

Understanding the Competing Uses of Skidmore's Commons:
A Stakeholder Analysis of the North Woods

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Introduction

Development within the Saratoga Lake Watershed impacts the preservation of the remaining open spaces in the watershed. The population of Saratoga County has one of the highest growth rates in New York State, having grown by 9.5% in the past decade (LIRPC 2011). Within Saratoga County, the population of Saratoga Springs has also grown considerably, thereby increasing the threat of encroaching development on open space (Bertz and Grassi, 2009). Less open space for people to use increases the strain placed on the remaining spaces for public use, regardless of whether the land is owned privately or publicly. Skidmore College's North Woods is an example of private property that functions as an open space within the Saratoga Lake Watershed. Though the North Woods is privately-owned, the College permits open access for community members. With fewer options of open space within the rapidly-growing watershed, current public lands have endured increasing use from an increasing number of users and user groups. Additional strain on the North Woods, as well as competing interests and different perceptions among various user groups, hampers the sustainable use of the property. It is of the utmost importance that such interests and perceptions be understood to ensure a healthy future for the North Woods. Therefore, we performed a stakeholder analysis of these different user groups to develop recommendations that balance these competing interests.

The Challenges Facing Open Space: Balancing Development and Values

The decision of whether to develop or preserve open space has challenged local governments, and has ignited a debate over land-use values within communities. The transformation of open space into development has altered the landscape of communities all over the United States. For example, between 1982 and 1992, approximately 6.2 million acres of

agricultural land and 5.1 million acres of forested land were converted to urban and other developed spaces in the United States (Geoghegan 2002). Most zoning regulations do not directly preserve open space; rather, such regulations determine the pattern of residential development. Thus, the conservation of open space must be protected by additional federal, state, and local regulations, such as urban growth boundaries, and market mechanisms like conservation easements (Geoghegan 2002).

Directly or indirectly, the fate of open space is determined largely by the public's values. The public's attitude and values towards open space can be determined through an analysis of their behavior within the space, including forms of recreation. Swanwick refers to a "portfolio of places" to describe the variety of needs and desires that individuals have for landscapes (2009). Landscapes are infused with meanings through the activities that people associate with them. Most people need to access and enjoy "different types of landscape at different times and for different purposes" (Swanwick 2009). Acknowledging that the public will have multifaceted perceptions towards an open space is the first step in analyzing their values.

While the spectrum of values towards open spaces poses challenges to land preservation, the distinction between private land and public use adds another layer of complexity in balancing the interests of multiple user groups in "common property regimes" (Gibson 2000). "Common property regimes" describe the "...institutional arrangements for the cooperative (shared, joint, collective) use, management, and sometimes ownership of natural resources" (Gibson 2000). This broad definition of common property regimes can be applied to complex open space situations, such as lands like the North Woods that are privately owned, but permit public access.

Conflict is almost inevitable in open spaces, like the North Woods, that are underlain with complex values and dynamic public and private interests. Resolving disputes between public users and private landholders requires framing, and subsequent reframing, of the issues. Framing - the "deliberate crafting" of angles for "strategic purposes"- enables successful resolutions to land use disputes (Smith and Kaufman 1999). Interveners can construct successful frames by emphasizing the elements that resonate most with the public. For example, frames that rely heavily on conservation purposes may discourage public support, while others that emphasize an area's "historic merits" may captivate the stakeholders (Smith and Kaufman 1999). By highlighting how a user group's interests are served, and not focusing on the preferred outcomes of either party, user groups are more likely to reach a consensus on the issue (Smith and Kaufman 1999).

The North Woods as a "Commons"

Wilson (1984) defines "biophilia" as humans' inherent desire to be outdoors and experience nature. Wilson argues that this desire is part of the subconscious, and thus people are not cognizant of this need to be in the natural environment. Although the biophilia hypothesis is not widely appreciated, we think this idea is crucial in understanding North Woods users' values towards open space. Wilson even notes that, "When people are confined to crowded cities or featureless land, they go to considerable lengths to recreate an intermediate terrain..." (Wilson 1984). North Woods users, living in Saratoga Springs, similarly experience this dilemma, as the city offers few green spaces for people to remove themselves from the chaos of urban life. The North Woods fulfills Wilson's three criteria for an "intermediate terrain" (1984). It has an "abundance of plant and animal life," hills that mirror Wilson's ideal for "topographic relief," and streams and water bodies (Wilson 1984).

As a space that is open to public use and lacks enforcement of its rules, the North Woods is highly susceptible to exploitation by individual users, and consequently, long-term degradation. This challenge is illustrated by Garrett Hardin's essay, "The Tragedy of the Commons." Hardin emphasizes that areas that are open for public use will be exploited because, in the absence of regulations on behavior (whether by the government, an effective social contract, etc.) some individuals seek to maximize their own benefits, and as a result, overexploit the common resource (Hardin 1968). The North Woods, though a privately-owned property, can be considered a commons because of the lack of enforcement of its regulations. While the College does set rules for conduct in the North Woods (i.e. no fire pits, dogs must be kept on a leash, etc.), the lack of a presence of College officials in the Woods renders these rules unenforceable. The College's Sustainable Skidmore Office employs North Woods Stewards, students employed during the summer that engage with community members about the rules and have a visible presence in the Woods. Even with this enforcement mechanism in place, visitors still do not abide by the rules. Dog excrement, off-leashed dogs, and fire pits are common occurrences in the North Woods. These elements suggest that the North Woods could be susceptible to the aforementioned "tragedy".

It is crucial to note that each user group contains a diversity of opinions, experiences, and values towards the North Woods. These interests can be coarsely summarized as: (1) individual use for exercise, recreation, spiritual reflection, and dog walking; (2) preservation as an academic (curricular, scholarly) resource; and (3) a desire to retain the capacity to develop the property in the future. While this categorization scheme is effective, there are fluid identities among these groups, as individuals may have views or uses that fall under multiple categories.

Through our research, we developed recommendations on how to best balance these varied interests among the different user groups in a way that distributes benefits to all the user groups, maximizes the sustainable use of the North Woods, and minimizes future degradation of the resource. These recommendations are geared towards the College Administration, in an effort to impact the College's plans for development in the North Woods. However, these recommendations are also intended for all users of the North Woods, as we seek to educate all user groups about the issues pertaining to the North Woods. Keeping this goal in mind, we also recognize that our research may recommend the implementation of stringent rules that diminish the benefits of one user group over another. While we still use the word “balance” to identify our purpose in this project, we recognize that some recommendations may entail benefits that are not equally distributed among user groups.

Focal Site: The North Woods

Although the Skidmore College North Woods extends from the campus to the woods behind the Skidmore Stables on Daniels Road, we focus exclusively on the portion of the North Woods that is contiguous to campus. This parcel of the North Woods is roughly 165 acres (Van Hook 2007), and experiences the greatest use by the greatest variety of users. It is enclosed by the railroad tracks, Glen Mitchell Road, Maple Avenue Middle School, and the Skidmore College campus. The underlying geology consists of carbonate rocks (mostly dolostone) that date to about 500 million years of age (pers. comm. Kim Marsella). Deposition of those rocks took place in a shallow tropical ocean, which created a unique surface and subsurface underlying the North Woods. These carbonates dissolve into water very well, which has led some to speculate on the presence of a cave system connecting the North Woods with an opening on High Rock Avenue (pers. comm. Mary Lynn). Professor Josh Ness points out that, “...the

degree to which its history is known and plant species are known” makes the North Woods unique (pers. comm. Ness). In particular, Professor Ness stressed that over 380 plant species have been identified (see Van Hook 2007), including species that are considered rare on a local scale.

In the years prior to European settlement, Native Americans used the Hudson River Valley and, more specifically, the Saratoga region, as a place for fishing and hunting (Van Hook 2007). In the 1700s, the North Woods and a large surrounding area were part of the Kayaderosseras Patent, which created twenty-five allotments of thirteen sub-parcels each (Van Hook 2007). The area now associated with the North Woods was sold to Jacob Walton, whose son, Judge Henry Walton took ownership of the property and named it the Woodlawn Estate. In 1879, Judge Henry Hilton purchased the property. Hilton built several buildings, each of immaculate style and leisure. Along with the buildings, Hilton created a large system of carriage trails that were used by visitors (pers. comm. Robert Jones). Many of these carriage trails still exist today, and are integrated on the current trail system. After Hilton’s death in 1899, Woodlawn went through a variety of owners until Skidmore College purchased much of the original property in 1961. The North Woods has had a dynamic history with multiple user groups and changing landscapes. In the first half of the twentieth century, the North Woods was used by these various groups freely, functioning as an open access park. This traditional use has led generations of Saratoga Springs to perceive the North Woods as an open space; individuals from the area have grown up using the property in numerous ways without following any set of rules.

In the College's 2007 Campus Plan, a document that outlines the College's future development plans, there is a proposal to construct new academic buildings and facilities on

portions of the North Woods. The Campus Plan has gone through four reiterations. The original Campus Plan was created in 1962, after the College purchased the Woodlawn property. The plan was then revised in 1972, 1989, and most recently, in 2007. The authors of the current Campus Plan address the North Woods as a “perennially contentious campus issue” (Chan, Lo-Yi, and Fred DiMauro 2007). In past Campus Plans, the College has envisioned building dormitories and parking lots in the North Woods. Within the 2007 Campus Plan, there is a plan to build the “Crescent Green,” which would entail new academic buildings and facilities, along with parking lots and a re-routed Perimeter Road. In 2006, the College fulfilled parts of these plans by constructing the Northwoods Apartments, located in the portion of the North Woods adjacent to the Scribner Village. In addition, the College has also expanded into the North Woods by incrementally expanding the Falstaff’s Parking Lot for use as a storage site for gravel, woodchips, and dumpsters. These individual projects have a cumulative impact on the North Woods, and represent a troubling trend towards development in the forest.

