

Long Trail NEWS



Quarterly of the Green Mountain Club

SPRING 2019



50 Years of the GMC Caretaker Program

Long Trail NEWS

The mission of the Green Mountain Club is to make the Vermont mountains play a larger part in the life of the people by protecting and maintaining the Long Trail System and fostering, through education, the stewardship of Vermont's hiking trails and mountains.

Quarterly of the Green Mountain Club

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The *Long Trail News* is published by The Green Mountain Club, Inc., a nonprofit organization founded in 1910. In a 1971 Joint Resolution, the Vermont Legislature designated the Green Mountain Club the "founder, sponsor, defender and protector of the Long Trail System..."

Contributions of manuscripts, photos, illustrations, and news are welcome from members and nonmembers.

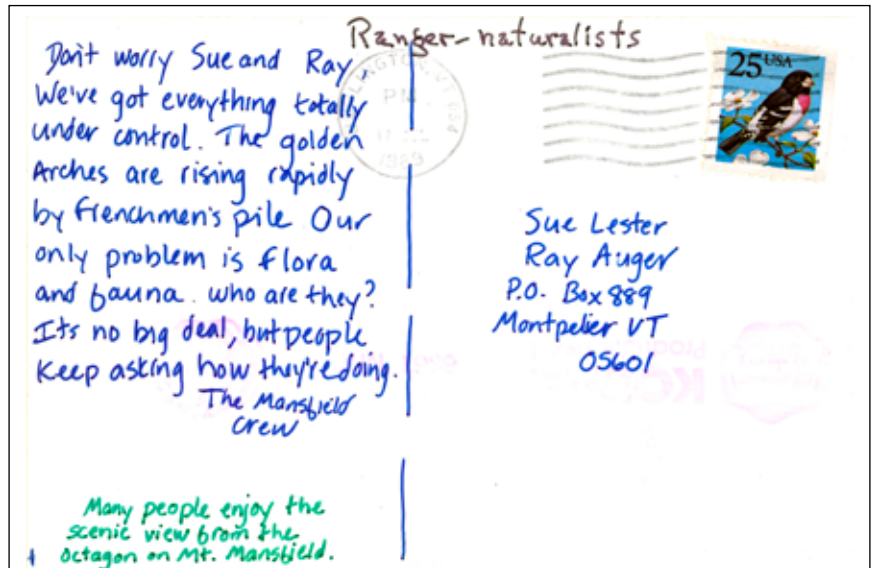
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The *Long Trail News* (USPS 318-840) is published quarterly by The Green Mountain Club, Inc., 4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road, Waterbury Center, VT 05677. Periodicals postage paid at Waterbury Center, VT, and additional offices. Subscription is a benefit for GMC members. Approximately \$5 of each member's dues is used to publish the *Long Trail News*.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the *Long Trail News*, 4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road, Waterbury Center, VT 05677.

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Cover: 2007 GMC caretaker, Robin Lenner, hiking Wampahoofus Trail to Mount Mansfield summit.
Photo by Alden Pellett.



1989 postcard to Field Assistant Sue Lester and Field Supervisor Ray Auger from the Mount Mansfield Ranger-Naturalist crew.

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From the President

This issue of the *Long Trail News* celebrates the 50th anniversary of the modern Green Mountain Club caretaker program, which was revived in 1969 with encouragement from conservationist and then part-time Bolton Lodge caretaker Ken Boyd. (See “Looking Back 50 Years: How the Caretaker Program Began” on pages 6-7.)

We take great pride in the success of this program and the caretakers who have dedicated one, two, five, or 50 hiking seasons to protecting and maintaining the alpine zones, shelters and backcountry overnight sites on the Long Trail. I only wish I had been one myself.

Imagine living in a tent or shelter for an entire summer in all kinds of weather, foregoing all amenities and luxuries—a job for the hearty (patience and a sense of humor help). Caretakers describe how their experiences enhanced self-sufficiency, developed self-esteem, or gave them a greater appreciation for the environment. Their comments often conclude with: “It was the best job I ever had.”

I’ve met caretakers many times as I reached the summits of Vermont’s highest peaks. I appreciated the artful way they politely managed and educated crowds of hikers—many with dogs—about sensitive alpine vegetation, Leave No Trace principles, and general hiking etiquette. Caretakers also spend a significant amount of time maintaining trails, and doing *my* least favorite job as a volunteer—processing backcountry waste. And with the increasing number of injured or lost hikers in recent years, caretakers have become a vital support element in search and rescue operations, at times reaching a person in distress before the search and rescue teams.

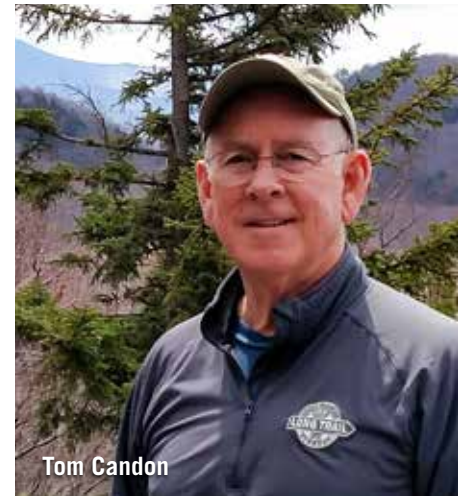
Long-time caretakers Hugh and Jeanne Joudry deserve special mention. They began

spending summers on the summit of Stratton Mountain in 1968, first as fire lookouts for the state, then from 1996 on as GMC representatives. Each summer Hugh and Jeanne take up residence in a very small cabin by the fire tower. Their reputations precede them as hikers anticipate meeting the caretakers who have been living seasonally on Stratton’s summit for 50 years. (For their story, see “Journey’s End” column on page 38.)

The value of the caretaker program increases as the number of hikers using the Long Trail increases. Last year more than 46,000 hikers were counted on the Mount Mansfield summit, and more than 20,000 on Camel’s Hump. Traffic on other points on the Long Trail is certainly not as heavy, but it is estimated that more than 200,000 people hike somewhere on the Long Trail System annually.

Caretakers describe how their experiences enhanced self-sufficiency, developed self-esteem, or gave them a greater appreciation for the environment.

The program is funded with a mix of government grants, contributions from ski areas, and private donations, but its vitality is at risk every year. Just last summer GMC was notified that the Green Mountain National Forest was shifting money from caretakers to other programs, heightening our concerns. After a concerted effort, GMC and the National Forest staff found enough money to



cover the season, but we need to secure more stable funding sources.

Former caretakers currently serve as the chairs of four extremely important Green Mountain Club committees: Trail Management, Nominating, Land Conservation, and Membership. And John Page, our immediate past president, is a former caretaker. Time has shown that an investment in the caretaker program today is an investment in the next generation of GMC leaders and trail stewards.

Finally, it is with sadness that I note the loss of long-time Montpelier Section member, Reidun D. Nuquist, who died peacefully at her home in November. Reidun was a thoughtful and powerful advocate for the GMC and Long Trail. For forty years, her submissions to the *Long Trail News* informed readers about the club’s beginnings and the pioneers who built the Long Trail. Reidun will be remembered as someone who not only captured the club’s history, but also created it. (To learn more about Reidun, see page 5.)

—TOM CANDON, PRESIDENT



PHOTO BY JOCELYN HEBERT



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Mountain Views

Why the Long Trail is Not a National Scenic Trail

I finished reading the winter edition of the *Long Trail News* and I want to congratulate you on the best edition yet. The stories were great, and I especially liked the piece about why the Long Trail is not a National Scenic Trail. It was interesting to learn the requirements behind such a designation and the thinking behind the decision to twice take a pass. I learned a lot and totally support keeping the Long Trail as it is. Thank you for an entertaining and informative edition.

—GEORGENE GROVER, SHELburne

I was very happy to read Preston Bristow's viewpoint on keeping the Long Trail its unique self. I've thru-hiked the PCT, the AT, and the Long Trail twice. The northern Long Trail is just what I wanted and not to be homogenized into some overly engineered tract. Vermont is Vermont, and the Long Trail reflects the energy and resourcefulness of the state. Please leave well enough alone.

—BAMBOO BOB SARTINI

Just finished reading the Winter *LTN*, which I very much enjoyed. I particularly appreciated Preston Bristow's article—a story I didn't know because, by the time those events happened, I was out of Vermont and away from the GMC.

—VIC HENNINGSEN

Staying Connected Through LTN

Even though we are flatlanders from South Jersey by the Atlantic Ocean, my wife and I love Vermont, and particularly hiking in Vermont. Since our hikes are sometimes few and far between, the editions of *Long Trail News* clearly keep us connected with Vermont and the Long Trail. We find the stories in each edition well-written and extremely informative. Our congratulations to you, the writers, and everyone who is connected to GMC for all that you do and for producing such a quality publication.

We will continue to support the GMC and Long Trail with whatever we can. The best to you, your staff, and all those who are involved with GMC and the *Long Trail News*.

—RAY AND LINDA DOLTON

We Griped and We Loved it

I was back for a short visit with my brother just last week. From 1960 to 1962—three summers—Harris Abbott and I from Burlington, and Everett Washer from Johnson, worked as Roy Buchanan's Long Trail Patrol. We drove a red 1949 International loaned to us by a GMC member in southern Vermont, but we brushed and cut out blowdowns mostly north of Mansfield.

I've lost touch with Everett and GMC, but I see on the website the LTP is a bit more organized than going out Monday through Friday with some canned beans for the summer. We griped, and we loved it, and came back.

—BRIAN SCHUMACHER



Long Trail Patrol, 1974

Path of Least Resistance

I'm writing to you because of the article you recently wrote regarding trail maintenance ("Path of Least Resistance: Understanding Hiker Behavior," by Jocelyn Hebert, Winter 2018). The science and cleverness behind it, and the industry to carry it out, was to me shockingly complex and effective. I was suitably impressed.

I just had a coincidental meeting at my local tire store. There was only one guy in the waiting room—a guy who was a hiker and who told some horror stories about mud slogging on the Appalachian Trail. I said that kind of trail damage wouldn't occur on the Long Trail (would it?). He then told me he was meaning to look into the GMC—and would—because he had property in Stowe. He then said he would be interested in volunteering for trail maintenance. That's when I told him I would send him your article.

—RUSS BAER, MARYLAND

Long Trail News Welcomes Your Comments.

Letters received may be edited for length and clarity. GMC reserves the right to decline to publish those considered inappropriate. Letters may not be published.

SEND TO: Jocelyn Hebert, jhebert@greenmountainclub.org or
 Letters to the Editor, GMC, 4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road, Waterbury Center, VT 05677

A Life of Purpose: Writer, Historian, Outdoorswoman



REIDUN DAHLE NUQUIST was the Green Mountain Club's unofficial historian, and a good friend and mentor to many. On November 26, Reidun died peacefully at her home in Montpelier with Andrew, her husband of 55 years, and their son, Jon, at her side.

Born on June 13, 1940, in Kongsberg, Norway, Reidun married Vermont native Andrew Nuquist in a small Norwegian church in 1963. They moved from Norway to Cleveland, Ohio, before settling in Montpelier in 1970. Together, Reidun and Andrew led a rich and balanced life of outdoor and cultural activities.

Reidun and Andrew joined the Green Mountain Club in 1970. Reidun's contributions to GMC were so broad that it is difficult to imagine the club, and especially the Montpelier Section, without her. She held many offices, wrote extensively for its publications, and regaled us—through the Taylor Series and other venues—with tales and photos of her many hiking trips. But I suspect she is best remembered by the many who hiked or biked or paddled or skied with her as a gracious, enthusiastic lover of the outdoors, and as a dependable trail worker who liked to muck it up with the best of them.

Reidun's sense of the club's history was keen, partly because she had met some of the old-timers she wrote about. She valued history and encouraged us to value it too. As

a librarian she understood the importance of original documents, and as a history writer she understood how to use those documents to convey compelling narratives.

A reader intending only a quick glance at one of Reidun's articles or books becomes entranced and reads on. Her contributions include *A Century of Long Trail Guidebooks: A Retrospective* (2017), an illustrated history of the *Long Trail Guide*; "A Century of Change—and Growth: A Short History of the GMC," which is Chapter 2 in *A Century in the Mountains: Celebrating Vermont's Long Trail* (2009); and *So Clear, So Cool, So Grand: A 1931 Hike on Vermont's Long Trail* (2008), an edited version of an early Long Trail hiker's journal.

Reidun was also chief author of the second edition of *A Trip Leader's Handbook: Advice for Successful GMC Outings* (2008). In addition, between 1978 and 2018 she wrote more than 30 feature articles—many of them historical accounts of early GMC leaders—and 37 book reviews for the *Long Trail News*. In 2007 she wrote and published *A Capital Section: The History of the Green Mountain Club's Montpelier Section, 1955–2005*, a useful and charming volume available in print and digitally on the Montpelier Section's website.

Though Reidun did extensive work for the main club, I think her real love was working with the Montpelier Section. She held so many section offices that, as I listed them, I began to wonder what she did during those years when she *wasn't* an officer. She was publicity coordinator; secretary; the first editor of *Trail Talk*, the section's newsletter; an alternate director to the main club; and director. But the real kicker is that she was section president three times in three decades. When I knew her, during her third term, she did not revel in the office, but took it on because she knew the work needed to be done and she completed it with her usual flair and aplomb.

She and Andrew led more than 400 outings. Often they revisited traditional destinations, but with different slants: a fall bike ride that stopped at all the orchards on the route; a celebration of midsummer at Elmore State Park, with hiking, swimming,

boating, and ice cream; a multiday paddle the length of Lake Champlain; a ski to Osmore Pond with a chili lunch; a full-moon snowshoe in Hubbard Park.

