

MATC Executive Committee  
Meeting November 5, 2010  
Randall Student Center, UMA

Present: President, Lester Kenway; Vice president, Tony Barrett; Recording Secretary, Janice Clain; Corresponding Secretary, Phil Pepin; Treasurer, Elsa Sanborn; Directors, Dennis Andrews, Bob Cummings, Bruce Grant, Bill Eddy, Bill Millis, Don Stack; Overseer of Lands, Dave Field; District Overseers, Dick Fecteau, Tom Gorrill; Club Coordinator, Holly Sheehan; Guidebook Editor, Ray Ronan; Campsite Committee Chair, Laura Flight; Guests, Roderick Forsman, Ron Dobra.

Absent: Directors, Craig Dickstein, Steve Gaffney; District Overseers, Peter Roderick, Rick Ste. Croix, Julian Wiggins.

**Call to order:** President Lester Kenway called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm. As there were guests in attendance, introductions were made.

**Secretary's Report:** Janice Clain presented the Secretary's Report of the September 7 meeting. With no indications of errors, Elsa Sanborn placed a motion, seconded by Don Stack, to accept the report as distributed. The vote of the Executive Committee was to approve.

**Treasurer's Report:** Elsa Sanborn presented the Treasurer's Report. She noted net assets of nearly \$474,000. Bruce Grant placed a motion, seconded by Bill Eddy, to accept the report as distributed. The vote of the Executive Committee was unanimous.

**Wind Power:** Tony Barrett gave an update on the Highlands Wind Power project. He said Bill Plouffe has met with the opposition attorney and has expressed the club's position. Bill doesn't believe the developers will be willing to compromise. They will go ahead with their filing before LURC, but will propose an installation of thirty-nine turbines, rather than the original forty-eight, and with increased mega wattage per turbine. The turbines removed from the proposal are the ones from Stewart Mountain.

Tony said the MATC Wind Power Committee has met. They will convene a partners' meeting with AMC and others organizations that oppose the Highlands project. The committee will share the visuals that the MATC Executive Committee saw at the September meeting. The groups are developing themes and setting "talking points." They will develop written pieces to distribute and use in their arguments.

Dave Field raised a question about the status of wind power in general, and this project in particular, when the new administration takes office. Tony noted that, of the candidates in the campaign, governor-elect LePage seemed to have the most questions about Wind Power. The feeling among the Wind Power Committee members is that he won't be so anxious to expedite sites.

As an example of the negative effects of wind power, Lester recounted that he was able to see the Kibby Mountain towers as far as 35 miles away, from Pleasant Pond Mountain and from Number 5 Mountain. He noted that, even in the most remote areas, towers will be visible.

Tony announced that the Friends of the Highland Mountains are holding a fund raiser on December 4. Information is available on their web site.

**Maine Huts and Trails:** Lester spoke on talks with administrators of Maine Huts and Trails. Their goal is to have a complete chain of huts from Rockwood to Bethel. They currently have two huts, and a third under construction.

Larry Warren called to talk about huts proposed for west of the Bigelows, in the Redington and Black Nubble lands and into the Saddleback area. Saddleback officials have refused permission to establish a hut on their lands as they don't want the trail to cross over the mountain. They feel that it would be too dangerous for families to cross a 4000 foot peak in winter headed for a hut. Maine Huts and Trails would like to cross the AT near the Caribou Valley Road. They have a permit to put a hut next to the AT on the Caribou Valley Road, but are considering a site further away from the AT and closer to Caribou Pond. They also have a donor to fund construction of the hut. Their trail would cross the AT twice as it proceeds across various pieces of public lands adjacent to the AT. If they are to proceed, their intention triggers the same process as establishing the Henderson Brook Trail at Katahdin Iron Works. If MATC recommends the proposed changes, the plan then goes to the Regional Partnership Committee, then to the Stewardship Council and, finally, to the National Park System for consideration. Lester has met with Dave Field, Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust's Carol Haas and others to discuss how to deal with these plans.

Dave Field expressed his approval for moving the proposed trail away from the Caribou Valley and towards Caribou Pond. He is concerned, however, that motorized vehicles would be used to groom the trail, a clear contradiction of NPS policy. He added that the rights of way in Maine are very complicated and that there are legal considerations. Both Dave and Lester spoke about how close the proposed Huts trail is to the AT. Dennis Andrews voiced his concern that the new trail could become a similar situation to the Maine Huts and Trails path on Flagstaff Lake, where the two trails are so close together and there is some confusion over markings. As the AT is more attractive than the Huts trail in that area, hikers opt for the AT rather than their own trail, increasing use on the AT.

