

Stewardship Monitoring Report

Property Information

(1) Name of Property: **West Monitor Barn**

(2) Property Ownership:

RLT Private

If privately owned, record name and address of current owner:

Name(s): Vermont Youth Conservation Corps (VYCC)

Address: 1949 East Main Street, Richmond, Vermont 05477

Contact Name & Phone #: Keegan Tierney: 802.434.3969 x141, keegan.tierney@vycc.org

(3) Has there been a change in ownership since last report?

Yes No

If Yes, include recording information below:

Visit Report

(4) Date and Time of Inspection: Thursday 12/8/2011, 8:30am-10:30am

(5) If privately owned, was owner contacted prior to visit (if yes how)?

Yes No

I contacted Keegan Tierney, VYCC Land and Facility Manager, several weeks prior to the visit via email and telephone to schedule the inspection.

(6) Did owner (or representative) accompany the monitor?

Yes No

Keegan Tierney-VYCC and Christa Kemp-RLT Chairwoman, accompanied me on the monitoring tour.

(7) Describe how the land is currently being used (in restricted area only). Give specific detail about agricultural and forest uses if applicable:

The property covers approximately 233 acres. Most of the upper elevations of property are forested. There is little merchantable timber on the property. Lower elevations are primarily open field, agricultural (~35 acres of which ~18 acres serves as cattle pasture, and ~7 acres for vegetable gardens and greenhouse), the West Monitor Barn and parking. Vegetable farming operations continues to expand as the landowner now operates a production farm. Ten lean-tos have been installed along the west side of the property in the tree line just above the old field.

(8) Monitor's best assessment of whether the terms of the conservation restrictions are being observed: (if No, explain below or on attachment)

Yes No

- (9) **Did you note any possible violations of the terms of the conservation restrictions:**
(if **Yes**, explain below or on attachment) **Yes** **No**

ATV tracks were again found in and across an intermittent streambed and sensitive and wet soils (site #1 on attached map). VYCC reports that it's President authorized a neighboring landowner to use an ATV on the property for the purpose of trail maintenance and that he mistakenly included authorization for the ATV use in a conserved portion of the property. While this miscommunication was unfortunate, it does not appear to be a deliberate violation of the conservation restrictions.

To prevent similar occurrences of unintended damage in the future, to minimize soil erosion and compaction, and to ensure that RLT and VHCB fully understand VYCC's intentions regarding ATV usage on the property, a map of the current trail system should be prepared and shared with all parties. This map should identify all locations where motorized vehicle operation is expected for management purposes, the expected frequency of operations (e.g., hours/day and days/year), optimum trail conditions, etc. It is understood that in certain emergency situations such guidelines might not apply.

Unauthorized ATV Activity: According to neighboring landowner Wright Preston, unknown individuals using jeeps/ATV's trespassed on Andrews, VYCC and Prelco properties in early July 2011. Access was on the VAST trail starting at Valley View Extension. Soils, vegetation and gates were damaged in the process. (Appendix 1).

(10) **General Remarks**

- A. Property Management Plan:** A property management plan is still in development by the landowner. The conservation easement stipulates that concurrence of the Richmond Land Trust and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board is needed for the plan to become final.
- B. The Forest Management Plan** for this property calls for thinning stand numbers four and five, and re-examining stand number three in 2009. As of 12/8/2011 these prescriptions have not yet been implemented. VYCC is encouraged to review its forest management plan and the requirements for enrollment in the State's Current Use program to ensure that VYCC is not in danger of violating that agreement.
- C. Trail Master Plan:** In 2009 VYCC reported that it was the process of "creating a detailed trail master plan that will become incorporated as part of our land management plan." This plan will "include phased restoration and construction timelines." The projected completion date was to be the end of March 2010. As of 12/8/2011 this plan has not been completed. VYCC is encouraged to provide a draft plan to RLT and VHCB for review prior to adoption the adoption of this trail plan.
- D. Trail maintenance and trail development:** A culvert under the primary west side trail washed out completely in 2011 and is sitting up-ended beside the trail (site #2). Replacement of this culvert as soon as possible is encouraged to prevent the washout from growing. A culvert just below the lean tos has been in recommended for replacement since 2008 (site #3).

As noted in the previous monitoring reports, water diversion structures installed on the west side trail require yearly maintenance (removal of debris/leaves) and should be inspected yearly to ensure proper function. The upper portion of this trail still requires a more systemic fix to address surface water flows.

Repair, rerouting, and potentially decommissioning, of some trails and culvert replacement is still recommended at sites #3-6 (as identified in the 2005-2010 stewardship monitoring reports). Repairs at these locations would help restore and/or maintain forest and water quality and prevent further soil erosion on the property.

The 2007-2010 stewardship monitoring reports recommend installation of an ATV barrier at the northern end of the narrow—often wet—trail in the ravine between rocky ridges with significant wildlife sign (site #6). IF this isn't feasible, consider taking other steps to prevent unwanted ATV travel through this section and to minimize erosion such as re-routing the trail.

- E. Invasive Exotic Plants:** In 2007 the exotic, invasive shrub Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*) was found growing in the northwest portion of the property (site #7) and the largest plants were covered with a blue tarp. As recommended in 2007-2010 monitoring reports these plants and others in the area should be removed before they spread. Surrounding area should be checked for additional plants. Follow-up monitoring should occur for two-three years to ensure that dormant seeds haven't sprouted.

