

MATC Executive Committee Meeting
Friday, November 6, 2009
Newport Cultural Center

Present: President, Lester Kenway; Secretary, Janice Clain; Treasurer, Elsa Sanborn; Directors, Dennis Andrews, Bob Cummings, Bill Eddy, Bruce Grant, Bill Millis, Don Stack; District Overseers, Dick Fecteau, Tom Gorrill, Peter Roderick, Julian Wiggins; Overseer of Lands, Dave Field; Historian and Guide Book Editor, Ray Ronan; Club Coordinator, Holly Sheehan; Wind Power Committee Chair, Tom Lewis.

President Lester Kenway called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Secretary's report: Janice Clain presented the Secretary's report for the September 4 meeting. She noted she had made corrections taken from input by those in attendance. The revised minutes were redistributed in the week before the meeting. Lester noted that this seems to be a good process for maintaining an accurate account of proceedings at Executive Committee meetings. Dave Field added that he is scanning minutes of all the Executive Committee meetings and will compile a disc to distribute to members of the committee.

Elsa Sanborn placed a motion, seconded by Bill Eddy, to accept the September 4 minutes as amended. The vote to accept carried.

Treasurer's Report: Elsa Sanborn presented the Treasurer's report and made a few brief explanations. She is concerned that the annual appeal has not seen as positive a response as in past years. She pointed out the deficit in some accounts, which is also a concern. The Finance Committee will meet soon to set the next budget. That committee will discuss concerns regarding deficits. She asked that any requests for items to be included in the budget be forwarded to the committee within the next two weeks.

Dick Fecteau asked about the \$5000 listed as paid to ATC for the cost of a Visual Impact Study on the Highland wind power site. Elsa explained that MATC has paid for the Visual Impact Study, which had been budgeted for wind power. She added that MATC had set aside \$10,000 for wind power expenses.

Dave Field placed a motion, seconded by Bruce Grant, to accept the Treasurer's report. The vote of the Executive Committee was affirmative.

Volunteer Hours Reporting: Elsa thanked those who supplied information on volunteer hours and announced that MATC members reported some 505 volunteers gave 25,762 hours of service to the trail from October 2008 to September 2009. She noted that the numbers of volunteers reported earlier may not be accurate, as overseers didn't always supply names. She noted that ATC credits Maine members as 8% of total AT volunteers and 12% of the total hours contributed.

Wind Power Policy: Tom Lewis presented a draft policy on wind power development along the AT. He distributed documents that presented the history of the wind power movement and actions taken by ATC and MATC. The Wind

Power Committee has drafted a policy, distributed to Executive Committee members, that is consistent with ATC policy. Dave Field pointed out that the policy mentions National Recreation Areas, which do not exist in Maine. Tom agreed to remove that wording. Lester noted that the evaluation criteria as delineated in this document, is critical.

Bill Millis commented that this policy is very important as there are up to twenty-five wind power projects in planning stages. Executive Committee members are concerned by the precedents that will be set by reactions to individual projects. Tom Lewis also signaled the cumulative impact of proposed wind power projects; once MATC demonstrates willingness to relax its standards, the flood gates may be opened to a succession of projects that impact the trail.

The discussion of this matter continued for some time, with individual members adding personal observations and experiences. The major concern seems to be that the lands denoted by the Governor's task force as expedited areas for wind power sites are all in remote areas, and are in lands along the AT. Tom Lewis explained that the task force removed language from the original wind power bill that would require consideration for the esthetics of the site. Many public figures consider wind power to be progressive and beneficial. Dick Fecteau noted that wind power "is not green" when effects on the natural resources and impact of construction of enormous wind turbines are taken into account. He also recognized that the members of the task force were predominantly involved in wind power businesses.

Bruce Grant placed a motion, seconded by Dick Fecteau, to accept the Policy on Wind Power Development along the Appalachian Trail in Maine, as presented by the Wind Power Committee. With some further discussion and Tom's explanation that the policy was worded to be read and understood by a wide variety of individuals, the Executive Committee voted to accept the proposed Wind Power Development Policy.

