



THE CANAAN COMMUNITY FOREST

The 424 acres of land comprising the Canaan Community Forest property was transferred to Town ownership on September 12, 2013. This land was acquired with 368 acres conserved under an easement held by the Vermont Land Trust, and 56 developable acres with available for future economic development. An additional 10 acre parcel and small building that was historically the Tillotson family camp was also purchased with funds from the Tillotson Trust.

The Canaan Community Forest Committee is presently made up of the following members: Odette Crawford, Yvan Doyon, Eugene Reid, Chris Masson, Morgan Wade, Vernon Crawford, Greg Noyes, and Noreen Labrecque (as Town treasurer). Presently, the committee is working on establishing recreational trails, either leasing the sugar woods or selling sap, and finalizing the management plan.

Recently, the Canaan Community Forest received a \$73,000 Tillotson grant to help the town move forward in meeting the goals of using the community forest property to enhance local educational, recreational, and economic opportunities. \$30,000 of this grant is proposed to be used to partially fund a position to develop and pilot a diversified agriculture program. This vocational program would educate juniors and seniors in our area on historical and current land uses in our region. Many of our students have strong connections to the local environment. The diversified agriculture program would prepare students for careers or further education in a variety of fields including agriculture, forestry, and the biological sciences. A truly integrated program would mesh literacy, math, and science, while students acquire deep knowledge about their natural surroundings. An example experience would involve students learning about a tree, harvesting it, and then designing, producing, and marketing a product all through Canaan Schools. The attached sheet will give you more ideas on what the diversified agriculture program could look like.

The remaining \$43,000 will be utilized in initiating our recreational and economic goals. Specifically, this coming summer we will start improving access to the property through the development of a series of trails for walking, hiking, cross country skiing, and snowshoeing. Approximately \$10,000 of the grant funds will go towards the trail work, with the remainder being used to start preparatory site work for the sugaring operation. An initial forest cutting, scheduled for winter of 2014, will need to occur prior to the establishment of any form of sugaring operation. County Forester, Matt Langlais, will coordinate and oversee this forest harvest.

It is hoped that wise use of these grant funds and our continued forward motion in meeting the community goals for this property will result in further funding. Any resident with any interest or thoughts on this work should feel free to contact a committee member at anytime.

Potential Major Units of Study for Canaan's Diversified Agriculture Program

Our Local Forest Economy

- Topics - Plant and Tree ID, Forest Pathogens and Disease, Forestry Practices, Wood Identification.
- Projects - plant collections, pathogen collections, succession study, forest management plan, forest measurements, Game of Logging, small scale logging, sawmill work, annual firewood sale, Christmas tree and wreath production,
- Possible Field Trips: logging sites, tree farms, sugarbushes, apple orchards, Ethan Allen...
- Preparation for Continuing Education in or Employment as: forester, environmental science, biologist, logger, sawyer...

Managing Our Natural Resources

- Topics - Soil and Land, Water and Air Resources, Fish and Wildlife, Outdoor Recreation, Renewable Energy, Sustainability, Global Environmental Topics
- Projects - deer yard study, trapping small mammals, experiments with alternative energy, Annual Soil Competition at VTC, Wildfire Prevention Training,
- Possible Field Trips - local farms, Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest, VTC, Silvio Conte Wildlife Refuge, Jay Peak Resort,...
- Preparation for Continuing Education in or Employment as: forester, environmental science, biologist, logger, sawyer, farmer, outdoor recreation, game warden,...

Modern Agriculture

- Topics - Sugaring, the Localvore Movement, Horticulture, Agriculture (Dairy, Beef, Chicken, Vegetables, Berries),
- Projects - gardening, pruning, grafting, harvesting of fruit, raising chickens, entrepreneurship in agriculture, making syrup and syrup products, tractor safety course,
- Possible Field Trips - local dairy, beef, and fruit farms (Gray's, Haynes Homestead, Baum), Hardwick VT, VTC, Strawberry Farms in Quebec, local sugaring operations,...
- Preparation for Continuing Education in or Employment as: sugarer, farmer, agricultural entrepreneur,...

Woodworking, Design, and Manufacturing

- Topics - Properties of Wood, Design, Build, Manufacture, and Marketing of Wood Products, Entrepreneurism,
- Projects - furniture, lamps, bowls, instruments, boats, first aid certification, safety
- Possible Field Trips - Ethan Allen and other manufacturers
- Preparation for Continuing Education in or Employment as: woodworker, luthier, ..