Existing Trail Review and Redesign

Key Attribute #:
1 9 11 17

Need #:
7 10

Estimated Cost:
$$$

Timing:
Short-Term

Although the Weathersfield Town Forest has yet to see much use as a public forest, there are many existing trails on the forest. These are a combination of former logging roads, deer trails, and other trails from past human recreational use. The town should conduct an assessment of these trails to begin creating a recreational trail system in the town forest.

The Upper Valley Trails Alliance is a fantastic partner in this project, as they have worked with nearby towns to review and assess the existing trails to evaluate for potential ecological harm and mitigate the site through necessary means.

Some of the existing logging roads have erosion and drainage issues, but these are relatively minor. The existing trail corridors present opportunities but will require some trail reconstruction. The review may also determine that certain trails should be closed to some or all user groups and signage that reflects that should be posted. Other existing trails are overgrown and simply require maintenance.

Based on the results of the existing trail conditions assessment and review, the Town should reroute, redesign, or create entirely new trails to enhance experiences for all user groups, improve drainage, and limit erosion. The system should include a mix of traditional footpaths and "bike-optimized" multi-use natural surface trails to provide desired experiences. Many of these trails should also be able to accommodate equestrian use. Equestrian-specific trails should also be added where necessary. For example, in a location with a technical mountain bike feature or a narrow footpath, an equestrian trail should parallel it.

Responsibility:
Town Forest Steering Committee/Conservation Commission

Partners Involved:
Trails Collaborative, UVTA, ATA, STAB, GMHA, local builder/users

Planning Required:
Trail reroute & redesign

Funding Opportunities:
RTP, RTC, VHCP, ERG

Toolkit Resources

Trail Assessment Forms

Natural Resource Guidance Toolkit

Sustainable Trail Standards