of Safety
Randolph must raise $1,800,000 to purchase underlying fee

- Randolph Foundation
  - Raises $600,000

- Gang of three and TPL write grant applications
  - Raise $1,000,000

- NH Land Conservation & Heritage Investment Program
  - Raises $200,000
December 4, 2001

- Title passes from TPL to the Town of Randolph
- Pond of Safety project completed
- “Randolph Community Forest” a reality
- The name signifies effort to be all inclusive
“Gang of Three” propose new a management structure

- NH Legislature passes a special act to adopt new structure
  - Local Legislator guides to passage
  - DRED holds Conservation Easement gives full support

Randolph holds special town meeting – new town ordinance passed
Responsibility for day to day management placed in a 5 member appointed commission. Revolving fund is established. All income to the Forest.

Over all authority rests with the elected Randolph Planning Board
Board approves the annual Forest Commission Budget
DRED requirements leave commission flexibility

Primary Commission goals:

Hire professional forestry team & Prepare a 10 year stewardship plan

Learning curve aided by UNH Extension Service:

County Forester-Educator
Community wide goal setting public meeting
Requests for proposals circulated to licensed foresters

Forestry Team [ W-W&W ] hired after candidates present at public meeting:

10 year Stewardship Plan completed late 2003  [< 2 years ]
DRED accepts with high praise
Memo of Understanding

RFC, WMNF, and DRED have common objective

Manage Natural Resources for the Public Good

Coordinate as a Federal, State, and Town Partnership
Additional Agreements

Shared road agreement with WMNF
Snowmobile corridor agreement with DRED

Activity Managers

Randolph Mountain Club
Waumbek-Methna Snowmobile Club
Presidential Gem Society
Sugarbush manager
Lessons Learned

Inclusiveness from the start
Keep the public informed – Many Public Meetings
Establish clear Purposes and Goals
Small Group Leadership
Respect for the Range of Public Opinion

Goals achieved

Land Conserved – No Development
Public Access for Traditional Uses
Management for Sustainable Timber Harvest
No Adverse Effect on Town Taxes
Future Income to the Town

No Regrets – No Changes
Partners

Wider Community
Randolph Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Board of Selectmen
Jefferson Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Board of Selectmen
Gang of Three negotiating Team
NH Congressional Delegation
U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee
Society for the Protection of NH Forests [SPNHF]
Trust for Public Lands [TPL]
Randolph Foundation
Multiple Foundation Grantors
NH Land Conservation & Heritage Investment Program [LCHIP]
NH Legislature
Conservation Community
White Mountain National Forest [WMNF]
NH Department of Resources & Economic Development [DRED]
University of NH Extension Service
Randolph Forestry Team [W-W-W]
Randolph Mountain Club [RMC]
Snowmobile Club
Presidential Gem Society
NH Fish & Game Department