Reidun loved trail work. She almost always showed up for the section's semiannual work hikes. She claimed her favorite job was cleaning waterbars, but she would do anything, from raking leaves to moving rocks. She went out of her way to encourage women to join the fun, and while she was successful at recruiting some, I know she always hoped for more. She helped build Sterling Pond Shelter in 2005, and she and Andrew spent numerous nights in a tent on a ridge below Camel's Hump while they helped build Bamforth Ridge Shelter in 2002. For several years they adopted the Long Trail from River Road south to Bamforth Ridge Shelter.

Reidun was an all-around encourager. If you expressed the slightest interest in a trip she was leading, she invited you. Once she invited me to join a personal backpacking trip with her and Andrew on the Long Trail. I was flabbergasted: she hardly knew me! I was also delighted, and wanted terribly to go.

She was a sociable hiker, not solitary, which made her a cheery presence on the trail. She didn't escape into the woods, but brought us along. Our loss, and her family's, is great in part because her presence was so immense. We miss her terribly.

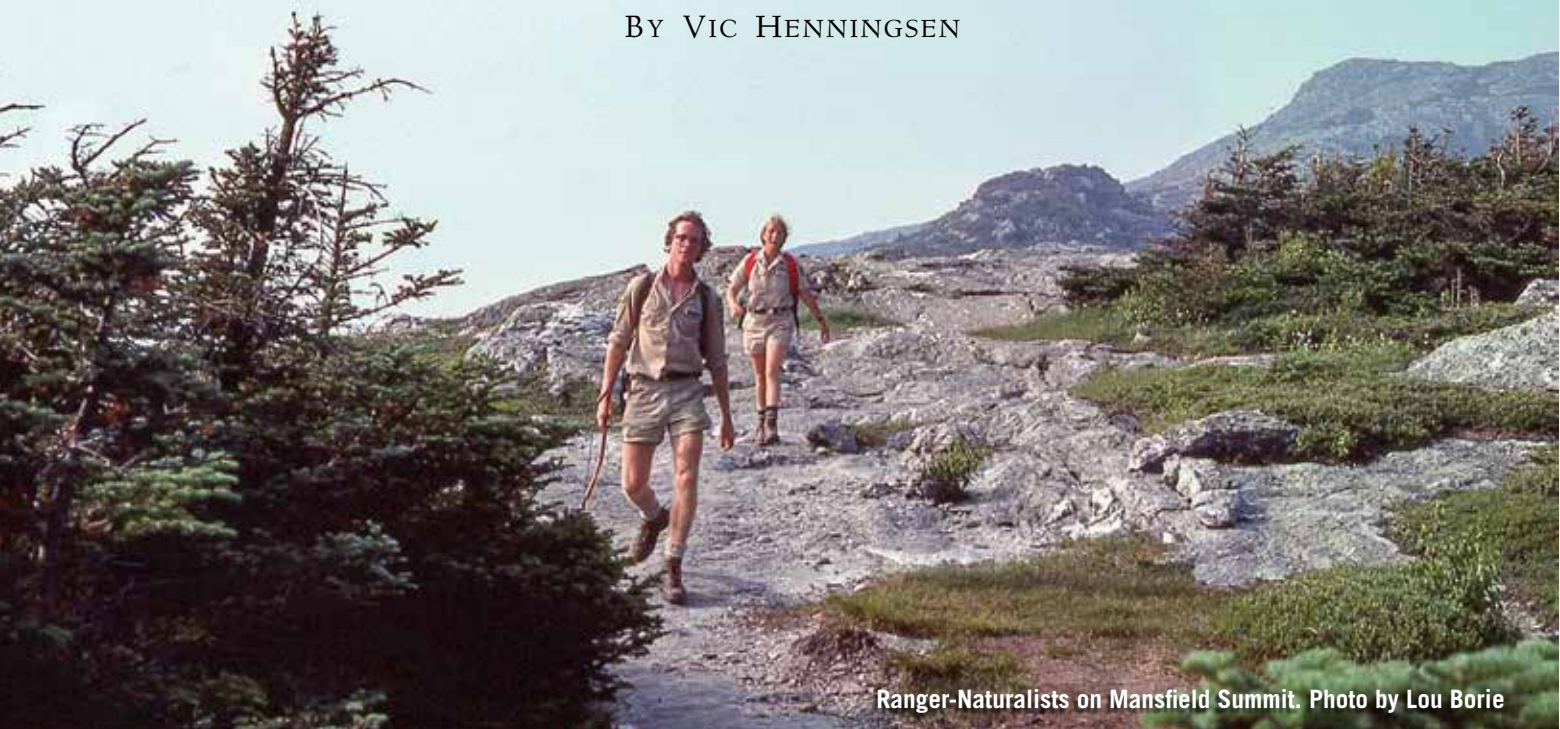
—KATHRYN GOHL, MONTPELIER SECTION



Looking Back 50 Years

HOW THE CARETAKER PROGRAM BEGAN

BY VIC HENNINGSEN



Ranger-Naturalists on Mansfield Summit. Photo by Lou Borie

Green Mountain Club caretakers are a familiar sight to those visiting the busiest parts of the Long Trail, but few hikers know we owe their presence to the hard work of visionaries more than a half century ago.

In the mid-1960s University of Vermont botany professor Hubert “Hub” Vogelmann oversaw research on Camel’s Hump that would bring national attention to the degradation of fragile ridgelines and mountaintops. Vogelmann and his students focused on acid rain, ultimately influencing state and federal environmental policy, but they also noted damage to delicate ecological communities caused by rapidly increasing numbers of visitors. Similar studies in the Adirondacks and White Mountains confirmed that popular peaks were in danger of being “loved to death” by enthusiastic but uninformed visitors.

In the summer of 1968, some 20 Long Trail miles to the north, Burlington Section member and passionate environmentalist Ken Boyd volunteered part-time as caretaker at Bolton Lodge. Beginning in the 1920s the GMC had stationed caretakers at Stratton Pond,

Killington, Camel’s Hump, and Mount Mansfield, maintaining shelters, supplying firewood, and providing blankets and occasional meals to weary hikers. The early club caretaker program lapsed in the quiet years after World War II.

*Hub Vogelmann,
Shirley Strong, and
Rod Barber laid the
groundwork for a united
effort to preserve the
fragile ecosystem of
Vermont’s mountain
ridgelines.*

When Boyd arrived at Bolton, his aims were quite different. Like Vogelmann, he knew the Green Mountains were besieged by human activity that threatened to overwhelm what visitors sought to enjoy. While Vogelmann and his students collected data on rainfall, soil erosion,

and plant damage, Boyd began to study backcountry users. He made a point of talking with everyone who passed through, kept meticulous usage records, and amassed data on trail and shelter conditions along much of the Long Trail. Hiker reports confirmed his suspicion that the trail system needed more thoughtful management.

Boyd developed a strategy of changing hiker behavior through low key, face to face education. Rather than harassing visitors about littering, he packed out the Bolton dump, explained the basic principles of what became the pack-it-in, pack-it-out philosophy, and enlisted hikers as partners to respect the trail, shelters, and mountain environment.

Visitors didn’t intend to damage the resource, he believed; damage came from lack of knowledge, not malice. So, he concluded, don’t treat them like criminals, and don’t make them feel like idiots. In a friendly conversational approach he explained what he was doing and why, and why they might want to join in. If it worked, they might influence others. It might be slow, but it promised to be effective.

As the visitor tide rose in that decade, Vogelman and Boyd pushed for action. Concerned also about Camel's Hump's even more heavily traveled northern neighbor, Mount Mansfield, Vogelman pressed UVM (which owns most of Mansfield's alpine area) and the Vermont Department of Forests and Parks, as it was then known, (which managed it) to mitigate the damage. Meanwhile, using statistics he had compiled at Bolton, Boyd lobbied the Burlington Section to reestablish shelter caretakers on Mount Mansfield.

In 1969 Vogelman found an ally in Vermont State Parks Director Rodney Barber, a master diplomat and administrator. He brokered a complicated agreement by UVM, the Mount Mansfield Company, and the Department of Forests and Parks to support a ranger on the Mansfield ridge. That same year Boyd's data-driven campaign convinced the Burlington Section to station the first caretaker at Taft Lodge since 1946.

Starting in June 1969, state ranger-naturalists on the ridge and GMC caretakers at Taft did what they could to cope with hordes of visitors, whose numbers continued to increase because of a nationwide backpacking boom further swelled by widely disseminated articles in local and national news media publicizing the Long Trail and Mount Mansfield. It was slow and often deeply frustrating work.

But things were beginning to change. In October 1969, prominent activists and stakeholders organized the Green Mountain Profile Committee to marshal a coordinated, ecologically driven approach to resource preservation. Vogelman chaired this group, but always credited its development and influence to GMC President Shirley Strong, whom he later described to historians Laura and Guy Waterman as "the driving force" in pulling the State of Vermont, the GMC, UVM, and others into effective partnership.

By 1971 this began to pay off. Now the GMC's volunteer caretaker coordinator, Ken Boyd persuaded the club to expand coverage beyond Taft Lodge to Butler, Taylor, Bolton, Gorham, and Montclair Glen lodges, and Stratton Pond. Perhaps

most importantly, Rodney Barber appointed Ken chief ranger-naturalist on Mount Mansfield. Ken and his wife Alice, who acted as a full member of the ranger-caretaker team, moved into the Mount Mansfield Company's Octagon building with their two young sons, John and the newborn Jasen.

Their arrival marked a crucial moment. The state ranger-naturalists and GMC caretakers could easily have descended into rivalry, but they united under the leadership of the Boyds. Alice's managerial and logistical skills complemented Ken's energy and drive as they showed enthusiastic young rangers and caretakers how to implement on a much larger scale the low key educational approach that Ken had developed at Bolton Lodge.

By Labor Day weekend 1971, the pattern that defines Vermont's approach to backcountry management was set. The club caretaker system absorbed the state's ranger-naturalist program in 1975. Since then Long Trail hikers have continued to receive a consistent message from all backcountry personnel via friendly explanation and persuasion rather than enforcement.

This "Green Mountain model" was widely adopted elsewhere. Today Appalachian Trail thru-hikers, and visitors to major summits in the White Mountains and the Adirondacks, regularly encounter trail stewards whose approach mirrors that originated by GMC caretakers a half century ago.

Hub Vogelman, Shirley Strong, and Rod Barber laid the groundwork for a united effort to preserve the fragile ecosystem of Vermont's mountain ridgelines. But Ken and Alice Boyd, and the rangers and caretakers they inspired and led, invented and implemented the strategy that made that effort successful. Two generations later the ripple effect of the caretakers' low key "each-one-teach-one" outreach to mountain visitors continues to spread.

Historian and Vermont Public Radio commentator Vic Henningsen was a caretaker and ranger-naturalist on Mount Mansfield during the 1970s. He would like to thank Alice and Ken Boyd, Howard VanBenthuyssen, and Larry Van Meter for their help with this article.



PHOTO BY LOU BORIE

Ranger painting white blaze on summit



Alice and the boys



Ken Boyd and sons John and Jasen in Octagon

GMC Ranger-Naturalists and Caretakers: Stewards of Vermont's Mountain Ridgelines and Shorelines



(1972) First women caretakers, Wendy Turner and Sue Valyi, posted at Taft Lodge



(1974) Stratton Pond Caretakers at tent site



(1975) Butler Lodge Caretaker Karen Rothman in front of lodge



(circa 1980) Ranger-Naturalist David Hooke at Gorham Lodge



(1981) Camel's Hump Ranger-Naturalists Holly DeVaul and Julie Alden



(1974) L-R: GMC President John Nuffort, Camel's Hump Ranger-Naturalist Larry Van Meter, GMC Vice President Ralph Bryant



(1974) Preston Bristow and Lee Allen, caretakers at Stratton Pond



(1974) Caretaker Lee Allen rowing an outhouse across Stratton Pond



(1977) GMC Caretaker Supervisor Harry T. Peet Jr. at Little Rock Pond



(1978) Stratton Mountain Caretakers Hugh and Jeanne Joudry in front of their cabin on summit



(1984) Caretaker Supervisor Ben Davis and Taft Lodge Caretaker Dave Day



(1984) Taft Lodge Caretaker Dave Day packing in mulch



(circa 1980s) Unidentified caretaker in front of canvas tent



(2001) Caretaker Catey Richie cleaning trail tools



(2007) Caretaker Robin Lenner stirring compost



(2009) Caretaker Natalie Smith talking with hiker on summit



(2011) Little Rock Pond Caretaker Anna Gouznova



(2014) Caretaker Glen Nelson at Stratton Pond



(2016) Mount Mansfield Caretaker Max Zielinski cooking dinner



(2017) Caretaker Marla Davidson on Mount Abraham summit



(2017) Caretaker Scout Phillips at Battell Shelter caretaker site



Backcountry Caretaker Program

Securing Funds to Protect Vermont's Mountains



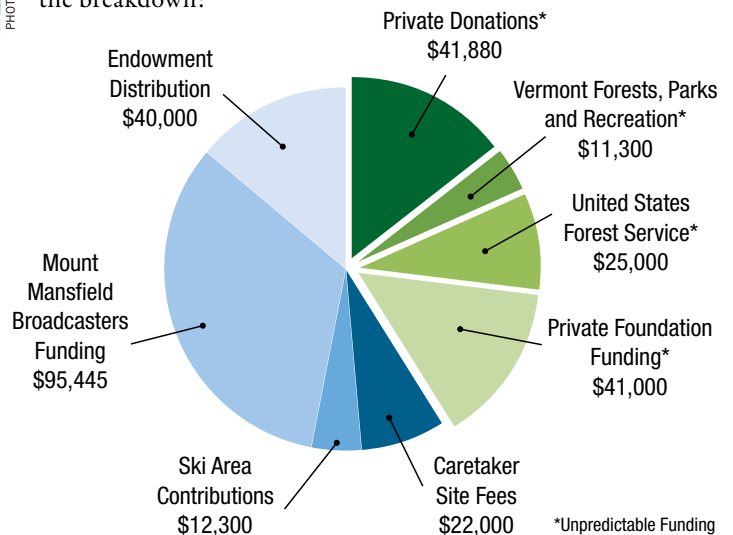
PHOTO BY ED BURKE

is insured and running well, and the director of development seeks grants and donations to run the program. Overhead expenses include field staff housing, office space, and employee benefits.

