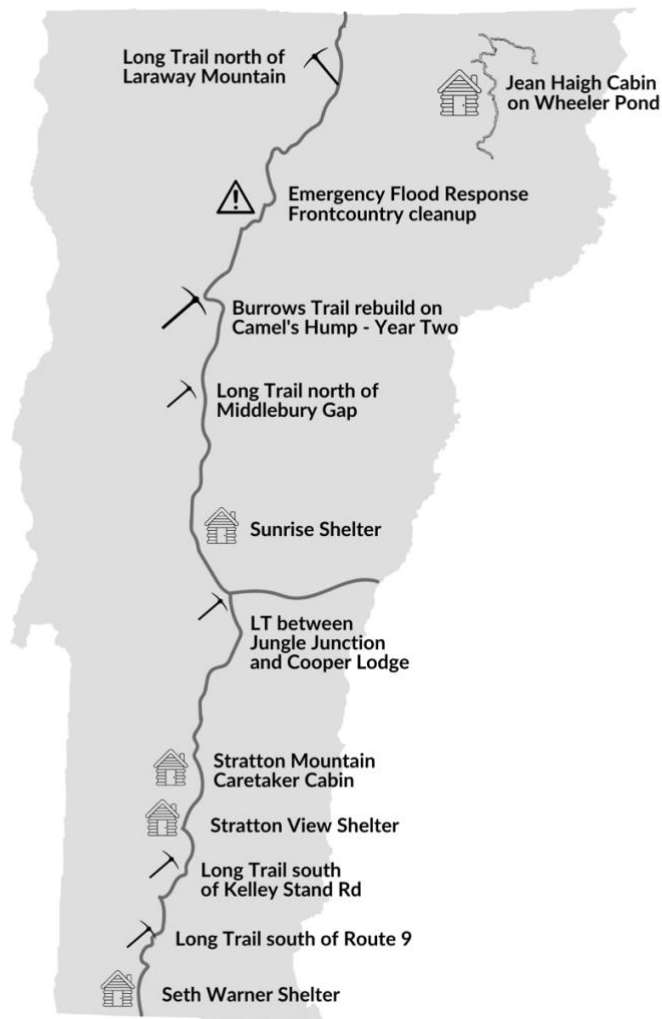




Green Mountain Club 2024 Annual Business Meeting

Celebrating the work you made possible in 2023:



Green Mountain Club Headquarters | Waterbury Center, VT
Saturday, June 15, 2024 | 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Business Meeting Agenda

- 9:00 to 9:10 Call to order and welcome by GMC President Nancy McClellan
- 9:10 to 9:15 Secretary's Report by Caitlin Miller
- 9:15 to 9:25 Treasurer's Report by Nancy Thomas
- 9:25 to 9:35 President's Report by Nancy McClellan
- 9:35 to 9:45 Executive Director's Report by Michael DeBonis
- 9:40 to 10:05 President's Awards by Nancy McClellan
- 10:05 to 10:15 Break
- 10:15 to 11:10 Panel: Climate Resiliency and the Long Trail
- 11:10 to 11:20 Announcement of Newly Elected Board Directors
- 11:20 to 11:30 New Business
- 11:30 to 12:00 Site Visit of the Rothberg-Birdwhistell Visitor Center
- 12:00 to 1:00 Adjourn for Lunch (provided)
Board of Directors Meeting (concurrent with lunch)
- 1:00 PM Hikes led by GMC volunteers depart

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.

We are committed to ensuring the GMC and Long Trail System are places that are inviting, safe, and open, regardless of age, gender, religion, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.

Green Mountain Club's 113th Annual Business Meeting Minutes
June 17, 2023
Craftsbury Outdoors Center | Craftsbury, VT

Nancy McClellan, Vice President, called the meeting to order at 9:01 am. Nancy started the meeting with a land acknowledgment, recognizing the Abenaki people as the original stewards and inhabitants of this land. Nancy asked the membership to reflect on the land acknowledgment. Nancy thanked the Sterling, Laraway, and Northern Frontier Sections for hosting the meeting and the Craftsbury Outdoor Center for the meeting space.

Nancy noted that Howard VanBenthuisen, President, is stepping down after two years to focus on family and health. If approved later in the meeting, Nancy will be voted in as President. Nancy thanked Howard for his 50+ years of service to the club.

Nancy introduced Caitlin Miller, Secretary, for the secretary's report. Dave Hathaway moved to approve the meeting minutes from the 112th Annual Meeting of the Green Mountain Club. Jim Fritz seconded. The meeting minutes were approved with one abstention from a member who was not at the 112th Annual Meeting.

Nancy introduced Jason Buss, Chief Finance Officer, to give an overview of the club's finances. Jason noted that the club is closing FY23 with a deficit. Jason cited the economy and increasing inflation as the main drivers behind the deficit of \$45,000. The working capital fund was used to partially close the deficit and the club still has money in that fund. See meeting packet for detailed year-end financials. The FY24 budget was approved at the March board meeting and the staff will present an updated FY24 budget for review at the board meeting later today given the deficit. Jason commented that the tight budget will likely persist into next year as well.

