



# Green Mountain Club 2022 Annual Meeting

Saturday, June 11, 2022

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# Green Mountain Club 2022 Annual Business Meeting

Green Mountain Club Headquarters | Waterbury Center, VT  
Saturday, June 11, 2022 | 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

## Business Meeting Agenda

9:00 to 9:05	Call to order and welcome by GMC President Howard VanBenthuisen
9:05 to 9:10	Secretary's Report by Caitlin Miller
9:10 to 9:20	Treasurer's Report by Nancy Thomas
9:20 to 9:30	President's Report by Howard VanBenthuisen
9:30 to 9:40	Executive Director's Report by Michael DeBonis
9:40 to 10:00	President's Awards by Howard VanBenthuisen
10:00 to 10:10	Break
10:10 to 11:10	Long Trail System in 2022 Panel
11:10 to 11:40	Nominating Committee Report with Chair John Page Announcement of new Board members and Honorary Life Memberships
11:40 to 11:50	New Business
11:50	Adjourn

*The mission of the Green Mountain Club is to make the 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.*

Green Mountain Club  
**111<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting Minutes**  
June 13, 2021 via Zoom  
*Minutes approved June 11, 2022*

**Call to Order:** GMC President Tom Candon called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. Mike Debonis gave an overview of the agenda and the technology being used to conduct the meeting.

**Secretary's Report:** The secretary's minutes from the 2020 Annual Meeting were reviewed; it was moved by Howard VanBenthuyzen and seconded by Nancy to approve the minutes, which were unanimously adopted.

**Treasurer's Report:** Nancy Thomas then gave the treasurer's report, a written copy of which was included in the meeting packet. The fiscal year ended with a surplus! There was a 69% increase in contributions over what was budgeted. It was the sixth year in a row that the fiscal year ended in a surplus!

**President's Report:** Tom then gave his president's report, in which he referenced the club's excellent financial situation. He thanked Nancy, Jason Buss, Mike Debonis, and the Finance Committee, as well as Alicia DiCocco, for the fantastic financial picture. He prepared a detailed, personal, interesting, and informative written report, from which he read.

**Executive Director's Report:** Mike then shared his executive director's report, which was also included as a written report in the meeting packet. Mike recognized Tom for all his contributions to the GMC. He commented on the club's strong financial status and acknowledged the contributions by staff, partners, volunteers, adopters, donors, sections, and board members. He mentioned the double-digit increase in trail use and the successful Taylor Series. He also commented on the excellent online merchandise sales and stated that investments in outdoor recreation have increased from hundreds to thousands to millions of dollars over the years.

**Committee & Staff Reports:** Alicia and Nancy McClellan then spoke about the [Long Trail Legacy Campaign](#), which has a goal of \$4.0 million and its areas of investment will focus on trails, Wheeler Pond Camps, GMC's heritage and space for archives, the headquarters facility updates, and GMC's future financial stability. Nancy then spoke about the kick-off of the public phase of the campaign and how people can help, which included making a pledge, helping with Long Trail Day on August 29, and sharing ideas. She ended by asking people to please be generous.

**President's Awards:** The Presidential Awards were then announced. From 2020, Steve Klein was recognized for serving as GMC's treasurer for six years. Lee Allen – who served as Nominating Committee chair, Trails Management Committee chair, and has led the Annual Meeting birding sessions numerous times – was also recognized.

For 2021, Ed O'Leary was recognized for serving on the GMC Executive Committee as secretary for the past three years; being the board liaison to the Forest, Parks, & Recreation Department (FPR); his membership through the Northeast Kingdom Section; and for being chair of the Camps Committee.

For 2021, Nancy Thomas was recognized for being GMC's newest treasurer, chairing the Budget and Finance Committee, serving as a member of the Endowment Committee, serving on the DEI Working Group, and being an active member of the Montpelier Section.

Also for 2021, a plaque was awarded to the entire GMC staff for its excellent work while coping with the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Nominating Committee Report:** John Page then gave a Nominating Committee report. New general directors on the board are Nancy McClellan, Ram Moennsad, Millie Mugica, and Jeff Wehrwein. Their bios are found in the [Spring 2021 issue of the Long Trail News](#). The slate of new officers is as follows: Howard VanBenthuyzen, president; Amy Kelsey, vice president; Caitlin Miller, secretary; and Nancy Thomas, treasurer.

**Honorary Life Memberships:** Honorary Life memberships were awarded to Susan Shea, past GMC staff member, for her incredibly important work on over 90 Long Trail Protection projects; and Jim Sullivan, who has been a member since 1994 and a volunteer since 2008, giving thousands of hours of his time and providing critical support to the field program staff.

**New Business:** A question was then asked about the status of Bromley Tower. Fundraising is complete, the design is finished, but there is a need to address long-term liability, as the tower is situated on state-owned land. The hope is that construction will start in late summer or early fall of 2021.

It was mentioned that the *check in/check out* practice for volunteers needs to be followed by all.

Regarding the status of Cooper Lodge, discussions with FPR continue but no final decision has yet been made.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 10:27 AM.