Additional infestations of Japanese barberry and buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*), an invasive exotic tree on the property (sites #8 and #9) were found in 2008. Actions were taken immediately and again in 2009 to remove these plants. These sites were not monitored or treated in 2010 or 2011. Resurvey and follow-up control are encouraged to prevent return.

- F. New Surveys:** In 2010 property lines near the East and West Monitor Barn campus were resurveyed. It would be helpful if VYCC would provide RLT, VLT and VHCB with the survey data in an appropriate GIS format to facilitate ongoing stewardship mapping.

(11) Attachments (Note how many of each - leave blank if none):

 Photos 1 Map Drawings 1 Appendix

 Other (describe _____)

(12) Name of Monitor: Jon Kart

Signature: 

Date: 12/8/2011

Appendix 1: Correspondence regarding ATV trespass in July 2011

Date: Fri, 4 Nov 2011 10:17:02 -0400
From: bradge@comcast.net
To: jonjkart@hotmail.com
Subject: West MB property

Hi Jon: I may have neglected to pass on this exchange between Tom and Wright regarding jeeps wreaking some havoc along the VAST trail through Andrews, VYCC and Prelco property. Wright made repairs and installed posts at two property boundaries. Maybe this could be included in the next monitoring report for the West property.

From: Thomas Hark [<mailto:thomas.hark@vycc.org>]
Sent: Friday, July 08, 2011 4:36 PM
To: Preston, Wright
Subject: RE: VAST Gate at Prelco / VYCC smashed by Jeeps

Thanks. Sorry you need to do this. How do we stop this in future...as I am sure they will be back.

Cheers, Thomas Hark, President

From: Preston, Wright [<mailto:Wright.Preston@tdbanknorth.com>]
Sent: Friday, July 08, 2011 4:29 PM
To: Thomas Hark **Cc:** Keegan Tierney; Paul Schmidt; Christa Kemp
Subject: RE: VAST Gate at Prelco / VYCC smashed by Jeeps

Thanks Tom. I'm happy to put the 2 posts in the Andrews / VYCC line. I think my beagle, Oliver, and I will replace the gate and install posts this evening while Cindy and a bunch of kids are at the movies. I'll take pictures of the two posts for your file. Thanks. Wright

From: Thomas Hark [<mailto:thomas.hark@vycc.org>]
Sent: Friday, July 08, 2011 4:21 PM
To: Preston, Wright
Cc: Keegan Tierney; Paul Schmidt; Christa Kemp
Subject: FW: VAST Gate at Prelco / VYCC smashed by Jeeps

Wright, Unbelievable.

Cedar posts sound like a good plan. Need help? Vast Club I am sure would pay and do this work if you asked. I can meet you depending when you do this.

Thomas Hark, President

From: Preston, Wright [<mailto:Wright.Preston@tdbanknorth.com>]
Sent: Friday, July 08, 2011 10:45 AM
To: myskaburritt@aol.com
Cc: Thomas Hark
Subject: VAST Gate at Prelco / VYCC smashed by Jeeps

Larry: Last Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday two Jeep type 4x4 vehicles entered the VAST Trail off Valley View Extension, drove to the right of the locked gate (dug things up there) then proceeded east onto Andrews, then drove around the Andrews/ VAST gate then smashed the Prelco / VYCC gate (see photos) then down to Snipe Ireland and around that gate. I let Richmond police know about it this, this morning. I will straighten, strengthen and re-install the Prelco / VYCC gate this week-end.

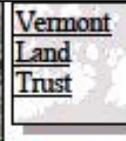
In the interest of keeping Jeep and ATV traffic off the VAST trail, I'm willing (this week-end) to pound in two cedar fence posts at the Valley View Ext. gate, if that is ok with you.

Tom: In the interest of keeping Jeep and ATV traffic down on the VAST trail on VYCC land, I'm willing to drive in two cedar fence posts at the "Jeep drive around" at Andrews and VYCC.

Thanks, Wright

Stewardship Recommendations for the West Monitor Barn Property 2011

Base map from VLT



Property: Montior Barns
 Location: Richmond, Vermont
 8 Bailey Avenue, Montpelier, VT 05602

7. Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*) infestation. Identified in 2007. It should be relocated and treated.

4. Standing water at low spot in trail ~10m x 5m. Consider re-routing trail or raised-walkway.

5. Steep, rutted, trail prone to erosion. Re-route to follow contours. Consider installing ATV barrier.

6. Narrow—often wet—trail in the ravine between rocky ridges with significant wildlife sign. Consider steps to reduce erosion and ATV access from trails connecting from the East Monitor Barn property.

2. Culvert blowout at trail.

8. Japanese barberry (*B thunbergii*) 2008

9. Buckthorn (*R cathartica*) 2008

3. Culvert needs replacement (2008)

1. ATV tracks on conserved land and in stream bed and sensitive soils.

Conserved Wheeler property held by RLT & VHCB

New survey in red

Conserved Monitor Barns property in yellow Co-held by RLT & VLT

Protected Property

Scale: 1:10,000