Lester is looking for a committee to create a proposal to bring back to the Executive Committee to find a mutually agreeable location for the proposed hut. He requested that the following members of the Executive Committee form an ad hoc committee to discuss the options: Dave Field, Tom Gorrill, Tony Barrett.

**Request for campsite in Black Brook Notch:** Laura Flight presented a request to establish a campsite in Black Brook Notch. She explained that maintainer Rod Forsman had e-mailed Tom Gorrill about a well-established bootleg campsite in the flood plain of Black Brook. That location even includes benches, but there is no privy. Several members of the Executive Committee familiar with the location explained that hikers have chosen the site because the brook becomes difficult and dangerous to cross at times of high water. When the Campsite Committee met, members discussed the need for an established campsite in that area, to relieve the damage of multiple bootleg sites, and to move the existing well-established bootleg site away from the water. The committee plans to visit the area in the spring to evaluate the possibilities. They recognize that Black Brook is sometimes uncrossable, and that the closest lean-tos are four miles in one direction and nine in the other, both over high peaks. They are

also concerned that an established lean-to near the current boot-leg site might be too close to a road and therefore attractive to local partiers. The committee proposes a tent site, not a lean-to, which wouldn't be so attractive to casual users. A fireplace and a privy would be essentials.

Dave Field said he has been aware of the bootleg campsite for a long time. He added that, as the current well-used site is in the flood plain, whatever is done in summer washes away. He advised that any plan should verify viable water sources. He also feels that people will continue to camp near the brook, but hopes that an established campsite away from the stream will lessen the impact. He suggested a site at the junction of the AT and the Clearwater Brook Trail, another location where many people already camp. He explained that that area has one of the oldest stands of red spruce on the trail and that the Club has opposed camping there to protect the trees, but added that the old forest is nearing the end of its life span. The site has the most reliable water source between Black Brook and Bemis Mountain Lean-to, and is located half way between those two places.

Phil Pepin commented that he spent a night on the river's edge when he through hiked this season. He noted that all campsites disappear when the water is high, and that high water might also wash away a privy. He added that the Georgia trail club has made campsites between established lean-to sites to ease congestion.

Laura noted that the Campsite Committee is aware of bootleg sites and will assess and address the situation when they can. She hopes that members of the committee can visit the area in the spring to determine the best way to proceed. She said that, given the discussion, she had a sense of the feelings of the Executive Committee.

Tom Gorrill thanked Rod for bringing the matter forward.

After the discussion of this campsite issue, Lester commented that the club needs to review campsite availability and distribution along the trail. Elsa said she hopes the revived campsite committee can review and renew the plan, and establish a mechanism to address the issue.

When Dick commented that groups are more of an issue, as they plan to use some of these unofficial campsites, Bruce Grant reported that the Stewardship Committee has discussed whether to establish designated group sites.

**Club Coordinator update:** Club Coordinator, Holly Sheehan, reported on her activities this fall. She has been preparing and filing several grant proposals. These include the following:

- the Betterment Fund, for Piazza Rock and Horns Pond caretakers and for Saddleback Mountain trail work.

- the Davis Conservation Fund for work on West Peak of White Cap (Trail Crew) and for the Gulf Hagas ridge runner

- Plum Creek for funding for the Gulf Hagas ridge runner– she asked for \$5000 for Gulf Hagas

  - Recreational Trails Program to support the Trail Crew

  - a mini-grant for first aid training to fund three one day first aid CPR training; these will take place at different times and in different locations

**Trail Crew Base Camp:** Lester pointed out drawings prepared by Renner Architects to

provide a visual draft of the proposed Trail Crew Base Camp. Renner suggested a money and energy saving change to the original plan by replacing the six cabins to sleep six people with three cabins to sleep ten people. The plan includes a basement under the bath and shower areas as a space for heating and fuel storage.

The Base Camp Committee planned to meet with Rick Renner on November 17, at which time he would have cost estimates. Lester explained that the reduced number of buildings, less landscaping, and volunteer contributions from members would further reduce costs.

Lester said the Base Camp Committee would start advertising for a fund raiser the following week.

Ray Ronan reminded the Executive Committee that the Green Mountain Club used a firm from Portland for its capital campaign. Lester said he would contact that agency.

Lester suggested a complimentary organizational membership for Somerset Woods Trustees.

Julian Wiggins, Elsa Sanborn, Tom Gorrill and Chris Dorion planned to visit the base camp site to check topography and place pins for the buildings. Lester said he wants to have the next chainsaw training session on the site.

**Club Dues:** As mentioned at the Annual Meeting in April, Lester brought up the subject of club dues and whether they should be increased. Elsa Sanborn explained that an individual membership is \$15 and the club expends \$10 of that per year for mailings.