If that seems like a lot—it is! Is this time, expense, and effort worth it? Absolutely! Without the caretaker program, the mountains in Vermont would suffer, and hiking here would be a much different experience. Popular overnight sites would be overrun with trash, tree cutting, and free range campfires. Fragile and rare alpine vegetation would be trampled, if not destroyed.

Caretakers are both our first line of defense, and the face of the Green Mountain Club for tens of thousands of hikers a year.

Funding for this program last summer and fall cost \$288,925. We relied on funds from a variety of sources. Here is the breakdown:



Have you ever wondered how GMC programs work and are funded? Take our backcountry caretaker program, for example. If you're like many hikers, you assume that the fees you pay at overnight sites pay for the caretakers who collect them. Those fees supply less than one dollar of every ten it takes to run the program.

It might seem easy to select, assemble, and train 18 people every year, but it requires careful thought and a whole team. Placing our corps of seasonal caretakers on summits and at backcountry ponds requires year-round field staff: a director of field programs, a field supervisor, and a field assistant.

The field staff begins interviewing and hiring caretakers in January. The winter and spring months are spent on project details and ensuring clear communication with our agency partners—the Green Mountain National Forest; the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation; the Appalachian Trail Conservancy; and UVM. The staff also buys materials and tools and finalizes caretaker assignments.

The caretakers arrive in early summer. They receive two weeks of training covering wilderness first aid, Leave No Trace principles, natural history, public interaction, backcountry sanitation, and more. Then the field staff helps the caretakers pack their gear and supplies in to sites around the state. The field staff continues working with caretakers through the summer and fall, hiking in supplies and handling other logistics to make sure they are safe and comfortable, and have the tools to be successful.

GMC's director of field programs oversees the department, the director of finance handles the invoices and payroll, the operations coordinator makes sure the fleet of caretaker vehicles

The federal and state governments, private grantors, and private donations provided \$119,180. These categories of funds are variable and determined by the providers each year. This unpredictability is a serious challenge that we hope to reduce or eliminate through an enlargement of our endowment dedicated to the caretaker program. We also hope to increase private donations, and to develop new relationships with grant making organizations.

The Green Mountain Club staff and Board of Directors will be working diligently over the next few years to establish a more stable source of income for this vital program. I look forward to your feedback and ideas and will keep you informed as we move together towards a more secure financial future.

—ALICIA DiCOCO
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT



Fifty Years of Hiking Camel's Hump

The Importance of Summit Stewardship

BY MIKE DeBONIS

Last year I came across a study of hiking on Camel's Hump, published 50 years ago in July 1969, by Frederic O. Sargent, a resource economist with the Department of Agricultural Economics at UVM. Since this year marks the 50th anniversary of the revival of the caretaker program, it is interesting to see what has changed on the mountain since 1969 and what kind of impact summit stewardship has had.

The resurgence of the caretaker program was part of a joint response of the GMC and the Vermont Department of Forests and Parks to increasing adverse environmental impacts like destruction of arctic-alpine flora and trail erosion. The club also worked to remove backcountry dumps and to address group use of the trail. These efforts coincided with a statewide and national interest in environmental planning that resulted in Act 250 in Vermont and the Clean Air Act nationally.

Analysis of Hiker Use Data Collected on Camel's Hump between 1966 and 2017

In 1966 and 1967, Sargent and his researchers at the Vermont Agricultural Experiment Station gathered data on hiking activity on Camel's Hump to help inform environmental planning. Important questions included how management of public outdoor spaces should be funded—through user fees or taxes—and to what extent natural public spaces should be developed or not. At Camel's Hump the questions were whether, and how, development should occur in the state park.

Sargent had researchers dressed as hikers observe hiker

behavior at registration boxes located at major trailheads. They determined that 95 percent of hikers registered. Note: About 50 percent sign in today.

Here are some of the results:

- 7,725 hikers registered in 12 months.
- Peak use was in July, with no recorded use in January.
- Almost half of hikers didn't belong to a hiking or outdoor club.
- The Callahan Trail from the east was the most heavily used trail.

The Green Mountain Club and the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation have been collecting user data on Camel's Hump since the early 1970s. These data, combined with summit counts made from 1988 on, can be used to make comparisons between hiker use then and now.

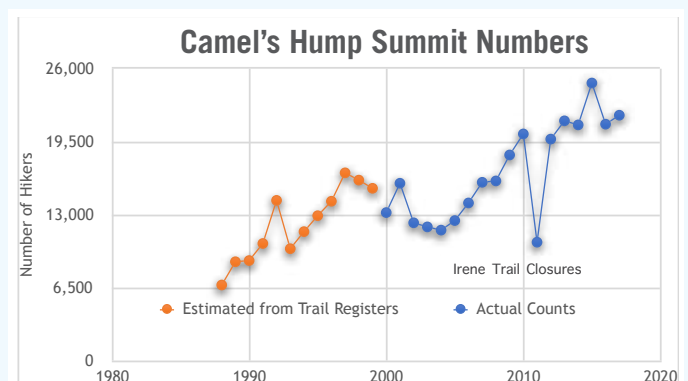


Figure #1 shows summit use over time (actual and predicted). Regression analysis was used to predict summit counts prior to 1988.

The data show that visitation to Camel's Hump has increased three times from 50 years ago. The Sargent study recorded 7,725 hikers from 1966 to 1967. GMC caretakers counted 10,500 hikers in 1973. In 2017, GMC caretakers counted 21,865 hikers on the summit from June through October. Summit counts are typically less than trail register counts, because not all hikers go to the summit.

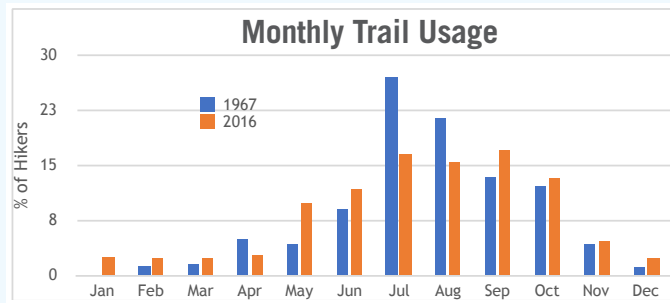


Figure #2 shows monthly usage of Camel's Hump trails from trail register data, not summit counts.

Data indicate a longer season of use in 2016—with hikers on the trail in January—than in 1967. Climate change, improvements in hiking equipment and clothing, and access to better information have all likely contributed to the increase in the length of the hiking season.

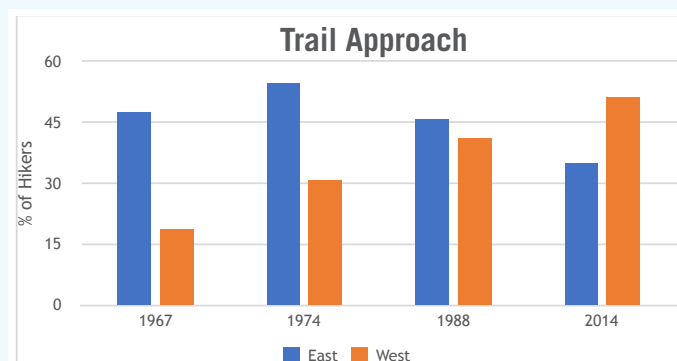


Figure #3 shows whether hikers reached Camel's Hump from the west or east.

The western approach to Camel's Hump now gets the most use. However, in 1967 the eastern approaches received the most use (48 percent versus 19 percent). This represents a significant shift to the Huntington (west) side. Is the relative increase in the popularity of the western approach due to improved access or infrastructure? Or has it occurred because of vigorous population growth in Chittenden County?

The Vermont population grew 41 percent between 1969 and 2018, from 444,000 to 626,299. The population of Chittenden County grew 63 percent in essentially the same time, from 99,131 in 1969 to 162,372 in 2017. Probably faster population growth in Chittenden County than the state average contributed materially to the shift in which hiker access routes are most popular.

Hiker Education

In 1969 the modern caretaker program was just getting started by Ken and Alice Boyd and the Burlington Section on Mount Mansfield.

In the early 1970s the club and the state provided a ranger program to protect arctic-alpine vegetation on Camel's Hump by educating the public informally. Larry Van Meter served as supervising ranger, with an additional ranger and four caretakers at Wiley Lodge, Buchanan Lodge, Gorham Lodge, and Montclair Glen Lodge. The state contributed \$2,500 of the \$3,500 budget.

Author and editor, Tom Slayton, published his impressions of the caretaker program in the Barre-Montpelier *Times-Argus* issue of August 30, 1974:

A recent hike up Camel's Hump was a reassuring experience, both because it confirmed that much of Vermont is still an extremely beautiful, unspoiled place, and because of a minor insight into state spending priorities it afforded ... There's a lot of public debate about the inflated Montpelier bureaucracy and the wasteful ways in which state money is sometimes used. But we hope that even in a time of tightening budgets that some money will continue to be found to pay someone to sit atop Camel's Hump, assist hikers, and guard the Bigelow Sedge.

At this writing the future of the Camel's Hump cooperative program is awaiting decisions by both state officials and GMC trustees. As part of their consideration of the matter, they will be studying a comprehensive report prepared by Larry Van Meter. At one point in this he states, "We are cautiously optimistic that the program as presently organized provides the arctic-alpine zone with adequate protection. But it must proceed on a continuous basis—to 'skip' a year would be to sell previous efforts quite literally down the Winooski."

The thought of the club skipping a year of caretaker coverage on Camel's Hump may seem far-fetched today, but 45 years ago the effectiveness of and support for the modern caretaker program was not established. Sargent's research helped prove the value of public support. Today, trails on Camel's Hump, and trails and shelters on virtually all of the Long Trail System, are free and open to the public. Taxes, plus GMC dues, donations, and volunteers, make trails and other backcountry resources possible.

Sargent's research also helped inform the debate about how much and what kind of development is appropriate in Vermont's natural public spaces. There was significant pressure to develop Camel's Hump State Park in the 1970s. The state and GMC's leaders and staff pushed to keep the mountain undeveloped, and it is now Vermont's highest undeveloped summit.

How effective has the caretaker program on Camel's Hump been for almost 50 years? Despite a three-fold increase in visitation, the communities of arctic-alpine vegetation are still there and going strong. The decision to invest in a caretaker to sit atop Camel's Hump, assist hikers, and guard the Bigelow Sedge has proven one of the best the club ever made.

Special thanks to Lee Allen for his data analysis and assistance with this article.

To Next Year's Caretaker:



Advice and insights from 2018 end of season caretaker reports.

"Subway was my favorite trail...The impression Subway left on me was: this is where the spirit of Mansfield lives."

—BUTLER LODGE CARETAKER

"WAMPAHOOFUS: Otherwise known to hikers as the 'Wampa,' 'Wamp-hoof,' 'Wannahootus,' or 'Wampata' Trail, this is the trail named after the rock resembling the mystical Mansfield creature, the Wampahoofus."

—BUTLER LODGE CARETAKER

"Twin Brooks Tenting Area: The map of the area on the entrance kiosk could be replaced or an eraser brought, as a hiker wrote 'Yelp Rating 2.5,' and I do not care for their rating."

—BUTLER LODGE CARETAKER

"Montclair Glen composter: I swear, whoever takes over for me NEEDS to keep up the reputation I built up for it. I got A LOT of compliments about it."

—MONTCLAIR GLEN LODGE SUMMER CARETAKER

"There's also something about the four walls [of Glen Ellen Lodge] where hikers are like, oh yeah, it's totally cool to leave my trash or food here, and it's not. It's not cool."

—BATELL SHELTER CARETAKER

"This job certainly helped to cement my passion for conservation and will allow me to be a better educator and steward to the land going forward."

—GRIFFITH LAKE CARETAKER

"The biggest and most critical problem this privy faces is that EVERYONE pees in it. Literally everyone. It's a big ol' pee party every day. The catcher weeps for mercy from the bottom of a perpetual golden deluge."

—MONTCLAIR GLEN LODGE FALL CARETAKER

"I am proud of myself for making my site my home, and for thriving with all the luxuries and foods I could afford to pack in. I learned to love spending the majority of my time at the summit, in all weather conditions, and felt a sort of pride that I spent the most time there."

—TAFT LODGE CARETAKER

"Jeanne and I always meet so many wonderful people so enthusiastic about the trail...For us the honor is to work for the club and to still do the work on Stratton Summit that is so important for the trail and forest."

—STRATTON MOUNTAIN SUMMIT CARETAKER HUGH JOUDRY

"I really enjoyed public interaction and education. This is my cup of tea, so I really loved every time I got to teach a kid about the eastern newt or the tannins in the water. Savor these moments because a lot of people don't want to hear it."

—LITTLE ROCK POND CARETAKER

"Sit down, take a deep breath (through your mouth) and get ready. [The Little Rock Pond privy] is your pride and joy."

—LITTLE ROCK POND CARETAKER

"A fox lives near the caretaker platform, so it will try to chase the mice around the area. All you have to do is yell 'GO AWAY,' or 'I LIKE ADAM SANDLER MOVIES,' and it should go away."

—MONTCLAIR GLEN LODGE SUMMER CARETAKER

"There is a bull moose that has made an appearance for the past two years. This year he spent about a week hanging out, bedding down about a hundred feet off trail just up the hill from the privy...The sunsets off the summit are fantastic on clear days, and the stars are gorgeous. Enjoy flying high and solo on Mount Abe, it's one of the best on the entire trail."