Focal Community

A. Dog Walkers

Presently, individual users from the community remain one of the most visible user groups. In particular, community members (and some Skidmore faculty and staff) that walk their dogs are especially common. One challenge dog owners must face is where to bring their dogs when they live in a city, as there are limited green spaces in many urban environments. Along with Skidmore College, dog walkers are able to bring their dogs to the Yaddo Gardens, Congress Park, Saratoga Spa State Park, and the Saratoga National Historical Park (Dogfriendly.com 2011). All of these areas require dog owners to use leashes, and users tend to comply with those regulations. The one area in Saratoga Springs that allows owners to let their dogs run off-leash is

the Saratoga Dog Park located on South Broadway, across from the entrance to the Saratoga State Park. Unfortunately, the dog park has been negatively affected by ill-behaved dogs (pers. comm. Ken Ivins). As a green space close to downtown Saratoga Springs, the North Woods is attractive to many dog walkers because of its location and, significantly, due to limited oversight on leash rules.

B. Recreational Users

The trail system of the North Woods promotes a variety of uses and supports year-round recreation. Forms of recreation include hiking, running, snow-shoeing, birding, cross-country skiing, and meditation by both members of the Skidmore and Saratoga Springs communities. Some interviewees indicated that they have noticed a decline in the prevalence of many of these recreation activities (pers. comm. Susan Rosenberg). While there has not been research to address the cause of this decline, some of our interviewees speculate that the increased presence of off-leashed dog walking has led to this decline in the number and types of recreation within the North Woods (pers. comm. Sue Rosenberg, Mark Youndt). One interviewee even noted that she no longer uses the North Woods for cross-country skiing because of past negative experiences with off-leash dogs disrupting her use. (pers. comm. Judy Halstead).

C. Academic / Scholarly Resource

The North Woods has been compared to a "living laboratory," due to its use in a range of courses and academic research. The proximity of the North Woods to Skidmore's main campus allows classes to utilize the Woods for research and other learning opportunities. Professors in the Biology, Environmental Studies, Studio Art, History, American Studies, and Geosciences departments, among others, incorporate the North Woods into their courses. A professor

maximizes his or her research time during a two-hour lab because a walk to the North Woods from a classroom is only a few minutes, and the logistics of bus travel to an alternative "nature site" are eliminated. Having the North Woods adjacent to campus distinguishes the College from Skidmore's peer and aspirant universities that may own wooded property, but are not able to access their forests in classes as readily as Skidmore can with the North Woods (Van Hook 2007).

Faculty-student collaborative research, on such topics as seed dispersal by ant populations, has been published in internationally-recognized scientific journals (Ness and Morin 2007; Ness, Morin, and Gialdi 2009; and Ness, Rollinson, and Whitney 2011). The North Woods, and the local cultural history surrounding the Woods, is even the subject of a forthcoming historical book by Professor Robert Jones. Thus, the North Woods has been used in a scholarly way for scientific understanding and cultural teachings.

D. Potential Development Plans

As the campus has expanded, the pressure to develop into the North Woods has increased. The expansion of the campus and the decreasing area of the North Woods are directly correlated (Figure 1). Although the square footage per student has increased in recent years, student class sizes (number of students per class) have not increased proportionally (pers. comm. Mark Youndt). This trend is indicative of the competition among colleges to develop the most up-to-date amenities to attract new students. While there has been a verbal agreement not to develop past the power lines in the North Woods, the College Administration wants to preserve its right to develop portions of the North Woods in the future, and thus no official recognition of the preservation of the North Woods has been reached (pers. comm. Robert Jones).

Methods and Results

I. Interviews with Students, Faculty/Staff, and Community Members

We conducted interviews with stakeholders among all core user groups. We used Elmendorf and Luloff's "Using Key Informant Interviews to Better Understand Open Space Conservation in a Developing Watershed" to elucidate an effective framework for interviewing stakeholders about open space conservation in the context of development. The identification of user groups is a critical step in addressing issues within a common space. Such characterizations of user groups are not universal to every member of each group; this is a complexity that we recognize as we approach our methodology.

Elmendorf and Luloff interviewed stakeholders in a developing watershed to gather their perspective on the benefits of open space conservation. The authors use the term "key informant" interviewees to describe the target of their study's population. "Key informant" interviewees are local people who have similar experiences and knowledge about the issues of a certain place (Elmendorf and Luloff 2006). The authors contacted a range of stakeholders within the watershed of their study, including community members, local planners, industry and business representatives, leaders of environmental organizations, representatives from "underclass" interests, and representatives from the local media (Elmendorf and Luloff 2006). Although we did not contact such a wide variety of interests (the North Woods is much smaller in scale than the watershed of Elmendorf and Luloff's study), we were deliberate in whom we selected for interviews. Rather than contacting random people within the watershed, we sought individuals with diverse experiences in the North Woods.

In the summer of 2011, as part of our job as North Woods Stewards, we conducted seventeen interviews with different faculty members, administrators, and community members.

The goal was to gain a better understanding of the North Woods, its uses, and the challenges facing the space, and to generate an archive of information for future stewards and interested individuals. Faculty and staff members were chosen because they were identified as having expertise and knowledge of the North Woods. Questions were focused on the individuals' use of the Woods, ranging from how they interacted with the Woods, what were the challenges facing the Woods, who else uses the Woods, and what their vision was for the future of the Woods (see Appendix for full list of questions). We used these summer interviews as a foundation of knowledge as we developed our understanding of the North Woods and as we designed additional interview questions for stakeholders.

In 2011-12, we expanded our interviews to a larger number of users of the North Woods by interviewing students, dog walkers, recreational users, community experts. Expanding our interviews to students broadened our insight into Skidmore's relationship with the North Woods. Interviewing dog walkers and other recreational users of the North Woods helped us gain a well-rounded understanding of individuals' views toward the Woods. Additional interviews with faculty, staff, and administrators allowed us to ask revised questions from those asked by the North Woods Stewards. We formulated new questions that challenged the interviewee to discuss the perceptions about the interactions among different user groups within the North Woods, ask interviewees to provide policy suggestions for North Woods use, and force the interviewee to seriously consider the current state of the North Woods.

We sent emails to faculty, staff, and community members with an explanation of our purpose and some of the questions and themes that we wanted them to address during the interviews. To reach Skidmore students, and obtain a random sample of student data, we conducted brief, informal interviews with students outside the library and in the dining

hall. When possible, we filmed interviews for archival purposes. Since the North Woods Stewards recorded the majority of their interviews over the summer, we wanted to be consistent with the format of the interviews. In addition, we want to create a database to store all the recordings of North Woods stakeholder interviews for educational purposes and for the creation of a future documentary about the North Woods.

A. Students

A total of 100 students were interviewed randomly around campus, including at the library, in Case Center, in the Dining Hall Atrium, and in the Scribner Village and North Woods Village Apartments. We brought a FlipCam to record all interviews: some students directly appear on film, while others elected to just have the audio recorded (for anonymity purposes). Generally, each recording was of one student, but there were also circumstances in which it made more sense to record multiple student interviews simultaneously. All interviews took place between January 31, 2012 and March 24, 2012. Interviews ranged from 1 minute to 7 minutes. Since we acknowledge that North Woods users may use the Woods in multiple ways or may hold several concerns and values towards the resource, we permitted students to give multiple answers to the questions. Additionally, we collected 29 comment cards from students, while we sat at a table in the Dining Hall Atrium during our interview collection event on February 22, 2012.

The distribution of the 100 interviews is as follows: 37 seniors, 13 juniors, 29 sophomores, and 21 freshmen. Refer to the Appendix for the three bar graphs that depict class distribution for use, concerns, and values. We permitted all respondents to identify the multiple uses, concerns, and values they told to the North Woods; thus, the proceeding pie charts represent proportions of those responses.

1. Use

Of the 100 students, 91 had been to the North Woods (at least once) and 9 students had never been to the North Woods. With regards to use, 62 students use the North Woods for walks (46% of responses on use), 32 students have used it in a class (24% of responses), 31 students use it for exercise (23% of responses), and 9 (7% of responses) students have used it as a social space to gather with friends. No students indicated that they use the North Woods for dog-walking. Students were the only one of the three user groups to indicate using the North Woods as a social place.

The general category of "walks" includes responses that mentioned walking through the Spirit Trail as a short-cut to class, walks with friends and alone for recreation, and walks on tours led by the North Woods Stewards or faculty. The range of responses for "academic use" includes use in a course or lab component of a class, research projects, and inspiration for art and other academic projects. "Exercise" includes jogging and running. Under the category of "social space," we included all responses that pertained to gathering in the North Woods as an alternative place to socialize with friends.