Green Mountain Club  
**Treasurer's Report, Submitted by Nancy Thomas**  
112<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting | June 11, 2022

**Overview:**

This report covers the close of Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22), which closed April 30, 2022, and the budget for FY 2023, which began on May 1, 2022. The Green Mountain Club continues to maintain a healthy fiscal position despite the significant challenges presented by COVID and the ensuing economic conditions. The FY22 budget included a strong slate of field work again but faced several uncertainties as we entered this second year of the pandemic. Thanks to hard work and discipline on the part of the club's administration and continued support by donors and volunteers, the year ended with a small surplus.

1. Fiscal Year 2022 – May 1, 2021 through April 30, 2022

FY22 ended with a surplus for the **eighth** consecutive year. The unaudited budget surplus is \$3,634, virtually balanced for a \$2.1 million budget. Part of this was possible due to the significant cash cushion the club had from the previous year. This also eliminated the need for short-term borrowing for the second year in a row and eliminated payments for publications and solar loans. Most significantly, GMC staff worked to hold down expenses to stay within the resources available.

The total operating revenue for the year was \$1.76 million, supported in part by \$596K in contributions, down as expected from last year's record, but up from the previous year's end at 106%. Membership revenue was also slightly above budget and down from last year's record. Having returned to a full, active field season, fee for service income was back up significantly.

Expenses for the year totaled \$2.12 million, which was 98% of the budgeted amount. With the return to full work crews, personnel expenses were up 134% compared to last year and at 95% of the budgeted amount. Office expenses were up slightly. Program expenses were up significantly, 157% of last year and 107% of the budget due to increased material, gas and contracted expenses such as helicopter work.

Non-operating income of \$362,399 from the endowment distribution and other restricted distributions for specific field work made up the difference between expenses and operating income, resulting in the \$3,634 surplus.

2. Fiscal Year 2023 Budget – May 1, 2022 through April 30, 2023

In March, the board approved the FY23 budget. This budget is substantively higher than previous years, reflecting a strong organization growing to meet its mission and vision while

strengthening its core. There are risks, including the impact of inflation in almost all areas of club expenses and the continued uncertainty of the impact of COVID. However, the club is in a stable position to manage the challenges ahead.

On the revenue side, this budget takes advantage of federal funding opportunities to collaborate with a variety of partners on the Burrows Trail Restoration Project. The goal for contributions has been increased as staff members who were focused on the Capital Campaign turn to focus more on continuing growth in annual giving and membership.

On the expense side, there will be more seasonal staff in the field than in other years for trail work including the Burrows Trail Restoration, on privies, and construction of the Beaver Dam Cabin. The base rate of pay for seasonal staff has been increased as the club works to be the Employer of Choice and remain competitive with other trail maintaining organizations. At the same time there are increased administrative costs with staff added to manage the increased workload. Interest expenses will be back in the budget as the club borrows during the field season and receives fee for service payments later in the year. As the Capital Campaign wraps up, the full cost of staff who devoted significant time to the Capital Campaign will be back in the operating budget.

### 3. Capital Campaign and Endowment

Congratulations are in order to the GMC administration and volunteers who have put so much effort into the Long Trail Legacy Capital Campaign, which will wrap up soon having met and exceeded the ambitious goal of \$4 million. This is a tremendous achievement that has already created opportunities for important trail work, for the new Visitor Center building, and to significantly bolster the endowment. While GMC has seen its endowment investments sink as the stock market reacts to inflationary pressures and the crisis in Ukraine, the long-term prospects outlook remains positive.

I would like to thank Mike, Jason, all the staff, as well as volunteers who have contributed to the growth and strength of GMC during these challenging times.

Green Mountain Club  
**Committee Reports**  
112<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting | June 11, 2022

**Budget & Finance Committee**

Budget & Finance Committee members: Nancy Thomas (chair), Jonathan Breen, Lee Allen, Jeff Wehrwein, Ira Sollace, and Stephen Klein.

GMC staff representatives: Chief Financial Officer Jason Buss, Executive Director Mike DeBonis.

The Budget and Finance Committee serves several vital functions in the club committee structure. It:

- Provides oversight and technical support regarding the club's finances;
- Supervises the annual audit of the club's financials and reviews other financial controls;
- Recommends the annual budget to the Executive Committee and Board of Directors.

The committee met six times during the year. Together with the staff, the committee had a productive year as it:

- Oversaw the successful completion of the Fiscal Year 2021 audit; the auditor did not find any deficiencies or material weaknesses;
- Continued oversight of existing financial controls; and
- Recommended the Fiscal Year 2023 budget to the Board.

One year ago, we closed the 2021 financial year in a global pandemic with much uncertainty on the ongoing impact to the organization. The financials show a resilient, efficient organization with solid support from contributions and membership as we complete this fiscal year. The fiscal year reflects the areas where the organization could hold or cut costs, the significant increase in the amount of work completed and related expenses, and the impacts of growing inflation.

