

MA/RI-TACF Spring Meeting Minutes

Springside Park, Pittsfield, MA

4/29/18 Sunday

Present:

Lois Breault-Melican, Bob Presutti, Karen Jones, Brian Clark, John Meiklejohn, Yvonne Federowicz, Gray Curtis, Mark Meehl, Mike Novack., Mike Grames, Dave Lent , Denis Melican
Jamie Donald, Kathy Desjardin, Gray Curtis, John Emery, Josh Soojian

Jane Winn from "Beat" Berkshire Environmental Action Team — in Pittsfield came.

Jane@thebeatnews.org

BEAT has about 300 volunteers per year members. Often orgs vol events- bring reusable supplies. Newsletter to 1000, founded 15 years ago — Jane Founder

Seed Orchards

Birian distributed schematics for plantings

Pittsfield:

Remove plastic cones. 4 or 5 new plots. Kendra req. updated maps

Place to store mower at Pittsfield. In Lenox? Quonset Hut? Bob believes that we can do anything needed with orchard, such as put up a mower shelter.

Volunteer workday May 19-20

A volunteer appreciation gift was presented to Bob — beautiful chestnut wood birdhouse

Westboro:

Lois would like to get the kids more training. 15 kids

Paul Sisco had different config.

We would like to change spacing. Westboro and Pittsfield too — Brian would like to try.

Brought piece of plastic to show people

Westboro has a lot of slope, might cause erosion if we have a big block with no veg to catch water. Will be a swale at the top. Bill at F&W in March — going to use Bobcat to make runoff channel

Planning to buy same hoop house. Going to change location. Bill says we could plant things around as a windbreak. Native plant likely best. Should it come down at end of season?

Natural blight starting in Westboro seed orchard — can remove dead ones

Granville:

Did a spring cleanup

Kendra will soon look at for inoculations

17 local folks are on a volunteer work part list! Letter to 27 local TACF members
7 people responded. Others came from talks. We can replicate this for other orchards. Also did
thank you letter.

Early May: 2nd work party. Many replacement seedlings started by Brian. No new plots

Smith:

Paul will be inventorying soon. Might inoculate one plot.

Mid-May planting. 14th?

S.Kingstown

May 9th Kendra speaking down there

Will check out orchard before talk

Nail down work day

Likely need replacements for all new plots

Landsake

John Emery working at planting — both plots getting quite close to end

We don't know how we will apportion the replacement seeds

Bad chipmunk trouble last year. Lost about 90 percent. Traps? Smelly discouraging things?

Bristol Aggie

Over 1200 planted last year. A lot could be used in orchards this year

Lincoln: 169 new Nanking seedlings

Improving the ground. Large stumps rotted, formed holes

Brian will take his Bobcat out

Can reach out to local people - Jamie

There are involved local people in Lincoln — Mark

Phone numbers and emails

There is a memorial to a dead chestnut in Chestnut Center

Land Trust very involved

They said we could expand the orchard

Older orchards: how long should we maintain them?

169 seedlings to put in

Might be about 12 older selections left

Need to plan what to do with

Brian will go through the Lincoln trees and make a call — see which selected BC3F1 trees could
be removed from there at this point. Maybe not remove a whole line? Is the whole line "bad"?

How did the family perform in Meadowview? Some whole lines (Pollen parent lines from
Meadowviw) are just not good

Not much PT resistance in Clapper.

Graves PC3F1 selections should generally be retained so we can test for PT resistance
Clappers may not have PT markers

Breeding orchards:

NEFF is still in same state, Jamie would like some help
2 need cutting down, burning ok year-round
Nuts (Graves) needed for Granville
Weekend in May for workday
Pittsfield May 19, 20

Summer Meeting Date:

July 21, 2018 at NEFF with Work Party after

Stockbridge's Native Americans are interested in chestnut! These people were forced from the area in spite of agreement that they could retain Stockbridge.

Pollinations for this year

We might have 14 or 16
Americans for Jerrod's project
1.) Range-wide genomic analysis — we will hear more about that w/protocol
2.) 100 new sources of Americans — nuts from wild trees, grafts etc. A few every year fine.

Nankings: Jerod made changes in recommendations — will share
There are other homes for the GCO type pure Americans
We want lots of unique sources — Kendra

Dave and Mark have identified stands of pure Americans to give away. Has from 3 different regions, from separate trees. New trees all the time. Center of MA very rich.

Treesnap: several of us have already.
National is working to get Treesnap integrated with TACF DB.

Ratings and inoculations

Ratings:
W. Boyleston, Princeton — final selections early June
Uxbridge — need to look at again; need to help Kathy with

Inoculations:
Seed orchards!