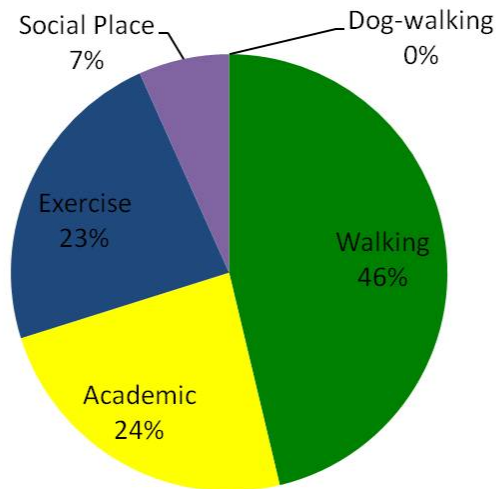


Figure 1: Breakdown of student use in the North Woods

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2. Concerns

When asked if they had any concerns about the North Woods, 29 students were concerned about trail maintenance issues, 23 students brought up litter, 22 students had no concerns or did not know enough about the North Woods to discuss concerns, 17 students mentioned trail degradation and overuse, four students talked about off-leash dog-walking, and three students were concerned about future development plans.

"Trail maintenance issues" includes responses that mentioned lack of clear signage, trail erosion and runoff, the kiosks, bridges, and the need for water bars. "Trail degradation and overuse" covers trail widening, invasive species, the impact of biking, users not walking on the paths (increasing the edge effect), dog excrement, and the threat of forest fires. The "development" concern includes responses that noted a fear that the College will destroy parts of the North Woods to construct new academic buildings or dorms.

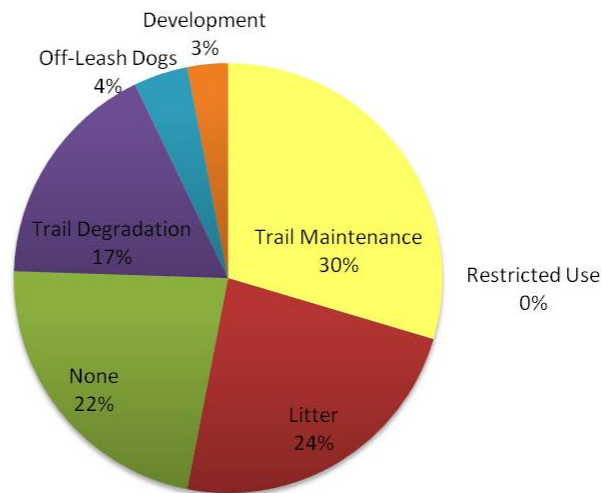


Figure 2: Breakdown of student concerns about the North Woods

3. Values

One hundred percent of student respondents said the North Woods is valuable to Skidmore College. Overwhelmingly, 50 students identified the great benefit to mental health that the North Woods provides to students. This number constituted 32% of responses on concerns. Within this same category were students who identified that the North Woods provides students with a "separate" space to remove themselves from the chaos of campus life. Thirty-two students named its proximity to campus as what makes the North Woods valuable. Similarly, 30 students identified the academic and scholarly value of the North Woods, noting that (among other reasons) many colleges lack access to a "nature" setting so close to campus that can be used for academic purposes. Twenty-six students mentioned the North Woods' aesthetic contribution to campus. In many of these responses, students said that "it's just nice having it [the North Woods]." Six students said that the preservation of the North Woods demonstrates the College's values. Four students noted the recreational values of the North Woods.

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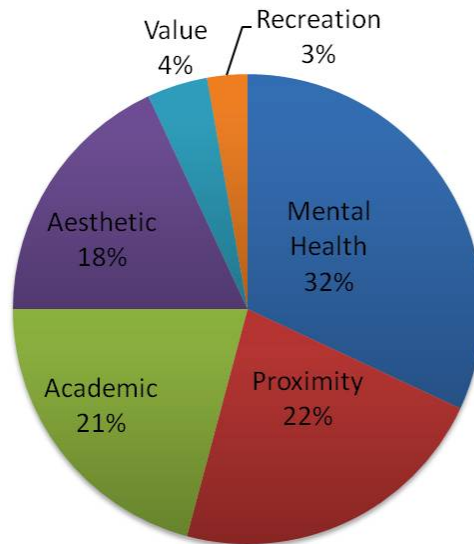


Figure 3: Breakdown of student values towards the North Woods

B. Faculty and Staff

A total of 21 faculty, staff, and administrators were interviewed between June 10, 2011 and February 28, 2012. These faculty, staff, and administrators were selected because they all had some connection to the North Woods: some had directly used it in their courses or research, others used it in personal ways, and others have seen North Woods issues over time. Predominantly, these interviews were recorded with video cameras; however, some interviewees elected not to be filmed, and we took notes from those interviews. Similar to students, the pie charts represent proportions of the responses.

1. Use

Sixteen of the 21 faculty and staff used the North Woods personally, including for walks, exercise, research, spiritual meditation, among other uses. Eleven faculty members use it in a variety of academic courses or for independent studies, including in the Environmental Studies,

Biology, American Studies, and English departments. An additional 7 faculty and staff members noted its use in academic courses, but do not directly use it in their own courses or for their own research. Thirteen faculty and staff noted use of the North Woods by community members. Fifteen faculty and staff mentioned dog-walkers as North Woods users. Eleven faculty and staff identified students as a user group of the North Woods. Nineteen faculty and staff discussed some aspect of recreational use in the North Woods, with eight faculty and staff members speaking explicitly about biking. The breakdown of faculty/staff use in the North Woods is depicted in the figure below.



Figure 1: Breakdown of faculty/staff use in the North Woods

2. Concerns

Thirteen of the 21 faculty and staff mentioned trail degradation and overuse when asked about concerns of the North Woods. Trail degradation and overuse includes, trail widening, fires, invasive species, and dog excrement. Development of the North Woods was mentioned by 15 of the faculty and staff members. Among these 15 respondents, most referred to the Campus Master Plan and its future development plans. Another concern brought forth by 9 faculty and staff members was the North Woods' preservation. The breakdown of faculty/staff concerns about the North Woods is depicted in the figure below.

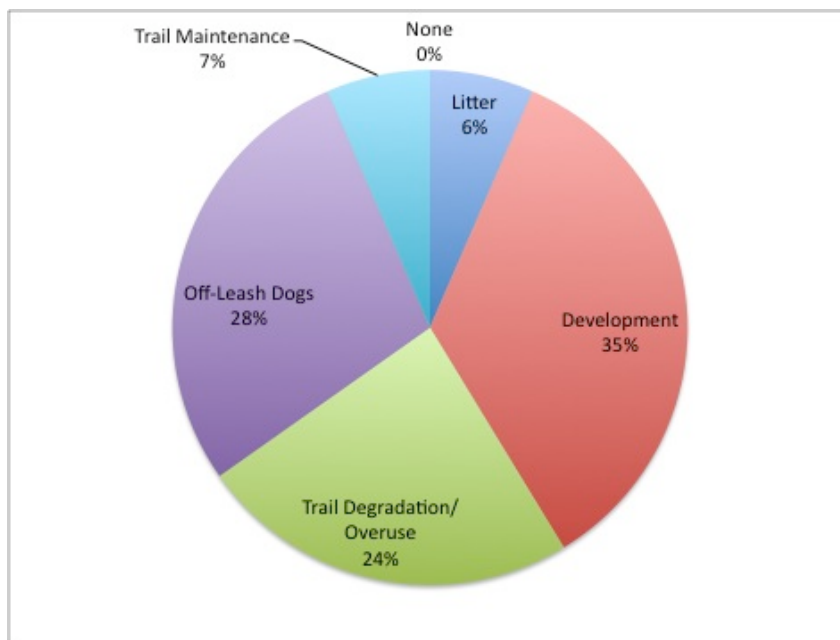


Figure 2: Range of faculty/staff concerns about the North Woods

3. Values

When asked what was unique about the North Woods, faculty and staff overwhelmingly mentioned its proximity to campus: eighteen faculty and staff (86% of all faculty/staff

interviewees) noted that having the North Woods as a resource that borders the campus makes it special. Only three faculty members identified the ecological uniqueness of the North Woods (notably, they are all Biology Department faculty). Ten faculty and staff discussed that the preservation of the North Woods speaks volumes about the College's values regarding sustainability in higher education. Five faculty and staff discussed some aspect of the values of community members. The breakdown of faculty/staff values towards the North Woods is depicted in the figure below.

