

Maine Appalachian Trail Club
January 25, 2014
Jewett Hall UMA

Present: President, Lester Kenway; Vice President, Mike Ewing; Recording Secretary, Janice Clain; Corresponding Secretary, Doug Dolan; Treasurer, Elsa Sanborn; Directors, Dennis Andrews, Tony Barrett, Laura Flight, Bruce Grant, Sherri Languais, Dan Simonds, Don Stack; Overseer of Lands, Dave Field; District Overseers, Craig Dickstein, Ron Dobra, Tom Gorrill, Dick Fecteau, Rick Ste. Croix; Club Coordinator, Holly Sheehan; Finance Committee Chair, Tom Lewis; Development Committee Chair, Tim Fortune; Members and Guests, Larry Clark, Steve Clark, Ardie Hacker, Dave Hacker, Anne Huntington, Jon Huntington, Don Miskill, Michelle Moody, Stan Moody; Fund raising Counsel, Alicia Nichols; Public Relations Advisor, Susan Tompkins; ATC Resources Manager, Claire Polfus; Maine State Search and Rescue, Bryan Courtois; Maine Warden Service, Lt. Kevin Adams
Absent: Directors, Bob Cummings

President Lester Kenway called the meeting to order at 9:09 am. He explained that the topics for the morning sessions would be mainly informational, with a few that might require a vote, when non Executive Committee members would be asked to leave the room.

Clean-up on Bigelow Mountain: Dan Simonds presented a slide show of the clean-up project on Bigelow Mountain initiated and carried out by caretaker Ian Fitzmorris. Ian started by cleaning refuse from the site of the Avery Peak fire warden's cabin. He carried trash by bucket to Bigelow Col and he enlisted some willing hiker volunteers to help. He then continued to clean a woodshed and dump sites at the Bigelow Col warden's cabin, again aided by hiker volunteers. He collected and packaged a variety of items of all sizes and shapes and then brought them by backpack to the Horns Pond trailhead, where an Americorps volunteer staying at Bigelow Lodge and working for Bureau of Parks and Lands was able to pick them up and transport them to proper facilities. The Maine Forest Service sent a helicopter to take out the largest and last pieces, and this segment of the project was filmed for a broadcast of Bill Green's Maine.

In all, Ian and his 1528 helpers carried out 10,975 pounds and contributed 5519 volunteer hours. Ian wants to continue the process at other fire tower sites in Maine. Dan has written an article on the project that will appear in the spring edition of AT Journeys.

Update on Trail Center Project: Alicia Nichols presented an update on the Trail Center project, which was initiated by the Executive Committee in 2007. As background for attendees who may not have been involved with this on-going project, she explained that its purpose is to fund and construct a five building complex in Skowhegan to house the Maine Trail Crew, store its equipment, and provide training

and meeting space. The project is currently in the quiet phase, working on planning with no publicity. A solicitation committee composed of Lester Kenway, Elsa Sanborn, Craig Dickstein and Bruce Grant, is starting with the Executive Committee, building consensus and securing a commitment to support the project financially and institutionally. Alicia has emphasized on a number of occasions the need for 100% backing by the club's governing board before forming a capital campaign committee. Once the campaign committee is in place, the next step is to secure a financial commitment from large donors. The project will launch publicly when at least campaign 50% of the campaign goal is secured.

Executive Committee Vacancy: Lester inserted a business item into the agenda. He announced that Rebecca Clark resigned her MATC Director position in September. Lester talked with the Nominating Committee, who then approached Sherri Langlais. Sherri and her husband Ed have been longtime maintainers in the White Cap District and key contributors on the Trail Crew Committee, the Campsite Committee, and willing helpers with pack-ins and pack-outs of the Gulf Hagas Ridge Runner, along with many other volunteer efforts.

Ron Dobra placed a motion, seconded by Laura Flight, to appoint Sherri Langlais to the open Director position. The vote to approve by the Executive Committee was unanimous.

Friends of Baxter State Park Announcement: Ann Huntington, representing the Friends of Baxter State Park, announced a part time volunteer coordinator position opening. They would welcome input from MATC or applicants who have experience with the Appalachian Trail.

Black Brook Campsite Proposal: Another business item on the agenda was a proposal to establish a non-standard campsite at Black Brook, adjacent to the South Arm Road. Rod Forsman brought this to the attention of the Campsite Committee. Campsite Committee Chair, Laura Flight, distributed information and explained to this group that the proposal doesn't meet Local Management Plan guidelines because it is within three miles of a road crossing. There are already well-established bootleg sites where the Trail crosses the brook and with steep terrain just on the other side. The major concern is that many hikers don't want to cross Black Brook, especially at times of high water, so camp beside the brook, where there are no privy facilities. The proposed site would have tent sites and a privy, but no lean-to. The goal is to complete paperwork in 2014 and build in 2015.