Looking forward to FY23, we will continue to face tight fiscal operations as we are spending more money and doing more work than in previous years. Additional weeks of work in the field, land protection, marketing and engagement, and corporate giving add pressure to the coming fiscal year. Workforce shortages and increased administrative costs create additional stress.

New public COVID recovery funding streams aimed at supporting outdoor recreation create opportunities to make strategic investments in the trail resource. Successful completion of the Capital Campaign will provide foundational support for the club and free up development staff to refocus fundraising capacity on operational and project support. We will likely see a tight budget environment persist through FY23. Overall, The Green Mountain Club is in a solid financial position as we enter the new fiscal year.

As always, the club appreciates your many contributions to our mission and looks forward to your continued involvement in the years ahead.

*Respectfully submitted by Treasurer Nancy Thomas and Chief Financial Officer Jason Buss.*

### **Camps Committee**

Camps Committee members: Chair Paul Trojano, Alison Henry, Ann Gotham, Bob Fish, Catherine Brooks, Chad Forcier, Dann Van Der Vliet, Ed O’Leary, Hope Crifo, Matt Wels, Paul Houchens, RJ Thompson, and Kathryn Wrigley (FPR liaison).

GMC staff: Director of Land Conservation Mollie Flanigan and Director of Field Programs Keegan Tierney.

#### **Camp Operations:**

GMC’s Camps Program is currently renting Bolton Lodge and Bryant Camp in the town of Bolton, and Wheeler Pond Camps (Hadsel-Mares Cabin) in the town of Barton.

#### **Rental Data in Fiscal Year 2022**

<b>Camp</b>	<b>Percent Occupancy</b>	<b>Number of Different Rental Parties</b>	<b>Percent of Renters who are GMC Members</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Hadsel Mares	90%	169	40%	Season: May 1 2021- April 30, 2022
Bryant Camp	80%	139	31%	Season: August 1, 2021- March 31, 2022
Bolton Lodge	58%	102	35%	Season: July 1, 2021- March 31, 2022

*Respectfully submitted by Camps Committee Chair Paul Trojano and Director of Land Conservation Mollie Flanigan.*

### **Development Committee**

Development Committee members: Michelle Connor (Chair), Anne Hauser, Phil Hazen, Stephen Klein, and Don Taylor.

GMC staff representatives: Deputy Director Alicia DiCocco, Development Assistant Erica Harris.

The Development Committee has two primary roles:

- Support GMC staff in the solicitation and stewardship of donors, expanding and enhancing the club's base of support; and
- Keep the Board apprised of Development Committee activities and facilitate Board involvement in fundraising efforts, including providing the necessary support and training.

The Development Committee met quarterly through FY22 and assisted the staff development department in bringing in revenue for the club. They provided staff support throughout the onset of the global pandemic and with fundraising concurrent with an ongoing Capital Campaign. They also called to thank donors and to invite them to GMC events, strengthening their connection with the club.

Key accomplishments of the Development Committee in FY22 include:

- Creating fundraising participation guidelines for Board members;
- Contacted 379 first-time donors through the Donor Thank You Caller program;
- Participated in development training about corporate sponsorships;
- Established a GMC Outdoor Business Member Coalition where local retailers commit \$500 to be part of GMC's hiking season media outreach and support the growth of GMC's brand, fundraising, and membership;
- Supported a successful Long Trail Day fundraising campaign that raised over \$70,000 for the Long Trail Legacy campaign; and
- Provided GMC's Board of Directors with fundraising articles and specific ways to participate in fundraising activities and communications on a regular basis.

Thanks to all the committee members who volunteered their time and made for a successful Fiscal Year 2022!

*Respectfully submitted by Development Committee Chair Michelle Connor and Deputy Director Alicia DiCocco.*

### **Endowment Committee**

Endowment Committee members: Tom Candon (chair), Chip Wadhams, Ken Perine, Nancy Thomas, Rick Hubbard, Richard Andrews, Stephen Klein, Lisa Burns, and Jeff Wehrwein.

GMC staff representative: Chief Financial Officer Jason Buss.

At fiscal year-end April 30, 2022, the GMC endowment's invested assets totaled \$6.8 million, compared with \$6.1 million a year earlier, making it one of the club's most valuable assets from a monetary perspective. The endowment increased to \$7.4 million in January, with market growth and newly invested funds of \$1.4 million from the Capital Campaign. The endowment ended the year at \$6.8 million due to market conditions with the Federal Reserve tightening monetary policy and the war in Ukraine.

Invested assets are managed by Morgan Stanley's Alpine Legacy Group, based out of Colchester.

The Endowment Fund distributed over \$222,924 in the past fiscal year to GMC in support of the club's mission. The Endowment Committee recommended, and the Board approved, a \$238,530 distribution from the endowment in support of FY22 operations. This distribution equates to 4.52% of the average quarterly balance of invested assets calculated on a trailing 12-quarter basis and 8.9% of the FY23 annual operating budget.

Following a comprehensive multi-year study and search by the Endowment Committee, the GMC Board voted to place the GMC Endowment Fund with Morgan Stanley's Alpine Legacy Group, based out of Colchester. With the assistance of Morgan Stanley, the Endowment Committee completed the updating of the GMC Endowment Policy to include investment reporting requirements and the Board's commitment to have the values and mission of the club reflected in the investment of its assets.