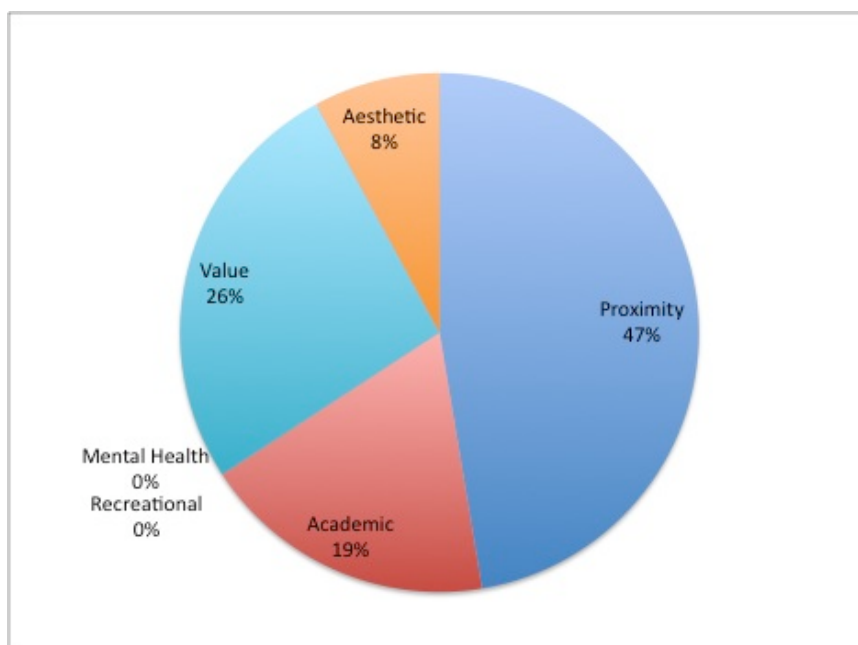


Figure 3: Range of faculty/staff values towards the North Woods

C. Community Members

1. Community North Woods Users

On June 20 and July 25 the North Woods Stewards interviewed Ken Ivins and Julie Stokes, two North Woods users that are private citizens. These individuals were identified as users of the North Woods who have been involved in projects relating to and involving the North Woods. Both interviewees talked about their use of the Woods, which involved walking their dogs. Ken Ivins noted his role in helping to establish North Woods Service Days and many projects that have been completed with the help of both Skidmore College students and faculty and community members. Julie Stokes is a longtime user of the North Woods, mentioning walking her dogs in the Woods for the last 35 years. As the Chairperson of the Saratoga PLAN Trails Committee, Julie Stokes spoke about the role Skidmore College could play in helping to connect Moreau Lake State Park to Mechanicville. These interviews helped us understand some of the reasons that dog walkers walk their dogs off-leash, including the exercise that it provides for the animals.

2. Community Experts

On February 28, 2012, we interviewed Greg Wozniack, Chief Park Ranger of the Saratoga National Historic Park. The interview with Ranger Wozniack was approximately 25 minutes. Ranger Wozniack talked about a variety of issues that he has witnessed at the Park, including dog excrement piles, off-leashed dog-walking, dog attacks, dog baggie dispensers on the kiosks, and enforcement strategies for the Park's rules. Ranger Wozniack affirmed that enforcement rules, such as ticketing dog-owners who did not pick up after their dogs or keep them on leashes, helped improve the adherence to the rules. Based on the success of ticketing and adding dog baggie dispensers on the kiosks, Ranger Wozniack recommended that the College implement similar policies in the North Woods, whether it be adding an officer to ticket

rule offenders or adding a dispenser with baggies for owners to pick up after their pets. With regards to the latter suggestion, in particular, Ranger Wozniack noted that "...making it easier for [users] to follow the rules leads to increased compliance."

On August 2, 2012, we interviewed Lois Geshiwl and Nancy Castillo, owners of Wild Birds Unlimited. The two women own a retail store in Wilton that caters to bird watchers. Though they had not previously been to the North Woods, they accompanied us on a walk there. After walking through the North Woods, they shared their knowledge of how birding can be impacted by other recreational uses in forests. Specifically, they mentioned that dogs running without leashes could disturb the habitats of ground-nesting birds and could directly interfere with bird-watching by intimidating wildlife (with their barks).

II. Informal Communications: Comment Cards

We distributed comment cards to students and community members. At the February 22 dining hall tabling event, we asked the students who did not want to interview (but were interested in the project) to fill out comment cards. We contacted users from the community in a variety of ways. We made a flyer advertising the purpose of our project, and asking users to fill out comment cards. We provided an anonymous feedback form: we made comment cards with space to give users the opportunity to voice their concerns about the North Woods. These comment cards were returned to the boxes on the five kiosks. We made a schedule where we each took periodic walks in the North Woods at different times of the day. By having a visible presence in the Woods at different parts of the day, we each engaged with different users. We discussed our project with users and distributed the comment cards to them.

In a prior capstone project, the student researcher stressed the importance of collected data in the North Woods: speaking with users, while being situated in the woods, allowed him to become “immersed in the culture of the North Woods” (Forest 2000). Similarly, Elmendorf and Luloff agree that key informant interviews provide “localized, culturally-appropriate information” (2006). In-person interviews allow sufficient time for contemplation and thorough response to the interviewers’ questions, and that the average duration of their interviews was thirty minutes (Elmendorf and Luloff 2006). Although we did not directly interview users in the North Woods, we made it very easy for users to fill out comment cards. Within the kiosk boxes, we left a pen and a stack of blank comment cards in the section of the box labeled "Blank Comment Cards" and encouraged users to place their completed cards in the section of the box labeled "Completed Comment Cards."

Following Forest's and Elmendorf and Luloff's methodology, we similarly valued data that was collected *in situ*. Receiving comment cards that were completed while users were in the North Woods allowed the data to be even more honest, as users were forced to reflect on the questions while simultaneously experiencing the North Woods.

A. Students

With 29 comment cards collected from students, 24 had been to the North Woods and five had not. Seventeen use the Woods for walking, five for exercise, four for academic use, and 3 students use the Woods as a social place. When responding to what concerns they had about the North Woods, ten students responded saying development was a concern, eight noted litter, seven trail maintenance, four wrote trail degradation and overuse, two said off-leash dogs, and three did not have any concerns about the North Woods.

B. Community Members

During the period of our data collection, which ranged from January to March we received 17 comment cards from community members (some were anonymous, some were not). When describing their use, 11 community members mentioned using the Woods for dog walking, five for walking, two as a place for exercise, and one community member used the Woods for nature study. The concerns of the Woods for community members were as follows, six mentioned trail maintenance, five noted a fear of restricted use imposed by the College, four wrote trail degradation and overuse, two community members were concerned about unsocialized dogs, one wrote litter, one noted development, one said dog excrement, and two had no concerns. Although values were directly asked in the comment cards, the aesthetic appeal of the Woods arose four times.

A. Community Forum Data

Approximately 45 community members, faculty and staff, and students came to the North Woods Community Forum held on Thursday, March 29th, from 6-8 PM in Davis Auditorium. The distribution of guests was as follows: 12 community members, six faculty/staff, and approximately 30 students. Although we encouraged all guests to fill out a brief survey, we only received 26 completed surveys. The distribution of the surveys was as follows: one survey response from a faculty member, 15 surveys from students, and ten surveys from community members. We received additional comments via email from two community members that wanted to share their feedback, but were unable to attend the event.

The event occurred between 6:05 pm and 7:30 pm. We provided an introduction that outlined the purpose of our project and the purpose of the Forum. We spent about 20 to 25 minutes discussing four general topics: (1) Trail maintenance, (2) Balancing dog-walking with

the College's other North Woods rules; (3) Potential development plans; and (4) Personal vision for the North Woods. On the PowerPoint slides for these topics, we provided visuals (including a GIS map of dog excrement along the Green Trails and a part of the 2007 Campus Master Plan) and posed a couple of questions to the group. A student recorded the conversation and provided us with a transcript at the end of the forum. Though we led the discussion, we took on mediator roles, facilitating dialogue and actively listening to guests' responses and answering their questions.

Thirteen of the fifteen student surveys mentioned that going for walks in the North Woods is how they primarily use it. An additional nine students mentioned that they use the North Woods for academic purposes (in class and for research), nine students use the North Woods for exercise, and seven students use the North Woods for mental health or spiritual purposes. Eight students were concerned about trail maintenance issues, seven noted litter, six mentioned trail degradation and overuse, five discussed off-leash dog-walking, and only one student mentioned potential development plans as a concern. Overall, the data received from students at the Forum is consistent with the data we received through student interviews and comment cards, as walking was similarly the largest use and trail maintenance issues dominated the concerns.

The one survey that we received from a faculty member mentioned that he uses the North Woods for walks and snowshoeing and is concerned with invasive species (chiefly, Bishop's Weed). From the ten surveys from community members, six people discussed using the North Woods for walks, six people mentioned using the Woods to walk their dogs, three people use it for exercise, and two people use it for nature study (e.g. botany). Ten community members discussed trail degradation and overuse as their concerns for the North Woods, while only five

talked about trail maintenance issues, five mentioned off-leash dog walking, four talked about potential development, and 1 discussed balancing nature with public use. Based on these responses, it was clear that the ways in which Skidmore values, especially with regards to academic value, the North Woods is not apparent. When spending time in the North Woods, we observed that the peak hours of community member use were before work (between 7:00 and 9:00 am) and after work (between 4:00 and 5:00 pm). Since academic use typically occurs during the work day, there is no interaction between community members and students and faculty researchers.

Discussion

I. Findings: North Woods Interests

Consistently, the largest three themes that arose pertained to (1) individual use (including both personal use and disrespectful forms of use), (2) scholarly use and nature study, and (3) potential development plans. These themes are discussed in more detail below.

A. Individual Use: Personal and Recreational

Members of each user group consistently use the North Woods for individual uses. These uses include (but are not limited to) recreational walks, snowshoeing, exercise, peaceful meditation and reflection, nature study, dog-walking, and biking. In addition to experiencing the North Woods in the classroom, many students identified that they go on periodic walks in the North Woods for a variety of reasons, including to clear their minds after a stressful day, for exercise, and to remove themselves from the “chaos” of campus life. A majority of students, 62%, use the North Woods for these private walks. Similarly, 76% of faculty and staff that were interviewed use the North Woods for similar personal

purposes. Though the dominant form of use of community members was dog-walking (17 responses), 11 responses from community members similarly noted using the North Woods for personal walks as well.

