



Town of Scarborough, Maine

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To: Town Council
From: Jay Chace, Assistant Planner
CC: Tom Hall
Date: August 10, 2011

RE: Conservation Commission recommendation for use of back land near Wiley Recreation Area

Over the course of the past months I have been working with the Conservation Commission on a number of initiatives, one of which has been to inventory Town owned lands that have been identified for conservation type uses (i.e. trails, habitat, etc.). As a result of their work the Commission has prepared the attached Habitat Management Plan for a 12 acre portion of “back land” near the Wiley Recreation area. The goal of the proposal is to create habitat for the New England Cottontail, which is a state endangered species. Ideally, projects such as this will improve the vitality of the species, thereby keeping it off the federal endangered species list.

The proposed land area was obtained by the Town as part of the Coulthard Farms Subdivision process. The property is now occupied by Town maintained recreational facilities and trail system through a portion of the woodland, as well as areas of undeveloped and largely inaccessible lands. As described in the Commission’s project proposal provided, the area in question appears well suited for habitat restoration due to the current vegetative state of the land and the proximity of similar habitat area on the abutting Rachel Carson property.

On July 27 the Commission held a public workshop at the Pleasant Hill Fire Station to inform the area residents of the proposal and to receive their feedback. Based on the public comment the Commission made the following modifications to the proposal:

- Retract the notion of expanding the existing trail system
- Eliminate the use of alders shrubs from the management plan (replace with other native shrubs such as dogwood, elderberry, winterberry holly, etc.)
- Ensure that the existing forest edge is maintained

With these modifications the Commission is now pleased to present the attached Habitat Management Plan for your consideration.

If Council is satisfied with the proposal, the Commission would request that you authorize the Town Manager to enter into an agreement with the U.S Fish & Wildlife Service for the proposed future use of the area.