Wolcott Forest Stewardship Committee

Next public meeting on Thursday, July 9, 2026
6 pm – 8:00 pm

Attending: Gordon, Gabe, Dave, Trevor, Cate, Roger, Alice LaChance
Online: none
Quorum? yes

1. Call to order (6:10 pm)
2. Organizational actions
    a. Amendments to agenda
        i. Outside classroom (new business)
        ii. Sen. Peter Welch visit
        iii. Committee leadership
    b. Approve minutes from last two meetings (5/14 and 6/11)
        i. Postponed until August
3. Public comment
4. Ongoing (6:10 pm)
    a. Trail-building update
        i. The committee acknowledged that much of the trail building momentum has stalled, and discussed the need to add energy to these efforts to keep them going. Gordon mentioned that it could be a research opportunity to measure impact of our recreational developments on local flora and fauna, since the property has not been open for these uses previously. Cate mentioned that Vermont Huts may be worth engaging, in order to draw more people in. Roger said that he is willing to take on projects that work with the school to bring kids into the woods, including the development of outdoor classrooms/presentation spaces. Gordon voiced support for all of these ideas, but reiterated that they need to be organized and managed in order to be actualized.

ii. Roger ordered trail maps to post at the kiosk and the town office. He will hang them once they arrive. The committee discussed posting QR codes to download the map, report trail conditions and to sign up volunteers.

iii. Roger requested names of local contractors to prepare quotes for removing the gate at the bridge and the installation of bollards.

iv. Gabe mentioned a program that installs flying squirrel boxes to improve falling populations. The committee requested more information.

v. Gordon reported that he followed up regarding the Game of Logging program, and is waiting for a response from the organizer.

b. Maintenance update

i. Roger mentioned a few areas that were showing mild wear-and-tear and should be monitored, but had not noticed any areas that needed immediate attention.

c. Forest management update

i. Gordon gave an update regarding the Forest Road Reclamation Grant. Specifications for the bid process are complete, and they are currently planning walk throughs of the site. The grant money must be used by the end of October, so the timetable is tight. Hoping that a local contractor will take on the job.

5. New business (7:30 pm)

a. Roger mentioned that he met with faculty from Wolcott Elementary School to discuss adding an outdoor classroom space to the town forest. They identified a location off of Eaze Up that is already used by

faculty as an impromptu instruction space, and could be made more useful with the installation of some classroom features (benches, whiteboard, etc.). He will continue to work with school faculty until they generate a proposal.

b. Senator Peter Welch is planning to visit Wolcott. Details to follow, but there is a chance we can host him at the Town Forest.
c. Gordon voiced concerns about the projects or potential improvements that are not moving forward. He invited others to step into leadership if they feel they can move these projects forward. The committee agreed that more could be done with a higher level of organization and more promotion.
d. Trevor noticed a parking lot construction at the Tony Smith property and was curious as to how this came to be. Cate explained that NRLT had constructed it, and that they retain control of the property until the transfer to the town has been formally completed. He voiced concerns about using that property to access that side of the town forest due to proximity to the wetland and the abutting properties. Gordon asked in NLRT could proceed with building a boardwalk across the wetland for this purpose. The committee discussed what such a walkway would need in terms of liability, maintenance, safety, and respecting our neighbors' properties.
e. Dave asked about the status of the Westover property. Gordon reported that the Selectboard have not decided yet, but they did renew the current sugaring lease as a source of income. Gabe voiced support for maintaining it as-is to serve as a wildlife corridor, but was interested in assessing the impacts of recreation occurring in the town forest.

f. Roger brought up the need to clear foliage from the earthen dam and to clear out invasive species. The committee discussed the details of these projects, and the possibility of organizing a group work day to gain access through a neighbor's property.

6. Adjourn (8:00 pm)

Next meeting: Thursday, August 13, 2026