Exactly 50% of student respondents lauded the North Woods for its restorative properties to mental health. Students consistently brought up how the North Woods provides a "separate place" for students to leave behind the chaos of campus life. One student, a first-year student, noted at the Forum that he, "...walks in the North Woods when I need a break. I live in a triple, and it's nice to be able to go to the North Woods to de-stress." Interestingly, of the 50 respondents who identified the mental health value of the North Woods, the two largest class-years represented were freshmen and seniors (15 freshmen and 17 seniors). Many freshmen may particularly appreciate the North Woods for its capacity to improve their mental health, due to their living situations as first-year students (as mentioned in the above comment) and their need to become acclimated with college life. Similarly, one possible explanation for the relatively large number of seniors who answered this way is seniors, like freshmen, are experiencing a dramatic transition in their lives: leaving behind college life and entering the next chapters of their lives.

With regards to all forms of use (personal, recreational, and disrespectful alike), the physical presence of students in the North Woods suggests that students have a desire to be in nature – one consistent with the biophilia hypothesis (Wilson 1984). When we asked students to justify why students would want to socialize in the North Woods instead of on campus, several students reported that "those" experiences (whether they be drinking alcohol, smoking marijuana, sitting around a campfire, or just walking with friends) are more enjoyable outdoors than in the confines of a dorm room. The "featureless land" that Wilson (1984) describes is comparable to

the monotony of living in a dorm, eating in the same dining hall, and studying in the same spots. Students that feel "confined" to these "landscapes" may seek a natural "intermediate terrain" in the North Woods. Similarly, in an interview with a faculty member, the professor talked about how beer cans, campfires, and cigarette butts are "curious, but real" indicators of the North Woods' value; remnants of these activities show that students value being outdoors.

B. Individual Use: Disrespectful Use

Littering is a common form of disrespectful use, and nearly 25% of students interviewed identified litter as a concern for the preservation of the North Woods . Though litter is a problem, it is typically only rampant along the Spirit Trail (a "highway" corridor between the North Woods Village Apartments and the academic buildings) and adjacent to the Falstaff Parking Lot by the Green Trail. Since students typically interact with the Spirit Trail in superficial ways (i.e. as a way to save a few minutes off of their commute to class), students identify litter as a concern because it is a highly visible form of disrespectful use within the North Woods.

Unlike faculty and staff and community members, students are the only users that identified forms of personal use that involve others (i.e., were inherently social). More specifically, almost 10% of student acknowledged that they use the North Woods as a "social place," or a place to gather with friends (and as a place to do recreational drugs and drink alcohol). The 10% figure seems lower than the number of students observed hanging out in the North Woods. However, some students may have feared telling us the truth about using the North Woods as a place to party, for fear of recording their behavior on camera. One faculty

member, in particular, even noted that “stoners” clouding the North Woods trails was a challenge facing the North Woods.

Off-leashed dog-walking and dog excrement along the trails are forms of disrespectful use that consistently emerged throughout our research. Between February 11 and March 30, we went on periodic walks in the North Woods. During that time, we observed a total of 38 dog-walkers, with an astonishing 38 dogs off-leash and nine dogs on-leash. As an official policy, the College *requires* dog owners to walk their dogs on leashes *at all times*. During the Community Forum, community members that identify as dog-walkers identified that they walk their dogs off-leash in the North Woods for several reasons, including the fact that there are few green spaces in downtown Saratoga Springs for dogs to roam free, the owner and the dog can get exercise, the aesthetic appeal of walking one’s dog in a forest versus on a paved sidewalk, and some community members have historically used the North Woods for off-leashed dog walking for decades without any intervention by the College.

Also, during the forum, the consequences of this disrespectful form of dog-walking were discussed. Many members of the community were in awe at a GIS map of dog excrement piles along the North Woods (see Appendix): they were shocked that upwards of nine piles of dog excrement were left behind by dog owners. In addition to dog excrement, we mentioned that off-leashed dog-walking can spread invasive species, result in humans being bitten, and limits the enjoyment of other users. Most community members at the Forum acknowledged that these consequences are serious. During one full-interview with a community member last summer, the dog-walker acknowledged that dog-walkers need to share the trails with other users. However, instead of emphasizing that all users should coexist on the trails, he questioned why anyone would want to jog on the North Woods’ trails. The sense of entitlement behind this community

member's voice points to a troubling perspective that some users, including dog-walkers who walk their dogs off-leash, use to justify their disrespectful use of the North Woods.

It is worth pointing out that not all dog-walkers are exclusively associated with the "community members" user group. During two of the 21 interviews with faculty and staff, interviewees discussed how they have used the North Woods to walk their dogs. As Swanwick noted, users will hold "different types of use [towards an open space] at different times" (2009). Thus, it is possible for users to simultaneously belong to multiple user groups due to their disparate forms of use. One staff member said she has walked her dogs off-leash in the North Woods for years. Another faculty member, during the Forum, mentioned that he walks his dogs on-leash and always brings extra bags to clean up after his pet (and to give dog-owners who are not following the rules a bag to encourage them to follow the rules). Though these two interviewees are faculty and staff members, their personal use of the North Woods as dog-walkers shows the complexity of delineating user groups.

C. Scholarly Use and Nature Study

The North Woods is undoubtedly a place for scholarly pursuits. Its use in a variety of academic disciplines, including (but not limited to), Environmental Studies, Biology, American Studies, English, shows that the North Woods is a versatile academic resource. When students were asked what makes the North Woods valuable, those who answered that its proximity to campus (just over 25% of the students), all alluded to or directly mentioned that its distance to campus (and thus the ease at which it can be accessed) makes it an invaluable resource to the College. Eighteen of the 21 faculty and staff interviewees mentioned that the North Woods' proximity to campus makes it unique. A consistent theme throughout these interviews was how

the North Woods' ease of access permits it to be integrated with the academic courses. This invaluable fact highlights the irreplaceability of the North Woods: several faculty members noted that the "New Land" (the two-hundred acre, newly-acquired territory above the Stables on Daniels Road), though providing unique ecological points of study, could not be as easily integrated into academic courses.

Faculty members were not the only North Woods users who have identified using the North Woods to study nature. During the Forum, one community member identified as a wildflower enthusiast. She told the group about how she uses the North Woods periodically to study the rare (county-level) wildflowers that appear and features the North Woods on her blog. She also talked about how similar groups, such as the Schenectady Environmental Clearinghouse, takes periodic walks in the North Woods to study its ecology. These nature enthusiasts, though not affiliated with the College, use the North Woods to satisfy their own intellectual curiosities, thus placing these users in a similar category to the students and faculty that study the North Woods in academic courses and in scholarly research.

D. Development

Only 3% of students discussed potential development plans in the North Woods. Although this number is low, students at the community forum had a strong visceral reaction to the portion of the Campus Master Plan that showed the extension of the Crescent Green development into the Green Trails. One student even commented, "Is Skidmore growing so intensely that the College needs to develop so many new buildings?" The emotional response of the students who attended the Forum shows us that Skidmore students are likely to be opposed to

future development plans; however, the majority of those students just do not know that the development of portions of the North Woods is a challenge to its preservation.

Faculty, on the other hand, were aware of, and consistently brought up, the development challenge in interviews. Although 76% of the faculty and staff interviewees mentioned that development poses a challenge to the preservation of the North Woods, not all respondents maintained that that development is not necessarily a bad prospect. In one interview, a staff member noted that the “core of the North Woods” (the Red, Blue, and Orange Trails) will be preserved for current academic, recreational, spiritual, and individual use purposes.

However, another faculty member described development in the North Woods as the largest threat to the preservation of the North Woods. This faculty member commented, “A new ring road eviscerated the North Woods, and instead of building 100 percent within the existing road, nearly all new development was outside of it.” This faculty member, in addition to commenting that the Crescent Green extends like a “phallus” into the North Woods, was troubled with the fact that the College’s development plans all involved sprawl, instead of focusing on sustainable development within the existing infrastructure. Though these examples illustrate a diversity of opinions on development plans, however, faculty and staff consistently noted that the more development plans that the College goes through with (i.e. a parking extension in the North Woods Village Apartments’ lot or using Falstaff’s lots as a space for dumping for facilities), the easier it makes it to exploit the North Woods for more development projects in the future.

Only 17% of community members mentioned development as their chief concern about the North Woods’ preservation. Similar to the low number of student interviewees who mentioned development, community members seemed to be mostly ignorant to the Campus

Master Plan. During the discussion of development at the Forum, several community members questioned the location of the new buildings. These questions showed us that community members, in general, are not familiar with the College's development plans, despite the inclusion of public forums during the creation of the Master Plan several years ago.

II. Recommendations

Synthesis

Our stakeholder analysis was multifaceted: it included interviews recorded on tape (both scheduled and ad hoc interviews), anonymous comment cards, surveys, and an open forum at the College. Each piece of our methods served a different value: anonymous, specific, and collaborative feedback each contributed to a holistic understanding of the challenges facing the North Woods. Through an analysis of the multiple perspectives and values of the North Woods' user groups, we were able to create recommendations for the College on how to best balance these competing interests in a sustainable way.

A comprehensive study of the above findings allowed us to understand the diverse values that undergird these different types of use. Understating these values has informed the proceeding recommendations. We feel that these recommendations reflect the diverse set of uses, concerns, and values of our respondents and are indicative of the different North Woods users as a whole. Our recommendations are as follows: (1) Implement a clear signage system; (2) Increase public outreach and education forums to emphasize the value of the North Woods; (3) Hire a sustainability "landscapes" fellow; and (4) Official recognition of the North Woods for preservation purposes and the modification of the next Campus Master Plan to include revised

development plans (construction projects that are on the interior of campus, rather than expanding outwards). These recommendations are organized from short-term to long-term goals.

