

Pondicherry Park Stewardship Committee

Minutes from 1/10/2024

- 1.) Meeting called to order at 5:02 PM at the LELT office
- 2.) In attendance: Lauren Pickford, Chair (LEA), Paul Tworog (Town), Anne Mann (Public), Jon Evans (LELT).
- 3.) The Kendal C. and Anna Ham Bridge extension is in production with Great Northern Docks of Naples. Allied Dock Services of Naples will do the installation in April. The committee recommends that the section of trail from the Ham Bridge to the Hancock Amphitheater be improved to cover roots and improve drainage. The current “bog bridge” is inadequate for wheeled mobility devices and should be upgraded.
- 4.) The Committee discussed a suggestion from a citizen to groom the accessible portions of Pondicherry Loop and Willet Brook Trails. At this time, no plan has been presented to the committee for consideration. The Management Plan mentions grooming by snowmobile/drag specifically, contingent on the original infrastructure being upgraded to support grooming equipment. That upgrade occurred in 2022. The groomed trail would still be available to snowshoers and pedestrians and for a short section, dogs.
- 5.) Emerald Ash Borer impact will begin to present itself in the coming years. The committee recommends removing dead or dying ash trees in proximity to the walking trails and structures as outlined in the management plan. Other standing deadwood not considered a threat to visitors or structures by the Public Services Department, should be left to provide wildlife habitat. The Town may want to consider identifying and treating some of the few legacy ash trees in the Park with pesticides.
- 6.) The “No Dogs Beyond This Point” sign is missing from the Willet Road entrance. The committee recommends that new signage with use guidelines specific to dogs be placed at the parking area on Maine Lakes Science Center Land on Willet Road in addition to the kiosks on Town land.
- 7.) Other:
 - A.) LELT developed a sign for the 2 main kiosks that illustrate the permanent protection of the Park through a Conservation Easement. The signs are allowed under Section 9, Part D.
 - B.) University of Maine research at Pondicherry Park, see below:

Hi Jon and Lauren,

As you may or may not recall, Devin Rowe from UMaine had reached out to the Town last spring to get permission to monitor for BTM and Spongy moths in Pondicherry Park. I had been the primary contact for Devin when he first reached out, so I think that's why he sent me the results. If you could share with the Town on behalf of the Pondicherry Park Stewardship committee that would be great.

Also note they will be conducting web surveys in the park this winter and plan to monitor next year as well, pending continued permission.

Thanks,

Maggie

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Devin Rowe** <robert.d.rowe@maine.edu>

Date: Wed, Jan 3, 2024 at 12:44 PM

Subject: 2023 Browntail Moth Trapping Results (Pondicherry Park -Devin Rowe PhD UMaine Student)

To: Maggie Lynn <maggie@lelt.org>

Hey Maggie,

Thank you for letting us trap browntail moth (BTM) at Pondicherry Park!

Here are summary statistics for the male Browntail moths that were caught at your site:

Sum Moths Caught	Average caught per trap (2 traps)
8	4

Your site was ranked 6 out of all the sites (26) I trapped for BTM in Maine.

Your site also collected 14 spongy moths. This moth is an established pest in New England since the late 1800s. Their hairs are not toxic like the BTM caterpillar, but they are known to be aggressive tree defoliators.

Take these numbers as a snapshot of BTM at your site, not the full story. We are going to make statistical models based on this data to predict BTM densities in the near future.

Once again, thank you for letting us trap at Pondicherry Park. We will be coming back this winter to count BTM winter web. Winter web counting is dependent on bright sunny days, so I cannot provide precise dates when we will be counting. I also plan to send another email to you all in spring about the next adult moth trapping season.

Best,

Devin

8.) Meeting adjourned at 5:45 PM

Minutes recorded by Jon Evans

Next meeting is 4/10/2024 at the Dunning Bridge, conditions permitting.