Dave Field expressed his opinion that increasing dues is not a way to raise money for large expenses; he feels that the club needs to maintain a reasonably large membership by keeping dues modest. The club can then rely on the generosity of members who are willing to give more than the basic rate.

Bill Millis agreed and even suggested lowering dues to attract a larger base. He commented that the real income is from the annual appeal and donations.

Bruce Grant said the Stewardship Council has discussed the matter of dues and how to help clubs increase membership. The Council thinks larger numbers have more influence. Bruce suggested that the club consider different levels of membership. He also recommended that the club form a membership committee to form a plan for what to do for members when they do join. He felt we should make more of an effort to make personal contact and invite members and potential members to join a project.

Bob Cummings added that names and contact information are the most valuable thing the club has. He agreed that we should maintain a broader base, so we can contact established members for a special appeal.

Dave Field reminded the group that members don't just pay dues; they also work. He suggested that we should ask less from those that are already contributing so much in labor and stewardship.

Dick Fecteau asked how large the membership is, to which Elsa answered that there are 600 - 700 dues-paying members, but the appeals letter is mailed to 8000. That letter offers membership if the recipient sends a donation.

Lester reminded the group that the club has a lot of expenses that are drawing down financial resources, including the struggles to maintain funding for the CARE program, which is usually short by four to five thousand dollars per year, and the expenses incurred to oppose

the efforts of wind power developers, which has run to \$300,000, or \$115,000 more than budgeted or covered by contributions. He agreed that it is a valid goal to recruit members and to broaden the funding by increasing numbers.

To a question regarding Life Membership, which is designated to the Stewardship Fund, and so can't be used for other "normal" expenses, Bill Millis commented that many of our life members do contribute a lot, both financially and in work. He suggested having the Finance Committee review and make a recommendation on dues, their pricing and their structure.

Ray Ronan placed the motion to adopt Bill's suggestion. Bob Cummings seconded the motion. The vote of the Executive Committee was in favor of doing so.

**Maintainers' Winter Gathering:** Lester presented the topic of a social gathering in the off-season for maintainers, to give them a chance to meet each other and to share experiences and strategies. The occasion would also give club organizers a chance to clarify trail maintenance standards, and to give information about the trail crew, the CARE program and to pass along information on policies and on trail assessments. Bill Millis suggested that such an event might be combined with the winter social, to attract a larger body of participants and to make a more efficient use of time. Phil Pepin suggested that the occasion could be like a weekend retreat, and he mentioned using it for a trail work project. Dave Field reminded the Executive Committee that the club used to hold an August work trip to provide that opportunity, but he said he would favor the idea of having such a gathering in the winter. Holly Sheehan reported that Dick Anderson has indicated he won't continue to organize the winter social, and this might be a good time to plan for a different type of winter gathering.

Lester offered to help with planning, and asked that overseers, assistant overseers and corridor monitors help with organization. A tentative date of February 26 was set for the event, and Lester will investigate locations.

**MATC Volunteer Recognition:** Tony opened a discussion of volunteer recognition. He noted that ATC has various recognition programs. He added that, while the VIP program is intended to honor members for overall hours, some of the impressive totals are lost when volunteers report by individual districts and functions. He asked for ideas for how the club could give recognition to people who give time and service locally; while the national organization might not take note of such contributions, these individuals provide an invaluable service to the MATC and to the AT in Maine. He suggested recognition at the Annual Meeting or in the club newsletter. He recommended an ad hoc committee of himself, Peter Roderick and Don Stack who would meet to formulate a plan. Elsa Sanborn has some volunteer data collected in recent years for reporting to ATC.

**Learning Viewpoints:** To the question of clearing view points, Tony commented that there are a number of signs directing hikers to scenic vistas that are now grown in. He feels that, when dealing with proponents of wind power, view points are critical. They contribute to public relations and raising awareness to garner public support. He noted that ATC has a data base of recorded viewpoints, but that many of them no longer provide those scenic views. Dave Field checked the Local Management Plan and quoted the following message to maintainers: "Existing vistas will be maintained and opportunities will be sought for new vistas." He suggested this might be a good topic for the winter maintainer gathering. He also

suggested placing an item in the MAINetainer to remind of this policy.

**Maine Leave No Trace Committee:** Geoff Shadman has asked for endorsement to represent MATC on the state LNT committee. This committee is coordinated with the national LNT organization.

Tom Gorrill placed the motion, seconded by Don Stack, to authorize Geoff to represent MATC. The vote of the Executive Committee was to approve the motion.

Lester asked that Geoff communicate minutes of those meeting to Executive Committee.