—BATELL SHELTER CARETAKER

"Even so it's a great privy [Battell]. I tried to stay really on top of emptying the catcher and keeping it swept out, as well as bringing up toilet paper to reduce the amount of trash, socks and baby wipes thrown in. This, as well as being up for some toilet talk (and sometimes tours of the process!), really seemed to inspire respect/appreciation from those using it."

—BATELL SHELTER CARETAKER

"When staying at Cooper Lodge I recommend eating dinner on the nearby ski run, it has a beautiful sunset view. Enjoy your season; you've got one of the best jobs the GMC has to offer."

—COOLIDGE RANGE RIDGERUNNER

"The top of Spruce Peak is beautiful. Take that spot in as much as possible. The time we get to spend in the woods is fleeting. Enjoy it while you can."

—STERLING POND CARETAKER

"Everyone will think your hazel hoe is an axe, and will make strange comments about it. Don't worry. No matter how many times people say otherwise, you are NOT an axe murderer. You are a summit caretaker, and your job is cool."

—BATELL SHELTER CARETAKER

"Learn how to effectively invert the cone in the catcher. THIS IS ESSENTIAL. People pee in the privy like it is their day job. Make signs that are funny and engaging, tell EVERYONE you see, even if they already know, that you are the human responsible for cleaning the privy and beg them to have mercy on your soul...I would usually use the privy to help ease the fee talk. Stir the run, empty the catcher, sweep it out or something with gloves on around 5:30 p.m., and explain to all the hikers you will help them once you are done composting human sh*t. No one will argue the \$5 if their first encounter with you is while you are working on the privy."

—LITTLE ROCK POND CARETAKER



2016 Caretaker Jake Chinitz on Camel's Hump summit

PHOTO BY JOCELYN HEBERT



BUILDING SUSTAINABLE TRAILS

The Stratton Pond Area Relocation

BY KEEGAN TIERNEY

Routing the Long Trail in 1910 wasn't sophisticated. Some sections went in straight lines from point A in the valley to point B on the ridge. Others followed lowland routes chosen by state foresters mostly for convenience in reaching and fighting fires. Later on, some stretches were relocated for better scenery, but builders didn't worry about hordes of hikers. There weren't any. And they didn't seem likely.

In 1916, Professor Will Monroe convinced Green Mountain Club leaders that the young Long Trail would be much improved if they lifted it from lower elevations to the ridgeline. The club agreed, and under Monroe's leadership, the Long Trail between the Winooski River and Lincoln Gap, now named the Monroe Skyline, became a rugged ridgetop trail with dramatic views. Much of the Monroe Skyline, however, has survived only because the bedrock beneath its thin soil, which soon washed away, is indestructible.

In low gaps and valleys, and along riparian areas, water can quickly turn

deep soil to deep mud, tempting hikers to widen the footpath and devastating the micro landscape. Much of the Long Trail in southern Vermont is a prime example. Unfortunately, hikers encounter sections of trail that degrade the hiking experience: knee-deep mud, eroded gullies floored with ankle-turning six-inch cobbles, or slick side slopes all come to mind.

Today, thousands of accomplished trail builders in commercial, government, and nonprofit organizations have changed trail design to a science that anticipates both the wear of heavy traffic and the ravages of time and weather.

Relocating and improving trails in the Stratton Pond area has long been a goal, because erodible soil next to the pond washes into the water. This season shoreline sections of the Stratton Pond Trail and the Lye Brook Trail will finally be relocated.

Sustainable trails begin with careful planning and design. The following steps are critical to successful construction, whether of an entirely new trail system or a 100-yard relocation.

Trail Design Basics

Establish goals: Protecting resources and pleasing hikers are the primary goals. But is the purpose solely to get from point A to B? Do we want a challenging route? Are we building a new section because something was wrong with the old one?

With the answers to these and other questions, we can begin thinking about where the trail should go.

Establish control points: Where are we starting and ending? Should the trail pass or avoid certain features? Are there legal or political restrictions? What do the agencies or partners who will help manage the trail want?

Stratton Pond has elements of both positive and negative control points. It's beautiful, appeals to hikers, and provides a bit of open sky in the long green tunnel of southern Vermont. However, the northbound approach to the pond is a steep section heading straight downhill. The shoreline portion of the trail is frequently flooded, and sections of the bank have eroded into the pond causing the trail to



Puncheon along Stratton Pond Shoreline



Volunteers Jim Sullivan and Dick Andrews on Lye Brook Trail

PHOTO BY ILANA COPEL

continually creep uphill. As we plan, we strive to establish a positive control point and protect the natural resource.

Create plan on paper and walk the

ground: The next step is to craft a map identifying control points, contour lines, parcel boundaries, soil types, and environmentally sensitive areas. With an accurate map and a little math, we can lay out a trail using two rules.

The half rule. The overall grade of the trail should never exceed half the grade of the slope it crosses unless you plan to build erosion control structures. As the trail climbs and descends it should surf across the slope, and not turn too steeply down the slope. (Note: A slope that rises or falls 1 foot in a horizontal distance of 100 feet has a grade of 1 percent.)

The fives rule. The average grade of a Universally Accessible trail cannot exceed 5 percent. The average grade of any trail should stay within 5 to 10 percent. Any trail segment built between 10- and 15-percent grade will require structures for water drainage. Avoid grades over 15 percent; they require stairs or other structures for long-term sustainability.

These are generalities, of course, and can be varied depending on the substrate, vegetation, and cross slopes. For example, a 15-percent grade trail on a 40-percent cross slope is likely to be fine with well-designed grade reversals, whereas a 5-percent grade trail on a 7-percent cross slope is not (here the half rule takes precedence).

Our paper plan, using control points and the grade rules, prepares us for the field. If we limit our average grade to 8 percent, we allow for adjustment on the ground. In normal practice the line on paper marks the center of a 100-foot-wide corridor, the area where we could potentially build the trail. Ground truthing tells us whether that is possible, or if our paper plan has run us into a cliff band, an uncharted wetland, a mismarked property boundary or any of a myriad of real-world problems that may prevent us from building our new trail.

Paper planning and ground truthing alternate until we find a line that will work. The Green Mountain Club and partners from the Green Mountain National Forest and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy followed this process at Stratton Pond with many field visits to examine many possibilities. In 2018 we established a corridor that will preserve access to the pond,

while ensuring the durability of the trail and the environmental sustainability of the pond.

Flag and build the trail: Once the route is established, flagging the corridor begins. The density of flagging for a new trail should vary depending upon the skill and experience of the crew. A well-seasoned crew and leader can follow a minimal flag line, while those with less experience typically need more flags. New crews and builders with inadequate training benefit from pin flags at 10-foot intervals.

This season GMC will field the Volunteer Long Trail Patrol and Long Trail Patrol crews at Stratton Pond. With field supervisors and field assistants they will begin restoring and relocating trails near the pond. Then work will begin on tent sites, two moldering privies, and a new shelter on the southwest side of the pond, which has views of Stratton Mountain.

Most GMC trails are legacy trails created, maintained, and bequeathed to us by generations of trail users and builders. Although many miles will be adequate for years to come, some will have to be rebuilt or replaced. In the end, we will be on the right track if we ask ourselves the question posed to me in my early trail building days: Will what I'm doing keep water off the trail, and people on it?



CLIMATE CHANGE

Trail Management Strategies

BY MIKE DEBONIS

I don't know how much Long Trail pioneers thought about climate or bad storms when designing and building the trail. But after more than a century of trail maintenance and management, the Green Mountain Club is definitely concerned about climate change today.

Climate change is a global problem affected by, and affecting, everyone on the planet. The GMC's response is twofold. In our daily operations we seek ways to minimize greenhouse gas emissions. We have also developed a strategic plan to guide us toward best practices as we design and manage our trails and supporting facilities to withstand increased hiker use and more severe and unpredictable weather. This aspect of preparing for climate change requires special attention.

It is essential to understand the magnitude and speed of climate change to predict how it might affect trails and the landscape. Scientists at the Hubbard Brook Research Station in the White Mountains of New Hampshire have been studying ecosystems for more than 60 years. Here is some of what they have learned:

The Northeast is getting warmer.

- Extreme low temperatures are disappearing. Minimum temperatures have warmed more than maximum temperatures.
- The annual average air temperature is increasing, and winters have warmed more than other seasons.
- There are fewer days of even moderate cold. Compared with 1956, there are now ten fewer days with an average temperature lower than 32 degrees F in a typical winter.

Precipitation has increased.

- Annual precipitation has increased on average 12 inches since 1956, which is

substantial—nearly one quarter more rainfall in a year. And the increases aren't distributed evenly. The largest increase is in summer, the least in winter.

- There are more heavy precipitation and high-water days. Annual days with heavy precipitation (greater than 0.75 inches of water) have increased by 7.5 days on average since 1956.

Snow depth and ice duration have decreased.

- Average snow depth has decreased by about a foot since 1956.
- Mud season is longer, and mud season conditions occur in every month of the year.
- Ponds, lakes, and rivers freeze later and thaw earlier.

Short term variability in weather makes it hard to see long term climate trends. Just recall how different the weather has been at Christmas the past few years: sometimes wintry, other times spring like—but with no clear recent trend. This is what makes the Hubbard Brook data so useful. Examined over 50 to 60 years, the trends are very clear.

What do these findings mean for the Green Mountain Club?

First, climate change is real and substantial, and likely to accelerate. We must take it into account in trail design and placement, bridge building, shelter siting, water control, and invasive species management. For instance, bridges spanning large rivers, like the Winooski River Footbridge in Bolton, might be built higher (unfortunately making them longer and more expensive), while those over small streams might be designed to float out of the way of floods on tethers and be reset on their piers afterward, saving the cost of new material.

Second, climate affects people as well as the environment so our approaches

to public engagement must also adapt. For example, more people now hike in winter—many without snowshoes—so there is greater need for winter safety education. And the risks have changed, too: ice is more common and harder to travel safely than deep snow.

Our strategy is focused in three key areas:

❶ Backcountry caretakers and educators

We must employ enough caretakers to manage increased use and provide public education in a hiking season that may lengthen. Their presence in the past 50 years has been critical to the club's success in handling heavy hiker traffic and protecting fragile ecosystems.

❷ Technology, science, and best practices

Trails built today will likely be used for the next hundred years, so we have to use the best tools and practices available to ensure our work is durable and functional while not losing elements that make the hiking experience special.

❸ Planning and Funding

GMC collects information that helps us identify and develop contingency plans for areas on the trail susceptible to extreme weather events. We need to establish more reliable revenue sources and robust financial reserves so we can respond to unanticipated extreme weather. As the pace and scale of weather events increase, we won't be able to respond adequately if we can only afford our ordinary operations.

The Green Mountain Club must have foresight and act now so our trails and infrastructure can withstand intense storms and hikers can continue to enjoy recreating in the Green Mountains.



Education and Volunteer Coordinator Rob Rives removing blowdown



ROLL INTO NATURE Gentle Trails to Scenic Places

BY KRISTA KARLSON

If you're recovering from a knee or hip replacement, or you have a longer lasting mobility impairment, there are now many attractive outdoor destinations for you in Vermont.

In the last few years collaborations among nonprofit organizations and local, state, and federal agencies have created boardwalks where you can easily see wetland wildlife. Expanded rail trails skirt the shores of rivers and lakes, and most state parks have smooth, gently graded short interpretive trails.

The Green Mountain Club routinely gives trail suggestions suitable for all ages, but until now we haven't had a full and rich list of possibilities for outdoor enthusiasts with less mobility. We narrowed the list to a selection of scenic vistas accessible by car, and a sample of new and interesting wheelchair-accessible trails.

ACCESSIBLE BY CAR

- **Burke Mountain Toll Road, East Burke.** The parking lot at the top of this paved road connects to a 200-foot, ADA-accessible path to a south facing overlook. There is a slight grade that may not be suitable for all visitors. \$5 per car.
- **CCC Road, Willoughby State Forest, Sutton.** This beautiful three-mile gravel road between Routes 5 and 5A can be walked with trekking poles as well as driven and passes a scenic overlook with views of Lake Willoughby and Mount Pisgah. It has significant elevation change.
- **Mount Horrid Overlook, Brandon.** This roadside stop along Route 73 offers views of a beaver pond and the Great Cliff. Take binoculars to look for moose and Peregrine falcons.

- **Mount Philo State Park, Charlotte.** Drive to the top of the mountain for views of the Champlain Valley and the Adirondacks. There is a park entrance fee.
- **Mount Mansfield Toll Road, Stowe.** Travel to the top of Mount Mansfield by car (no RVs, bikes, or motorcycles) for sweeping views of Lake Champlain and the Adirondacks. \$24 per car, plus \$9 per passenger.
- **Mount Ascutney Parkway, Windsor.** The 3.7-mile drive to the summit of this historically rich state park passes multiple picnic areas. The parking lot at the top offers nice views. Modest toll per car and per passenger.
- **Okemo Mountain Road, Okemo State Park, Ludlow.** This 4.5-mile road winds through the ski area, giving visitors an up-close view of the mountain's scenery. A short trail to the summit fire tower provides an option for companions. Toll free.
- **Mount Equinox Skyline Drive, Sunderland.** Stop at one of many overlooks, parking lots, and picnic areas along this 5.2-mile drive, which is the longest privately-owned paved toll road in the U.S. \$20 per car, plus \$5 per passenger.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE

- **Mollie Beattie Bog, Brighton.** This 200-foot wheelchair-accessible boardwalk in the Silvio O. Conte Wildlife Refuge reaches a black spruce woodland bog that's home to the rare bog sedge plant.



