

A WALK THROUGH THE LOVEJOY FOREST & HUNTING SWAMP - 5-10-2019



On May 10, 2019 at 9:00 am, several members of our Loudon Trails Committee invited Jules Robinson, Chairman of the Loudon Conservation Commission, and Craig Tufts of the Concord Regional Planning Commission to join us on a walk through Town of Loudon's property off of Lovejoy Road. The purpose of the walk was to prepare an overview of what work would be needed to be done in order to create an enjoyable trail system there.

Also participating on the walk were: Sandy Blanchard, Deb Eastman-Proulx, Denis Proulx, Nancy Huckins and Martha Butterfield.

The group made their way north on the narrow path along the Town's 100' right of way leading to the edge of the Hunting Swamp and were soon confronted by the reality that there would be no easy way to access the higher and drier western area of the Town's land without crossing over the private property of an adjacent land owner. The only alternative would be to construct a series of bog-bridging over the Pine Island Brook wetland and through a portion of the Hunting Swamp.



The group spent time that morning discussing possible crossing points and tentatively selected a spot in an open, level area where the crossing would be the easiest and safest way. But in the meantime, they had to hop over the Pine Island Brook at its shallowest area and gingerly make their way over the boggy areas before reaching a manmade banking adjacent to a shallowly dug canal.



Beyond the canal, a break in a stone wall could be seen, and the group followed a narrow path next to the stone wall rather than pick their way along the low-lying farm trail that had numerous trees lying across its path. They soon connected with a drier

part of that same trail and reached higher ground.

All along the entire two-mile trek, the group encountered several fallen trees, large limbs and undergrowth that would need to be removed later on. But it was easy to see that the entire area with its numerous stone walls and rolling hills had great possibilities for hiking.



The group covered most all of the overgrown existing trails and also saw possibilities for new areas to be explored. Up on the higher portion of the Town's property to the west, we imagined cutting a new trail along a stone wall where beyond it we could see how the land fell off sharply toward the lower forest that bordered the Hunting Swamp. Most impressive was an old farm trail bounded on both sides by stone walls which led southward downhill toward the back of the former Lovejoy Bed & Breakfast, now the Lovejoy Farm.



Our walk lasted until 11:15 am when we gathered briefly at the trail's entrance to discuss improvements to the future parking lot. It was a very productive morning and an enjoyable experience for everyone.

Martha Butterfield – December 4, 2019