Stewart Mountain, Highland Plantation Wind Project: Tom Lewis turned the attention of the Executive Committee to the proposed Independence Wind site on Stewart Mountain in Highland Plantation. Tom, Bill Plouffe and Lester Kenway met on August 23 with Angus King and Rob Gardiner, who formed Independence Wind. They work in conjunction with Bayroot LLC. The partners plan to locate forty-eight turbines on the Highland Plantation site, and to construct ten miles of access roads and fifteen miles of connector roads, with access from Long Falls Dam Road. They plan to file a petition in November for permission to build. Tom presented simulation photographs prepared by Eric Crews and that clearly show the turbines from five of the nine points along the AT from which they would be visible. Dick Fecteau informed that he had recently had the opportunity to observe the lighted the Kibby Mountain turbines at night from Horn's Pond. He is very concerned about the visible impact of lighted turbines so close to the AT at Little Bigelow and West Carry Pond. Independence Wind acknowledges that this site, though indicated as beyond the four mile fore-and mid-ground view shed, will have a visual impact on the trail. Bruce Grant, Bill Millis, Dick Fecteau and others agreed that if this project comes to fruition, it will open the flood gates to further wind power projects already in the planning stages. All noted that other entities, including Maine Audobon, and AMC, which

supported opposition to the Redington Wind Power Project, have not shown interest in opposing this one. The total cost of the Redington case was \$180,000, of which MATC paid a significant portion. Executive Committee members expressed concern that MATC cannot commit financial resources to oppose this project by itself. Nevertheless, the general consensus was that MATC must take a strong stand to oppose this project on the grounds of its visual impact, and that the club not agree too readily to mitigation, and then only to receive in consideration something that is of equal importance. Tom Gorrill added his observation that opposition should include a detailed explanation of the particular aspects of the proposal we oppose.

Finally, Tom Lewis, Dennis Andrews and Bill Millis mentioned other Independence Wind proposed wind power sites, such as in Rangeley Plantation, Mosquito Mountain and Pleasant Pond Mountain. It is imperative that MATC set a precedent with this project to set a tone in advance of plans for further planned sites.

[Using photos taken by Steve Engle, the US Forest service will produce simulated visualizations of the Highland Plantation Wind Project. The Wind Power Committee will use these simulations when it meets with Pam Underhill to elicit the National Park Service opinion on the Highland Plantation project.](#)

Tom Lewis will return to the Wind Power Committee with the knowledge gathered at this meeting as to the sense of the Executive Committee's stance in this matter. The Wind Power Committee will develop a strategy in this issue and will return to the Executive Committee for authorization to proceed. Lester noted club by-laws permit committee members to communicate club business via e-mail or teleconferencing.

January Workshop: Lester cited the original purpose of the full day January meeting, to allow club members to bring topics of interest or concern for general discussion. He solicited topics for the agenda from the members of the Executive Committee.

Tony Barrett has suggested that the club invite Pete Antos-Ketchum of the Green Mountain Club, to speak about its facility, which is similar to what we envision for the new base camp. Bruce Grant also mentioned the facility at Woodstock, Vermont, where the regional meeting was held. He described it as a "platinum" facility, incorporating several "green" aspects.

Bruce mentioned a number of topics discussed at the Regional Partnership Committee meeting and that Lester will incorporate into the agenda for the January meeting.

Another topic for the January meeting will be the make-up and format of standing committees. Tony Barrett sent a request for information on standing committees. He is trying to determine which committees are meeting, how often, and who is involved.

Grassy Pond Trail Relocation: On the topic of the Grassy Pond Trail in Baxter State Park, Lester informed that he advised park authorities that MATC voted to approve adoption of the new trail as the AT path in the park. As Baxter State Park controls trails within its boundaries, no other approval is necessary. Markings in that section of trail have already been repainted to white blazes.