Nancy introduced Mike DeBonis, Executive Director, for the Executive Director's report. Mike echoed Nancy's thanks for Howard's service as president. Mike also thanked Nancy for her willingness to step into the role of president a year early and commented on the strength of the club and Nancy's leadership to weather the leadership transition. Mike thanked the Sterling, Laraway, and Northern Frontier sections for hosting the meeting, the staff for their hard work, and introduced the staff. Mike discussed the close of the Long Trail Legacy Campaign and use of the funds raised. Mike highlighted some of the projects completed by staff over the last year. Mike noted that use of the Long Trail System (LTS) is still up, with the Mount Mansfield Visitor Center hitting a record number of visitors last October. Mike gave an overview of the field programs conducted last year and on the schedule for this year. Mike also noted the biggest challenges the club is facing: climate change, rising use, and making sure the LTS is a place where all people feel welcome, and how the Club's operations and business must rise to meet these challenges. Mike discussed Dorothy "Dot" Myer's incredible legacy as volunteer and adventurer with the Club and notified the membership of her passing.

Mike and Nancy then gave out the annual volunteer awards:

- Ruth Penfield, Breadloaf Section, was awarded the Outstanding Service Award for her amazing and longstanding service to her section, including creating and maintaining the section's website.

- George Roy was awarded the Outstanding Volunteer Service Award for over 45 years of service with the Brattleboro Section, including helping to rebuild the William B. Douglas Shelter and serving as the section president. Joe Turgyen accepted the award on George's behalf.
- Kathy Astrauckas was awarded the Outstanding Volunteer Service Award for her service with the Upper Valley Ottauquechee Section and on the Trail Management Committee, including her tireless work to foster leadership among the section's volunteers and work to maintain the trail.
- Kevin Williamson was awarded the Outstanding Volunteer Service Award for his work with the Northeast Kingdom Section as the section maintainer leader and extensive work on the section himself. John Predom accepted the award on Kevin's behalf.

Nancy invited Mollie Flanigan, Director of Land Conservation, to give an overview of GMC conserved lands. Mollie led the membership through a slideshow. The club is down to just 6 miles of the LTS that do not have legal protection (broken out over about 15 parcels). Mollie recognized GMC's partners, in particular the State of Vermont. The majority of GMC conserved land is held in easement through the state. However, GMC does own several parcels outright (around 3,400 acres) and there are several parcels held in easement through private landowners. Mollie highlighted the importance of boundary maintenance for continuing to protect GMC conserved land into the future and thanked the club's boundary maintenance (or corridor monitoring) volunteers. GMC has 178 miles of boundary line and around 8% of that line is lost or non-existent and needs to be surveyed or re-surveyed. Mollie is working with surveyors with the State of Vermont to complete that work, but there is a bit of line that is on GMC-owned lands that GMC will need to pay to survey.

Discussion of Mollie's presentation involved if the program's data could also help the club monitor the impacts of climate change on the landscape, advancements in the technology used in surveying, the monitoring system for the Kingdom Heritage Trails, the minimum width of the corridor (1,000 feet), the legal longevity of our easements on private land, how GMC balances competing interests in Vermont's forests, clarifications on some of the data Mollie shared, and considerations for the Abenaki nation in the corridor monitoring program. Dave Hathaway invited anyone to accompany him on his corridor monitoring trips, and Mollie echoed that anyone interested in corridor monitoring should reach out to her.

Nancy called for a break at 10:14 am. Nancy called the meeting back to order at 10:34 am. Nancy introduced Keegan Tierney, Director of Field Programs, to introduce the section panel. Panelists:

- Ken Whitehead, Northern Frontier Section
- Bruce Bushey, Laraway Section
- Kevin Hudnell, Sterling Section

The panel led a discussion on their sections of the trail, the state of the northern Long Trail, and section volunteerism. It was noted that the Appalachian Trail is one of the Long Trail's longest side trails. Themes from the panel discussion:

- Winter use is almost higher on the northern end of the trail than summer use. Summer use is predominantly backpackers and end-to-enders, except in a few high-use areas.

- The current infrastructure of the northern section is only appropriate so long as there is not a significant increase in use.
- There is a concern about the aging membership of most section members and a small (but dedicated) cohort of truly active volunteers. A related challenge is finding volunteers for more “admin” positions such as officers, and the depth of volunteer skill sets to do technical trail work.
- There is a love for the camaraderie among the section volunteers, for the Green Mountain Club, and for the Long Trail.
- There are benefits and challenges of working with youth groups to complete section projects.
- Communication between the main office and the section adopters, especially for larger projects is important.
- There was discussion about emerging threats to the Long Trail, such as the proposed gondola connecting Smugglers’ Notch and Stowe Mountain ski resorts.