Barnes Camp Boardwalk, Stowe

PHOTO BY KRISTEN MCLEANE

- **NEW! Moose Bog, Wenlock Wildlife Management Area, Island Pond, Brighton.** This popular wildlife viewing area located off Route 105, 7 miles east of Island pond, has a 1-mile accessible trail that includes a boardwalk.
- **Lewis Pond Overlook, Silvio O. Conte Wildlife Refuge, Warren's Gore.** In addition to spectacular views, this observation area has plenty of seating.
- **NEW! Sentinel Rock State Park, Westmore.** A 1-mile accessible trail off Hinton Hill Road overlooks Lake Willoughby and the Green Mountains and reaches the glacial erratic the park is named for.
- **NEW! Raven's Ridge Natural Area, Monkton.** Traveling a 935-foot accessible boardwalk to a 0.3-mile-long accessible trail gives you a chance to spot bats, bobcats, and rare plants.
- **Eshqua Bog Preserve, Hartland.** The Nature Conservancy and the New England Wildflower Society oversee a 460-foot accessible boardwalk past lady slippers and other orchids.
- **Brighton State Park Nature Trail, Brighton.** Approximately 800 feet of accessible mixed-surface trail brings visitors to a beautiful wetland and informational displays.
- **COMING SOON! CCC Camp 55, Willoughby State Forest, Sutton.** The Friends Of Willoughby State Forest in partnership with the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation are cooperating with the Division of Historic Preservation to bring CCC Camp 55 back to life. The development will include two wheelchair-accessible trails, one around the swimming hole and one from the old forester's house to the picnic area. Located off Route 5.
- **Thundering Falls Boardwalk, Killington.** Nine hundred feet of accessible boardwalk on the Appalachian Trail in Vermont, built and maintained by the Green Mountain Club, crosses an extensive wetland and connects to a smooth gravel switchback path to a platform at a 140-foot waterfall.
- **West River Trail, Jamaica State Park, Jamaica.** The 16-mile trail is a converted railway with a packed gravel surface. If you plan to stay the night, the Briar lean-to in the campground is wheelchair accessible.
- **Waterbury Center State Park Trail, Waterbury.** A 1,500-foot accessible trail, built in 2010, skirts the Waterbury Reservoir.
- **Otter View Park, Middlebury.** The paths in this 15-acre park are accessible, and take visitors through a wetland to Otter Creek.
- **Kent Pond Fishing Platform, Gifford Woods State Park, Killington.** This campground has several wheelchair-accessible cabins, as well as a roadside fishing platform on Kent Pond.
- **Killington Resort gondola, Killington.** Visitors in wheelchairs can ride the gondola to the summit, where they will find sweeping views of Vermont. Leaving the gondola requires five steps, but staff can help.



PHOTO BY LAINE DUNHAM

Accessible Boardwalk at Hildene

- **Robert Frost Trail, Ripton.** The first 0.3 mile of the interpretive trail is a boardwalk suitable for wheelchairs or walkers. The rest of the trail is more suitable for visitors who can use trekking poles.
- **Hildene Homestead, Manchester.** The estate of Abraham Lincoln's son, Robert, has a 600-foot accessible boardwalk over a wetland where you might spot turtles, frogs, and herons. There is an admission fee.
- **NEW! Smugglers' Notch Boardwalk, Stowe.** You can explore wetlands, see a beaver dam and admire the notch from this new 660-foot accessible boardwalk on the Long Trail.
- **Winooski River Footbridge, Bolton.** The 224-foot Long Trail suspension bridge, built and maintained by the Green Mountain Club, is accessible from the Duxbury Road (south) side of the Winooski River. It was a long time coming: The Vermont legislature appropriated \$500 for it in 1912, but it wasn't finished until 2015.

For more information on wheelchair-accessible trails, visit trailfinder.info, and select "Wheelchair Accessible" in the dropdown menu under "Trail Adventures." Brochures for each state park are available in braille and can be obtained by emailing parks@vermont.gov.

We know this list isn't complete. If you know of other attractive possibilities, please email gmc@greenmountainclub.org. For our most current list, visit greenmountainclub.org/accessibletrails.

The Walker's Guide to Vermont, published by the GMC and for sale at our visitor center and on our webstore, is another helpful resource for those looking for gentler trails.

Krista Karlson is a journalist and recent graduate of Middlebury College. Her work has appeared in Backpacker, Anglers Journal, and REI Co-Op Journal, among other places. kristakarlson.com.



Tucker Johnson Shelter Open

Thanks to the club's perseverance, and the enthusiasm, energy, and skills of volunteers, Tucker Johnson Shelter stands again.

Tucker Johnson Shelter is on the Long Trail just north of Maine Junction, where the Long Trail heads for Canada and the Appalachian Trail heads for Maine. The first accommodation there was a lodge built in 1938. The lodge deteriorated over time and a new shelter was built in 1969. That shelter burned in 2011.

Last summer GMC's construction crew began site work for a long-awaited fourth shelter. A curious bear passing through caused damage to concrete footings the crew had just poured. The bear returned a second time, tempted by a food bag hung by a hiker from a tree branch above the work site, before clearing out so the crew could finish building a new ADA-compliant privy, complete with a 25-foot-long wheelchair approach ramp.

Later, over a fall weekend, Jonathan Bigelow led volunteer builders in the construction of the shelter. Jonathan described the spirit of the shelter raising and weekend:

Our community is a loose coalition of mountain towns above Manchester, but there is no doubt about what is at its center: an extraordinary group of individuals who seem to be everywhere—on the rescue squad, fighting fires, leading CPR classes, and tirelessly doing trail work.

When GMC Executive Director Mike Debonis heard that we wanted to celebrate GMC's Manchester Section President (and former GMC President) Marge Fish for her central role in our community, he suggested we rebuild Tucker Johnson in her honor. It was a perfect fit. When I spoke to Marge's husband, Bob (equally central to our area), he warned me: "She's not going to like you making a fuss over her, but she will like the project."

As word spread, the response was wonderful. Joe Miles, proprietor of local lumber and materials company r.k. Miles, made a significant financial donation; students from Burr and Burton's Mountain Campus hauled pressure treated lumber to the site; GMC Construction Crew Leader Kurt Melin and volunteer John Ogden framed and decked the shelter's floor; and volunteers offered to help build the walls and roof.

It was great to see the variety of GMC volunteers. Even better for this newbie was the way everyone checked their egos at the trailhead. People asked how they could help, and dug in.

The highlight for me was when we met in the parking area on day one. Former GMC President Rich Windish, whom I had just met five minutes earlier, turned quietly to me and asked, "Jonathan, would you like me to take over organizing the volunteers and acting as safety officer? I actually like doing this." What a relief.

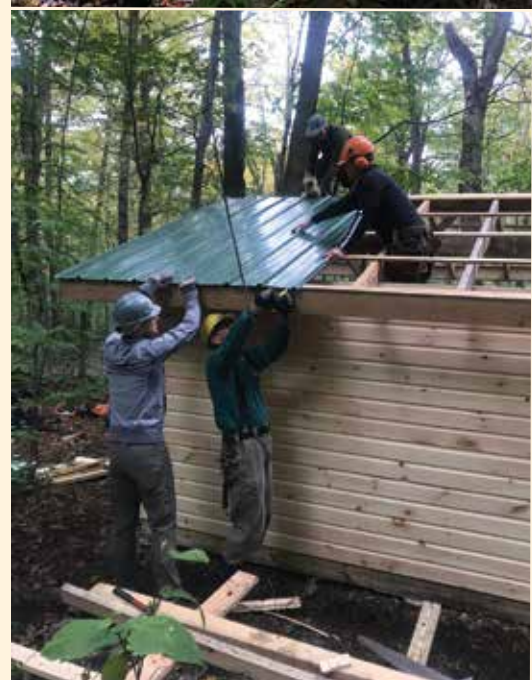
A large group ferried material in multiple laps. I saw firsthand why Larry Walter was chosen as GMC's 2018 volunteer of the year—working with him was a delight. Experienced carpenters made the work fly, and we had a strong and experienced team, including Millie Mugica and her daughter Maxine.

Finally, after seven years, there stood a new Adirondack style shelter, upgraded to meet ADA standards. It was a joy to see the result of an energetic group of volunteers coming together to honor a friend and help the Green Mountain Club.

The Green Mountain Club thanks all the donors, volunteers, and staff, especially Jonathan Bigelow, for their contributions to this project.



Jonathan Bigelow





Photos by Rich Windish

Mother-Daughter Duo

Millie and Maxine Help Rebuild Tucker Johnson Shelter



Maxine in front of the shelter

Among the volunteers rebuilding Tucker Johnson Shelter were ten-time Long Trail end-to-end Millie Mugica and her 9-year-old daughter Maxine, also an end-to-end.

Millie first volunteered with GMC in 2002 when she read a notice in the *Long Trail News* calling for help rebuilding Lost Pond Shelter. “The notice said ‘no experience necessary,’ and I figured I was qualified for that,” said Millie. She had just completed a thru-hike and thought it would be cool to help build a shelter for other hikers after sleeping in them herself. Millie also assisted with Bromley and Rolston Rest shelters.

Like mother, like daughter, Maxine ventured into the woods to help. She doesn’t remember the Tucker Johnson site from her section end-to-end hike. That’s understandable, since she was only 6 at the time, and by then the shelter had burned. More memorable to Maxine is that this was the first time her family backpacked with their new dog Charlie, and that they had stayed at David Logan Shelter the night before. They hiked 13 miles, which was Maxine’s longest day on the trail.

Millie and other volunteers paired up, and used straps to carry balanced loads of boards, roofing, and siding in to the site. Millie remembers it was a beautiful day, and everyone was happy and ready to do whatever was needed, and to teach others. That included Maxine. “I helped nail stuff in and got to write my name on the shelter. But it got covered up,” she said. “I collected scrap wood when it was needed. And I swept and carried out the broom.”

GMC pride was alive and well. Millie recalls a favorite moment, when a hiker asked why the Long Trail had white blazes when the Appalachian Trail’s blazes also were white: “No fewer than six volunteers simultaneously answered: ‘The Long Trail was there first!’”

The highlight for Maxine was lunchtime: “The people gave me delicious cookies. Mmmm!” Her favorite off-trail part was when she and her family stayed at Inn at Long Trail. “It has an awesome kids’ room and food,” she said.

Millie summed up the essence of the weekend nicely: “I love that GMC brings this spirit of workmanship into being. We are really all just folks who love the Long Trail and enjoy doing what is needed to sustain it.”

—JOCELYN HEBERT, *LONG TRAIL NEWS* EDITOR



The 2019 field season is approaching. With staff hired, we are gearing up for a summer of substantial progress on diverse projects.

Led by Field Supervisor Ilana Copel and returning Field Assistant Isaac Alexandre-Leach, we will field two Volunteer Long Trail Patrol (VLTP) crews and two Long Trail Patrol (LTP) crews. In addition, we expect to staff the caretaker program at slightly higher levels than in 2018. We'll add another caretaker and begin the season earlier in the spring, so caretakers will staff the most popular sites on Canada's Victoria Day weekend, and all sites by June 8.

Two major projects are on the docket for the VLTP this season: the continuation of last year's work to rehabilitate the Long Trail from **Dunville Hollow** to **Consultation Peak**, and the relocation of the Long Trail at **Stratton Pond**. The Stratton Pond work will include decommission of a section of steep trail with no switchbacks that deposits a lot of eroded ground directly into the pond, and relocation of the Long Trail to more sustainable grades along the east shore.

The LTP crews will work a 21-week season on trail and construction projects around the state. Projects include relocation of a stretch of the **Lye Brook Trail** next to Stratton Pond; replacement of the **William Douglas** and **Governor Clement** pit privies with moldering designs; open areas maintenance along the Appalachian Trail east of **Maine Junction**; and rehabilitation of the Long Trail from **Lincoln Gap** to **Sunset Ledge**. Additional

work is anticipated on the **Sterling Pond Trail** and the Long Trail between **Harrington Lookout** and **Bolton Mountain**; on the **Deerfield Ridge Trail**; and around **Little Rock Pond**.

Last fall we began a systematic assessment of the northern portion of the Long Trail, a key step in fulfilling GMC's strategic plan. Using a GPS receiver, staff leads Rosalie Sharpe, Marla Davidson, and Abby Orosz catalogued the location of every constructed trail feature from the Winooski River Valley to Hazen's Notch, noted its condition, and photographed it.

In 2019 we plan to continue the assessment, working south from **Bamforth Ridge** to **Maine Junction**, and filling in small gaps in the north where the previous crew was snowed out. This is critical to meeting another strategic plan goal, which is to improve the northern section of the Long Trail so its construction and maintenance standards match those on the southern portion of the trail. Last fall's assessment will enable an LTP crew to complete six weeks of work on the Long Trail from **Jay Peak** to **Journey's End** this fall.

The **Wheeler Pond** camps will also receive attention. The porch on **Hadsel-Mares Camp** will be scraped and repainted, and it will be jacked up and its foundation repaired. Last fall asbestos abatement was performed at **Beaver Dam Camp**, and the structure was stabilized. The field staff will work with Northeast Kingdom Section volunteers to complete deconstruction of the cabin and remove debris. Then we will plan for a new cabin.

—KEEGAN TIERNEY, DIRECTOR OF FIELD PROGRAMS



Tree removal training on Monroe Skyline



AARON EMERSON

GMC's New Outreach and Field Coordinator

A lifelong resident of northern New England who seeks a healthy balance between human activities and the natural world, Aaron Emerson is pleased to be back in Vermont and working as GMC's new VHCB AmeriCorps Outreach and Field Coordinator.

Aaron studied biogeochemistry and small-scale renewable energy at Lyndon State College (now NVU—Lyndon). He held an internship for three summers at the Appalachian Mountain Club, where he studied air quality and alpine plants on Mount Washington. His curiosity about composting human waste and desire to improve trails and campsites then led him to a stewardship position maintaining backcountry campsites in the White Mountains.

Since September, Aaron has been coordinating group use on the Long Trail and promoting low impact camping techniques. He enjoys playing music and can often be found in the woods riding his bike or skiing.



Researching Winter Long Trail End-to-End Hikers

Have you thru-hiked or section hiked the Long Trail in winter? Do you know someone who has? If so, we'd like to hear about them.

Please email any names or leads you have to Membership and Communications Coordinator Kristin McLane, kmclane@greenmountainclub.org.