1 inch diameter at 18 inches, 80% of plot needs to be that size though if others are way too small might wait another year

Smith 1-3 plots

Granville

S.Kingstown?

ACTION ITEM: Determine survival of Bristol Aggie spare BC3F2s

Gray's planting:

Lots of voles

Had trouble with planting

Did have some success

Afternoon Board Meeting

12:53

Board Members Present: Lois Breault-Melican, Karen Jones, Brian Clark, John Meiklejohn, Yvonne Federowicz, Gray Curtis, Mike Novack., Mike Grames, Denis Melican, Jamie Donalds, Kathy Desjardin, Gray Curtis, John Emery, Josh Soojian, Paul Wetzel
Guests Present: Bob Presutti, Mark Meehl, Dave Lent ,

Minutes from Winter meeting:

MOTION accepted unanimously

Treasurer Report Mike Novack

Handed out Statements: very few supplies first quarter

Numerous checks written after March 31st...

Zero-turn mowers: Jamie has donor who can match on half a mower. We need about \$1500 for the Pittsfield mower match.

ACTION ITEM: Jamie can contact Jane...

1000 members in BEAT — contact Jane re. Need for mower Contact: Jane@thebeatnews.org

Jamie would like to do a mailing also to our members in the Pittsfield area

MOTION accept Treasurer's report: passed unanimously

John did snail mail and got good response in the Granville area

Seemed more personal, he signed it.

ACTION ITEM:

Jamie will work on the Pittsfield area letter, work with John M and Lois to refine and send out.

Secretary Report Kathy Desjardin

Membership -256. We have also 25 new members also.

Director emerita: Charlotte and Mike Meixsell

Hoop house in Westboro (Kathy had found trailer in Scituate, found 3-5K price, too much... so hoop house)

Ship to Rufin if he can accept it?

New connections:

Norfolk Aggie: teacher at Norfolk Aggie. Lisa Collins, teaches forestry. Lois, Kathy, Denis, Rufin met with Lisa. Lisa doing a proposal with Board there.

Presentation on May 18th. Graves Seed orchard? Great place — they teach arborists there etc. Students would help, they come to Norfolk Aggie from 70 communities.

Tantasqua provided info for Norfolk.

Family connection at Norfolk Aggie to Bristol Aggie

Aldon from Nantucket: would like to plant chestnuts there for a food forest

Could contact Thad Jones — who is working with a reforestation project on Nantucket —

Kendra:

ACTION ITEM: We need to put Aldon and Thad in touch. Thad has experience.

Gray offered that a Nantucket person could stay with him to come see our orchards

MOTION accept secretary's report passed unanimously

President's Report Lois Breault-Melican

Spring National Meeting: Abingdon, Virginia

1st Day: Rex Mann — Having a chestnut story that is personal to help with audience

Education Committee meetings at National...

Website, Learning box — lots of need for these

There was strong interest in doing more with "Chestnut schools" — like Tantasqua in MA; use that as model and replicate. Could have them select a representative from group on our Board (idea from last year.)

Jesse from Tantasqua did a story that made the National chestnut magazine ... getting recognition at National level

Be sure to publicize work with schools — John M.

School network publications could help with that — Gray

Schools can have rigid curriculums because of requirements

Kendra might do an extended session on partnerships at this year's regional meeting

High schools, Jr high, university (Maine)

Jack S. Now president of CT

Rufin has a lot of rough-sawn chestnut wood that needs good homes. Old mother trees from years ago.

Norfolk Aggie? Make it into things

Brian would like some of the wood to make things. Save some for plaques... 8 inch boards 7/8 in or so. One side rough.

Pittsfield volunteer would like some

How much to keep, how much to get to people?

Eric Evans in Maine just auctioned a chestnut Adirondack chair, they hold up very well.

Rufin has the heavy-duty Chapter weed whacker (that Roy helped us buy years ago). Jamie can store, it is a heavy duty one.

Mark could use this in Lincoln; will pick it up from Rufin.

WBUR reporter creating a podcast on chestnut restoration did interviews from various chestnut groups; MA/RI, VT/NH, NY, National. We can hear it soon.

We can publicize this for various issues

Communications Report Yvonne Federowicz

Report re. National spring meeting:

Science & Tech Committee:

There will be a new science review by an excellent group of non-TACF scientists this August at Meadowview. Questions to be reviewed can be sent to Jared, cc Kim and Brian..

Using a propane torch to kill stump sprouts -- being investigated at National. Avoids herbicides which can spread between trees and kill desired ones alongside rogued ones.