Base Camp Update: Lester explained that a Base Camp Committee composed of volunteers and members of the Trail Crew Committee has worked for three years to locate a site. It is now time to expand and formalize that committee. Lester has invited fourteen people to join the committee. Members of the committee met on Friday, November 6, with representatives of Somerset Woods Trustees, an architect and a landscape architect, to collect ideas for a site plan. Their work was facilitated by detailed survey maps provided by Julian Wiggins. From that meeting, the architects will create a first draft of a site plan in seven to ten days. Lester will circulate that plan via electronic documents and with telephone consultation. The deadline for submission of the first draft of the site plan to SWT is December 1, with a January 15, 2010 deadline for submission of the final document. Somerset Woods is offering a ninety-nine year lease with no fees for at least half the lease term.

Condor Flights: In September, the MATC Executive Committee voted to oppose the proposed Condor flights. Lester agreed at that time to write a letter to state the MATC position. He wants to review the history of the Condor program before he drafts that letter. Dave Field gave a brief overview, explaining that the Massachusetts Air National Guard requested the governor's permission to make low level training flights, at 500 feet above the ground, over remote areas of western Maine, which includes sections of the AT. The deadline for public comments is January 1, 2010. Dave noted that it has been difficult to access the Draft Environmental Impact Study. He also felt that the New England Regional Office and Pam Underhill are more appropriate entities to make statements in this case, but the New England Regional Office is currently vacant, [and Pam's office is in a state of transition.](#)

On the subject of the lease extension request for the Surplus Pond camp owner, which was discussed at the September meeting, Dave reported no communication to date from the National Park Service.

Corridor Monitor and Maintainer Agreements: Dave presented the proposed changes to the Corridor Monitor and Maintainer agreements. The proposed changes to the Maintainer agreement came as a result of concerns regarding water bar cleaning and the number of visits per season. He noted that some overseers include a second page to the agreement which may include a check list for expected actions or a request to report miles traveled. Dave feels it should be up to the overseer to enforce the terms of the agreement. Tom Gorrill questioned the statement that the Maintainer agreement may be terminated by request of the District Overseer and by a vote of the Executive Committee. Others noted that a case for dismissal has never been brought to the Executive Committee. Dave explained that the Local Management plan states that all assignments, whether to engage or dismiss, must be brought to the Executive Committee for a vote. Opinions regarding these stipulations were mixed, with Dave and others suggesting that an appeal process should be included. Lester asked Dave to revise the agreement with an appeals process and to bring it to the January meeting.

The Executive Committee agreed with the changes Dave recommended to the Corridor Monitor agreement.

Dave Field announced that he has signed an agreement with Arcadia Books to write a book on the Appalachian Trail in Maine. He has one year to compose the book, which will be mostly vintage photographs. The company will have twelve to fifteen choices for a cover. Dave will approach MATC for permission to include in the publication any documents that belong to the club.

Updates on funding: Lester introduced Club Coordinator, Holly Sheehan, to update the Executive Committee on her work. She has submitted several grant applications, including the one for the Recreational Trails Program voted at the September meeting. She received notification that the club has received \$17,500 from the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund.

Holly explained that the CARE Committee, for which she expends a good part of her time, is facing challenges for its funding. Many of the foundations that offer grants for environmental and outdoors groups are interested in supporting trail construction projects but not operations. The CARE program has operated this year at a deficit. The CARE Committee discussed the funding issue at its last meeting and decided take a new approach. It will aim to secure funding for its program a year in advance. This will mean a transition year with limited staffing and seeking new funding sources. Holly has a list of potential regional partners, organizations and municipalities that benefit directly from the presence of a care taker or ridge runner in their proximity. Unless funding increases dramatically in the coming months, CARE plans to staff only three positions for the 2010 season, and to return to five positions for the 2011 season.