Dave Field clarified that the LMP policy requires that a campsite be at least three miles from any road, to prevent use by casual travelers, and not on the shores of any lake or pond. Given the unique situation of this site, he recommends this proposal, with the campsite located beyond the flood plain of the brook.

Elsa Sanborn placed a motion to establish a campsite where the AT crosses Black Brook, as recommended by the Campsite Committee. Dave Field seconded the motion.

Bruce Grant expressed his concern that putting in a handicapped accessible privy may attract users, and Craig Dickstein recommended that the campsite and privy be out of sight of the road and on the other side of the brook, to which Laura concurred. The motion carried, with 17 in favor.

Public Relations / Communications Update: Susan Tompkins reported on public relations activities, beginning with a history of the involvement of her company, Rising Tide PR, and MATC. As a result of the buildup towards a capital campaign to fund a Trail Crew Center, fund raising counsel, Alicia Nichols, recommended that MATC increase its public recognition and reach out to a broader community. MATC engaged Vreeland Marketing and its affiliate Rising Tide to improve its public image. Vreeland Marketing concentrated on the club's digital footprint, revising the club's web site and its Facebook page and establishing a club Twitter feed. Rising Tide concentrated on traditional media, with a series of print articles and broadcast reports. Susan worked with Alicia and other club members to establish the Friends of the AT in Maine, which, in turn, organized a series of public presentations on a variety of topics centered on the Trail and on the work of the club.

While the initial contract for public relations services ended a year ago, Susan has continued to work on behalf of the club. She rejoined the effort in April, and has continued to promote the club's work, preparing an article in the Portland Press Herald about Dave Field, and an article in the November / December AT Journeys about the Maine Trail Crew.

As a result of her work with MATC, Susan submitted examples of work she did for the club for awards sponsored by the PR industry. Her publications on the 75th anniversary and the Facebook photo contest, which was posted through REI and "went viral," won top honors.

Susan finished her presentation with a wrap-up of social media highlights: the club now boasts 1843 likes on Facebook, has 1209 Twitter followers, and has 551 e-mail contacts, people who have asked to be on the club's mailing list, with a 38-40% open rate (people who actually open e-mails).

Brainstorming Session – What will MATC look like in 25 years?: Susan followed her presentation on the club's PR campaign by a Brainstorming and Big Ideas session. Working in small groups, attendees were asked to fast forward 25 years and consider a number of topics related to the club's image and its work. Topics included: advocacy, accessible privies, fees for campsites, the structure of MATC and its membership, and the Trail Crew and CARE.

Search and Rescue Presentation: Bryan Courtois, Education Director for Maine Search and Rescue, and Lt. Kevin Adams, Search and Rescue Coordinator for the Maine Warden Service, spoke to the group regarding their operations and how to better connect their services and utilize the expertise of MATC volunteers. Their contact with MATC was a result of the efforts last summer to locate hiker Geraldine Largay. Lt. Adams explained that the Warden Service is called on average for 22-23 incidents per

year on the AT. These are usually more rescue than search, and are usually in a known area. It is very rare to have a full-blown search on the AT. The Geraldine Largay incident in the summer of 2013 was a different case, and Lt. Adams presented a power point slide show of the complete time line of the search.

Bryan Courtois, education director for MESAR, recommended at an Executive Committee meeting last fall and again in an article in the MAINEtainer, that MATC volunteers become more involved with local search and rescue organizations by taking advantage of training and then joining a search and rescue team.

Holly Sheehan offered that she has records of any MATC incident reports filed by volunteers and seasonal employees.

The afternoon session convened at 12:56. Lester prioritized agenda items to treat those that required a vote first.

Little Wilson Falls Trail Proposal: Ron Dobra spoke on the proposal for trail access to Little Wilson Falls, which was first broached at a meeting on January 14, 2013, in Dover- Foxcroft, with AMC Policy and Program Director Bryan Wenzell and Mark Leathers, Roxanne Quimby's land manager. The proposal stemmed from the Piscataquis Economic Development Council / Tourism Development Authority, which has instituted publicity to promote waterfalls in the county. There is concern for safety of the present bootleg trail, which lacks signs, has no drainage, and crosses ledges. Under the original proposal, AMC would build the trail from a former campsite, now closed, and would include improved road access and parking.

