

WAITSFIELD ROAD DEPARTMENT 2008 Annual Report

With another snowy winter to start the year, the Road Department once again kept our roads open and safe, using the latest in technology and some good common sense. The crew was able to keep the cost of expensive winter road materials to a tolerable medium. Spring came with a slow thaw. On March 31 we had a 30-inch frozen solid snow pack. This also gave us a very easy mud season.

As spring sprung our road crew was able to start the summer work plan. Included was the usual grading and ditching, spreading some crushed gravel where needed, though we held off as much as we could in anticipation of our new gravel pit opening this spring. Much time was spent maintaining the brush along the roadsides this year, which is a difficult and dangerous task. We ask the public to watch for those *People Working* signs. "Safety is no accident," and we like to keep that way.

We are continuing to install the E-911 reflective road signs throughout town. This was the middle year of a 3-year process to bring the Town in compliance with the government mandate. Everything south of the Commons is now done. Next year we will finish the north end of town.

The new equipment is working extremely well. The new "green" tandem dump truck has proved its usefulness. We were able to haul all of the rock we used for ditch lining. We hauled some crushed gravel from Granville, and made fewer trips back to the shed in the winter during a snowstorm. The backhoe has also proved itself as well. More control of the machine, quicker cycle time has meant more time out in the field.

As summer gave way to fall, a number of road and bridge projects were completed. The wooden bridge on Ronk Road was rebuilt, as was the wooden bridge on Palmer Hill Road. The crew did an excellent job with those replacements. We still had some storm debris that needed picking up from the active thunder storms we had. There was also the miscellaneous brush pile to pick up.

A lot of work was done on Dana Hill this year to address the chronic drainage and erosion problems that that steep road experiences every year. The Better Back Roads program helped fund improvements to the Class 3 section of the road, and Friends of the Mad River and the National Wildlife Federation teamed up to make improvements on the Class 4 portion of the road, including the replacement of the wooden bridge with an appropriately-sized culvert.

In an on-going effort to identify problem areas in our roads and plan ahead to fix them, the Town hired Robert J. Turner and Associates from Bristol to inventory road-related erosion locations and develop a five year capital plan to prioritize and fund needed improvements. He produced a map identifying problem locations, a report, and a proposed five year capital plan. His findings are reflected in the capital budget. This project was also funded in part through the BBR grant program.

We wished Kendall Maynard well as he moved on for other opportunities, and welcomed Bradley Mayhew in November.

Overall, 2008 was a good year for the Road Department. We have seen the gravel pit come closer to reality, and the summer work plan was completed within budget, even with some unexpected repairs to equipment.

Looking ahead, money is in the capital budget to do major road work on Joslin Hill Road and culvert replacements.

Respectfully submitted,

Stuart Grandfield
Road Foreman

and

Charles Goodman, III
Road Commissioner



Von Trapp Farm mailbox on the Common Road
Photo: V. Capels