Bromley Observation Tower Update

Thanks to generous support from donors, we are only \$34,500 shy of our fundraising goal of \$262,000 to build a replacement observation tower on Bromley Mountain. This season the club will work with engineers to develop final blueprints and begin the permit acquisition process to start building the tower. To help support this project visit greenmountainclub.org/bromley.

SAVE THE DATE!

Mud Season Celebration and Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 20, 10:00 a.m. – Noon
GMC Visitor Center, Waterbury Center

Children of all ages and their parents are invited to take a walk on The Short Trail during our annual non-competitive Mud Season Celebration and Egg Hunt. This is a great opportunity for families to get outside and enjoy the warming weather, while avoiding the muddy and slushy hiking trails, giving them time to dry. When the search is over, children can turn in the eggs for chocolate and other goodies. Please come dressed for the outdoors and BYOB (bring your own basket)! FREE. Open to the public. Registration not required.





Vermont Conservation Design Quantifies Ecological Impact of Long Trail Protection Campaign

The Green Mountain Club launched the Long Trail Protection Campaign in 1986 to conserve the Long Trail System. We can celebrate this on-going campaign today for protecting trails for people to enjoy but also for protecting some of Vermont's highest priority natural communities and habitat features.

GMC has long understood that protecting the ridge of the Green Mountains would help ensure a diversity of wildlife species and retain the character of the state's mountainous landscape. Today that general understanding can be scientifically quantified, thanks to Vermont Conservation Design, a conservation planning tool developed by the State of Vermont to identify the most important lands to protect or manage for their ecological value.

Vermont faces serious challenges to its ecological health: a rapidly changing climate, fragmentation of forests, intrusion of non-native invasive plant and animal species, and water pollution. A resilient response to these challenges requires a connected and diverse natural landscape. But what areas are most critical to protect and manage for ecological function? Vermont Conservation Design seeks to answer this question.

Vermont Conservation Design analyzes the state's landscape for five critical conservation attributes:

- **Interior Forest Blocks** (the largest intact tracts of forests and other natural communities that provide key habitat for wildlife)
- **Connectivity Blocks** (areas that provide ways for animals and plants to migrate across the landscape)
- **Surface Waters and Riparian Areas** (the network of lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, and their shoreline areas)

- **Physical Landscapes** (diversity of physical landforms, from lowlands to cliffs)
- **Wildlife Road Crossings** (critical points along our roads for wildlife to cross safely)

The tool registers the location and extent of each of these characteristics to identify lands where they combine, and thus yield the highest conservation value. The result is a connected network of forests, waters, and riparian areas that provide wildlife habitat, flood protection, clean air, clean water, and forest products. If these areas are responsibly managed, the long-term ecological function of Vermont's landscape will be ensured.

Private landowners, municipalities, state agencies, and non-profit organizations all have important roles in managing these natural resources. The Green Mountain Club is proud to report that Vermont Conservation Design data shows that the Long Trail Protection Campaign has protected more than 21,000 acres of Vermont's most critical areas.

That total includes the following acreage of each classification:

- **20,828 acres** – Highest Priority Connectivity Blocks
- **10,507 acres** – Highest Priority Representative Physical Landscapes
- **19,061 acres** – Highest Priority Interior Forest Blocks
- **9,174 acres** – Highest Priority Rare Physical Landscapes
- **1,603 acres** – Highest Priority Surface Waters and Riparian Areas
- **1,241 acres** – Highest Priority Riparian Corridors
- **890 acres** – Highest Priority Physical Landscapes
- **1,695 acres** – Priority Interior Forest Blocks
- **19 acres** – Priority Connectively Blocks

- **5 acres** – Priority Surface Water and Riparian Areas

The Long Trail Protection Campaign is still working to protect the Long Trail and its corridor, defined as a 500-foot strip of land on each side of the footpath. Protecting the corridor is still the primary goal; however, the club plans to consult Vermont Conservation Design data and to collaborate to protect high priority lands where possible.

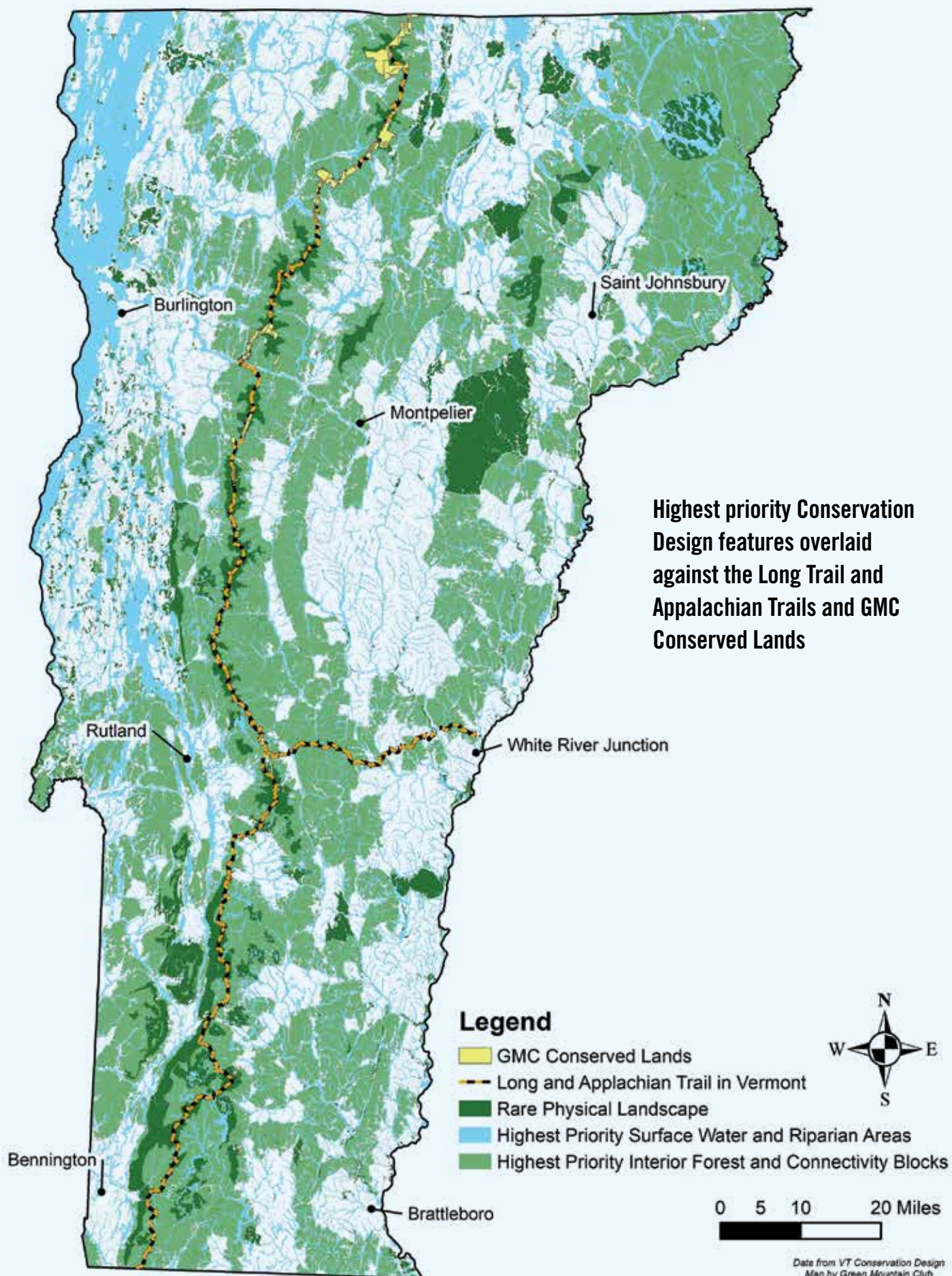
The Highest Priority Vermont Conservation Design data in the adjoining map shows a striking correlation between the areas of Highest Priority Interior Forest and Connectivity Blocks and the route of the Long Trail. That should not surprise a hiker. The Long Trail was routed on the ridgeline because it provided immersion in remote natural beauty and diverse landscapes, both characteristic of large connected blocks of forest land.

GMC's stewardship responsibility doesn't end with land acquisition or easements. We have a humbling stewardship responsibility as recreationists in this highest priority landscape. Our behavior—waste disposal, pet regulation, group size, and so forth—has an impact. Let's vow to tread lightly and follow Leave No Trace principles as we explore the Long Trail System and the natural wonders that Vermont has to offer.

To learn more about Vermont Conservation Design, visit vtfishandwildlife.com/conserve/vermont-conservation-design.

—MOLLIE FLANIGAN,

LAND STEWARDSHIP COORDINATOR



GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB'S 109th Annual Meeting

Friday–Sunday, May 31–June 2

Windridge Tennis & Sports Camps, Roxbury

The 109th Green Mountain Club Annual Meeting, hosted by the Montpelier Section, will take place at Windridge Tennis & Sports Camps in Roxbury. The grounds encompass more than 250 acres of woods, hills, meadows and playing fields, and have a beautiful view west across the valley to the Green Mountains.

Load the car with your boots, pack, tent, bike, kayak, camp

chair, and favorite campfire clothes (but please leave pets at home), and plan to spend a fun filled summer weekend with friends. It's a wonderful opportunity for GMC members to share stories and club news, and to celebrate our year's accomplishments.

Registration begins at 4:30 p.m. on Friday. *Note: Please do not arrive earlier than 4:30 p.m. when the venue opens.*

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, MAY 31

10:00 a.m.

Work hike at a location to be determined (check the GMC website for details). Bring lunch, liquids, work gloves, and bug repellent, and dress for the weather; tools will be provided, or bring your favorites. Contact gmc@greenmountainclub.org by May 27 to sign up.

4:30 p.m.

Registration begins.

6:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Registration and dinner (by reservation only), followed by storytelling by GMC caretakers.

SATURDAY, JUNE 1

6:15 – 7:30 a.m.

Birding walk.

7:00 – 8:00 a.m.

Trail run. Join Education and Volunteer Coordinator Rob Rives for a three- to five-mile run.

8:00 – 9:00 a.m.

Registration and breakfast (included with lodging, or by reservation). Sign up for afternoon activities.

9:00 – 11:45 a.m.

Business meeting.

12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

Board of directors meeting.

9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Kids' activities. Arts and crafts materials and games will be provided all day for children. There are also outdoor play spaces. Supervision will not be provided.

11:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Bag lunch buffet. Courtesy of the Montpelier Section.

11:45 a.m.

Silent auction to benefit GMC begins.

1:00 p.m.

Afternoon outings begin.

Some longer hikes may start earlier; check the posted schedule. A film may be shown for those not hiking.

4:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Yoga. Please bring your own mat.

6:00 p.m.

Dinner. By reservation.

6:45 p.m.

Silent auction ends.

7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Presentation. Photographer and naturalist Sue Morse: "Wild Cousins of Our Best Friends: Wolves, Coyotes, and Foxes."

9:00 – 10:00 p.m.

Campfire and social.

SUNDAY, JUNE 2

7:00 – 8:00 a.m.

Tai chi.

8:00 – 9:00 a.m.

Breakfast. Included with lodging, or by reservation.

8:30 – 11:00 a.m.

Trail maintenance workshop. We'll cover topics such as pruning and clipping, blazing, and erosion control. No prior experience is necessary. Tools will be provided. This is valuable for new trail adopters. Location to be determined.

9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Section workshop. Learn what works from other sections, facilitated by GMC staff. Topic to be determined.



OUTINGS OVERVIEW

(Distances are round trip.)

Scragg Mountain. *Hike.* 6 miles. Moderate to difficult.

Irish Hill. *Hike.* 5 miles. Easy to moderate.

Millstone quarries. *Hike.* 4 miles. Easy.

Appalachian Gap: LT south to Theron Dean Shelter.

Hike. 3.6 miles. Strenuous.

Lincoln Gap: LT south to Sunset Ledge. *Hike.* 2.2 miles. Easy.

Lincoln Gap: LT north to Mt Abraham. *Hike.* 5.2 miles. Strenuous.

Paine Mountain. *Hike.* 6.7 miles. Moderate.

Blueberry Lake and Warren Falls. *Hike.* 4.6 miles. Easy to Moderate.

Allis State Park. *Hike.* 1.3 miles. Moderate but short.

Hubbard Park and North Branch Park. *Hike.* 3 miles. Easy.

Roxbury to Brookfield. *Road bike.* 26 miles. Bring bike. Helmet required. Moderate.

Waterbury Center State Park. *Paddle.* Bring canoe or kayak. PFD required. Moderate.

The schedule is subject to change. For current information, please visit greenmountainclub.org/meeting.

REGISTRATION

Register online by May 17: greenmountainclub.org/meeting

Or to register by phone: Call GMC's membership coordinator (802) 241-8324 (M-F, 10:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.)



PRICING

Registration is free. All prices below are per person.

Lodging options are:

- Tent or RV space (\$16/night)
- Shared bunkhouses (\$26/night)
- Private cabins (\$36/night).

Linens are not provided for bunkhouses or private cabins.

Meals can be registered for a la carte:

Friday dinner: \$20, BYOB

Saturday breakfast: Included with lodging, or \$8

Saturday lunch: Courtesy of the Montpelier Section

Saturday dinner: \$25, bar included

Sunday breakfast: Included with lodging, or \$8

Please let us know if you need special meals, wheelchair accessibility, or any other special considerations.

EVENING PRESENTATION



Photo © Susan C. Morse

Wild Cousins of Our Best Friends: Wolves, Coyotes and Foxes

Intelligent, loving, and loyal, wild genetic relatives of dogs have much to teach us—not only about our beloved pets but about healthy ecosystems. Susan will have the audience howling with laughter as she shares her amazing photos and accounts of adventures studying these animals in Arizona, Montana, northern Minnesota, the Northeast, Canada and the Arctic.