*Respectfully submitted by Endowment Committee Chair Tom Candon and Chief Financial Officer Jason Buss.*

### **Land Conservation Committee**

Land Conservation Committee Members: Chair Preston Bristow, Alexis Peters, Bob Paquin, David Hartman, Harris Roen, Howard VanBenthuyzen, Joseph Bahr, Kenna Rewcastle, Lee Allen, Marge Fish, Melissa Reichert, Paul Kendall, Richard Andrews, Richard Windish, Rolf Anderson, Russ Ford, Sheri Larsen, Tom Kahl, Hawk Metheny (ATC), Matt Stevens (ATC), and Becca Washburn (FPR).

GMC staff representatives: Director of Land Conservation Mollie Flanigan and Executive Director Michael DeBonis.

### **Strategic Planning:**

The Land Conservation program launched a strategic conservation planning process in the spring of 2021 to plan out the future scope of the Long Trail Protection Campaign. This two-year planning process will assess the current legal protection for the Long Trail System, set conservation goals and criteria, and map out strategies for accomplishing those goals. Led by a working group of the Land Conservation Committee, this planning process will invite member feedback through a survey provided in the upcoming edition of the *Long Trail News*.

### **Land Trust Alliance (LTA) Standards and Practices:**

GMC's Land Conservation Program continues to improve its data management systems to bring greater efficiencies and capacity to GMC and meet Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices. This past year, GMC focused on digitizing our land records to make them accessible while

working remotely and create a duplicate copy. Over the course of 2021, GMC scanned about 1/3 of our land records onto GMC's server and plans to continue this project in 2022.

This past year the Land Conservation Committee adopted a Stewardship and Land Management Plan for a 1,110-acre property GMC owns in Jay, Vermont. While GMC has had Current Use Forest Management Plans for most of our 18 properties, GMC is in the process of developing holistic land management plans as recommended by the Land Trust Alliance standards for each of our fee owned parcels. This is the second plan adopted by GMC since it started this project in 2020.

#### Corridor Stewardship:

*Corridor Monitoring:* Over the past year, the Green Mountain Club worked with our volunteer corridor monitors to help ensure against encroachments on GMC-conserved parcels and maintain property boundaries. There are currently 65 active corridor monitor volunteers who monitor and maintain the boundaries on Long Trail and Appalachian Trail lands and easements. In 2021, GMC's volunteers monitored and maintained just under half of the boundaries on GMC's Long Trail conserved lands (83 miles out of a total of 178 miles) and contributed over 450 hours of volunteer effort to the project. On the AT, volunteers monitored and maintained a third of the boundaries (41.5 miles out of a total of 128) and contributed 200 hours of volunteer effort to the project.

*GMC Conserved Lands Boundary Inventory Initiative:* In 2021, GMC hosted a second half-term Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) AmeriCorps Stewardship Assistant member to focus on GMC's inventory of boundary line conditions on the organization's fee and easement lands. Over the course of the summer, the AmeriCorps member inventoried 15.7 miles of remote and rugged boundary, leaving just 9 miles of boundary left to be inventoried. GMC will work to complete the inventory in 2022. When the inventory is complete, GMC will have an up-to-date database of the condition and location of all 178 miles of boundary line on our conserved lands. This will allow GMC to run a more effective and rewarding volunteer Corridor Monitoring program while safeguarding GMC's conservation easements and fee-owned properties against encroachments, and allow for more effective management long into the future.

#### Appalachian Trail Open Areas Maintenance:

In 2021, GMC and our partners at the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) and US Forest Service (USFS) ran another successful year of Open Areas maintenance. GMC staff did seven workdays throughout the summer to control invasive species at four open areas. GMC also assisted in the mowing of Dupuis Hill, a three-acre open area in Pomfret, in October. The other open areas due for mowing in 2021 were done by the USFS Wildlife Team or by Mary Beth Herbert through a grazing/manual control contract with ATC.

*Respectfully submitted by Land Conservation Committee Chair Preston Bristow and Director of Land Conservation Mollie Flanigan.*

### **Membership Committee**

Membership Committee members: Kathryn Wrigley (chair), Ted Albers, Hope Crifo, Jim Fritz, Phil Hazen, Caitlin Miller, Kenna Rewcastle, Annette Seidenglanz, and John Zaber.

GMC staff representatives: Membership Coordinator Rick Dugan and Volunteer and Education Coordinator Lorne Currier.

Due to COVID-19 and staff transitions, the Membership Committee did not hold formal meetings in FY21. Rick Dugan has recently been promoted to Membership Coordinator and will be the staff representative for the committee as they resume their work.

