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Maine Appalachian Trail Club



The MAINEtainer

Volume XXXIV

Number 2

Early Spring 2011

Oops, we goofed last issue

2011 MATC Annual Meeting really is April 9 at UMaine Farmington

The MATC annual meeting will be held at the Lincoln Auditorium at the University of Maine Farmington on Saturday, April 9.

Schedule

8:00 AM Registration, Coffee, and socializing

9:00 AM Annual Business Meeting of the Club

- Welcome – Lester Kenway – President
- Approval of the 2009 Annual Meeting minutes – Janice Clain, Secretary
- Treasurer's Report – Elsa Sanborn, Treasurer
- Corresponding Secretary Report – Phil Pepin
- Adoption of Budget for FY 2011-2012 – Tom Lewis, Finance Comm.
- Nomination Officers for 2011-2012 – Dave Field
- Care Committee Report – TBA
- Trail Crew Center and Capital Campaign Project – Lester Kenway – President
- Walter D. Green Service award for 2010
- President's Report on the past year – Lester Kenway – President
- 10:30 AM** Trail Reports – District Overseers with slide show by David Field
- 12:00 PM** Lunch
- 1:00 PM**
 - Trail Crew – Lester Kenway – President
 - Kennebec River Ferry Report – David Corrigan

- Current Wind Power issues update – Tom Lewis
- Campsite Committee Report – Laura Flight
- Corridor Monitoring – David Field
- Chainsaw Safety Training – Craig Dickstein
- Other reports – TBA.
- Open Forum on current issues before the Club
- 2:45 PM**
 - Concurrent Meetings with Trail Overseers and Maintainers
 - New member or Guest welcome session – Lester Kenway – President
- 4:00 PM** End of Day

Officer and director nominations for 2011-2013

President, Lester Kenway; **Vice President**, Tony Barrett; **Secretary**, Janice Clain; **Treasurer**, Elsa Sanborn; **Corresponding Secretary**, Dick Doucette; **Overseer of Lands**, Dave Field, **Overseers of the Trail: Katahdin District**, Rick Ste. Croix; **White Cap District**, Ron Dobra; **Kennebec District**, Peter Roderick; **Bigelow District**, Richard Fecteau; **Baldpate District**, Thomas Gorrill; **Directors**: Dennis Andrews, Bob Cummings, Craig Dickstein, Laura Flight, Jack Gibson, Bruce Grant, Dan Simonds, Don Stack.

Submitted by the Nominating Committee: Dave Field (Chair), Laura Flight, Tony Barrett

Volunteers make MATC trails special

By Lester Kenway, MATC President

From the beginnings of the Appalachian Trail project in Maine, it was volunteers who led the way.

In the mid-1930s the Maine woods were difficult to navigate. USGS maps were not available, and the people scouting the route only had panoramic photos taken from mountain summits to lay out the route of the trail.

Early trail scout Myron Avery and his companions located 77 miles of the trail route between Katahdin and the West Branch of the Pleasant River along existing trails and tote roads in 1933.

They connected with a trail across the rugged Barren Chairback range that was cleared by volunteer Walter D. Green. Green had cleared over 15 miles of mountain top trail mostly by

Continued on page 2

Three-quarters of a century of volunteerism

Lester Kenway's report continued from page 1

himself.

Similar heroic efforts were made by other MATC volunteers along the route of the trail.

Game Warden Helon Taylor, who later became Supervisor of Baxter State Park, donated his time to clearing the trail route across Bigelow Mountain to the summit of Sugarloaf. Bates Outing Club students and faculty scouted nearly 40 miles of the trail route between Andover and Saddleback.

CCC crews arrive

When the Appalachian Trail became a project of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in 1935, large amounts of labor became available to clear trail and build lean-tos. Much of this work would have been delayed without the prep work contributed by volunteers.

The next period of volunteer achievements came after World War II. During the war, few people were available to work on the trail and sections fell into disrepair. Accelerated logging operations obliterated the trail route at times. When the war was over, volunteers reestablished the Appalachian Trail.

With the arrival of the 1970s, new challenges came. Much of the original route of the AT followed logging trails and roads that could be wet going. Land owners were turning some sections of Trail into all season truck roads.

MATC began a series of relocations that would enhance the hiking experience along the trail and eventually prepare the AT for acquisition by the National Park Service.

For 20 years, Club Presidents Louis Chorzempa, Sam Butcher, Steve Clark, and Dave Field organized volunteer trail clearing trips. This all volunteer effort resulted in 164 miles of highly scenic new trail with much reduced conflicts with private landowners.

Some of the major relocations included:

- C-Pond – from the South Arm Road to B-Hill Road
- Little Swift River Pond – included all of the trail between Route 17 and Route 4
- Bigelow to Crocker Mt. – traversed Crocker Mt. and added two 4000 ft peaks
- Elliotsville – rerouted the entire trail between Monson and Barren Mt.
- Nesuntabunt Mt. – which paralleled Nahmakanta Lake for 7 miles, was cleared by the Clark family from Windham, Maine.

