

**Multi Use Trail Meeting – Monday, June 15, 2020**

**HAND OUTS**

**Correspondence – Letter from FRCC dated June 3, 2020**



June 3, 2020

Dear Dan, Christine, and the New Hartford Trails Study Committee:

FRCC would like to congratulate the town on receiving the grant for \$120,000 from CT DEEP for the recreational trail project connecting to Canton - referred to as "Planning, Design, and Outreach for a 5-mile E-W connector to Barkhamsted to establish a link to the Farmington River Trail." Several of our FRCC representatives have been following the project as it unfolds, and as it draws nearer to a decision on a proposed route for the trail, FRCC would like to be involved in the design as it relates to the Farmington Wild and Scenic River.

Recently, a group of us from FRCC took a walk to look at the area for the proposed trail with the purpose of evaluating routes that both showcase the beautiful river and protect its Outstanding Resource Values. As you may know, one of those values is recreation - and the FRCC strongly supports enhancement of recreational features that do not interfere with other values such as fish and wildlife habitat and scenic qualities.

We would like to offer some thoughts on the various routes that could be proposed and make suggestions on components of a trail that the committee sees as the least harmful to the Wild and Scenic values of the river.

- 1) Regarding a proposed cantilevered boardwalk through Satan's Kingdom (a unique and prominent ORV for the W&S designation) – FRCC believes this would interfere with other ORVs specific to that area such as scenery and habitat values. FRCC would like to suggest that an alternate route be considered given a boardwalk through the gorge would be:
  - Expensive - involving not just the cost of design and construction, but long-term maintenance, particularly for a constructed elevated structure. Who will bear this expense? Would that fall to the town of New Hartford or the current landowner(s) where such amenities would be constructed?
  - Damaging to the other W&S ORVs, and,
  - Could likely cause safety issues for the trail users.
- 2) Other general concerns include:
  - Increased traffic congestion from the added vehicles driven by the larger user base the trail will attract,
  - Increased parking needed to accommodate the added vehicles driven by those users,
  - Sub-optimal user experiences from issues such as exhaust, noise, crowding,

**FRCC - Appointed Representatives:**

**Barkhamsted**  
*Mario Santoro*  
*Roger Behrens*

**Canton**  
*Lans Perry*

**Colebrook**  
*Tom Stanton*

**Hartland**  
*Dan Bowler*  
*Bob Beeman*

**New Hartford**  
*Alison Murdock*  
*Tony Mitchell*

**CT DEEP**  
*Peter Aarrestad*  
*Matt Gocłowski*  
*Susan Peterson*

**Farmington River Anglers Association**  
*Mark Swenson*

**Farmington River Watershed Association**  
*David Sinish*  
*Bill Dornbos*

**Metropolitan District Commission**  
*Jim Randazzo*

**National Park Service**  
*Liz Lacy*  
*Jamie Fosburgh*



View the Upper  
Farmington River  
Management Plan at  
[www.FarmingtonRiver.org](http://www.FarmingtonRiver.org)

- Trail-user safety issues at driveway and highway crossings if a US 44-roadside route is chosen,
- Impacts on vehicular flow on US 44 if needed crossings for safety are put in place, and,
- Costs of route acquisition and trail construction if a user-experience-optimizing overland route behind businesses is selected to connect the rail grade owned by the Town behind the Church in Pine Meadow down to the Satan's Kingdom Road area.

3) Alternate routes that we have discussed internally at FRCC would include:

- A safe scenic overlook of the gorge from higher up,
- Access to all the businesses on US 44, preferably from the back side so driveways do not need to be crossed,
- Accessible to the majority of potential users. If it is too steep only a small segment of users will go on it, and,
- Approval from all landowners, including CT DEEP, and abutters along the route.

4) FRCC would like to see what the estimated costs would be for the different routes being considered.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments, and please contact me for further discussion of these issues.

Sincerely,

*Dan Bowler*

Dan Bowler

FRCC Chair, Hartland Representative

CC: Laurie Giannotti, CT DEEP

Rick Jacobson, CT DEEP

Mike Lambert, CT DEEP

FRCC Members – Barkhamsted, Canton, Colebrook, Hartland, New Hartford, CT DEEP, FRWA, FRAA, MDC, NPS

Kevin Grindle, Anchor Engineering

Val Ferro, Anchor Engineering/Good Earth Advisors