

**Minutes for MRATC Partnership meeting, Nov. 13, 1:00 p.m.,
USFS Work Center, Flatridge Rd., Sugar Grove**

Present: Anne Maio, Terry Walker, Jim Warden, Ron Bobko, Edie Bobko, Sharon Trumbley, Elizabeth Minnick, David Hatcher, Robert Hagen, Gerald Davis, Mary Davis, Janet Gibbons, Doug Levin, Bill Hurlebaus, George Kilgore, Carol Broderson, Marcia Pruner, Barry Garten, Ed Wright, Kathryn Herndon-Powell, Marci Holland, Josh Kloehn, Viviana Ruiz, Connor McBane, Evan Blevins

Chair: Gerry Davis

Introductions

Review of trail work 2019 and plans for 2020 projects - Doug

Bog Bridge to be replaced this weekend 11/17/19 @ 9:30 as well as two privies

We have a safety plan for our club that Doug explained. (see info from 11/13 MRATC meeting)

Fox Creek and Comers Creek Falls bridges - Josh Kloehn We were able to get out and observe the bridge \$225,000 coming to work on the Fox Creek Bridge. Engineers already looking at plans. More reviews and surveys to come until spring and then a design will take shape. Comers Creek - We will need a full replacement. A request for funds for this bridge has been submitted similar to Fox Creek. The detour is about 2 miles.

Hardcore 2020 (May 17-18): We will be on Wilburn Ridge for one more year.

Use of Shelter 2 at GHSP for Sunday and Monday night.

2020 is last year on Wilburn Ridge. Future possible projects? Josh said they had looked at the low wet spots near little Wilson Creek but that may be a Konnarock project. Discussion for Hardcore projects for 2021.

MRNRA plans for land management, visitor use management and how MRATC can help - Barry Garten indicated looking at doing active management in the high country above 4000 feet. Connor McBane discussed doing management with Red Spruce. The land management plan gives us guidance for the high country with the open areas. Hoping to address the issues of invasive species. Must begin by facilitating an inventory of what is there and seeing what is sustainable. Contact with all the user groups who have a stake in the high country. Use of animals and prescribed fire.

Other Mt. Rogers high country concerns and plans (campfires, sanitation, bears, etc.) Kathryn shared signage for bear boxes and use.

Kiosk signage - Massie Gap Kathryn and Anne worked on Kiosk information design for that Kiosk.

Other information from Partners: ATC Connor McBane introduced signage for Elk Garden, bollards have been considered. ATC also doing some work on protecting the Grays Lilly at Elk Garden. Looking to work with Spruce restoration on White Top. Planning to collect cones so we have a good seed source. Planning to plant understory Spruce from these collections.

GHSP - Limiting overnight backpacker lot. Need to have a reservation for an overnight backpacking now. Also limiting parking for day use. GHSP plans land management working with natural heritage to clear some areas.

Notice (as required by our VSA) to MRNRA of MRATC's planned upcoming **outreach** activities:

April 2020 (2 festivals): Abingdon Earth Day and Creeper Trail Fest;

May 2020: Damascus Appalachian Trail Days