This year, membership operations were again impacted by COVID-19, but we still saw a consistent growth in membership over the past year. Staff worked to engage new and existing members in the following ways:

- Reaching out to new members by email and thanking them for their continued support;
- Providing up-to-date information through our communications channels;
- Publishing a “HikeVT, Love GMC” campaign that offered Vermonters weekly hike options and promoted nearby businesses in different parts of the state. Our goal was to encourage folks to explore new parts of the state and support the local businesses that have done so much for the trail;
- Communicating continuously on all platforms to have direct communication with more members; and
- Continuing discussion of DEI goals, education, and strategies for the club.

### **Membership by the numbers:**

- 9,802 total voting members
- At-Large: 5,885
- Bennington Section: 149
- Brattleboro Section: 125
- Bread Loaf Section: 310
- Burlington Section: 1,122
- Connecticut Section: 185
- Killington Section: 257
- Laraway Section: 62

- Manchester Section: 232
- Montpelier Section: 533
- Northeast Kingdom Section: 267
- Northern Frontier Section: 61
- Upper Valley Ottaquechee Section: 303
- Sterling Section: 135
- Worcester Section: 176

*Respectfully submitted by Membership Coordinator Rick Dugan.*

### **Nominating Committee**

Nominating Committee members: John Page (chair), Andy Hood, Tom Candon, Amy Kelsey, and Mike Peckar.

GMC staff representative: Executive Director Mike DeBonis.

The Nominating Committee has three functions:

- a. Nominate General Directors to represent the membership at-large;
- b. Nominate Officers; and
- c. Nominate individuals for honorary life membership.

1) This year the committee nominated three first-term general directors:

- Nika Meyers
- David Hawaway
- Don Taylor

2) Officers – second year of typical three-year cycle; three of the four officers continuing:

- Nancy Thomas - third year as treasurer
- Howard VanBenthuisen - second year as president
- Nancy McClellan - New incoming vice-president
- Caitlin Miller - second year as secretary

3) Life Membership

Three individuals were recommended for Honorary Life Membership by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Board of Directors in 2022.

*Respectfully submitted by Nominating Committee Chair John Page and Executive Director Mike DeBonis.*

### **Publications Committee**

Publications Committee members: Martha Stitelman, Cindy Griffith, Elisabeth Fenn, Millie Mugica, Jeff Wehrwein, Mike Dacey, and Bruce Yelton.

GMC Staff representative: Operations Manager Matt Krebs.

Publications Committee members volunteer time supporting projects; writing, editing, and fact-checking trail descriptions; taking photographs; and creating illustrations. The GMC's publications program continues to be successful, thanks to the dedication and talents of GMC volunteers and staff. Sales of all GMC publications support the club's work to protect and maintain the Long Trail, Appalachian Trail, and Kingdom Heritage Trails in the Northeast Kingdom.

Publications Committee members have experience in editing, writing, photography, graphic arts and book production. As needed, the committee contracts with writers, editors, photographers, cartographers, and graphic designers. Most GMC publications are printed on paper with recycled content and on paper certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.

The Publications Committee is responsible for developing new books, maps, posters and other types of printed and electronic products for sale in the GMC Visitor Center and club's online store. Products are also marketed to retailers around Vermont through GMC sales representatives and wholesalers.

The Publications Committee's charge is as follows:

*The charge of the Green Mountain Club Publications Committee is to identify, research, produce and publish educational and stewardship guidebooks, maps, and associated products that support the club's mission of helping the Vermont mountains play a larger part in the life of the people.*

The committee aims to achieve its charge in every way possible, including the use of electronic and interactive media to reach today's *and tomorrow's* hikers where they are most likely to find and use information we provide, as well as feel more closely connected to the Green Mountain Club and Vermont's vibrant hiking and outdoor community.

This year the Publications Committee accomplished the following:

- Completion and publication of the 23<sup>rd</sup> edition of the *End-to-Ender's Guide to the Long Trail*.

*Respectfully submitted by Operations Manager Matt Krebs.*

### **Trail Management Committee (TMC)**

Voting Members: David Hathaway (chair), Caitlin Miller, Lee Allen, David Morrissey, Ira Sollace, Kathy Astrauckas, Lars Botzjorns, Marge Fish, Andrew Nuquist, Peter Hope, Richard Andrews, Tom Candon, Martha Stitleman, Wayne Krevetsky, Mariah Keagy, Matt Vezina, Richard Windish, Larry Bruce, Paul Beliveau, Bruce Bushey, Howard VanBenthuyzen, and Cathi Brooks.

Agency Representatives and Staff

- Appalachian Trail Conservancy Representative: Hawk Metheny,
- VT Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation Representative: Walter Opuszynski,
- USFS Green Mountain National Forest Representative: Steve Pytlik,
- GMC staff representative: Director of Field Programs Keegan Tierney

*To oversee and encourage effective management of the Long and Appalachian Trail footpaths and associated facilities; and to provide guidance to GMC's participation in other Vermont trails and trail issues.*

The Trail Management Committee (TMC) is one of the largest groups serving the GMC and is composed of passionate and devoted members of the club and partner organizations. Over the course of the winter, the committee focused attention and discussion around the following trail matters:

#### **Trail Relocations:**

Two trail relocations of significance were discussed and approved. The first is a relocation of roughly 1.1 miles on the southern flank of **Belvidere Mountain**. This relocation will complete the dual goals of significantly improved tread and moving 0.3 miles of trail onto state owned land on the Long Trail State Forest allowing for permanent protection of this section of the trail. The second relocation is from the Southern Terminus at the Massachusetts border northbound for approximately 0.3 miles. This will move the southern terminus and approximately 1,200 feet of trail from private land ownership onto the Green Mountain National Forest.