A. Creation of a Clear Signage System

Throughout data collection, students, community members, and faculty and staff members all expressed the desire for clearer signage within the North Woods. The North Woods is bordered by Maple Avenue Middle School to the North, Glen Mitchell Road to the East, the Skidmore campus to the South, and the railroad to the West. These boundaries make it possible for users to find and reorient themselves. Even with such boundaries, however, when a user is within the woods, it is still possible for that user to become disoriented. The current signage system includes tin cans that are painted orange, blue, green, and red to denote the “color” of the trail. However, these signs are not color blind accessible (as they do not contain text) and do not have arrows to show users the intended direction of the trail. Without clear markers, users are left unsure of which trail he or she is on.

Students were very concerned about signage. Many students noted that they got lost on “the back trails [the Orange Trail].” When new students come to Skidmore, many seek out the North Woods for walks or to escape stress, as we point out in our findings about the value of the woods for mental health purposes. Without clear signage, however, students, being afraid of getting lost, might be discouraged from using the North Woods. One student even noted that while she enjoys taking walks in the woods, she is often dissuaded because the trails are not “well-marked.”

At the Forum, a major topic of discussion was signage and how better signage would make the North Woods a more inclusive space. One community member pointed out that

many users are unable to distinguish marked trails from unmarked trails, which consequently, leads to increased use of unmarked trails and the creation of segmentation of the forest. Community members and students alike spoke in favor of new signs to replace the tin can system currently in place. As one participant stated, “I’ve been in North Woods and the trail [markers] misguided me.” An additional concern presented at the Forum regarding signage was that more signage may increase the number of users in the North Woods, thereby leading to more trail degradation. Certainly such an increase could be seen, but as signage increases, education and understanding of responsible use will hopefully increase.

Additional education at forums from North Woods Stewards and a sustainability “landscapes” fellow (see below recommendations) could stress the importance of staying on the marked trails. Faculty and staff members noted that improved signage would be an opportunity to show Skidmore’s commitment to the North Woods, thus demonstrating to community members that the College has a vested stewardship interest in the North Woods.

B. Increase Public Outreach and Education About College's Rules

One hundred percent of the surveys that were collected after the Forum emphasized that the importance of having dialogues between the College and the Saratoga Springs community. Whether or not the College is able to hire a Sustainability “Landscapes” Fellow (see below recommendations), the job descriptions of the North Woods Stewards should be bolstered to include a large responsibility in organizing similar forums, lectures, tours, and other events with the community. While these discussions could include talks about the North Woods’ rules, they should, even more importantly, revolve around on-going student and faculty research. Several community members noted on their surveys and during the Forum dialogue that they would like to know more about what the College community is up to in the North

Woods. Highlighting the way in which students, faculty, and staff use and value the North Woods will help show community members that complying with the rules would help support these projects and respect the ways in which the College values the woods. Making that value known during these dialogues should be prioritized, regardless of the topic of the conversation.

The North Woods Stewards should not limit their advocacy to Skidmore students; rather, they should maintain a healthy email list with community members who wish to receive more frequent emails about North Woods updates and upcoming events. In addition to emails, the North Woods Stewards should actively monitor and update all five kiosks with clear information that lists the rules (and even explains the purposes for the rules in short flyers). The kiosks should also contain information about on-going North Woods projects (e.g. biological studies, maps made by the GIS class, among others) to show community members of the different ways that the College community values this resource. These materials help users see the value of woods as a resource, rather than only identifying the restrictions on use in the woods.

We believe that maintaining that line of communication between the College and the community would show that the College is willing to hear and respond to community voices. The last meeting between the College and the community was in 2006, and this meeting had a harsh tone (the meeting revolved around the possibility of the College restricting dog-walking entirely from the North Woods). In an interview with Sustainability Coordinator Riley Neugebauer, she commented that "...because it [the dog-walking meeting of 2006] was framed around a negative conservation, it tended to be really negative..." (pers. comm. Riley Neugebauer). We agree with Riley's insight, and with Smith and Kaufman, that the frame of conversations among stakeholders matters immensely in the outcomes of the events. More specifically, Smith and Kaufman hold that focusing on the outcomes of one party over another

(in this case, the focus on dog-walking restriction) prevented reaching any sort of consensus or compromise. Similar to our Forum, future dialogues should instead be framed in a constructive way that focuses on everyone's concerns and seeks to collectively establish recommendations. Additionally, for the reasons stated above, hosting conversations that highlight the ways in which the College community values the North Woods would show community members that following the rules is not just to appease the College Administration, but rather would benefit and show respect for student, faculty, and staff projects in the North Woods.

C. Hire a Sustainability “Landscapes” Fellow for All Skidmore Land

Undeniably, the lack of a daily College representative in the North Woods hampers rule compliance. The basic job description of this College official, who could work out of the Sustainable Skidmore office, would be to engage with community members (inside and outside of the woods), educate users about the rules, and enforce these rules (through a combination of periodic “patrols” throughout the Woods and interacting with users at the entrance points – sites for a disproportionate amount of unsanctioned use (litter, dog defecation, etc). Although these descriptions align with the responsibilities of the North Woods Stewards, the summer stewards would not be able to continue that commitment into the academic year (unless there is a substantial restructuring of the Academic Steward Position).

Having a Sustainability “Landscapes” Fellow in the North Woods would also add an enforcement mechanism for individuals to follow the rules. The officer could redirect bikers to the Saratoga Mountain Biking Association (SMBA) trails above Daniels Road, monitor outbreaks of invasive species with GPS units, and catch people littering. The addition of this oversight could help decrease trail degradation and overuse. In addition, with the acquisition of

the newly-acquired property above Daniels Road (and the likelihood of Skidmore receiving an adjacent parcel), a Sustainability “Landscapes” Fellow can also help the College develop a long-term plan that sets out the College's commitments for the resource's use and preservation for both the New Land and the North Woods.

We believe this position could greatly help make the North Woods a more inclusive space. By having daily education of North Woods users, individual use, of all users, would benefit. Throughout interviews with students, faculty and staff, and community members, users across all three of these user groups rehashed instances in which their use has been hampered by a dog running off-leash. One community member at the Forum talked about how she was bit by a dog when she was jogging. Similarly, a professor talked about how she no longer cross-country skis in the North Woods because of instances in which dogs have literally jumped upon her while she was skiing (pers. comm. Judy Halstead). Clearly, when users do not abide by the rules, use by other stakeholders is compromised (or lost entirely). Additionally, making the Woods a more inclusive space would not only benefit individual use, but would also improve the use of the forest to support the College’s foundational academic mission. One professor told us a story about how an off-leash dog ran, barked, and chased away a bird that her ecology class was observing (pers. comm. Monica Ravaret-Richter). Having an officer with a daily presence in the North Woods could help mediate the conflicts that arise among user groups.

We recognize that this would require a substantial financial investment on the part of the College, one that could come at the expense of other sustainability initiatives. One professor suggested an alternative: hire a recent Skidmore alumnus who could be given a smaller salary and in exchange receive free room and board on-campus (pers. comm. Karen Kellogg). The alumnus would benefit by learning land management skills and by receiving a job upon

graduation, and the College could benefit from the pre-existing experiences of the former student and community member. Regardless of the structuring of this position, the position itself would, significantly, help make the North Woods are more inclusive space and show the College's commitment to land preservation.

D. Recognition of the North Woods for Preservation and Revised Development Plans

Looking toward the future of the North Woods, we see the recognition and commitment to preservation of the woods as paramount to maintaining the values expressed by students, faculty and staff, and community members. The College should make a concerted effort to form development plans that would not further intrude into the North Woods. The area considered to be the North Woods has steadily shrunk since the College purchased the property in 1961 (see Appendix). In 1969, the wooded area of campus was 223 acres. As more buildings were completed and the College grew, the area of the woods shrank to 207 acres by 2007. Finally, after the completion of the Northwoods Apartments, the wooded areas further diminished to 180 acres. Should the College proceed with its Crescent Green development plans, the wooded areas would be reduced to 163 acres.

As one staff member noted in response to a discussion about the Campus Master Plan, "...once you hack at it, it's gone." She emphasized the need for continued stewardship, but also the fragility of the woods. Built capital, the number of square feet per person, has increased on Skidmore campus. One faculty member talked about how despite the fact that the College has not expanded its student body too much over the past couple decades, the amount of "built capital" (and proposed built capital) has risen dramatically (pers. comm. Mark Youndt). Development should focus inwards and upward instead of outwards. That is, a new

Master Plan should consider the construction of new facilities on top of existing structures and adjacent to existing buildings in the interior of the current Perimeter Road, rather than sprawl outwards into the North Woods. As noted earlier in the Discussion, 76% of faculty and staff mentioned development as a concern, along with a number of community member and students at the Forum. "Mission creep," as one interviewee put it should be revised and refocused to make sure the North Woods does not only represent a potential building zone.

It is our sincere hope that the College takes our recommendations into consideration in the future planning of the North Woods and campus.

