HMCA Activities Update

by Diana Todd

for sharing at the May 11, 2015 meeting of the HPC

1. UMass bird migration study
   1. The researchers successfully installed the antenna at the top of Meadow as part of their study to track migrating songbirds.
   2. The Brattleboro Reformer covered the installation in a front page article.
   3. A visit to Hadley, where the researchers are netting and tagging the birds that will be tracked, was planned for Tuesday, May 12, but nobody signed up for the trip.
2. Connor Hunt, a student at Lyndon State College, contacted the HMCA seeking permission to conduct a long term study on the mountain involving mice, ticks and Lyme Disease.
   1. The initial contact came through the Hogback Facebook site, another indication that the venue is serving a useful purpose.
   2. HMCA forwarded the proposal to the HPC.
   3. The HMCA Board endorses the proposal and recommends that it be accepted.
3. Saltman Overlook memorial site
   1. We decided that rather than purchase a manufactured bench, we will construct one from a tree felled for the purpose.
   2. The interpretive sign about Vernal Pools is finished and ready for installation.
4. The Vermont Land Trust will be visiting Hogback on Wednesday, June 3.
   1. VLT is this year’s host for an annual gathering of professionals from land trust organizations from across Vermont, New Hampshire and Massachusetts.
   2. VLT asked that someone from HMCA be available to talk to the group about the Early Successional Habitat project and other activities on the mountain.
   3. Diana Todd and Staley McDermet have offered to speak to the group.
5. HMCA Treasurer Nancy Anderson applied for and received an EIN number for HMCA, a first step in the process of achieving formally recognized non-profit status on the federal level.
6. HMCA is planning an Annual Meeting on Sunday afternoon, August 9.
   1. No cost, donations accepted, open to HMCA members and the public.
   2. The meeting will feature a talk by Tom Wessels followed by an interpretive walk with him on the mountain (four hours total).
   3. The subject of his talk will be “Reading the Forested Landscape.”
   4. We hope to use Memorial Hall in Wilmington for the indoor portion of the meeting.
   5. Wessels is charging $600 plus travel expenses (another $50 or so.) We plan to use one of the $50 activity stipends already in our budget to offset part of the cost. The rest will be paid from our own funds.
   6. The number of people who can attend the indoor portion will be limited only by the size of the facility.
   7. We may decide to limit the outdoor portion to about 60 people, asking those interested to sign up in advance.
   8. We plan to announce the talk first to our members (the email distribution list), and if the outdoor slots don’t fill up, announce it more widely to the general public through things like Front Porch Forum, the Commons, the Reformer, etc.
   9. We’d like to start having an annual event with a well-known speaker and expect to request funding for future years through our Selectboard-approved budget.