To a question regarding who will build and maintain the trail, Bryan explained that AMC will build the trail and PEDCTDA will seek a group to "adopt" and maintain it. He pointed to benefits of this trail to the AT, giving it more recognition as an important natural resource.

Lester has expressed concerns that MATC authorities can't evaluate the trail at this time, as there are no signs on the ground. Bryan is anxious to get started as Elliottsville Plantation has established a grant to fund the work this summer and he is not sure if that funding will continue to next year. He wants to bring his crew in August. The proposal would eventually include a northern route, a plan that would be reevaluated after a year's use of the southern route. That route would also require ATC approval.

MATC members at this meeting who are very familiar with the terrain of the proposed trail added their concerns for increased traffic, safety issues, threats to natural resources and the hiking experience of the type of user who responds to public promotions.

Dick Fecteau questioned the incompleteness of the proposal, in particular the question of who will maintain the trail. Lester agreed, and added that, as PEDCTDA wants to connect to the AT, they need to work with the club, and it needs more information. Furthermore, because the Vasey's rush only grows in six areas, NEPA will want to examine the area. He observed that it would be unethical for AMC to build and then seek MATC / ATC approval.

Bruce Grant placed the following motion, which was seconded by Dave Field: "While we think a new trail is a workable solution and we support the idea of a trail, we can't approve until we see the trail and until maintenance responsibilities are designated."

The Executive Committee voted to approve the motion.

Lester and Ron will correspond with Bryan Wenzell.

Proposed Motorized Crossing of the AT in Redington Township: Dave Field referred to a proposal for a multi-use trail crossing of the AT in Redington Township that he had previously distributed to the Executive Committee via e-mail. Currently, motorized vehicles have been crossing the Trail near Perham Stream over a logging road on National Park land for which the reserved right of way, a "timber haul road," does not allow crossing by motorized vehicles for anything but timber management and logging purposes. The proposal is to shift this use to a crossing over the state-owned Redington Public Lot. Motorized / mechanized vehicle use would include snowmobiles, ATV's, Maine Huts and trails cross-country ski trail groomers, and bicycles. Dave showed a layout of the lots in that area and explained that any trail across the Public Lot that was designed to link to Caribou Valley would have to cross the 1,163-acre Ridge Parcel, which was acquired by an unidentified conservation buyer at the end of 2013. Uses that will be permitted by this buyer are not known, but the acquisition is said to have been largely for wildlife conservation purposes. The multi-use trail from Barnjum to Caribou Valley is being supported by ATV clubs. At the time the West Saddleback Connector Trail was created, allowing ATV travel from Phillips to Rangeley past Eddy Pond and across the AT, these clubs indicated that they would ask for no other motorized crossings in the so-called High Peaks area, specifically including the Barnjum Trail to Caribou Valley, but no firm agreement on that issue was ever reached.

Dave noted concern that allowing the proposed crossing of the AT on state-owned land would set an unfavorable precedent for AT protection, but pointed out that such a precedent had already been set by the West Saddleback Connector. He also said that he had reviewed all other AT crossings of state-owned lands in Maine and saw little chance of further requests for motorized vehicle crossings.

Dick Fecteau said the new owner of the Ridge Parcel will likely not allow a crossing, so his opinion was that MATC should table this discussion. It's a moot point, as there is no definitive route, so MATC shouldn't authorize anything. With that in mind, Dick placed a motion to table the discussion until MATC has a definitive proposal. Craig Dickstein seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Lester commented on the timing issue; if this were to start the approval process, it would have to go to NERPC in March. He added that it's really a matter for the Bureau of Parks and Lands.

Secretary's Report: Janice Clain presented the Secretary's Report for the November 1 meeting. She explained that two sections were deleted after the report

was distributed to the Executive Committee members, both because their topic was sensitive.

Tony Barrett placed a motion, seconded by Bruce Grant, to accept the Secretary's Report as amended. The Executive Committee approved the motion.

Treasurer's Report: Elsa Sanborn referred to previously distributed Treasurer's Report. She had nothing to add to printed documents.

Donation of Longley Property in The Forks: Elsa also spoke about the Steve Longley property in the Forks. According to the terms of Longley's will, MATC will receive Longley's property in The Forks, land and building, and everything else goes to family heirs. Elsa's feeling is that the club should accept the bequest and then put the property up for sale.

Elsa placed a motion, seconded by Dan Simonds, to accept the Longley property gift in The Forks.

Dan Simonds commented that Steve's intention was to benefit the club. Dick Fecteau recommended that, if we sell the property, we should consider doing something positive with the money to honor Steve's bequest. Tony Barrett cited Steve Clark's vision of small parcels along the corridor to give the Trail more protection. Bruce Grant suggested that, given the high visibility of the location, it might be appropriate for a facility to interact with the public or to serve the hiking public. The first step should be to accept the property and then look for creative ways to use it, perhaps through a committee established for the purpose. To that end, the Executive Committee voted to accept the Longley property in The Forks.

