

## SUMMARY

### Atlantic Salmon Federation and Midcoast Conservancy Proposal for the Coopers Mills Dam to The Town of Whitefield - January 21, 2016

Background: Over the past year, a town appointed citizen committee in Whitefield (Jane Chase, Chuck Vaughn, Louie Sell, Leslie McCormick, Barry Tibbetts, Scott Higgins, and Herb Hartman) has met monthly to consider all options for the future of the Coopers Mills Dam and surrounding land. This includes consideration of repairing the dam, looking at the potential for small hydropower; and removing the dam and providing alternative sources of water for fire protection in the Coopers Mills Village. As part of this process the Atlantic Salmon Federation (ASF) and the Midcoast Conservancy (MC) have provided a number of experts, consultants, and engineers to help in the committees work.

After weighing all the options, the committee at its meeting on 7 January voted unanimously to support a proposal to remove the dam spillway, construct new dry fire hydrants, implement a landscape design to showcase the history of the site, and establish a fund to improve access/recreation at other points along the river. This work would be done by ASF and MC and there would be no cost to the Town of Whitefield. The Selectmen unanimously endorsed this proposal at their meeting on 12 January.

The details of the proposal supported by the committee and the Selectmen include:

- Construct three dry hydrants. Two would be located upriver from the current dam site and a third hydrant would be located on the upstream side of the West Branch, Sheepscot River and accessed via a deeded Right of Way easement from the landowner to the Town of Whitefield. ASF/MC to guarantee operation for three years.
- Establish a \$30,300 maintenance fund for the hydrants to be held by the Town of Whitefield Fire Department to pay for future maintenance/repairs.
- Construct the landscape design prepared by Interfluve dated December 10, 2015 that focuses on preserving the history of the site while increasing safety and access. The final details of the site design to be determined by a small committee established by the town and with support provided by ASF/MC.
- Establish a \$7,500 maintenance fund to be held by the Town of Whitefield for future maintenance/repairs of above site restoration.
- Remove the Coopers Mills Dam spillway. Retain and reconstruct the near shore abutment and possibly far shore abutment as part of historical preservation designed by Interfluve and approved by Town.

- Establish a \$25,000 fund to be held by the Town of Whitefield to help pay for any improvements to river access in the town of Whitefield such as trails, canoe access sites, and additional river restorations such as at King's Mills.
- Provide \$15,000 to the Town of Whitefield for the Vigue Road Crossing that has failed and pledge to help raise additional funds for this culvert replacement.
- All parts of this proposal to be part of legal agreement between ASF/MC and the Town of Whitefield.
- Project to be implemented between July 1, 2016 and September 30, 2018.