



TOWN OF GROTON

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Groton Trails Committee

**** Groton Conservation Summit ****
Lawrence Academy Media Center
February 16, 2017, 6:30 – 9:15 p.m.

Attendees:			Visitors:
Chairman	Paul Funch	X	See attached attendee list
Vice Chair	Olin Lathrop	X	
Secretary	Emma Newman		
Members	Wanfang Murray	X	
	David Burnham		
	Stephen Legge	X	
	Timothy Newman	X	
	Jason Remillard	X	
	Jim Peregoy	X	
	Dan Patnaude		
	Darcy Schultz		

1. Call to Order

Funch called the meeting to order with the above committee members present at 6:30 pm.

2. Groton Conservation Summit

This special meeting of the Trails Committee was called to allow the full Committee to attend the third annual Summit. This year, the Trails Committee was responsible for organizing the Summit. Funch and Lathrop invited all major open space landowners and all known Groton conservation organizations to send representatives. The general public was also invited to attend through notices in the local newspapers. Lathrop acted as the Master of Ceremonies to introduce the attendees, introduce the speaker, and moderate the nearly 1.5 hours of discussion that followed the presentation. There were at least 43 attendees; in addition to some members of the public, there were also representative from the Friends of the Trees, the Great Ponds Advisory Committee, the Groton Conservation Commission, the Groton Conservation Trust, the Groton Garden Club, the Groton Greenway Committee, the Groton Planning Board, the Groton Selectmen, the Groton Turtle Conservation, the Invasive Species Committee, Mass Audubon, Mass Wildlife, the Nashua River Watershed Association, the New England Forestry Foundation, the Sargisson Beach Committee, and the Squannacook Greenways (see attached list of attendees).

The Conservation Summit is intended to provide an opportunity for municipal, state, and private conservation organizations to meet to develop collaborative strategies for addressing complex biohabitat and property management issues that impact all of Groton and that cannot be solved by

any single organization with their limited resources. Excellent progress on this goal was achieved this year.

The speaker, Dr. David Black, teacher of Ecology and Environmental Science at Groton School and board member of the Groton Conservation Trust, made an outstanding 30-minute presentation to the group that was expertly delivered and conceptually stimulating. It captured the interest of the entire audience. It also led to a very productive discussion about Groton's exceptional biodiversity as well as approaches to developing a strategic scientific management plan that reflects a consensus of the town's/region's priorities for conservation and that is properly "sized" for the goals identified in such a strategic plan.

Dr. Black made it clear in his presentation that choices will be made by Nature as the climate change "experiment" we are experiencing unfolds. He also indicated ways that we may, if we choose, be able to influence the natural selections that will occur by default if we do nothing.

Dr. Black described how truly unusual and spectacular is the biodiversity found in Groton. Because this richness is typically taken for granted by people not trained in Ecological Science, the attendees were in agreement that public education is a critical ongoing need; indeed, many of the organizations represented at the Summit have been heavily involved in public education efforts for many decades.

Dr. Black's presentation succeeded in conveying to the attendees a very deep awareness of the great responsibility that we have to protect and nurture Groton's biodiversity in the most effective ways we can going forward. This means being mindful that there will be winners and losers in the natural world's struggle for adaptation, and that there are strategies that can be developed to retain the highest possible value of biodiversity going forward. In order for such strategies to be developed, an initial step is to conduct a detailed inventory of what flora and fauna exist in each of the numerous unique ecological niches in Groton. One idea brought forward at the Summit was for the Conservation Commission and the Groton Conservation Trust to collaboratively seek Community Preservation Funds to help defray the significant costs of taking such an inventory of the town.

The Groton Conservation Trust will be responsible for organizing the fourth annual Groton Conservation Summit that is tentatively scheduled for February 2018.

3. Adjournment

The Summit concluded at 9:15 pm.

Groton Conservation Summit
February 16, 2017
List of Attendees

Bettencourt, Brian
Burnett, Adam
Chilcoat, Stacey
Donald, Darcy
Easom, Bruce
Edwards, Susan
Eliot, Anna
Estes, Holly
Funch, Paul
Gagnon, Anne
Gerath, Mark
Giger, John
Goehringer, Suzanne
Huckery, Patricia
Hutchinson, Stephen
Jones, Jennifer
Lapres, Ted
Lathrop, Olin
Legge, Steve
Llodra, Jacob
Llodra, John
Loren, Linda

Luening, Jim
Marks-Strouble, Greta
McGrath, Helen
Meehan, Steve
Murray, Wanfang
Newman, Tim
Peregoy, Jim
Perkins, Carolyn
Pine, Bob
Pryor, Chris
Remillard, Grace
Remillard, Jason
Ruby, Michelle
Silinonte, Celia
Simmons-Mavilra, P.K.
Smigelski, Laurie
Stoddart, Marion
Strouble, Ray
Vander Linden, Chuck
Wolfe, Dan
Woodle, Alex