Change in Member Renewal Dates: Elsa recommended a change in policy for member renewal dates. Membership currently coincides with the club's fiscal year, April to April. Many members think their membership starts when they pay dues, and with the new data base it is now possible to track membership according to individual paid dates.

Ron Dobra placed a motion, seconded by Mike Ewing, to establish membership on a rolling basis according to members' dues-paid dates. The motion carried.

Affinity Program with TD Bank: Elsa presented an affinity program offered by TD Bank, where the club has checking, savings and CD accounts. According to this proposal, if members have a TD Bank credit card, they can choose to designate MATC to receive financial benefits. The amounts are a small percentage, but it won't cost the club anything, and will bring in a little money. If the Executive Committee approves, a TD Bank representative will come to the Spring Meeting to explain the program and enroll members.

Elsa placed a motion, seconded by Dick Fecteau, to participate in the TD Bank affinity program. The Executive Committee approved the motion.

Budget Committee Report: Tom Lewis spoke on the preliminary MATC budget, which Executive Committee members had received prior to the meeting, He reminded the group that this is only a draft and needs some refinement. He noted that the club has some expenses because of the Wind Power Committee and the quiet stages for the capital campaign and said the Finance Committee will need to examine the figures more thoroughly. He explained that the Trail Crew operates at a surplus, thanks to heavy support from grants, and other programs operate at a deficit, so we need to examine allocations. Tom will bring the revised budget to the March meeting of the Executive Committee for its approval before presenting it at the Spring Meeting.

Dan Simonds noted that the Executive Committee voted on contracting issues with the capital campaign that don't appear in these figures, to which Tom replied that we've been operating on our normal budget, and we need to define future large expenses. Dick Fecteau added that capital campaign expenses will be recouped through the campaign but wind power expenses won't. Elsa Sanborn noted that the club received more money this year from LL Bean than expected and that the annual appeal has been bringing in contributions. Alicia Nichols commented that the club is beginning to see income from the capital campaign, and received a couple donations and pledges sent after the report was sent. Holly Sheehan also reported that the Recreational Trails funding looks secure.

Steve Pinkham's Maps Request: The Executive Committee considered a request from Steve Pinkham to reprint archival maps of the Trail to sell and then give the club a portion of the sales. He is interested in the 1938 edition of the Trail Guide. Steve Clark clarified that the maps are copyrighted and belong to the club. The club needs to research copyright regulations before responding to Mr. Pinkham.

AMC Woods Race: AMC has established a Woods Race and they want to cross the AT on White Cap and use the Pleasant River Tote Road for one section. They seek MATC approval to use parts of the AT and its side trails. Dave Field gave his opinion that such a race is inadvisable and recommended that the Executive Committee not approve such use. Claire Polfus said she talked with ranger Todd Remaley who confirmed that AMC will need MATC approval. She added that there's a money prize involved (\$50,000) so race organizers will need a permit. She recommended that we consider not just the racers but also the spectators, who would endanger the resources. Others at this meeting cited a similar race planned for the Bigelow Preserve that was not approved, and police were sent to block access to trails.

Dave Field placed a motion, seconded by Craig Dickstein, that MATC not approve a request by AMC to use AT trails for a Woods Race. The Executive Committee approved the motion.

Business Incentives: Lester communicated with the Executive Committee regarding business connections. He and Holly have a list of businesses, such as Cadillac Mountain Sports, that have expressed interest in supporting the club. They would make a contribution to MATC and consider it a marketing expense (advertising) in return for a

designated consideration, such as a mention in the club newsletter. Lester would take to the proposal to the Finance Committee to set a hierarchy of levels of marketing considerations. Stan Moody suggested a list of sponsors by contribution categories and explained that many non-profit organizations do this. Susan Tompkins said it's common in the non-profit world; it's not advertising per se and it has to be recognition for a particular service. She cited the Bangor Daily News' in kind donations for Friends of the AT in Maine events. She recommended that MATC establish a policy and that the club consider how this will impact future fund raising, and added that this might be a good topic for the new communication committee that's forming.

Alicia Nichols recommended communication with any corporate contact that expresses interest, and that we demonstrate recognition for their support, which sets a donor relationship. Rick Ste. Croix noted the list of corporate donors in each edition of the AT Journeys magazine and suggested we use that as a guideline.