Nancy then handed the mic back to Mike for the Nominating Committee report. Mike gave an overview of the committee’s charge. Mike welcomed the new and returning general directors: Michele Kupersmith, Owen Rachampbell, Mariah Keagy, Alexis Peters, and Anne Houser.

Mike, on behalf of the Nominating Committee and Board of Directors, awarded Senator Patrick Leahy this year’s Honorary Life Membership to the Green Mountain Club. The club honored Senator Leahy for his long and dedicated service to the Long Trail, conservation, and outdoor recreation in Vermont, and his dedicated advocacy for the Green Mountain Club and Long Trail System. In addition to an Honorary Life Membership, the club has planted a sugar maple tree in honor of the senator at the GMC headquarters. The senator said a few words about his support of the GMC and love of hiking on the Long Trail and elsewhere in Vermont, including the importance of preserving the wildlands the trail traverses.

Mike gave some logistics announcements for lunch, the upcoming board meeting, and afternoon hikes.

Alicia DiCocco, Deputy Director, reminded members to participate in Long Trail Day this year on August 19th, 2023.

Dave Hathaway moved to adjourn. Inge Brown seconded. The meeting adjourned upon unanimous vote at 11:46 am.

Green Mountain Club
Treasurer's Report, Submitted by Nancy Thomas
114th Annual Meeting | June 15, 2024

Overview

This report covers Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) which closed on April 30, 2024, and the budget for FY25, which began on May 1, 2024. This past year was a busy one with a number of challenges, including the effects of inflation and catastrophic flooding in July. Staff worked to trim costs and were able to achieve a significant increase in contributions over the previous year and above the projected revenue in the budget. Though the Club ended with a small deficit, the overall financial picture of the Club remains strong with a substantial increase in net assets.

Fiscal Year 2024 – May 1, 2023 through April 30, 2024

Fiscal Year 2024 ended with a small operational deficit of \$44,000. The endowment increased to \$7.3 million with the addition of bequest funds and a strong market. The Club has maintained a working capital reserve at our target of 5% of the operation expense budget, now \$131,000.

Total operating revenue for the year was \$2.17 million, up 11% from the previous year and up 1% over the budget. Contributions were strong at \$772, 223, but membership income was down. The Club was fortunate to have received 3 significant bequests in FY24. A portion of those donations (10%) are put into the current operational budget per Board policy. This made up \$142,500 of the revenue. Grants and fee for service were down from the budgeted amount due in part to field season changes on projects. A portion of that was due to the devastating flooding which prevented work on projects during and immediately after the storms as crews worked to clear trails. In non-operating activity, there is an increase in distributions from the endowment with \$50,000 going to the Backcountry Caretaker Program, a result of the successful Long Trail Legacy Campaign.

Costs were generally up this year as inflation continued to impact the budget. Total expenditures were comparable to last year's and 2% higher than budgeted. Though personnel salaries were down from the budgeted amount, health insurance costs were up \$10,000. Office expenses increased. Program expenses exceeded the budget in part due to \$19,000 for unexpected Board facilitation contractor costs. Building supplies and lumber were over budget as supplies were purchased ahead of the summer 2024 field season, offset by fee for service revenue.

Fiscal year 2025 Budget – May 1, 2024 through April 30, 2025

The FY25 budget was developed with a revised approach to budgeting in this tight economic environment. The focus is on efficiency and sustainability and reduced reliance on unrestricted funds. The revenue side includes increases in grants, fee for service and new funding for the support of staff time working with volunteers. There is an increase in contributions. With the printing of the new Long Trail Guide, there is an increase in projected publications revenue. On the expense side, personnel costs have risen as GMC works to offer competitive salaries, wages and benefits. Office costs are up to meet technology needs.

Given the fact that GMC has experienced two years of small annual deficits, there is a

recognition that there will need to be even more efficiency and cost containment going forward. One open position in the Finance department will remain unfilled. Borrowing costs are up and the need is greater with the increase in trail season project costs. The Board of Directors will be asked at the Annual Meeting to approve the proposal from the Budget and Finance Committee to use a portion of the bequest from Don Groll to increase the working capital reserve from 5% to 12% of the operation expenses. This one-time investment will help to decrease projected borrowing costs now and in the future. GMC staff leadership will continue to seek efficiencies and other cost reduction measures while maintaining excellence in the workings of the Club. Moving ahead, the staff leadership team will be working to create a longer-term plan to address the club's financial stability.

Endowment

The endowment increased from \$6.6 million to \$7.3 million due to bequest deposits and improved market conditions.

New Visitor Center

It is exciting to see the progress being made on the construction of the new building! It has been a long process, slowed by COVID and Vermont's catastrophic flooding with the subsequent increased need for construction materials and labor in many parts of our state. Inflation and design changes to increase energy efficiency have added to the original cost projections. The Club is very grateful for the Wissman bequest from which \$310,000 will be used for the Building Renovation project. In addition, GMC has received a bequest from the Don Groll estate. The Board of Directors will be asked to approve \$190,000 from that bequest to fully fund the estimated \$1.5 million cost for the completion of the project.