**New England Regional Partnership Committee and Stewardship Council:**

Bruce Grant reported on discussions of the New England Regional Partnership Committee and on the latest meeting of the Stewardship Council. The 38<sup>th</sup> Biennial ATC meeting is scheduled for July 2 to 8 at Emory and Henry College, in southern Virginia. Included in that conference are workshops for assistance with promotion of clubs and leadership training.

Bruce mentioned the AT Trail Town program, which helps towns promote eco-tourism and develop comprehensive planning. Applications are submitted to the Stewardship Council for approval. Hanover, NH, has been approved to be a Trail Town. Monson has applied, but its application was incomplete. It will need a letter from the MATC Executive Committee stating its support.

NERPC also hosted a presentation on ATC Youth Initiatives, including educators who have taken advantage of the *A Trail to Every Classroom* program. Two schools in Maine participate in the program. There were discussions of the liability issue.

NERPC also discussed the boundary maintenance program. Bruce stated that the program will be "beefed up." The committee voted to approve the Randolph Mountain Club as maintainer of trail section. It also discussed the Highland Wind Power proposal and agreed to follow the MATC lead and support its policy.

In a summary of the budget, Bruce reported that there is not a lot of funding for projects, and ATC will likely continue the same level of funding as this year.

NERPC discussed the issue of side trails on Abraham Mountain, as discussed at the September meeting of the Executive Committee, approved the addition and sent the matter to the Stewardship Council.

In a discussion of management plans, the RPC representatives noted that those in the New England clubs are more developed than those in other regions.

In summary, Bruce invited anyone interested in working at a regional level to step in. He explained that the goal is to improve communications between local clubs and ATC.

**January Meeting Format and Agenda:** Lester called for suggestions for the format and for agenda items for the January meeting. He received the following:

from Bruce Grant: club direction, club structure, a discussion of how to increase membership; non-traditional and short term volunteers - Lester said that Holly has been investigating grants for groups and projects. She has also contacted the Maine Community Foundation for help with determining volunteer and financial capacity.

from Tom Gorrill: how to effectively use volunteers who offer their services

from Tony Barrett: back country waste disposal

from Dick Fecteau: campsites and capacity, in particular, do we have enough to handle the numbers of people who use the trail?

A general suggestion was brainstorming for ideas for fund raising.

**Nominating Committee:** Lester announced that the club President is supposed to suggest a nominating committee no less than four months before annual meeting. As he was not ready with that information, he would send the information by e-mail in December.

### **Reports from Overseers**

Dave Field reminded the group that he is writing a book on the history of the AT in Maine. He showed the group the cover design.

Dave reminded the Executive Committee of the discussion at the September meeting of the proposed transfer of Park Service land to the State of Maine to allow for a snowmobile crossing of the AT. Dave said Pam Underhill would be in Maine on November 16 to meet with Alan Stearns, director of the Bureau of Parks and Lands to talk about the trail past Eddy Pond and how to meet terms of the legislation that enabled the NPS to buy lands on Saddleback. The legislation required some of that land to be transferred to the State. Pam would then attend a meeting on November 17, in Oquossuc, with representatives of local snowmobile organizations, other landowners, politicians and the BPL. Dave reported that the illegal "Slippery Sliders snowmobile trail that was discovered across the AT last fall, and that has been closed, was now of interest to other snowmobilers in the area. A camp owner / snowmobiler called the November 17 meeting, and called all snowmobile clubs to attend the meeting with the NPS, congressional delegation and BPL.

When Lester asked what the MATC could do to help, Dave replied that we could advise parties representing landowners to "hang tough."

Bruce Grant placed a motion, seconded by Dick Fecteau, to confirm the support of the MATC Executive Committee for the decisions of NPS officials regarding the illegal crossing of the AT by snowmobile riders. All members of the Executive Committee voted in favor, with no "nay" votes.

Dave Field noted that Corridor Monitor openings are posted on the MATC web site.

Tom Gorrill reported that the Route 17 construction project is in progress. Tom has attended pre-construction meetings, and understands that the company is sensitive to the trail crossing and the impact work will have on the AT. Some clearing is going on now, and the trail will have to be rerouted next season, especially during blasting.

Tom also reported on an issue with advertising signs near the trail. He said Matt Stevens is going to check on the matter.

Dick Fecteau reported that he and others worked a couple days clearing blow downs on the Abraham side trails. The trail is blazed and cleared. Dick hopes to work on the new campsite near the site of the old fire warden's cabin. When asked if these changes will require a NEPA process, Dave Field responded that he doesn't think it does because the existing side trail is connecting to an already established NPS trail.

With discussions finished, Elsa Sanborn placed a motion, seconded by Tom Gorrill, to adjourn. The Executive Committee voted to approve the motion, and the meeting ended at 10:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Janice Clain  
Recording Secretary, MATC