Lean-to construction also became a volunteer tradition in Maine. The CCC had built 11 lean-tos in Western, Maine during the 1930's.

Later, Louis Chorzempa led volunteer crews in the building of 15 more lean-tos to complete the chain across the state.

Louis was followed by Carl Newhall, Lester Kenway, Charlie Gilman, and the people of LL Bean who organized work trips to add and replace 26 more abandoned or aging lean-tos. Given that a lean-to can take 900 hours of labor to build, these are remarkable achievements.

Maine Trail crew evolves

With increased use of the trail, and steep footpaths that suffer from years of running water, the MATC found itself in the trail crew business in the mid 1970s.

Initially volunteer student interns, led by accomplished trail builder Jim Mitchell, tackled the work of building water bars and steps to control erosion on the trail along Bigelow.

This crew has evolved over time and now has a blend of volunteer Student Conservation Association (SCA) interns and recruited volunteers that is now called the Maine Trail Crew and works the entire length of the Maine AT.

In some years Maine Conservation Corps teams have joined the Maine Trail Crew. The Maine Trail Crew is unique in that it is managed by MATC volunteers, not paid managers. These volunteer crews have accomplished projects that would have challenged even the most seasoned paid crew. Recently the Maine trail crew completed a 17 year project on White Cap Mt. that made 757 stone steps ready for hiker boots!

MATC volunteers have also led the way for information and education efforts on the AT in Maine. Increasing impact from hikers on Saddleback, Bigelow, and Gulf Hagas has been addressed by stationing trained caretakers and ridge runners to meet the hiking public and provide Leave No Trace information. The caretakers are seasonal employees, but their support and guidance comes from a dedicated group of MATC volunteers.

Volunteer numbers increase

The number of volunteer trail maintainers has grown exponentially over the past 30 years. While the AT was divided into about 30 maintenance sections in 1970, now there are 115 different maintainers that work on the trail. This regular tending of the trail – removing blow downs, brush, painting blazes, cleaning waterbars, etc. is the core of keeping the trail accessible to hikers. 70 volunteer Corridor Monitors walk boundary lines, and monitor rare and endangered species of plants on the 37,000 acres of NPS lands that surround the AT.

The Appalachian Trail in Maine is here because of the hard work and dedication of volunteers. Next time you find yourself on the Trail, take a moment to envision all of the volunteer effort that has gone before you to make the AT possible.

2011 Trail Crew

Maine Trail Crew Projects are a joint venture between the Maine AT Club, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and the Student Conservation Association. Work trips are scheduled Saturday–Wednesday.

Nahmakanta Stream

Stream bank stabilization and step stones

June 18, June 25

Moderate

West Peak of White Cap Mountain

Erosion Control

June 18, June 25

Difficult

Saddleback Mountain

Erosion Control

July 9, July 16, July 23

Most Difficult

Old Blue Mountain

Erosion Control

July 9, July 16, July 23

Moderate

Moody Mountain

Treadway Improvements

July 30, August 6, August 13

Difficult.

Carrying Place

East Carry Pond

Elevated Bog Bridges

July 30, August 6, August 13

Moderate

MATC members are welcome and urged to join us for a day or longer!

To volunteer contact: Maine Appalachian Trail Club:

PO Box 30, Garland ME 04939

207-615-5794

207-924-0133 (after May 15)

matc@gwi.net

Maine Trail Crew projects involve construction conditions. MTC will provide safety gear such as hard hats and eye protection. You must bring sturdy boots, long pants and gloves.

Please be sure to contact the Maine Trail Crew before joining the crew so you know where to meet them. Many approaches involve using abandoned logging roads and bushwhacks to save time reaching the site instead of hiking in along the AT.

For further information visit the MATC website: www.matc.org

Wind power threats continue to expand in Maine

By MATC Wind Power Committee

The recent construction of wind turbines in the Boundary Mountains has surprised many of us just how noticeable a distraction these structures pose, even 16 to 18 miles from the Appalachian Trail.

One's eyes are quickly drawn to the unnatural anomalies on what used to be an unbroken forested landscape all the way to Canada.

Hikers on viewpoints from Saddleback to Pleasant Pond Mountain (35 miles away) have reported their surprise seeing the Kibby turbines so clearly. Even the red flashing lights are visible from the Horns Pond campsite in the Bigelow Preserve.

The past several years of wind power development in Maine has taught us much more about the range of impacts that accompanies this type of development than we knew when the wind power siting law

was written in 2007/2008. At the current rate of development, hikers will soon be hard pressed to find any mountain summit east of Grafton Notch where they cannot see wind mills. If this trend continues, the scenic character of the mountains of Maine will be changed for the rest of our lifetimes.

Because of the visibility of these projects from scenic viewpoints, long distance hikers of the Appalachian Trail in Maine may soon be "in the presence" of one wind project or another for much of their trip through a state that was once considered to be a "wilderness."