Though this has been a challenging year, the fiscal foundations of the Green Mountain Club have remained strong and, in fact, have strengthened substantially over the past 3 years. I would like to acknowledge and thank Mike DeBonis, Jason Buss, Alicia DiCocco, and the other leadership staff for their vision and hard work in making this happen.

Green Mountain Club Committee Reports

Submitted by Committee Chairs and Staff Representatives

Budget and Finance Committee

Budget and Finance Committee members: Nancy Thomas (Chair), Lee Allen, Jonathan Breen, Jeff Wehrwein, Stephen Klein, Susan Tobin, and Ryan Robbins

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 on 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 2023 audit; the auditor did not find any deficiencies or material weaknesses;
- Continued oversight of existing financial controls; and
- Recommended the Fiscal Year 2025 budget to the Board.

The Green Mountain Club ended this last fiscal year (May 1, 2023 – April 30, 2024) with an increase in total assets. Total assets and liabilities increased by 11% from \$14.5 million to \$16.2 million. The endowment increased from \$6.6 million to \$7.3 million due to bequest deposits and improved market conditions.

This fiscal year concluded with a minor operational deficit of \$44k. This was due to the significant volume of work and associated increased expenses as well as the impact of flooding and other factors. Our total revenue and support reached \$2.17 million, while our total expenses were \$2.57 million. We had a net non-operating activity of \$356k from the endowment distribution and use of restricted funds to support operations, in the end resulting in an unaudited net deficit. As always, the Club appreciates your many contributions to our mission and looks forward to your continued involvement in the years ahead.

Moving into Fiscal Year 2025, we continue to face a tight fiscal environment and will be looking to carefully control, and in some areas, reduce expenses as well as increase efficiency where possible. Focus will be on increasing contributions and seeking targeted grants and fee for service opportunities.

To support the Club’s fiscal stability in the long run, the Committee has asked Mike and his team to create a fiscal plan to address GMC’s financial stability for the longer term.

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

Camps Committee

Camps Committee members: Paul Trojano (Chair), Ann Gotham, Bob Fish, Catherine Brooks, Chad Forcier, Dann Van Der Vliet, Paul Houchens, RJ Thompson, Kathryn Wrigley (FPR Liaison)

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

The primary purpose of the Camps Committee is to:

- Oversee Camps Program by reviewing annual fiscal reports, advising on camp rental policy, vetting additions to the Camps Program, and monitoring developments in the Vermont backcountry rental camp market;
- Develop Camp Program policies and strategic priorities by advising staff and, as appropriate, coordinating with other GMC committees; and
- Assist with special projects of the program as needed.

In 2024 GMC’s Camps Program built and opened Jean Haigh Cabin at Wheeler Pond Camps! This new cabin replaces the former Beaver Dam Cabin and is named in honor of NEK Section founding member and former GMC President Jean Haigh. In addition, GMC continues to rent Bolton Lodge and Bryant Camp in the town of Bolton, and Hadsel-Mares Cabin in the town of Barton.

Rental Data in Fiscal Year 2024:

Camp	Percent Occupancy	Number of Different Rental Parties	Percent of Renters who are GMC Members	Notes
Hadsel Mares Cabin	56%	103	34%	Season: May 1, 2024 - April 30, 2024
Jean Haigh Cabin	87%	63	49%	Season: January 1, 2024 - April 30, 2024
Bryant Camp	69%	118	31%	Season: August 1, 2023 - March 31, 2024
Bolton Lodge	54%	90	26%	Season: July 1, 2023 - March 31, 2024

Development Committee

Development Committee members: Anne Houser (co-chair), Nancy McClellan (co-chair), Carl Skoog, and Don Taylor.

GMC staff representatives: Deputy Director Alicia DiCocco and Development Coordinator Tori Dobbs.

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 regularly through Fiscal Year 2024 and assisted the staff development department in bringing in revenue for the club. This year they did tremendous work to update the work plan to reflect the development work of the Green Mountain Club after the completion of the Long Trail Legacy Campaign

Key accomplishments of the Development Committee in Fiscal Year 2024 include:

- Reviewing and providing comprehensive updates to the Development Committee Work Plan;
- Contacted first-time donors through the Donor Thank You Caller program;
- Supporting the work of increasing the planned giving program at GMC;
- Supported a successful Long Trail Day fundraising campaign that raised \$69,000 for the Green Mountain Club; and
- Providing GMC's Board of Directors with specific ways to participate in fundraising activities and communications on a regular basis

Endowment Committee

Endowment Committee members: Tom Candon (Chair), Ken Perine, Nancy Thomas, Stephen Klein, Lisa Burns, and Jeff Wehrwein.

GMC staff representative: Chief Financial Officer Jason Buss

At fiscal year-end April 30, 2024, the GMC endowment's invested assets totaled \$7.3 million, compared with \$6.6 million a year earlier, making it one of the club's most valuable assets from a monetary perspective.