Brian Roth involved

There is progress on predicting PRR resistance through 25 SNPs

Genomic testing of Clappers for blight resistance has a smaller variability than progeny testing/phenotypic

NY OXO chestnuts have 3 regulators to go through with very different approaches: USDA, FDA, EPA.

Dentabase is getting some advances!

GCOs -- germplasm conservation orchards of pure Americans with local source and good data -- the pure Americans in them survive reasonably well, at about 50% over 30 years
We would not need to do our own orchard; Maine or PA could plant them.

Tree Snap -- new app that lets you log new sources of American chestnut

Restoration Committee:

Are we working on restoring chestnut to our forest yet? (consensus generally 'yes') -- Bruce to work on document re this

Education Subcommittee:

Gimp -- open source photo alteration software

National would like more education-related stories for magazine/Esprout.

Coordination of educational material on TACF website is a goal.

Also notify Jules at National when we get a local media story about our work.

Chapters Website on National Website: Jules put together a password protected website of consolidated chapter resources -- distinct from individual chapter websites

Let Jules know anything else that we need

ACTION ITEM: YF to email Chapters Website password to Board

ACTION ITEM: Lois, Yvonne et al. talk to Barb about Norfolk and Bristol Aggie; Barb could talk to those folks too (added from YF notes after MA/RI-TACF meeting)

Demo Trees

Providence Parks not a good site for seed orchard but maybe Demo Planting

Kendra will have more this year

Kendra has some from last year

Starting with a deep pot is helpful to start with — 1.5 foot deep? Get to be 3 ft in one .

Mycorrhizae? Hill Craddock has great trees

ACTION ITEM Kendra will bring down some B3F3s May 9

Yvonne — put in notes from national meeting

Orchard Management Report Brian Clark

Getting heavier material for planting

Implication of planting spacing change on irrigation: 2 foot apart emitters rather than 1 foot

We can order tubes for Westboro with 2 foot spacing and reuse the old 1 foot Westboro ones at Weston

John Emery needs a 16 foot ladder, one disappeared...

MOTION: replacement ladder for Weston area orchard use approved unanimously

Bamboo — need good supply

Fertilizer being done

Rechargeable lead acid gel batteries — Jamie has; tell Gordon and Rudi

Paid interns?

Josh has a contact who might be able to do paid part-time work — he can present to them what is needed.

He knows people all over state. Jim DiMaio also.

Kendra will have a full-time intern most of the season. If we need them for a few days that might help.

Getting more help at South Kingstown

Get a list of S.Kingstown work needed to Kendra before her talk

Unpaid interns and gas reimbursement:

Gas money for Mark Meehl

We specify the category of unpaid intern as the only people who can be reimbursed for mileage.

We will clarify this

MOTION: Reimburse unpaid interns for travel to orchards or events at the IRS nonprofit rate.

This policy to be reviewed at the summer quarterly MA/RI-TACF meeting. Approved unanimously.

(No reimbursement of board members for this!.)

ACTION ITEM: Josh will review the VT/NH policy for travel reimbursement and present at the summer meeting.

Low mow grass seed as an idea. Clark apple orchards are finding this a good product

Tantasqua: disc golf course at bottom of new area, maybe good place for demo plantings?

Buckland Historical Society — potential seed orchard site. Stacy Contrabecki and Mike McCusker involved.

May 15th — surveying site. Historical Society owns the property.

Dartmouth — Russ Hensel: Jamie unavailable during discussion; no update

Ashfield: Brian was stopped in a bar by an attendee of John Meiklejohn's presentation... they have land and might be interested in doing a seed orchard.

Guido's window display: 25 new memberships. mid-March to mid-April. Guido's sells chestnut flour! We might like to do that again since good membership result

Karen gathered data re. This meeting's attendees' preparation time on the sign in sheet.

Strategic Plan:

Karen handed out latest draft. Please read, review and give comments back to Committee by June 15th. They hope to then turn it around and give us a new copy.

Current Subcommittee: Karen, Jamie and Brad.

Next: development of implementation plan

Taking from goals and strategies to actual strategies

"Champion: the comeback tale of the American Chestnut Tree" book noted... Lois has read it through. Discussion on whether to have a case to hand out.

We want to contact the publisher to ask re. a Case discount

Annual Fall Meeting: Huntsville AL October 25-27

Flying to Atlanta is cheaper than AL

Meeting adjourned 3:04

ACTION ITEMS re. These minutes: Add Karen's tally list to minutes, add own notes re. National meeting

Added after meeting by YF:

A productive work effort at the Springside Park Seed Orchard followed, along with a wonderful pizza dinner at "Hot Tomato".

Vole damage noted in Springside Park orchard.