#### **Shelter Management:**

The 2021-22 year was a big year for shelter management decisions. **Clarendon Shelter**, found next to a class-4 town road in Shrewsbury, has historically been inaccessible for vehicles due to poor road conditions. However, road work completed by a private landowner has improved road conditions to a point that a sedan can now drive directly to the shelter. Staff and the TMC will be watching the situation to evaluate whether these road improvements lead to changes in user behavior.

**Minerva Hinchey Shelter** is found on land owned by the Spring Lake Ranch organization. There has been a long and amicable relationship between the GMC and the Ranch. However, due to newly flagged liability concerns on the part of the Spring Lake Ranch's insurance company there is a need to remove the shelter from the private land. The TMC reviewed and approved the plan to move the shelter a short distance onto the adjacent public land managed by the Green Mountain National Forest. That work is slated to begin in the fall of 2022.

The **Seth Warner Shelter** management decision approved by the US Forest Service in its South of Route 9 Integrated Resource Project was discussed extensively by the TMC with the committee ultimately voting to approve the management strategies included in the USFS decision. This includes removal of the existing shelter and privy and construction of a new shelter that will keep the Seth Warner name. To reduce long running nuisance behavior, the new shelter will be located approximately two miles to the north of its current location, much further from existing road crossings at County Road and Risky Ranch Road.

Lastly, a plan to complete a similar management decision as mentioned previously was discussed and approved for the **Sunrise Shelter**. A new shelter will be constructed approximately one mile south of the existing site to move the overnight site further from the road crossing at Route 78. The old shelter site will be decommissioned.

#### North Country Scenic Trail in Vermont:

The TMC heard from the [North Country National Scenic Trail](#) (NCT) and the [North Country Trail Association](#) about the recent legislation that authorized the extension of the NCT from its former terminus at the Crown Point Bridge in New York into Vermont with the intention of creating a connection with the Appalachian Trail. The committee was briefed on past GMC discussions and positions on the NCT, and formally approved the alignment of the NCT where it will be co-located with the Long Trail from an intersection near Sucker Brook Shelter to Maine Junction in Killington.

#### Review of Telephone Gap IRP:

The US Forest Service uses a process of land management planning for large blocks of the forest known as an Integrated Resource Project (IRP). The process involves the USFS planning and

decision making across multiple uses including forestry, wildlife, recreation, ecology, etc. The TMC reviewed the scoping document for the area known as *Telephone Gap*, which encompasses the Long Trail from roughly Rolston Rest Shelter north to Bloodroot Mountain. Overall, there was negligible impact on the LT system and staff will continue to monitor the IRP planning process.

*Volunteer Code of Conduct:*

A group of volunteers has taken on the effort of developing a code of conduct for the GMC. TMC completed a first review of the document and have passed it along to staff for cross-walking with land management partners.

*Kingdom Heritage Trail Overnight Sites:*

Two overnight sites have been proposed, reviewed, and approved on the Kingdom Heritage Trail. The TMC reviewed materials presented by the KHT partners and supported by the club's Northeast Kingdom Section.

*Chainsaws and Risk Trees:*

The TMC reviewed plans to implement a large-scale sawyer training and certification effort coordinated by staff. Three classes were scheduled with 10 participants in each class to provide sawyer training and certification to cut trees on federal land. Two classes have been conducted to date and all sawyers supplied complimentary reviews of the content and educational value of the classes. David and Keegan have been coordinating with the State Dept. of Forests, Parks, and Recreation (FPR) to assess and mitigate risk trees around LT System backcountry facilities on state lands. This work will continue through 2022.

*Respectfully submitted by Trail Management Committee Chair David Hathaway and Director of Field Programs Keegan Tierney.*

**Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Working Group**

DEI Working Group Members: Caitlin Miller (chair), Tom Candon, Andy Hood, Nancy McClellan, Nancy Thomas, Elisabeth Fenn, Marge Fish, Millie Mujica, John Zaber, and Howard VanBenthuisen.

Staff Representatives: Visitor Center Manager Amy Potter and Executive Director Mike Debonis.

GMC's DEI Working Group was established in November of 2020 to advise the Board of Directors and provide leadership to the organization as it works to address diversity, equity, and inclusion at the club. The group has been meeting monthly analyzing ways to integrate DEI

within the organization's mission, operations, programs, and governance with the goal to help foster real change within the organization.