The Endowment Fund distributed over \$304,465 in the past fiscal year to GMC in support of the club's mission. The Endowment Committee recommended, and the Board approved, a \$314,817 distribution from the endowment in support of FY25 operations. This reflects increasing the Endowment Distribution for FY25 by CPI (3.8%). The total distribution amounts to 4.88% of the last 12 trailing quarters and 4.3% of the endowment value on 12/31/2023, in keeping with the adopted distribution formula.

Morgan Stanley's Alpine Legacy Group, based in Colchester, Vermont, manages the GMC's invested assets.

In 2021, 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 in Colchester, Vermont. With the assistance of Morgan Stanley, the Endowment Committee completed the updating of the GMC Endowment Policy to include investment reporting requirements. Morgan Stanley is providing a sophisticated Environmental, Social, and Corporate Governance (ESG) screen to ensure the Board's commitment to have the values and mission of the Club reflected in the investment of its assets.

Endowment committee members receive quarterly investment account reports, and the Committee meets at least two times a year.

Land Conservation Committee

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

GMC staff representative: Director of Land Conservation Mollie Flanigan

The Land Conservation Committee's responsibilities are to:

- Oversee stewardship of the Long Trail System and Appalachian Trail "transfer lands" by advising staff, reviewing project proposals, and monitoring developments in the member's local Long Trail System Section;
- Oversee the Long Trail Protection Campaign by advising staff, overseeing program work, and recommending acquisition opportunities to the Executive Committee; and
- Develop Land Conservation Program policies and strategic priorities by advising staff and coordinating with the Trail Management Committee.

The Committee worked closely with staff on the following topics:

Strategic Conservation Planning

The Land Conservation Program completed its strategic conservation plan in June 2023 and the plan was approved by GMC's Board of Directors at their September meeting. The two-year planning process was focused on recommending the future scope of the Long Trail Protection Campaign. It assessed the current legal protection for the Long Trail System, set conservation goals and criteria, and mapped out strategies for accomplishing those goals. The Committee is now focusing on implementation of the plan. A working group of members has been formed to assist staff in rolling out the plan's work plan over the next five years.

Long Trail Land Protection

Deer Camp Tract: On May 29, 2024, GMC purchased a 12-acre tract in Johnson, Vermont. The property hosts 300 feet of Long Trail treadway and 8 acres of the trail's 1000-ft corridor. GMC

will hold the property until it can be transferred to the State of Vermont to become part of the Long Trail State Forest.

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 to create a duplicate copy. This year the program completed scanning all land protection files and has moved on to scanning unprotected lands files. The program also developed and adopted three land management plans for properties the club owns in Bolton, Vermont. These holistic plans will guide GMC management of the properties going forward.

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 63 active corridor monitor volunteers who monitor and maintain the boundaries on Long Trail and Appalachian Trail lands and easements. In 2023, 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). On the AT, volunteers monitored and maintained 30% of the boundaries (51 miles out of a total of 128).

Fee land management: In the winter of 2024, GMC conducted a small timber harvest on a property the club owns in Bolton, VT. Working with GMC's consulting forester, Harris Roen, the harvest was designed to meet GMC's goals of improving forest health and vigor, carbon sequestration and storage, generating income for GMC, and to contributing to the local forest-based economy. The harvest was reduced in scale from its initial 10-acre proposal due to the mild winter leading to poor on-site conditions.

Appalachian Trail Open Areas Maintenance

In 2023, GMC and our partners at the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) and US Forest Service ran another successful year Open Areas maintenance. GMC, ATC and GMNF staff all worked on the project and together mowed Dupuis Hill (Pomfret), Arms Hill (Pomfret), and Merrill Hill (Pomfret). In addition, we did invasive species control workdays at Lower Howard Hill (West Hartford) and Lower Lewis Field (Woodstock).

Indigenous Land Access

The Land Conservation Committee has continued discussing how to act on GMC's Land Acknowledgement commitment to "*Support Indigenous efforts for land and water access on GMC-owned lands for ceremonial and cultural purposes.*" Research is ongoing to determine the best options for GMC and the current needs of the indigenous community as well as listening and learning about the ongoing dispute over Abenaki identity in Vermont.

Committee Chair Update:

After 28 years of service as chair of the committee, Preston Bristow stepped down from the role in April 2024. Alexis Peters, GMC Board Member and Land Conservation Committee has

agreed to serve as the next committee chair. **Thank you, Preston, for your decades of leadership at GMC!**

Membership Committee

Membership Committee members: Owen Rachampbell (Chair), Beth Eliason, Ben Feinson, Nika Meyers and Michele Kupersmith

GMC staff representatives: Membership Coordinator Rick Dugan

GMC's Membership faced significant challenges in 2023. Factors like the current financial climate, donor selectiveness, and an aging membership base that is scaling back in involvement and engagement have pushed the membership department to evaluate the current membership model and its effectiveness and sustainability. GMC has been aggressive in its retention efforts by focusing on dropped member outreach and continued engagement with our current members. Membership continues to be an integral part of GMC's organizational structure, and we will continue to evaluate best practices for GMC Membership that will ensure longevity and balance for the current membership model as a part of the overall club.