Bruce Grant placed a motion, seconded by Tom Gorrill, to authorize the club president to work with one or more committees to develop a policy to establish business incentives. The Executive Committee voted its approval.

As a result of this discussion, Dave Field recommended we revisit the MAINEtainer policy that prohibits commercial advertising.

Wind Power Committee Update: Tom Lewis and Tony Barrett reported for the Wind Power Committee. They met with the legislature's Energy and Utilities Committee, which voted 9-3 to reject LD 1147, prepared by MATC to better protect the view shed of the AT. Tom said the legislative committee did not really understand the contents of the bill, and that legislative leadership was putting pressure on the committee to reject it. The wind industry lobby is powerful, well-funded and single minded. Lester said that only half the committee members were in attendance, which shows little interest in the subject on the part of the legislature. People in attendance at the hearing only talked about the impact of wind power on their interests, not about the contents of the bill. He observed that we need to educate the public on the issue and added that persistence is the key. Susan Tompkins also recommended better communications and education on the topic; MATC general membership may not know what's going on and the people testifying in this case didn't understand the bill under consideration.

Steve Clark commented that there's no cohesion among the wind power opponents; groups are fragmented and don't have enough power, money or legislative support. Members of the Wind Power Committee think the club should regroup and reconsider tactics, and work in conjunction with other organizations that oppose wind power and that we start a process, and secure funding. The Wind Committee will reconvene and devise a different approach.

Attendees at this meeting expressed concerns about the costs involved in this issue.

Tony Barrett reported on First Wind's Bingham project. A second public hearing has not been scheduled. The project is still alive and there have been no substantive changes in the agreement MATC and other groups have been negotiating with First

Wind. Tony said he doesn't see any obstacles to the Bingham project from the regulatory position.

Dick Fecteau commented that the ideal solution would be repeal of the Wind Power Act; most other groups are like MATC; they don't oppose wind power but they do oppose particular sites that impact them. As long as we keep working in that way, we won't make progress toward repeal of the Wind Power Act.

News from ATC: Claire Polfus presented ATC news. She began her job as ATC Resources Manager last June and spent most of the summer familiarizing herself with the Trail in Maine. She concentrated on completing the trails assessment, which entails walking the Trail with a Trimble to note deficiencies. ATC guidelines call for an assessment of the full trail every five years, and the Maine portion was behind schedule. The assessment determines allocation of funding for large projects. The government shutdown in October impacted her work, but the assessment in Maine is completed, leaving only some sections of New Hampshire to complete the latest cycle. Claire will work mainly in the Baldpate District this summer to begin the next assessment cycle.

Hawk Metheny presented a report at the November RPC meeting in which he noted that New England has over half the trail deficiencies of the whole AT. The regional office is trying to prioritize funding to target problem areas. Hawk will present a list of priorities for funding to the Stewardship Council and to the full ATC board. Claire read a letter from Hawk in which he commended her for her work on behalf of the Trail and the club.

Claire updated the group on her work with other programs. She worked with boundary crews last summer, and will work with them again next season. A rare plants and natural resources inventory needs to be done. She will work on the teacher training program and will serve as a liaison to trail communities. She said she is still working out parameters of the job, and asked members to contact her if they have any needs or requests.

Claire reported that the National Park Appalachian Trail Foundation would hold discussions the week after this meeting. She announced that there is a Volunteer Leadership Meeting August 8 - 10, in West Virginia. This meeting is usually held in the off year to the biennial meeting. ATC pays for one person from each club to attend.

Maintainer Gathering: The annual Maintainer and Corridor Monitor Gathering is scheduled for February 22 at the American Legion Post 205, in Augusta. It will highlight best practices, and will include door prizes and a pot luck lunch. Lester planned to send out invitations by the end of January.

Club Coordinator Update: Holly Sheehan referred to the report she sent to all Executive Committee members and said there were no other updates. She presented the newly redesigned register box cards, which now include digital media links.

Overseer Reports:

Dave Field distributed his report as Overseer of Lands via e-mail. Ron Dobra included his report for the Whitecap District in the latest edition of the MAINEtainer.

Craig Dickstein announced chainsaw training dates set for April 12, at the Skowhegan facility, and October 4, at Larry Clark's farm.

First Aid training is scheduled for June 13. Holly will forward to maintainers information regarding Wilderness First Aid training hosted by the Maine Conservation Corps.

Spring Meeting: The date for the Spring Meeting is April 19. Lester said he is looking for a guest speaker, and Tony Barrett offered to work with him.

With all business concluded, Elsa Sanborn placed a motion, seconded by Craig Dickstein, to adjourn. The meeting ended at 3:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted
Janice Clain
Recording Secretary