SUSAN MORSE

Susan Morse is a nationally known naturalist, professional tracker and founder of Keeping Track®, an organization dedicated to wildlife conservation and citizen science at the grassroots level. Her 42 years of field research, monitoring and interpreting the habitat uses of selected wide-ranging mammals, has focused on puma, black bear, bobcat, Canada lynx, and fisher.

Her work has been featured on National Public Radio's Morning Edition, and in numerous publications, including *Smithsonian*, *Audubon*, *Amicus Journal*, and *Wild Earth*.





The Board of the Green Mountain Club met January 5 at GMC Headquarters in Waterbury Center.

Treasurer Stephen Klein reported that despite recent volatility in the stock market, he and GMC Director of Finance Jason Buss remain cautiously optimistic about GMC's financial situation. Initial financial data for December showed income and expenses tracking close to budget. A draft outline of the fiscal year 2020 budget was presented, as well as a capital plan that projects capital expenditures over time.

Executive Director Mike DeBonis reviewed progress toward strategic plan goals of protecting and managing the trail resource, operational excellence, engagement and inclusion, and strengthening our sections' membership and volunteers. He also summarized anticipated revisions to the GMC endowment policy, which include a modest reduction in the rate of withdrawals from the endowment.

Representatives of the Burlington company Seventh Generation presented the results of a marketing assessment they made of ways to attract younger people to the club. Mike then led a discussion about how the club might address diversity, engagement, and inclusion.

Matt Krebs, operations and publications coordinator, described the club's new electronic publications and maps. Keegan Tierney, director of field programs, presented plans for the coming field season and a description of the type of data collected from Phase I of the northern Long Trail assessment project. When complete, the assessment will provide current comprehensive information on trail features and conditions.

The meeting concluded with a report from the nominating committee on recruitment of new board members, and a discussion led by President Tom Candon of governance and whether changes in the terms of officers might make recruitment of officers easier.

The next board meeting will take place on March 23 at the Green Mountain National Forest Supervisor's Office in Rutland.

—ED O'LEARY, SECRETARY

Mud Season Reminder

The Green Mountain Club reminds hikers and trip leaders that spring mud season runs from snowmelt until the trails are dry, generally around Memorial Day weekend.

Some trails are closed by the State of Vermont and hikers are urged to stay off all wet trails during this time. This will allow the trails to dry and reduce erosion and maintenance needs. Please use your best judgment, and avoid trails in high elevation spruce-fir forests.

Look for spring hikes at lower elevations on trails with southern exposure on forested slopes. Be aware that while these soils dry out fastest, they also have the highest fire danger.

Consider walking on mountain roads (for instance, Ascutey, Burke, Okemo, Smugglers' Notch), closed to vehicles in spring, but mud free with nice views. For information on spring hiking alternatives, please visit greenmountainclub.org.

Thanks for helping protect Vermont's hiking trails!



AT THE GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB'S 109TH ANNUAL MEETING ON SATURDAY, JUNE 1, four general seats will open on the board of directors. General directors serve with directors elected by the sections. Directors are elected to three-year terms, with a limit of two consecutive terms. The GMC Nominating Committee presents the following candidates for approval:

- Caitlin Miller, *first term*
- Nancy Thomas, *first term*
- Howard E. VanBenthuyzen, *second term*
- Ira W. Sollace, *second term*

How to Vote:

Vote for up to four directors. If you have a family membership, you may vote twice. All section and at-large members are eligible to vote.

E-mail your vote to gmc@greenmountainclub.org, with "Voting for General Directors" in the subject line. Be sure to include your member number, located on your membership card. Ballots must be received by April 1.

ANNUAL ELECTION OF General Directors

Caitlin Miller

Caitlin worked as a GMC caretaker on Mount Mansfield in 2013 and at Sterling Pond in 2014 before serving for two years as GMC's Vermont Housing and Conservation Board AmeriCorps group outreach coordinator. She is on the Trail Management Committee, and active in the Sterling Section. She also serves on the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's Next Generation Advisory Council.

Caitlin is an assistant director for the Vermont Youth Development Corps and Vermont Youth Tomorrow AmeriCorps programs, where she supports positive youth development initiatives in Vermont.

A New Hampshire native, Caitlin says a two-week backpack trip on the Long Trail sparked her desire for conservation work and community service. She lives in Duxbury with her partner, James Robertson.



Howard E. VanBenthuyzen

Born and raised in Burlington, Howard graduated from UVM in 1973 and Albany Law School in 1982. He began hiking and backpacking on the Long Trail with his parents and with the Boy Scouts in the early 1960s, developing a lifelong love of the Long Trail.

Howard was GMC caretaker at the former Gorham Lodge near the summit of Camel's Hump in 1972. In 1973 and 1974 he was a summit ranger-naturalist on Mount Mansfield. He has 81 miles left to finish section hiking the Appalachian Trail.

Howard is chair of the GMC Trail Management Committee, a member of the Northern Frontier Section, and carves trail signs for the club. He is also a member of the AMC and ATC.

A veteran of the U.S. Army and the Vermont Army National Guard, Howard retired in 2011 as a lieutenant colonel, after serving combat deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan. He is a Vermont Superior Court Judge, and lives with his wife, Doreen, in Hyde Park.



Nancy Thomas

Nancy's love of the outdoors began on day hikes and hut-to-hut hikes in the White Mountains with her father when she was young. In the early '70s she sought a job with the Appalachian Mountain Club so she could share her passion with others. At Greenleaf Hut she was the first woman hutmaster in the AMC.

Nancy and her husband, Dana Lawrence, are members of the trails and shelter committee in the Montpelier Section, and adopters of Bamforth Ridge Shelter. They section hiked the Long Trail in 2010. In 2018 Nancy completed the New Hampshire Four Thousand Footers. Nancy is an active member of the local Trout Unlimited chapter, and last summer was a counselor at the Vermont Trout Camp for teens.

Nancy retired in 2017 after 43 years in education, most recently as superintendent of the Cabot and Twinfield schools. She is on the boards of the Vermont Higher Ed Collaborative and Plainfield Health Center. She is also on the executive board of the East Montpelier Old Meeting House. She loves to ski, snowshoe, garden, and sing in church, hospice, and community choruses.



Ira W. Sollace

Ira is a lifelong resident of central Vermont and a fifth generation Vermonter. He retired from the State of Vermont, where he was Director of Financial Operation for several departments.

Ira and his wife, Cindy, maintained the Dean Trail on Camel's Hump for 25 years before switching to the Barnes Loop Trail last year. For the past three years they have been the volunteer coordinators for Barnes Camp Visitor and Hiker Information Center at Smugglers' Notch. Ira is also on GMC's Budget and Finance, Trail Management, and Capital Campaign committees.

Ira and Cindy have completed two Long Trail section hikes. Ira is a member of the New England Four Thousand Footer Club, and has six peaks left to finish the New England One Hundred Highest. He now takes his two young grandsons hiking in the Green Mountains and in North Carolina.



Section Directory

Bennington

Maintenance: Harmon Hill to Glastenbury Mountain
President: Lorna Cheriton, (802) 447-1383
E-mail: chertop1@comcast.net
Website: meetup.com/gmcbennington

Brattleboro

Maintenance: Winhall River to Vt. 11 and 30
President: George Roy, (603) 381-7756
E-mail: neogeo03106@gmail.com
Website: brattleborogmc.com

Bread Loaf

Location: Middlebury area
Maintenance: Sucker Brook Shelter to Emily Proctor Shelter
President: Ruth Penfield, (802) 388-5407
E-mail: ruthpenfield@gmail.com
Website: gmcbreadloaf.org

Burlington

Maintenance: Winooski River Footbridge to Smugglers' Notch
President: Ted Albers, (802) 557-7009
E-mail: ted@ted-albers.net
Website: gmc Burlington.org

Connecticut

Location: Hartford, Connecticut
Maintenance: Glastenbury Mountain to Stratton-Arlington Road
President: Jim Robertson, (860) 633-7279
E-mail: jrobert685@aol.com
Website: conngmc.com

Killington

Location: Rutland area
Maintenance: Vt. 140 to Maine Junction
President: Herb Ogden, (802) 293-2510
E-mail: hogden@vermontel.net
Website: gmckillington.org

Laraway

Location: St. Albans area
Maintenance: Lamoille River to Vt. 118
President: Bruce Bushey, (802) 893-2146
E-mail: brbushy@comcast.net
Website: gmc laraway.org

Manchester

Maintenance: Vt. 11 and 30 to Mad Tom Notch
President: Marge Fish, (802) 824-3662
E-mail: marge.fish@gmail.com
Website: gmc-manchester.org

Montpelier

Maintenance: Camel's Hump to Winooski River Footbridge and Smugglers' Notch to Chilcoat Pass
President: Steve Bailey, (609) 424-9238
E-mail: stevecbailey@gmail.com
Website: gmc montpelier.org

Northeast Kingdom

Maintenance: Willoughby and Darling State Forests and the Kingdom Heritage Lands
President: Cathi Brooks, (802) 626-8742
E-mail: cathibrooks@aol.com
Website: nekgmc.org

Northern Frontier

Location: Montgomery
Maintenance: Hazen's Notch to Canada
President: Ken Whitehead, (802) 933-5352
E-mail: mrsswhitehead@gmail.com
Website: gmc northernfrontier.org

Upper Valley-Ottawaquechee

Location: Upper Connecticut River Valley, and New Hampshire
Maintenance: Appalachian Trail: Maine Jct. to NH border
President: Dick Andrews, (802) 885-3201
E-mail: techcomm@vermontel.net
Website: gmc-o-section.org

Sterling

Location: Morrisville/Stowe/Johnson
Maintenance: Chilcoat Pass to Lamoille River
President: Kevin Hudnell, (802) 851-7019
E-mail: khudnell@gmail.com
Website: gmcterling.org

Worcester

Location: Worcester, Massachusetts
Maintenance: Stratton-Arlington Road to Winhall River
President: Ram Moensad, (603) 767-2962
E-mail: shivatri@gmail.com
Website: www.gmcwooo.org



Sections at Work



WORCESTER SECTION: Using bow saw to clear blowdown



UPPER VALLEY-OTTAUQUECHEE SECTION: Clearing blowdowns from microburst on AT



**NORTHEAST KINGDOM SECTION:
Raking new Bluff Ridge Trail**



**BURLINGTON SECTION:
Wood stacking day at Bolton Lodge**



STERLING SECTION: New turnpike built by Sterling Section members on the Chilcoat Trail



BURLINGTON SECTION: Carrying lumber to Bolton Lodge



KILLINGTON SECTION: Using a crosscut saw to clear blowdowns near Churchill Scott Shelter



MONTPELIER SECTION: Building stone steps on Long Trail

A LONG TRAIL FOOTNOTE

Meet The Greeter of Laguna Beach

BY REIDUN D. NUQUIST

I first encountered Eiler Larsen when I was editing James Gordon Hindes' end-to-end journal, published by the Green Mountain Club in 2008 as *So Clear, So Cool, So Grand: A 1931 Hike on Vermont's Long Trail*. Larsen made a lasting impression on me as he did on Hindes, a Dartmouth College student.

Northbound Hindes met southbound Larsen—whom he wrongly remembered as Erickson—on July 19, 1931, at the Long Trail Lodge:

"This afternoon I became acquainted with a most remarkable man—Mr. Erickson. At first sight he might easily be taken for an eccentric tramp, a sort of curiosity, a hermit which one reads about in books but never meets face to face. His hair hung in folds from the center of his head and broke on his shoulders. His beard, meticulously kept, reached his collar bones. He wore a khaki suit and leather jerkin. . . . A few minutes of conversation changed my whole opinion of the man."

The two must have spent considerable time together—Hindes' summary of the conversation covers a page and a half. He describes how Larsen, carrying a copy of Plato, talked "simply but not wholly freely. I learned a wonderful philosophy from him but discovered little about the man himself." Who was this mystery man who so impressed and puzzled young Hindes?

Eiler U. Larsen (1890-1975) was born in Aarhus, Denmark, where his father managed the poorhouse. His younger brother Svend said that growing up among the poor was a "mixture of tragedy and baroque, macabre comedy," giving him an early understanding of social problems. A lawyer, Svend went on to become Aarhus city mayor and Denmark's justice minister. Another brother was a doctor, their sister a nurse.

Eiler Larsen, a true nonconformist, followed a less conventional path. At age 19 he was selling Danish butter in Russia.

After a stint in the army he traveled around South America for three years. In 1916 he arrived in the U.S., where he attended Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota for a year; to cover tuition he sold aluminum ware from door to door. During World War I Larsen served in the U.S. Army infantry, suffering a leg injury in France. For the rest of his life he used a



cane. After the war he worked for a while as a Wall Street messenger, calling the financiers "deaf and dumb and blind to all but the acquisition of money." On the side Larsen studied elocution, and would later help support himself by public speaking.

"Living the Song of the Open Road" by Bettie Margot Cassie, an article in the April, 1932, issue of *The Vermonter*, placed Larsen in Vermont as early as 1927, when he helped blaze the Long Trail: "He was happy in the work because it was a way of beckoning others to the beloved mountains." Cassie describes

Larsen as tall, broad shouldered, sun tanned, friendly, eloquent, an idealist with the courage to live his dream.

In June 1929 Larsen wrote to the GMC via Theron Dean, requesting a copy of the Long Trail guidebook. He asked to be remembered to Mrs. Dean, as well as Clarence Cowles and Will Monroe—implying that they had met. In September he entered the southern end of the Long Trail, and looked forward to meeting Dean at Monroe's Couching Lion Farm, where he would pick up his mail. Larsen signed himself "very earnestly" and "joyously."

In December, 1930, the *Long Trail News* ran a paragraph about Eiler Larsen of Carmel, New York, stating that Larsen expected to be the first person to hike the entire Appalachian Trail, such as it was (it was completed seven years later). He had arrived in Rutland on November 13, after hiking 350 miles from Mount Katahdin since August 14, carrying a 50 pound pack. He left the Long Trail in Shrewsbury, and planned to remain in Vermont until March, when he would resume his hike.