The Membership Committee continues to work to address engaging new At Large Members by planning events and work days and making GMC accessible to anyone interested in the trails.

The Membership Committee has planned several events for summer 2024 with the intention of reaching new members of the hiking community who are not members of GMC. The membership committee continues to focus on accessibility and inclusivity for all prospective members and hopes that through repetitive engagement and amplifying general awareness of the work of GMC, we will reach the future generation of hikers and GMC members.

Section Working Group

Section Working Group members: Representatives from all sections are invited and vary throughout the year

GMC staff representatives: Membership Coordinator Rick and Communications Coordinator Lily LaRegina

The Section Working Group met bimonthly throughout FY24 and continues to serve as a necessary tool between headquarters and the sections to troubleshoot section-specific issues and monitor section membership retention and growth. The working group has also proven to be useful in cross-section collaboration and will continue to serve as a common ground for sections to meet with HQ and share ways to communicate with section members.

Membership by the numbers:

- 9,096 total voting members
- At-Large: 5,349
- Bennington Section: 147

- Brattleboro Section: 133
- Bread Loaf Section: 326
- Burlington Section: 1,017
- Connecticut Section: 167
- Killington Section: 249
- Laraway Section: 69
- Manchester Section: 225
- Montpelier Section: 458
- Northeast Kingdom Section: 259
- Northern Frontier Section: 71
- Upper Valley Ottauquechee Section: 331
- Sterling Section: 115
- Worcester Section: 180

Nominating Committee

Nominating Committee members: Don Taylor (Chair), Andy Hood, Caitlin Miller, Millie Mugica, 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
- c. Nominate individuals for honorary life membership

1) This year the committee nominated two first term general directors and three 2nd term general directors:

- Ram Moennsad - 2nd term
- Jeff Wehrwein - 2nd term
- Melissa Reichert – 1st term
- Ryan Robbins – 1st term

2) Officers

- Nancy McClellan – 2nd year as President
- Don Taylor – 2nd year as Vice President
- Nancy Thomas – 5th year as Treasurer
- Anne Houser – 1st year as Secretary

3) Honorary Life Membership

The committee did not make a recommendation to the Board for Honorary Life Membership this year.

Publications Committee

Publications Committee members: Don Taylor (Chair), Martha Stitelman, Cindy Griffith, Millie Mugica, Jeff Wehrwein, Mike Dacey and David Hathaway.

GMC staff representative: Operations Manager Matt Krebs

The mission 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.

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.

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 committee aims to achieve its mission 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 5th edition of the *Mansfield Area Hiking Trail Map*.
- Reprint of the 3rd edition of the *Northeast Kingdom Area Hiking Trail Map* with edits to eliminate the closed Monadnock Mountain Hike.
- Began production of the 29th edition of the *Long Trail Guide*. Communications Manager, Chloe Miller, will be the new editor of this edition. Matt Krebs is providing logistical support for the production. The Publications Committee will provide feedback and support throughout the design and production phase of the process.
- The Publications Committee has undertaken a comprehensive strategic planning effort over the course of the last year. We have taken a hard look at the publishing program in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The committee has conducted a thorough review of our committee mission, vision, and values. Our goal with this process has been to develop a program based strategic plan, compatible with the larger GMC strategic plan, that will more strongly emphasize digital products, more critically examine possible partnerships and help GMC provide more relevant content to the hiking

public. As a result, we hope to put better systems in place to evaluate product feasibility, consider product value to the community, and make product updates more straightforward and formula driven.

Trail Management Committee

Trail Management Committee members: David Hathaway (Chair), Caitlin Miller, Lee Allen, David Morrissey, Ira Sollace, Kathy Astrauckas, Marge Fish, Andrew Nuquist, Richard Andrews, Tom Candon, Martha Stitelman, Wayne Krevetsky, Mariah Keagy, Matt Venzina, Larry Bruce, Paul Beliveau, Bruce Bushey, Howard VanBenthuisen, Cathi Brooks

GMC staff representative: Director of Field Programs Keegan Tierney

Agency representatives: Hawk Metheny (ATC), Walter Opuszynski (FPR), and Steve Pytlik (USFS Green Mountain National Forest)

The purpose of the Trail Management Committee (TMC) is 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.

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 winter the TMC accomplished the following:

- Reviewed proposals for use of the Long Trail on Mount Mansfield and the Kingdom Heritage Trail as routes for competitive trail running events. Both events were found to be taking appropriate precautions for protection of the trail and minimized disruption of other hikers and were approved by TMC.