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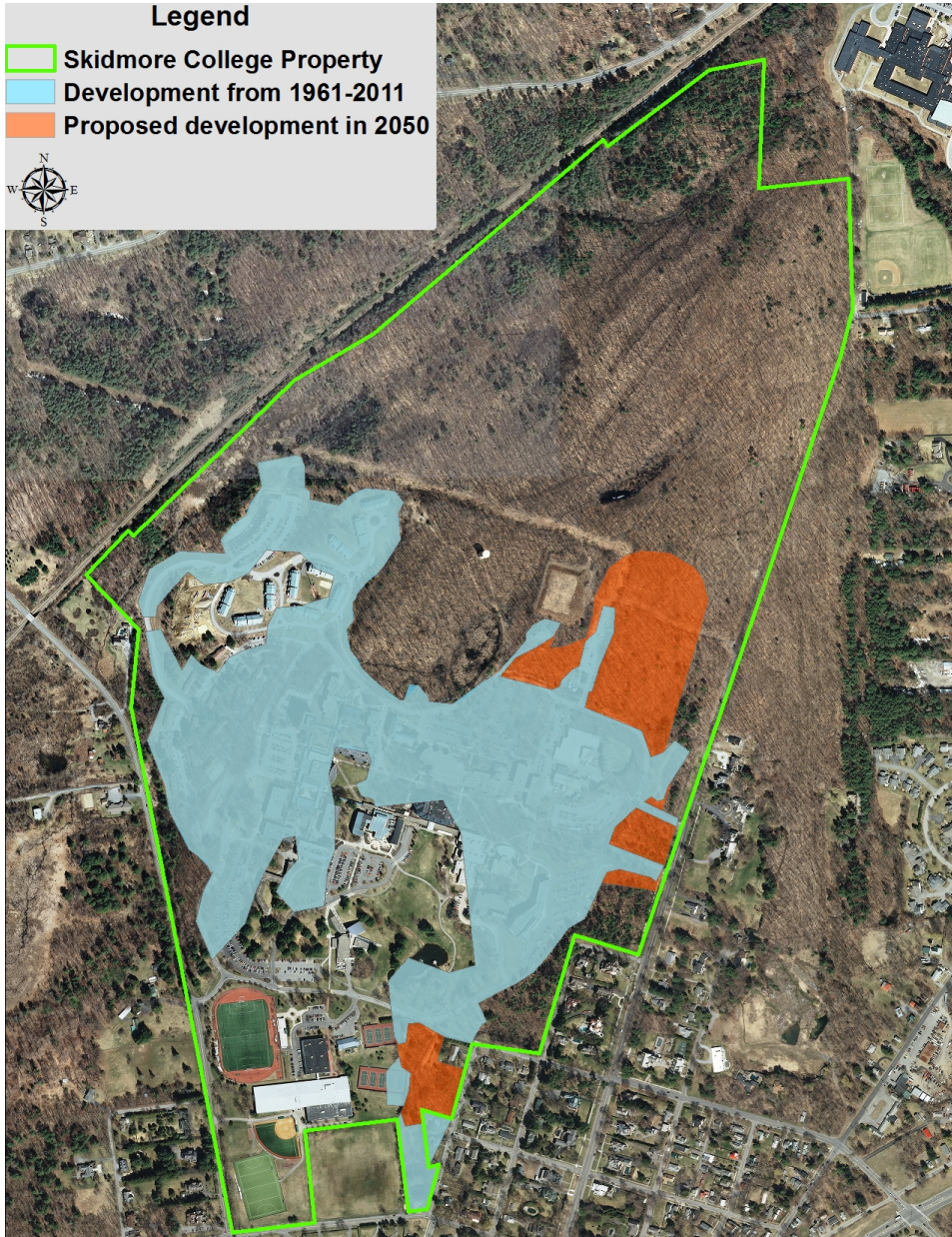
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Appendix

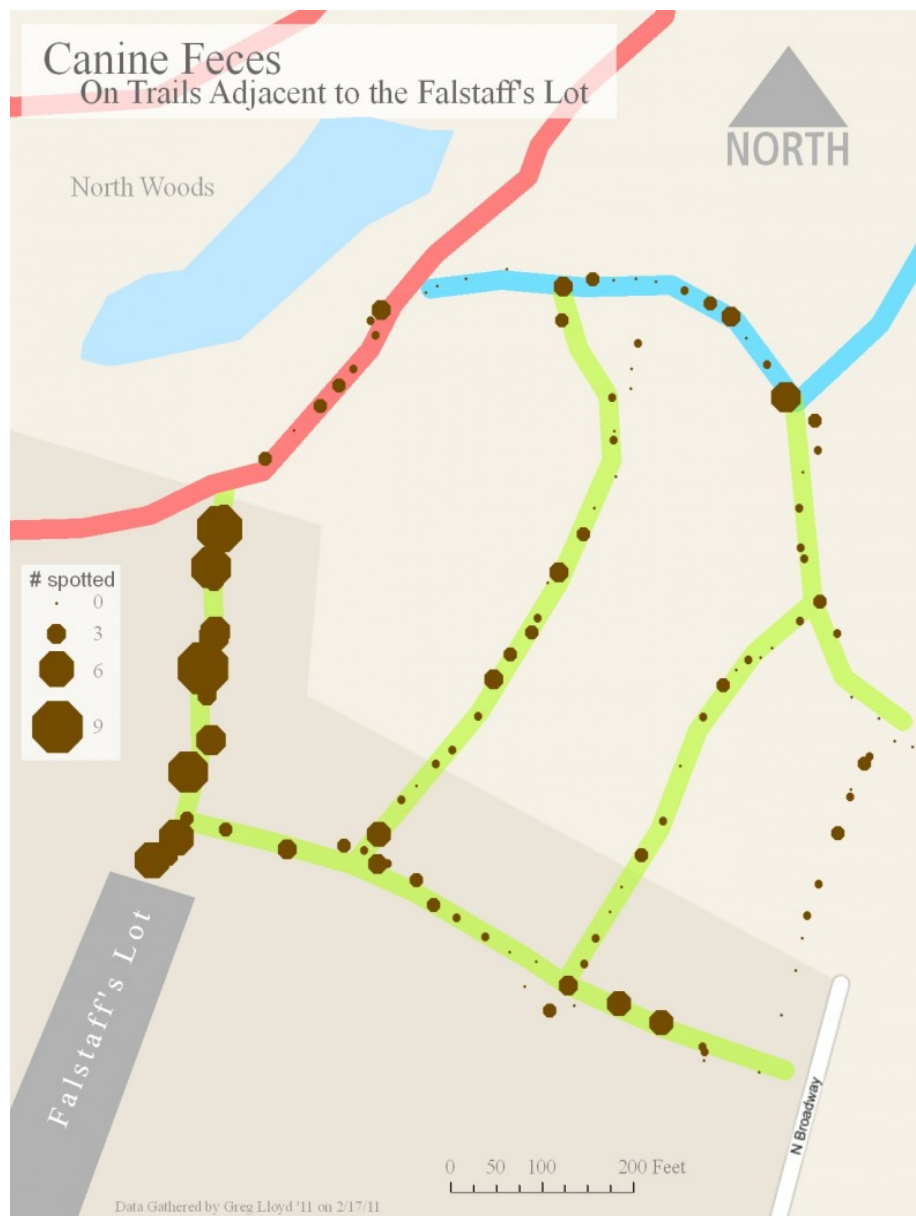
Maps



Map 1: North Woods Signage (Current and Proposed) (August 2011)

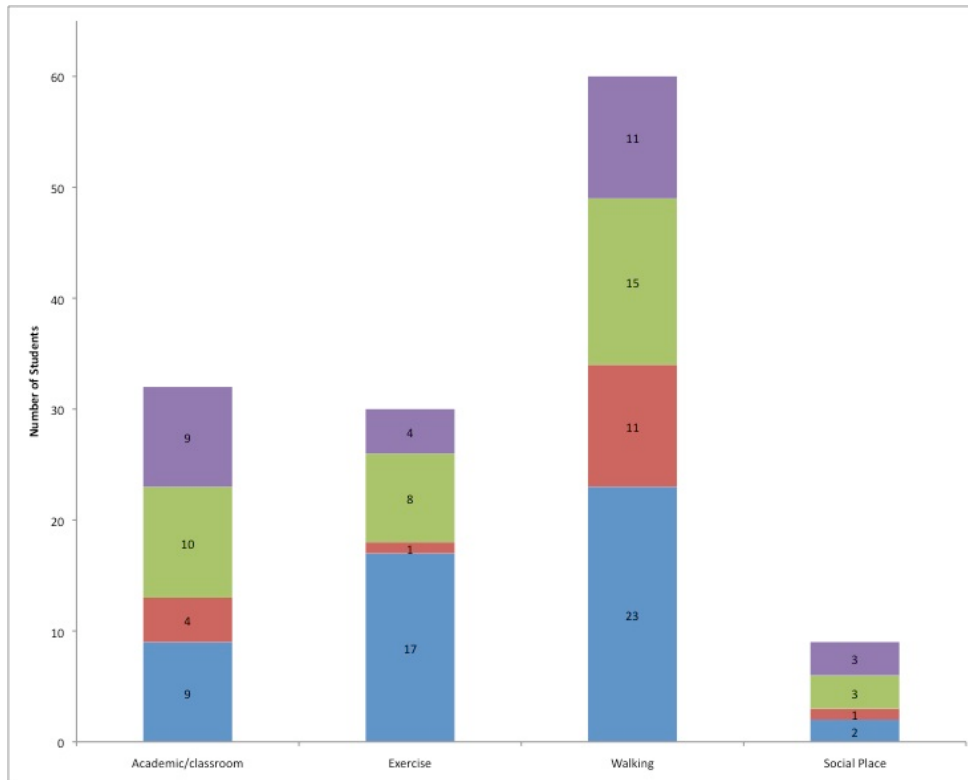


Map 2: Forested Land in 1961 vs. Development (April 2012)



