

State Line Serpentine Barrens Roundtable Meeting
January 13, 2011
Nottingham County Park, Nottingham, PA

Attending:

Molly Anderson, TNC/Volunteer Program Manager
George Gress, TNC/Land Steward & Fire Specialist
Tracy Coleman, TNC/Conservation Scientist
Jay Gregg, Nottingham County Park/Superintendent
Bob Williams, Chester County Parks & Recreation/Assistant Director
Josh Parrish, TNC/Director of Conservation Finance & Stewardship
Ray Hayden, BSA Camp Horseshoe/Director
Cindy Whitesel, TNC & Friends of the Stateline Serpentine Barrens/Volunteer/Chair
Bob Barker, TNC & Friends of the State Line Serpentine Barrens/Volunteer/Vice Chair
Henry Whitesel, TNC & Friends of the Stateline Serpentine Barrens/Field Operations Coordinator
Kent Wagner, TNC & Friends of the State Line Serpentine Barrens/Volunteer
Richard Winner, Goat Hill Hunt & Fish Club/President
Joe Frassetta, Bureau of Forestry, William Penn District
Grant DeCosta, Chester County Open Department of Open Space Preservation/Preservation Compliance Officer
Dr. Jessica Schedlbauer, West Chester University Department of Biology
Kerry Horner, Nottingham County Park/Foreman
John Mikowychok, Director, CPRP
Rick Deppen, DCNR

Purpose of the meeting was to discuss the current status of the State Line Serpentine Barrens and future efforts to maintain habitat restoration and support the Friends of the State Line Serpentine Barrens.

Molly Anderson opened with a discussion of the objectives of the meeting, which were to discuss the status and needs of each of the sites, and needs for the Friends of the State Line Serpentine Barrens to continue their efforts to preserve the State Line Serpentine Barrens. The meeting was organized around site descriptions and maintenance requirements.

Chrome Barrens

Background of the site and current maintenance objectives, purchase and history; acreage; burn history; fuel load; types of trees; value as a seed bank. Friends donated nearly 100 volunteer hours to trail work and habitat restoration in 2010.

1. Bob Barker from the Friends gave a current report on the status of the site.
2. Tracy Coleman has current work plan for Chrome and will send to Friends.

Issues:

1. Being used as a shooting range
2. Boundaries not clear; illegal hunting in Lower Chrome; farm equipment may be on private land
3. Need to advertise trail network.
4. Need up-to-date maps and established trails to bring in visitors.
5. Explore possible burns.

Action Items:

1. Friends will meet with Elk Township to give a status report on Chrome Barrens and seek assistance in removing abandoned equipment and monitor Chrome Barrens.
2. Friends will set up workdays in Chrome Barrens for habitat restoration. Firebreaks need clearing.
3. Friends will contact Keith Mullen, Wildlife Conservation Officer (WCO), about the shooting in Chrome Barrens.
4. Ray Hayden and Tom Murphy will explore possible Scout projects to build bulletin board, build footbridge, paint gates, and clean up.
5. Friends will continue trail work in Chrome Barrens. TNC will provide mapping assistance for brochures.
6. George Gress and Tracy Coleman will set up dates to walk the Chrome Barrens with the Friends group to determine status and work to be done here.

Nottingham County Park (NCP)

Background given by Superintendent Jay Gregg; NCP establishing grassland seed stock; Chester County is interested in doing more prescription burns in small burn areas. Friends donated almost 400 volunteer hours to habitat restoration in NCP in 2010.

Issues:

1. Remove 100 piles from the restoration sites where Friends have done their work. Continuing issue of what to do with the wood cut around the grasslands.
2. Priority is to remove the dangerous trees along the trails.
3. Possible removal of debris from quarry along Doe Trail.
4. No action on TNC-owned 92 acres adjacent to Park.

Action Items:

1. NCP will remove the piles of wood cut by the Friends.
2. NCP will look into removing debris from the historic Martin Dunlop quarry along Doe Trail.
3. Friends will continue to assist NCP in removing dangerous trees along the trails.

4. Friends and NCP rangers will walk the trails and identify what trees need to come down.

New Texas Barrens

Background given by Molly Anderson, George Gress, and Tracy Coleman. Henry Whitesel from Friends of the State Line Serpentine Barrens gave a status report on the grasslands, current as of fall 2010. Friends donate over 40 volunteer hours to New Texas habitat restoration in 2010.

1. Trail conditions good; grasses excellent.
2. Important seed bank.
3. Friends' efforts have been successful.
4. Mostly maintenance for 2011.

Issues:

1. In 2001, TNC had a verbal agreement with the Hannums to maintain the Serpentine Barrens habitat on the property.
2. In 2008, the verbal agreement was not pursued since the land is held privately with the Hannum family.
3. Friends of the SLSB will pursue an agreement with Hannums to continue maintenance.

Action Items:

1. TNC will advise the Friends as to how to proceed with an agreement with the Hannum family to continue habitat restoration on the Barrens.
2. Friends will meet with the Hannums to discuss future efforts on the New Texas Barrens.
3. George Gress and Tracy Coleman will set dates to walk the New Texas Barrens with the Friends to determine status and maintenance plan.

Goat Hill Public Plant Sanctuary

Henry Whitesel gave a summary of the work Friends has done in the Goat Hill Barrens. Friends donated over 230 volunteer hours to habitat restoration and trail clearing in Goat Hill in 2010.

Issues:

1. Trail marking in Goat Hill.
2. Involve the Boy Scouts from Horseshoe Camp in trail projects.
3. Monitor the areas PECO cleared along the power lines.
4. What to do with the cut wood near the grassland sites.

Action Items:

1. Joe Frassetta will meet with the Friends to discuss the maintenance areas for 2011.
2. Rick Hartlieb, DCNR, will GPS trails and boundaries and will make accurate maps.
3. TNC will survey their properties in the Goat Hill area.

Friends of the State Line Serpentine Barrens

Friends of the State Line Serpentine Barrens reported on their donated volunteer hours and needs to continue their habitat restoration and trail efforts.

Issues:

1. Liability – private insurance covers volunteers first; other insurance provided through charter with PPF, DCNR, and Chester County NCP.
2. Test Plots – should continue to be monitored.
3. Questions about what to do with the cut wood – TNC and stakeholders will explore options.
4. Friends asked for various items to offset cost, such as gloves, helmets, vests.

Action Items:

1. TNC will donate a hand-held GPS for Friends' use.
2. TNC will hold chain saw safety courses for volunteers, to be held at Nottingham County Park.
3. TNC will provide pesticide application certification for selected Friends' volunteers.