Although MATC remains determined to oppose the proposed Highland Wind project adjacent to the Bigelow Preserve, there are many more projects in the "pipeline" which will have increasing and cumulative impacts to the Appalachian Trail. We have recognized

that a broader legislative solution is needed to rationalize the "wind rush" caused by the 2008 'Expedited Wind Law'.

On February 12, a legislative workshop was held in Freeport to educate people about the 20 proposed bills that have been introduced in the current Legislature. The proposed legislation ranges from outright repeal of the expedited wind law to bills that will ensure improved transparency of claimed benefits and more accurate valuation of wind power costs and recognition of the impacts.

Over 100 people attended the workshop, including representatives from the 24 wind opposition groups in the state of Maine. Several MATC members also attended to observe and participate in the discussion. MATC will monitor the progress of these legislative initiatives and will endorse select bills that are consistent with our interests.

Here is the Kennebec District report for 2010

Kennebec District

October 1, 2009 to September 30, 2010

By Peter Roderick

The Kennebec District runs from the Long Falls Dam Road north of North New Portland to Route 15 north of Monson a total of 54.2 AT miles with an additional 1.2 miles of side trail. Included in the district are 6 lean-tos and 1 campsite plus the only ferry service on the AT.

There are 23 maintainers assigned in the Kennebec District currently including two organizations, Pine Island Camps and the University of Maine Outing Club. 62 volunteers reported a total of 1380 hours of work and travel time during the reporting period.

Highlights of the 2009-2010 included a series of hikes covering the entire Kennebec District by Peter and Craig, the purpose of which was to assess the overall condition of the trail and to find any opportunities for assisting maintainers with projects and problems in their sections. We found the district to be in very good shape due to the diligent efforts of our excellent corps of maintainers.

Craig and I along with Donna, Craig's wife, accompanied club president, Lester Kenway on a visit to the section between the Boise Road and the summit of Pleasant Pond Mountain. Under Lester's guidance, we flagged a relocation for a portion of the trail. The relocation will bypass several ledges on the footpath which hikers avoid during wet conditions which is widening the trail undesirably. The relocation will make this stretch safer for all who travel on it. The relocation is scheduled for this coming summer.

A third accomplishment was another site visit by Lester Kenway to determine the best design for a floating bridge to be constructed just north of the main haul road north of East Carry Pond. Bog bridging will also be replaced and improved in this same area. The bridge is required due to a beaver dam nearby which keeps water levels at a high level.

Another noteworthy development in the Kennebec District this season past was the invasion of beavers.

The damming of streams near the AT on Bald Mountain Stream and the inlet of Doughty Pond near route 15 north of Monson, has created big wet problems for the maintainers involved.

Relocations to take the trail out of the water are planned in 2011. If anyone knows of a beaver whisperer, we could keep that person busy in the Kennebec District.

Craig and I want to thank each maintainer for

their continued support for the Kennebec District and the MATC. We also thank all the friends and family that join the maintainers to provide the work crews that make the AT in Maine the best part of the AT

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Pine Island Camp volunteers at Pierce Pond shelter -- While walking AT boundary lines near Pierce Pond on July 7, Dave Field came across a Pine Island Camp crew about to leave the lean-to and work on their section, which runs down to the Kennebec River. Dave Field photo.

The MAINEtainer

is the newsletter of the Maine Appalachian Trail Club. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of MATC, its members, officers, or directors. *The Mainetainer* is published five times a year. Our mission as a club is to construct, maintain, and protect the section of the Appalachian Trail extending from Katahdin to Route 26 in Grafton Notch, and those side trails, campsites, and shelters accepted for maintenance by the club. We seek to make accessible for hiking the wild region of Maine through which the trail passes. *The Mainetainer* welcomes letters, feedback, and information from members and friends of the trail. Send your comments, photos, and information to:

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Visit us at www.matc.org

Your MATC board spends many hours planning the future of our trail



Board at Work -- On a cold January Saturday, about 25 MATC committee members gathered for an all-day workshop at the University of Maine, Augusta. The afternoon is a regular Executive Committee meeting. The morning is devoted to thoughtful discussions on special topics. Membership development, strategic planning, a partnership with 'Maine Trail Finder' and progress on design and fundraising for the Base Camp were discussed. The photo depicts Lester Kenway going over the latest design plans developed by Architect Rich Renner and the introduction of Alicia Nichols, who will help guide the club in its fundraising campaign for the new Base Camp. Tony Barrett Photo.

Invite a friend or a fellow trail worker to join MATC

Please check the membership category and the amount of contribution you wish to make.

Individual (\$15) ____ Family (\$20) ____ Organization (\$25) ____

Additional Contribution _____

Name _____

Address _____

Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Email _____
(both optional)

Family member names for membership cards

Check activities of special interest:

Trail Maintenance ____, committee work ____, Other:

Send form or just a note with your dues or contribution to:

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