Map 3: Dog Excrement in the North Woods (Spring 2011)

Graphs



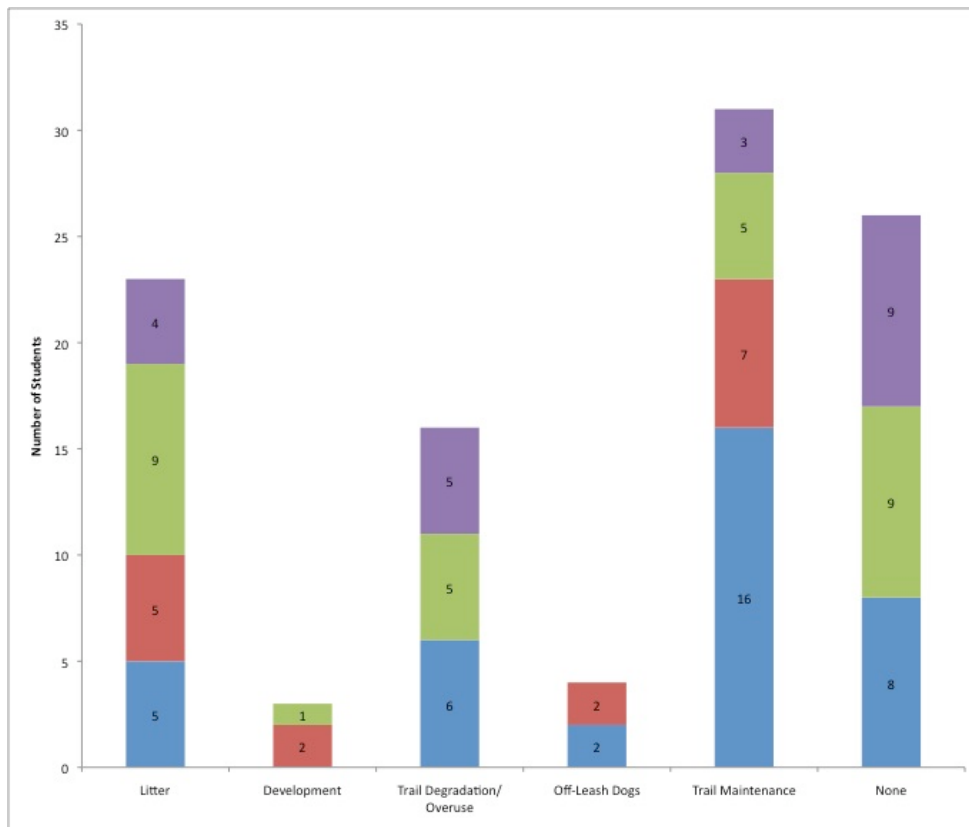
Graph 1: Class-year distribution of types of North Woods use. Blue represents seniors, red represents juniors, green represents sophomores, and purple represents freshmen.

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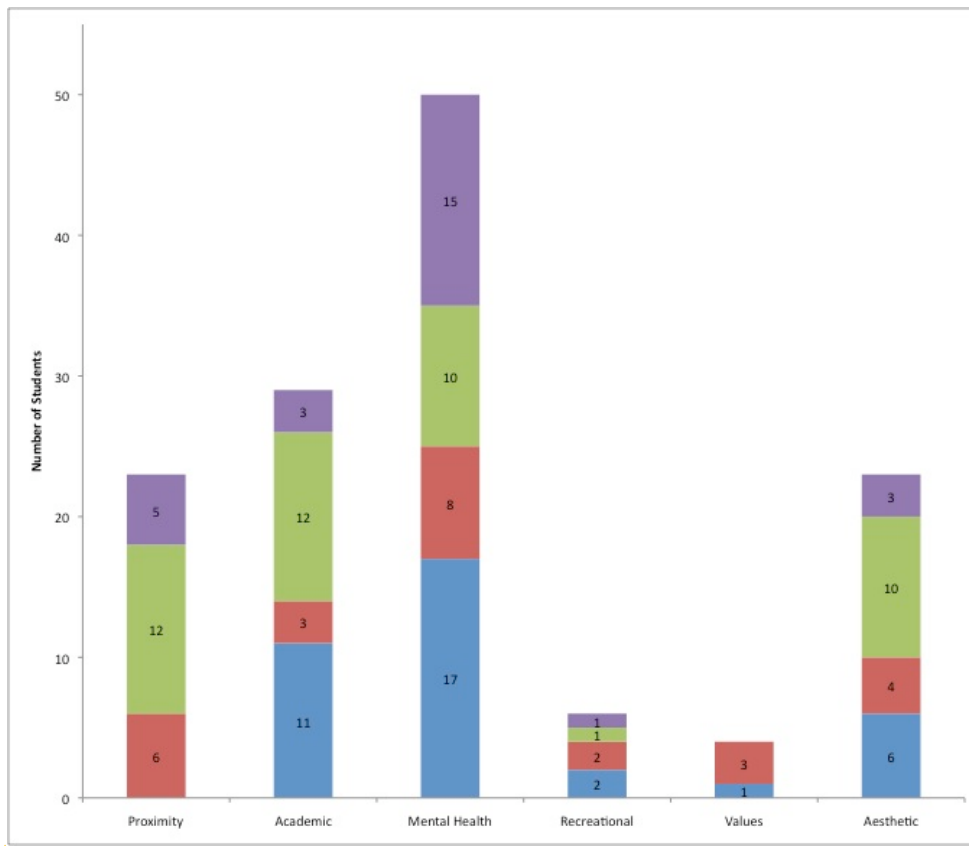
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Graph 4: Class-year distribution of range of concerns towards the North Woods. Blue represents seniors, red represents juniors, green represents sophomores, and purple represents freshmen.

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Graph 5: Class-year distribution of range of values towards the North Woods. Blue represents seniors, red represents juniors, green represents sophomores, and purple represents freshmen.

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Tables

Interviewee	Date	Video Available	Interview Notes
Faculty and Staff			
Rick Chrisman	6/6/11	✓	
Bob Jones	6/10/11	✓	
Sue Rosenberg	6/17/11	✓	
Sue Van Hook	6/17/11	✓	
Michael Marx	6/20/11	✓	
Alex Chaucer	6/20/11		✓
Mary Lynn	6/22/11		✓
Alison Barnes	6/29/11	✓	✓
Mark Youndt	6/29/11	✓	✓
Jennifer Bonner	7/8/11		✓
Kim Marsella	7/11/11	✓	✓
Karen Kellogg	7/18/11	✓	✓
Rik Scarce	7/19/11		✓
Monica Raveret-Richter	7/20/11	✓	✓
Josh Ness	7/22/11	✓	✓
Mike West	7/25/11		✓
Muriel Poston	7/25/11	✓	✓

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President Glotzbach	8/1/11	✓	
Judy Halstead	1/27/12	✓	
Riley Neugebauer	1/31/12	✓	
Beau Breslin	2/28/12	✓	
Community Members			
Ken Ivins	6/20/11	✓	
Julie Stokes	7/25/11	✓	✓
Lois Geshiwl and Nancy Castillo	8/2/11	✓	✓
Greg Wozniak	2/28/12		✓

Text

A. Faculty/Staff/Community Member Interview Questions

- What is your relationship to the North Woods? (How do you specifically utilize the North Woods?)
- How do you think the North Woods serve Skidmore and the greater community? (Who do you think is using the North Woods and why?)
- What is unique about the North Woods?
- What do you perceive as the challenges facing the North Woods?
- What is your vision for the North Woods?
- Anything else...story, anecdote, feedback...?
- Who else should we talk to in the community or on campus?

(For Faculty Members Only)

- How did you or do you use the North Woods in the classroom?
- How would you feel about the creation of an outdoor classroom at Skidmore?

(Supplemental Questions for 2012 Interviews)

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- What are your thoughts on how different users groups (i.e. research by faculty and students, community members walking their dogs, etc.) interact within the North Woods?
- Given the lack of enforcement of the College's rules in the North Woods, do you think the College should hire a full-time employee (separate from the position of Sustainability Coordinator) who has a daily presence in the North Woods and would be involved in the management of all the College's undeveloped land (including the newly-acquired property above Daniels Road)?

2. Student Interview Questions

- Name (optional) and Class year?
- Have you been to the North Woods?
- How have you used the North Woods?
- How did you first hear about the North Woods?
- In the time that you have spent in the North Woods, have you identified any problems? If so, what are they?
- Is the North Woods valuable to Skidmore College? If yes, how and why is it valuable? If not, why not?
- Who do you think uses the North Woods the most? How and why are they using it?
- Have you heard about the New Land?

Images

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Friends of the North Woods

Name (optional): _____

Contact information (optional): _____

How do you use the North Woods?

What concerns do you have about the North Woods?

Additional Comments/Suggestions/Feedback:

(Please check opposite side for how to contact us)

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Friends of the North Woods

Want to contact us directly?

Please email NWStewards@gmail.com

Facebook: Search "Friends of the North Woods" and "Like" us here:

<http://www.facebook.com/FriendsoftheNorthWoods>

Blog: Share your thoughts anonymously in the comments at:

<http://academics.skidmore.edu/blogs/northwoods/forum>

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