

Cows in Peril

The future of Southborough's Belted Galloway Cows on the Breakneck Hill Conservation Land is in jeopardy. The Stewardship Committee, which is responsible for the management of the land, is proposing a plan to the Southborough Conservation Commission that will make the presence of cows on the land unsustainable.

The Breakneck Hill Cow Fund (BHCF), a 501©3 organization was founded in 2001 to manage the cows which help control invasive species on the Breakneck Hill Conservation Land, promote agriculture and add to our rapidly declining rural character. The BHCF has been an active community member by hosting a variety of youth groups, engaging at risk children in farming, and creating a unique community volunteer experience. The BHCF was also the entity that sought out and secured the grant from the USDA for over \$70,000 that paid for the rehabilitation of the land to make it a more healthy and sustainable grassland; for which the presence of cows was an integral part of that Master Plan.

The Stewardship Committee's proposal will significantly reduce the amount of land available to pasture the cows, to the point that we can no longer maintain a small herd on the property. The BHCF appreciates the need to protect the wetlands and ensure that the property is available to the public. The BHCF has worked in conjunction with the USDA/NRCS, the experts in conservation land preservation, and is proposing an alternative plan. This plan adheres to the stipulations of the original agreement, while improving the health of the conservation land, protects the wetlands and provides other areas for the cows to pasture. For all areas that the cows are not in, means more areas to mow and maintain and ultimately increased costs to Southborough.

The health of the property, public use and enjoyment of the Breakneck Hill Conservation Land is a priority for all of us. The BHCF knows that the presence of the Belted Galloways on the Breakneck Hill Conservation Land is an integral part of that goal.

WE NEED YOU! Please attend the Conservation Commission meeting on Thursday, March 12th at 7:30pm at the Town Hall to show your support of our plan* and to keep the cows in Southborough or email the Conservation Administrator, Beth Rosenblum at: brosenblum@southboroughma.com

Thank you!

The Breakneck Hill Cow Fund and the cows

*Please go to www.southborobelties.org for a copy of the proposed plan