The following summer found Larsen in North Troy. On June 17, 1931, he wrote to Dean that he had spoken to 200 people in a Richford church, topic unknown. Showing his sense of humor, he related an incident in which "I was almost the cause of a couple of horses turning wild when they caught sight of my splendid looking face. You remember what I often said, 'My face is my best protection.' I had to laugh and laugh when I saw them jump up and down."

Before starting his southbound hike Larsen paid a visit to Burlington, telling Dean that "I greatly appreciate what you did to make my stay in Vermont's largest city a great and glorious adventure." Dean, in responding, thought that Larsen, an experienced hiker, should be able to complete the Long Trail in a month. I

have so far found no further information about Larsen's time in Vermont.

During the Great Depression, Larsen migrated to California, where he supported himself by picking fruit, gardening, and making pottery. He was first drawn to Laguna Beach by its annual Pageant of the Masters, where he portrayed Judas in a tableau of Da Vinci's *The Last Supper*. He settled there permanently in 1942.

According to his Wikipedia entry, Larsen then pursued his lifelong habit of choosing a vantage point and welcoming people. His usual spot in Laguna Beach was the busy junction of Forest Avenue and Coast Highway near the main beach. To every car and pedestrian that passed by, Larsen grinned, waved, pointed his wooden cane and shouted his catch phrases of "Hallooo!", "Delighted to see you!" or "Are you alive?!" The shaggy-haired and heavily bearded Larsen, usually dressed in a red shirt, slacks, and sandals, waving from the corner, became an iconic image for Laguna Beach tourists.

Some residents disapproved of the boisterous Larsen, but most appreciated his enthusiasm and friendliness, and helped him with lodging and meals. Over the years, he became the official Greeter of Laguna Beach. He continued to take long walks.

After Larsen suffered a stroke in 1967, townspeople collected money for a visit to Denmark; he had not been back in 53 years. He died in 1975, and is buried in the National Cemetery in Los Angeles. Today there are two life-size statues of Larsen in Laguna Beach, showing him waving to visitors. Thus the remarkable, good-natured Dane lives on.

Reidun Nuquist wrote this, her final article for the Long Trail News, as she faced a life-threatening illness that ended her life in November. Reidun was a librarian with a special interest in the Green Mountain Club and Long Trail history, and was a frequent contributor to the Long Trail News. For this article she drew upon the Theron S. Dean Papers at the Vermont Historical Society's Leahy Library.

Proceeds support local sections and the GMC Education Program. Check the GMC website, greenmountainclub.org for full calendar, updates, and changes.

All presentations will be held at the GMC Visitor Center in Waterbury Center unless noted.

The Mountains of Home: A 500-mile Vermont Adventure

Pavel Cenkl

Thursday, March 14, 7 p.m.

Last June, Pavel Cenkl planned to combine a one-day 213-mile bike ride south through Vermont with a run north along the Long Trail to Journey's End. He had planned ten days for the 500-mile adventure with companions joining him on the trail, but injury stopped him at the Winooski River, 80 miles from Journey's End.

Other runners did an impromptu relay of the rest of the LT to show how community builds resilience. Pavel, associate dean of faculty and athletic director at Sterling College in Craftsbury, has spent five years developing the Climate Run Project to foster dialogue on individual, community, and ecological resilience.

Searching for White Blazes: Hiking the Long Trail in Winter

Mary Lou Recor

Thursday, March 21, 7 p.m.

The *Long Trail Guide* rightly says the Long Trail is "not designed for winter," with snow-covered white blazes, dense woods, deep snow, remote trail, and short days. Mary Lou will recount her trail-breaking, route-losing adventures through 14 years of winter day hikes to cover 270-plus miles.



Big Wall Climbing

Big Wall Climbing in Yosemite Valley

Rob Rives

Thursday, March 28, 7 p.m.

Yosemite Valley, often called the birthplace of American rock climbing, attracts climbers worldwide, as its granite cliffs offer adventure and learning to aspirants and experts alike. In two years working in Yosemite National Park, Rob Rives entered the world of multi-day climbs. Join him as he explains the why and how of ascending and living on Yosemite's walls.

Rail to Trail: The Logging and Railroad History of the Long Trail in Southern Vermont

Preston Bristow

Friday, April 26, 6:30 p.m.

Montshire Museum, Norwich
Hosted by the Upper Valley-Ottawaquechee Section

Vermont's logging railroads lacked the scale of the Adirondack Mountains, where 22 lines reached deep into old growth forests. Vermont also lacked villainous timber barons like J.E. Henry, the notorious White Mountain railway "wood butcher" who said, "I never see the tree yit that didn't mean a damned sight more to me goin' under the saw than it did standin' on a mountain." Yet logging railroads did penetrate the Green Mountains, and three are intertwined in the history of the Long Trail.

Remembering Don Wallace

GMC's Forceful Giant



Don at 1975 Annual Meeting

A giant of the Green Mountain Club, Norwich University, hiking, and mountaineering passed away on November 18, 2018. Professor **DONALD M. WALLACE JR.** was an outsized, larger-than-life member of the GMC. Tall and lean, with his signature coffee mug, pipe, walrus moustache, and round wire-rim glasses, Don was a formidable figure remembered as both heroic and exasperating.

Don's passion for mountaineering began on hiking trips with his aunt and uncle, who were members from New Jersey. He was the fourth person to hike the Northeast One Hundred Fifteen (all the 4,000-foot summits in New England and New York), finishing in 1964. Don also climbed all the Colorado Fourteeners (peaks exceeding 14,000 feet) from 1972 to 1988. In 1980 he became the fourth person to climb the high points of all 50 states, including Denali in Alaska.

These illustrious accomplishments did not diminish Don's pride in being both a Long Trail and a Catamount Trail end-to-end.

Don became something of a rock star in his more than 50 years as a professor of mechanical engineering at Norwich University, where his students called many of his colorful statements "Wallace-isms." We GMCers who worked with Don cherish our own "Wallace-isms."

Larry Van Meter, executive director from 1975 to 1977, recalls cringing when Don confronted a hiker who had wandered

from the delineated treadway on the Mount Mansfield ridge with "Listen up! The name of the game is: STAY OFF THE F**KING SEDGE!!"

Vic Henningsen, a former caretaker and ranger, writes, "I can't think of anyone else who would engage in passionate—and extended—debate about the precise measurements for painted trail blazes."

Fred Gilbert met Don when he was a freshman at Norwich University and recalls how Don joined GMC's New York Section and became the trails and shelters coordinator. The section was responsible for maintaining the trail from the Winooski River to Mount Ellen which was scouted and built under leadership of Professor Will Monroe in the early days of GMC. "When the New York Section disbanded and gave up their trail responsibilities, Don was heartbroken and lost interest in GMC activities," said Fred.

I have my own recollections. One year when a proposed budget was presented, Don proclaimed "I can't understand this budget, and if I can't understand it, I know no one else can understand it!"

Before there was a paid GMC staff Don did a little of everything to help run

the club. In the 1960s, '70s, and '80s, he served on the board and chaired many committees including: Trails and Shelters; Conservation; Guidebook; Special Projects; Winter Outing; and Annual Meeting. He was also a member of the Budget and Finance committee and led numerous outings.


Perhaps Don's greatest legacy was reestablishment of the club's trail caretaker program in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Ken and Alice Boyd, founders of the modern caretaker program, doubt the GMC Board would have approved it without Don's forceful advocacy. Further, Don advocated in "Don Wallace fashion" for hiring single women as shelter caretakers, which many then considered inappropriate and unsafe. He prevailed. Although Don taught at what was then an all-male military school, he had many strong female mountaineering colleagues.

Don's bold style and approach didn't always sit well with everyone, but he will be remembered as a forceful giant, gruff but big-hearted, and a bright thread in the tapestry of Green Mountain Club history.

—PRESTON BRISTOW
GMC PRESIDENT FROM 1983-1985




Don on Camel's Hump Summit



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Loving Life on Stratton Mountain 50 Years Later



What are we doing? It's 1968 and a friend, an elusive poet in Buffalo, New York, tells us what he's been doing—living pretty primitively in the back woods as a fire lookout on a mountain in Vermont. Do we want a job? Sounds okay, like fun, and we know northern Ontario, don't we! Maybe the times then explained some of it. Okay, we'll take the job.

Flash forward to the present, and we've been on Stratton Mountain at the fire tower off and on for 50 years, first as fire lookouts for the Vermont State Forest Department, then as summit caretakers for the Green Mountain Club, beginning in 1996. We're still here! One could ask, why?

Beauty and serenity are here always, and there is a prevailing sense of freedom along with the continued responsibility and stewardship we have felt all these years to protect the forest and care for the Long Trail-Appalachian Trail that crosses the top of Stratton. There is wonder in our interactions with the animals that live with us in the forest, and enjoyment in conversations with hikers we meet on their journeys, north or south, and with those on day visits from Stratton Mountain Resort's gondola ski lift.

We live in a 1929 Thoreau-size cabin for a five-month season on the summit clearing with a direct view of the 1934 Civilian Conservation Corps fire tower. We get our water from a spring a 15-minute hike down the trail, have a Coleman propane cook stove, and collect rainwater for washing. We have a cave nearby for keeping food cool, plus a table, three chairs, bunks, and a wood stove.

There are numerous facets to our life on the mountain. *Interaction* is one of our biggest jobs. Here are just a few of note.

Okay, what do you do when a bear decides to rip a large hole through your door because you made a delicious curry dinner earlier that the bear can't resist? Hiker education: Get a new door, put the mangled door on display, be able to say "bear" in eight languages, and talk about bear interaction with everyone.

What do you say when visitors ask: "How can you stand living with one another in such a small space?" Answer: We read at night facing different directions! Then we show the puzzled listener that you can live well without dependence on modern conveniences.

Safe water? A young hiker arrived at the summit, poked his head in the door, and said, "Excuse me, I just drank from the spring down the trail, and I didn't treat the water. Do you think I'm going to die?" "Five minutes," Hugh accidentally said, looking at his watch. Next, spotting the look on the hiker's face: "Sorry, very sorry, I was just thinking out loud." Then we had a casual talk about giardia and safe drinking water.

At the beginning of one season, while hiking supplies to the top, we discovered that the personal territory established by a young moose included the fire tower and cabin. For three crazy weeks, sharing and coexistence wasn't on his mind. We chanted, "Go, go that way," all day to move the moose off the trail to allow hikers to get around him and through his guarded territory. Hikers we met in town asked us: "What's going on? We were held hostage on the tower all morning with the moose guarding the bottom steps!" Moose Rules—we're the interlopers.

Another part of our work is maintaining trails. Some days are long and arduous, but also meditative, as one moves slowly and looks minutely at every aspect of the trail in relation to what hikers need and what looks good to the eye. While doing trail work we are always amazed by the number of compliments and appreciations from both thru- and day-hikers that GMC receives for maintaining the Long Trail and Appalachian Trail in Vermont from border to border.

When it's cold and wet we fire up the stove. We usually invite hikers to warm up, and we sit and talk about their trail experiences and ours. They are great memories for us all. We feel that being able to work on Stratton remains life-changing each and every day. We look forward to next season.

—HUGH AND JEANNE JOUDRY, STRATTON MOUNTAIN CARETAKERS



PHOTO BY SCOT APPLAGATE



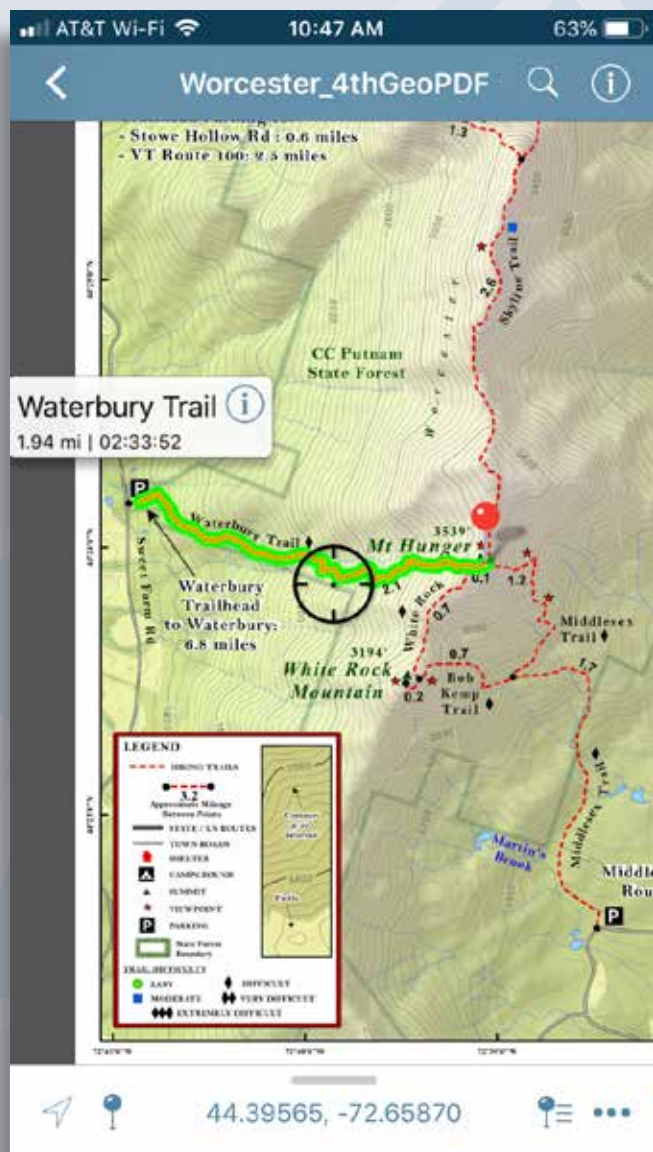


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