This past year, the Green Mountain Club Board of Directors approved a land acknowledgement statement. The statement was developed by staff and the DEI Working Group helped facilitate committee review and the editing process. The statement reads as follows:

*The Green Mountain Club and Long Trail System are located on land which is the traditional territory of Indigenous peoples including the Western Abenaki. This land has served as a site of meeting and exchange among Indigenous peoples for thousands of years. We recognize and respect them as the traditional stewards of these lands and waters, whose presence continues to enrich our community. We strive to respect and protect the lands within our use.*

Additional work conducted by the working group includes:

- Quarterly DEI discussion at Board meetings;
- Developed a DEI survey for the Board and committees;
- Incorporated DEI elements into Board orientation;
- Engaged an outside contractor to plan a Board DEI retreat that will take place in 2023;
- Began analyzing systems to make the Board nominating process more inclusive; and
- Developed an online Board DEI resource library.

*Respectfully submitted by DEI Working Group Chair Caitlin Miller and Executive Director Mike DeBonis.*



# Green Mountain Club Section Reports



## Bennington Section

### About this year:

Melville Nauheim shelter will get an upgrade this year! We can't wait!

The Bennington Appalachian Trail Community, which includes a number of people from our section, has helped designate Bennington, VT as the [newest Appalachian Trail Community](#), due to its hard work.

[Read more about it here.](#)

### Upcoming:

The Bennington AT Community will host Bennington Trailfest on July 30, noon to 3 PM. This free event will include workshops, activities, food, and entertainment – all geared toward increasing awareness of the AT and the Long Trail. Join at the Bennington Community Center, located at 655 Gage Street in Bennington, VT. [Learn more.](#)



## Brattleboro Section

### About this year:

We are proud to now have three active section members who successfully completed USFS Sawyer Certification, which includes First Aid and CPR. Congratulations and extended thanks to Jason Cook, Collier Shutter, and Matt Stinchfield.

We formally added the Trails & Shelters Coordinator title to the roster of Brattleboro Section officers, and “Trail Boss” James (Mitch) Mitchell has taken the lead. A sturdy crew of enthusiasts have attended workdays throughout the past year, and demonstrated a remarkable amount of skill, humor, and accomplishment.

### Upcoming:

Wood boring pests have continued to wreak havoc, so we are looking to further repair and preserve Spruce Peak Shelter. We are grateful for the support and assistance from the Green Mountain Club and US Forest Service. Brattleboro Section members also look forward to assisting in the construction of the new Stratton Pond shelter.



## Bread Loaf Section

### **About this year:**

The Bread Loaf Section had a substantial year both in terms of trail work and changes in leadership. Projects at Cooley Glen, Emily Proctor, and Boyce shelters were completed with incredible support from the Green Mountain Club, US Forest Service, and volunteers; we also supported new privy construction, reset shelter foundations, and continued general trail maintenance. Wonderful partnerships developed in completing these projects, and we are fortunate that such a wide range of community members – including GMC staff, the Coast Guard, a church youth group – made contributions. We are really grateful.

*Pictured above: Emily Proctor (left) and Cooley Glen (right) shelter repairs.*

Many dedicated members of Bread Loaf Section's executive team have transitioned into varied roles. Ruth Penfield, former section president, completed seven years as the section's leader; we are fortunate that she is staying on to tackle publicity and events. Ruth's commitment to GMC is energizing to us all. Additionally, after contributing a combined 49 years of volunteering with GMC, Doug McKain, David Andrews, Kathy Duclos, Ivor Hughes, and Bruce Yelton stepped down from committee duties. They will continue to lead hikes, adopt trails, and stay active in section activities. We are very grateful for the guidance and leadership from all these folks over the years.

### **Upcoming:**

We have three new executive team members – including Section President David Morrissey – who are excited to get involved. We've also slightly shifted roles and responsibilities. On trail, we've seen increased interest and usage, and we anticipate fostering that enthusiasm via the Bread Loaf Section. We're ready to get back out on trail and enjoy work that's been done over the past couple of years.



## **Burlington Section**

### **About this year:**

Volunteerism is alive and well within the Burlington Section, and the projects we've completed showcase its value. Trail maintenance outings were well attended. We carried new decking to Taft Lodge and new metal roofing to our most remote shelter, Puffer Shelter. We thank UVM Outing Club members for participating in both these endeavors. Other volunteers led outings, helped staff Barnes Camp Visitor Center, participated in Long Trail Day, stacked wood at Bolton Lodge, built tent platforms at

headquarters, and more. We are amazed at the continued, meaningful contributions of volunteers during Burlington Section activities.

The Burlington Section experienced significant changes to its Executive Committee at its January 2022 Annual Meeting. Long-time committee members Mary Keenan, Dot Myer, Maeve Kim, John Sharp, and Director Michelle Goodell stepped down. We are grateful for their many combined years of service. We are also heartened by the members who stepped in to provide leadership: Oliver Pierson, secretary; Ellen Cohen, membership; Tess Stimson, *RidgeLines*; Barbee Hauzinger, marketing and communications; Mark Hoffman, education and Taylor Series; Scott Albertson, trails co-chair; John Need, website; and Susan Tobin, director. Thanks to these members, we have a full committee for the first time in several years.

