

STATE OF VERMONT
DEPARTMENT OF FORESTS, PARKS AND RECREATION

LAND and WATER CONSERVATION FUND-LOCAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
POST COMPLETION INSPECTION FORM

Sponsor: Town of Fairlee
 Site/Park Name: Fairlee Town Forest
 Project Number: 320 City/Town: Fairlee Zip: 05045

| | YES | NO |
|--|------|----|
| 1. Is the property being used for public recreation | X | |
| 2. Is the entire site accessible for all? | | X* |
| 3. Is upkeep and maintenance adequate | X** | |
| 4. Is the site open to the general public, including non-residence? | X | |
| 5. Is the site open all the time or within the allowance for closures? | X | |
| 6. Are Fees and charges reasonable and within the limits of the program | N/A | |
| 7. Was the 6(f) boundary verified with a determination that no conversion to other than recreation has occurred? | X*** | |
| 8. Is the LWCF required sign posted so the public can see it | | X |
| 9. Is the site free of any problems? (i.e. vandalism, safety health concerns, detracting man-made features) | X | |
| 10. Are all buildings on the site used in the support of the outdoor recreation activity? | N/A | |

Explanation for "No" responses:

* Property does not include recreation infrastructure that meets ADA requirements and does not need to for compliance with LWCF requirements.
 ** See notes below for guidance about improvements to trail heads and the need for designation of uses of trails and corresponding management of that use in order to adequately maintain the trail system.
 ***The entire boundary was not walked during this visit. The areas visited were free of encroachments that would trigger the need for a conversion.

General comments and notes for future inspection:

Tad Nunez, Town Administrator and David Paganelli, County Forester, accompanied me during this post completion inspection. We drove to two of three trail heads (did not see the trail head corresponding with the Howdy Trail) and walked several trails and roads.

I have shared the Town Forest Recreation Planning Toolkit resource with the Town and they are following its guidance with the goal of engaging members of the community in planning for future use and management of the Town Forest.

In addition to sharing the above referenced resource, we also discussed a number of strategies which would improve user experience and support responsible management of the recreational resources on the property.

I recommend the next site inspection revisit trail heads, areas where there have been reports of trail erosion and focus on the Howdy Trail which was not visited during this inspection, in addition to visits to improvements made as a result of the recommendations below.

Visitor Experience

The publicly available trail map is a useful resource for members of the public and I encourage the town to continue to update the map and make it available. In addition, information at the trail heads that will assist users in knowing what to expect from their experience in the Town Forest as well as what is expected of them (allowable uses, hours open to public, carry in/carry out, etc.) should be developed and installed. Consistent trail signage and trail markers should also be developed to help those unfamiliar with the trail system with way finding.

Trail Uses and Maintenance

Multi-use trail opportunities are valuable to the public because it offers the most users with an outdoor recreation experience. However, it does require that the trail manager take steps to design, build and maintain trails to meet the standards required for the different uses being allowed on a particular trail. The trails in the Town Forest are currently being used by a wide range of user groups including motorized use which will have a negative impact on natural resources if it is not maintained adequately. An important component of the Town's public engagement and planning process for the Town Forest should be delineating which uses are going to be allowed (and managed) on each existing trail. There are a number of factors that commonly contribute to decisions about which uses will occur on which trails. Examples for the Town and community members to consider are: avoiding sensitive natural features, financial ability to sustainably manage trail system, connectivity with neighboring trail systems, needs and interests expressed by the public. In addition to designating allowable uses on existing trails, trail managers undertaking similar planning processes may end up deciding to close, gate to limit motorized use, re-route, or construct new trails.

FPR Inspector: Becca Washburn *Inspection Date:* November 5, 2021
Director of Lands Administration &
Title: Recreation

Sponsor: Fairlee *Project number:* 320





View of one of the trail heads



Current trail head signage



View of another trail head with signage in background.