Bruce Grant questioned the funding issue, and said that delegates to the Regional Partnership Committee had been assured that care taker / ridge runner positions would be funded by ATC. Elsa Sanborn added that MATC has not received funding from ATC for the CARE program. Bruce plans to bring the subject to the RPC. He is particularly concerned for the Abol position, which has increased communication and understanding with Baxter State Park. The issue will also be presented to the Finance Committee as it prepares the budget for the next year.

RPC meeting update: Bruce Grant and Don Stack reported on the latest Regional Partnership Committee meeting. The group has three major goals: to increase membership in ATC; to broaden the Trails to Every Classroom program, which has benefited from government stimulus money; and to provide more public outreach to trail towns. Bruce added that the Mega-transect project won't be a priority, due to budget issues. The [Regional Director position](#) is still vacant, and there is no clerical assistance. The Forest Service has been receiving funding, while the National Park Service has not. Given these conditions, the trail assessment in Maine will be postponed yet again.

Bruce feels the RPC can be pressured to support local clubs financially and with sensitive issues. He noted that ATC used to handle problems, such as the wind power development, that local clubs must now confront on their own.

Bruce also reported that the Stewardship Committee is in the process of restructuring, and will be comprised of representatives from the RPC.

Lester reported that there were eight students for the chainsaw workshop in October. The report on the Chairback Gap lean-to construction was available in the latest edition of the MAINEtainer, as was the report of the relocation on Little Boardman.

Lester will work with Matt Stevens to plan next year's partners' hike. Lester felt that some agencies that are directly involved with the trail were not represented. With his assistance in planning, outreach to these agencies might prompt them to participate.

Dave Field reported that the ATC Corridor Boundary Maintenance program has not been able to offer much support for field work. It operates out of the Mid-Atlantic office, and has placed more emphasis on documentation than on locating and maintaining boundaries on the ground.

Dave also raised concerns regarding a dam at the outlet of Pierce Pond, which hikers have been using. This dam is owned by a Mr. Cobb, who is concerned about liability issues. MATC may have to consider relocating the trail to avoid passing over this dam.

Dave has also had communication from the Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust to inform him of illegal trails built by the Slippery Sliders Snow Mobile Club and crossing their lands and the AT. Dave and representatives of the RLHT will address this situation.

Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust has requested an exchange of their mailing list and MATC list. We have agreed to this arrangement in the past. Bob Cummings placed a motion, seconded by Ray Ronan, to exchange mailing lists with MATLT. The vote carried.

Lester announced that the five year agreement with Baxter State Park expired in April of 2009. Jensen Bissell has presented an identical agreement extending the agreement for another five years. All members of the Executive Committee supported extension of the agreement.

Lester also said he has received two inquiries by individuals who are interested in accepting responsibility for management of the [ATC club data base](#).

Overseer reports:

Overseer of Lands, Dave Field, reported that the issue of boat storage is still not resolved. Bruce Grant mentioned that there is a campsite on an island in West Chairback Pond.

Peter Roderick reported that this is a quiet time of year in the Kennebec District.

Julian Wiggins noted that he still has an opening for a maintainer for the Pleasant River Road in the Whitecap District.

Dick Fecteau submitted his report for the Bigelow District through the latest edition of the MAINEtainer.

Tom Gorrill, Bald Pate District Overseer, said volunteers completed a relocation on the Grafton Loop Trail, which now needs blazing and some tread work. He's had inquiries about the Fry Brook Trail, which is not on AT land, but is owned by the state.

Finally, as a further clarification to the conversation on the proposed Trail Crew Base Camp, Lester explained that the idea of a multi-use "convention center" type facility has been dropped. The current plan is for use by the trail crew but with space if other groups need a location for meeting or training sessions. MCC might be interested in using the facility for early training and for its late season, in which case MATC would entertain the idea of renting the facility at competitive rates.

With all business completed, Elsa Sanborn placed a motion, seconded by Bob Cummings, to adjourn the meeting. The vote carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:56 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Clain
Recording Secretary