**Upcoming:**

The Burlington Section looks forward to spreading the word about the Green Mountain Club this year and involving more people in its mission. We plan to hold an educational event (or two), provide t-shirts to volunteers to promote GMC recognition, amp up social media use and explore resources like Meetup to reach new people. Lastly, we aim to install that roof at Puffer Shelter.



## Connecticut Section

**About this year:**

This year, we held week-long treks in Wyoming's Wind River Range and Shenandoah National Park. We also spent multiple work weekends on the Long Trail after a nearly two-year hiatus due to Covid-19.

**Upcoming:**

Our Annual Meeting and dinner is slated for September 2022. It'll be an in-person, indoor gathering for the first time since 2019.



## Killington Section

### About this year:

Through the work and persistence of a core group of members, the Killington Section has continued trail maintenance and led hikes for the past year. Additionally, Dave Coppock and Larry Walter have established a relationship between the section and Rutland's Allen Street School. The students assist with trail maintenance and in turn learn to safely use trail tools like crosscut saws and lopping shears while gaining exposure to and appreciation for the outdoors.

### Upcoming:

We've buffed up our outing calendar, particularly with potluck suppers. We're also excited to increase our communication efforts with greater use of the internet and reviving our full-length newsletter, *Smoke & Blazes*.



## Laraway Section

### About this year:

We've had a heavy focus on trails and shelter maintenance.

**Upcoming:**

We're excited to meet new volunteers during the spring trail clearing.

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## Manchester Section

**About this year:**

We hosted loads of winter snowshoe hikes this year and met in-person for Annual Meeting. We're also proud to continue involving students in trail work by connecting with local schools.

**Upcoming:**

Get ready for a packed summer hiking agenda!

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## Montpelier Section

**About this year:**

We're grateful to our Executive Committee, the stability of which is critical during this difficult time. Everyone generously volunteered for another year during Covid-19. Section membership remains strong

as well, allowing us to take on additional trail maintenance efforts in fall, winter, and spring. Previously, we had two fall and two spring maintenance events.

**Upcoming:**

We are excited to continue growing our membership numbers and participation levels at our outings.



## Northeast Kingdom Section

**About this year:**

We celebrated Long Trail Day with a trip up Jay Peak, our closest connection to the Long Trail. We had a small but mighty group and nearly perfect weather – it got a bit cold about halfway up the trail! We also enjoyed four lively Eat & Greets throughout the year at local NEK eateries, the latest being Hobo's in Island Pond. These Eat & Greets are a fun way to sign up new members, show some love to local restaurants, and enjoy table talk instead of just trail talk.

**Upcoming:**

We're looking forward to leading hikes at this year's [Brighton Trail Days](#), which is in the planning stages right now. It is scheduled for Saturday, June 25 at 8:30 AM at the Brighton Town Pavilion. We welcome other sections' members to join us for a hike in the Northeast Kingdom!



## Northern Frontier Section

### About this year:

Our trail work included blazing, clearing waterbars, and removing many blowdowns. Long Trail Patrol constructed a substantial stone stairway just north of Route 242. Last summer, water sources dried up because of drought conditions. In response, volunteers carried containers of water to shelters. We may need to carry in water again this summer.

### Upcoming:

Our section's Annual Meeting was on June 5. It included a bratwurst cookout and potluck. We also look forward to our trail walk-throughs and hikes this season.



## Sterling Section

### About this year:

Sterling had a great year of sweaty workdays in the summer and a chilly outdoor Annual Meeting in February! Highlights from the workdays include a major turnpike-building project on the ridgeline and our third year of monthly knotweed pulls at the Lamoille River.

**Upcoming:**

This summer we plan to repair or replace puncheon on the Long Trail over Morse Mountain as well as add new puncheon to the Beaver Meadow Loop Trail.



## Upper Valley Ottaquechee Section

**About this year:**

Despite the pandemic, we scheduled well over 150 outings last year, which included trail maintenance, hiking, backcountry skiing, snowshoeing, and paddling. Our maintainers kept our 45 miles of the Vermont Appalachian Trail in splendid condition, and we filled out a full complement of adopters to help us stay on top of the job.

**Upcoming:**

We look forward to more chain saw trainings so we can independently tackle problem areas on trail.



## Worcester Section

**About this year:**

The Worcester Sections maintains a camp at Cedar Meadow Lake in Leicester, Mass., which was purchased by our section in 1956. We currently have 143 members. Our 3-4 monthly activities include

hiking, mountain biking, canoeing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, trail maintenance, and events at our camp. Our members and the public enjoy picnicking, swimming, fishing, and boating at our camp. We coordinate activities with other environmental groups in our area such as the Wachusett Greenways, the Mid-State Trail Group, the Appalachian Mountain Club, and local land trusts.

The Worcester Section maintains the Stratton Pond section of the Long Trail, from Winhall River to Arlington West Wardsboro Road (Kelly Stand Road). We perform trail work to this section every spring and fall.

**Upcoming:**

We are excited for our events, which include Hump Day Horseshoes every Tuesday at our Leicester Camp, a hike up Mt. Wachusett on June 18, and a hike up Mt. Monadnock in New Hampshire on June 25.