TMC is currently working on the following topics and will meet this summer and fall to review the work of subcommittees:

- Development of a GMC **Chainsaw use policy**. For many years GMC had followed landowner policy for use of chainsaws. Over the last 5 years partner organizations and GMC staff have been reviewing saw use, training, and safety leading to evolution of policies at the USFS, FPR and ATC. TMC is working to build a policy and safety program for GMC that will meet compliance standards for all partner policies and provide adequate training opportunities for GMC staff and volunteers.
- Review of the **Kingdom Heritage Trail Corridor Management Agreement (CMA)**. The CMA signed between the GMC and Vermont Dept. of Forest, Parks, and Recreation expires in 2025. The TMC has tasked a sub-committee with review of the CMA and GMC's management responsibilities in the NEK and subsequent recommendation for involvement in the Kingdom Heritage Lands. Discussions among the sub-committee, the NEK section of the Club, and KHT partners are ongoing as we jointly look for the best path for management of the KHT.

The TMC has also completed its annual obligation to review and understand the annual work plan of the GMC's field program in relation to trail management. A number of past project reviews are getting underway this field season, including a major investment in the trail from the southern terminus and three miles northbound from there. This work will include a relocation of the southern terminus moving the trail from privately owned land to the public land corridor.



Green Mountain Club Section Reports



Bennington Section

About this year:

We're happy to report that our section has seen a significant increase in participation overall. This includes our outings, meetings, and trail work, as well as interest in our refurbished website and our new Facebook page. Our annual meeting drew 45 people; our website attracted 2,269 unique visits, an increase of 3000% from last year.

We created an Outreach Coordinator position to increase our visibility in the community. We've taken on more projects involving community trails outside of the Long Trail System, which helps us to network with the Town of Bennington and other local outdoor organizations. We've added easy-paced, family friendly hikes to our events which has diversified our participants. We also use Meetup as our portal to publicize our upcoming outings and events (41 in the past year), which simplifies communication between trip leaders and participants. We feel these efforts have led directly to our increase in section participation.

Upcoming:

We look forward to continuing our efforts to grow membership and participation in our section outings and events. We are grateful to GMC for the planned work this summer to repair the LT north of Route 9 to Harmon Hill.



Brattleboro Section

About this year:

The GMC Brattleboro Section is proud to acknowledge another great year of tending to trails and shelters. We count these maintenance and project days as events with, consistently, the highest turnout of our volunteers. Thank you to our members and the many new friends that have joined us.

Upcoming:

This coming year, the Brattleboro Section looks forward to developing our presence in our community through social media. Our goal is to increase our membership and participation with a strong and diverse base of active volunteers.



Bread Loaf Section

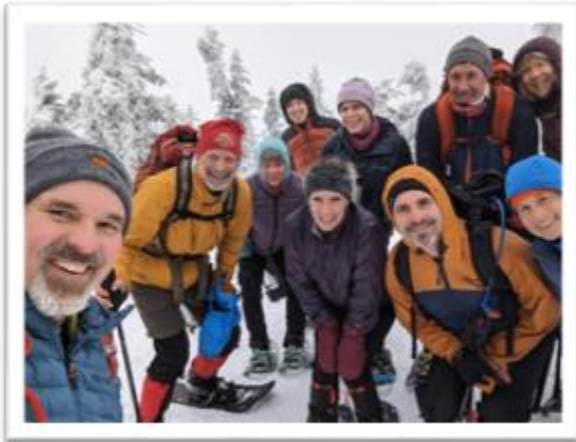
About this year:

The Bread Loaf Section had an active 2023, including a calendar full of outings and trailwork. A highlight was Long Trail Day (in August), which included a hike to the new Sunrise Shelter, followed by a gathering at the Drop In Brewery in Middlebury with former Bread Loaf Section President Jan Abbott (a founding member of the Section) and her extended family. Jan passed

away in April and will be missed. We welcomed two new GMC members to the EC in January; Dwight Griesman has stepped into a newly created Website/Social Media Coordinator position, and Michael Howson is serving on the Board of Directors.

Upcoming:

We are looking forward to a (drier) summer. Our summer list of outings calendar is filled with activities, and the Section has already completed three trail work outings, with more planned.



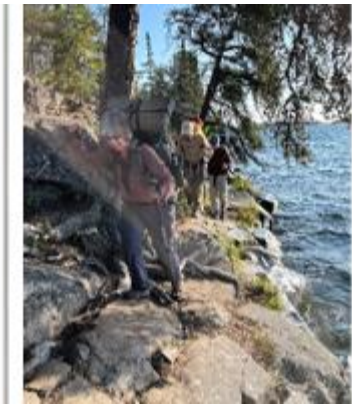
Burlington Section

About this year:

The Burlington Section saw the reinvigoration of two programs over the past year: the Young Adventurer's Club (YAC), and the Education & Taylor Series. Corinn Julow re-developed the YAC programming leading four outings in 2023 and several so far in 2024. The hikes are drawing families with young children, under the age of six, and are meeting the need of a preplanned family outing while providing an opportunity to socialize. She is taking lessons learned so far and focusing on scheduling one hike a month, with efforts to better promote the outings and GMC at those outings. Meanwhile Ted Albers recently revitalized our Education & Taylor Series programming, after it being dormant for a couple years. In January 2024 we hosted an in-person Taylor Series program "Does Nature Make Us Happier?" presented by Taylor Ricketts, Director of the Gund Institute for the Environment at the University of Vermont. Our first education program is scheduled for June 27, 2024, and will be "The Vermont Reptile and Amphibian Atlas" presented by Jim Andrews, the director of that statewide project. This past year saw another increase in outings led by David Hathaway, with 85 scheduled trips, versus 70 the year before. These included our May trail maintenance trips, YAC, and regular outings. We also saw another 5 members become new trip leaders. We know that outings are one of the key strengths Sections have in providing value to GMC members and in connecting the GMC to Vermonters.

Upcoming:

The Burlington Section hopes to focus on efforts that increase GMC's visibility and potential new members. Our section has seen a roughly 5% decrease in members each year and are back to pre-Covid membership figures. Our website, newsletter, and social media team of John Need and Barbee Hauzinger are working to coordinate content across our Section channels to increase traffic. We have planned events at a Lake Monsters game on August 4th and will be at the Shelburne Farmers Market on July 20th (thank you Rotary Club). We are also looking forward to planning for the 2024 Long Trail Day to promote our Club.



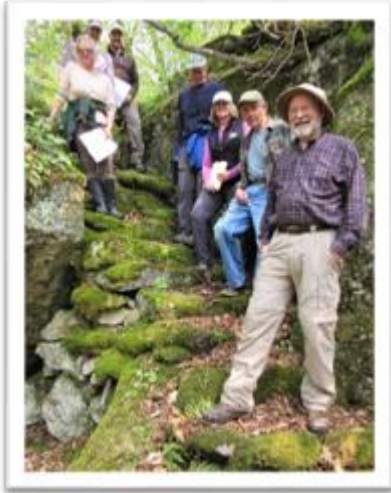
Connecticut Section

About this year:

Among dozens of local outdoor activities, highlights of Connecticut Section events were an eight-day backpacking trip on Isle Royale in Lake Superior, a four-day canoe trip at Voyageurs' National Park, three weeks trekking in New Zealand, and viewing the April 8 total eclipse from Moose Mountain above Wheeler Pond. At the conclusion of the trail maintenance season in the fall, the Connecticut and Worcester Sections celebrated the 60th anniversary of the construction of Story Spring Shelter with a barbeque and cake on November 4.

Upcoming:

We are planning on improving drainage and hardening tread on the Long Trail between Glastenbury Mountain and Kelley Stand Road.



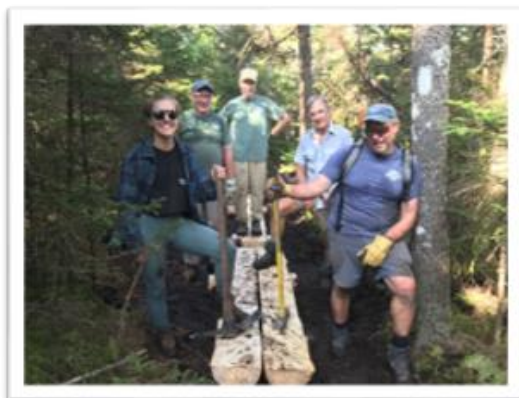
Killington Section

About this year:

This past year the Killington Section has many things to be proud of. The two that we wish to highlight here are the work of our History and Archives Committee, headed up by Amy Peacock, and the Trail and Shelters Committee, co-chaired by Larry Walters and Dave Coppock. With the weather that we faced this past year with rain, flooding, and wind, Larry, and Dave, ably assisted by Herb Ogden and a host of other volunteers, were able to keep the section's trails in excellent shape. The History and Archives Committee has been very active this past year working on state recognition for the site of the Long Trail Lodge, the original location of the Green Mountain Club headquarters at the top of Sherburne Pass. There is a picture of a tour the Committee took of the site with a visiting "dignitary" Mike DeBonis above. Also in the picture are Melissa Reichert, Ruth Hare, Bruce Peacock, Amy Peacock, Dave Wright, and Herb Ogden.

Upcoming:

The Killington Section is looking forward to completion of the Long Trail Lodge recognition project with a roadside historical marker and down the road, paths and signage explaining the history of the place.



Laraway Section

About this year:

The Laraway Section's focus is trail and shelter work. Last fall GMC's paid trail crew cut native puncheon on the south side of Laraway mountain and volunteers from Burlington and Northern Frontier helped install the puncheon with coordination from GMC Volunteer Field Supervisor Kate Songer.

Upcoming:

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



Manchester Section

About this year:

The Manchester Section continued engaging school groups in trail work. We have also had some new members who are getting involved in trail work and group hikes.

Upcoming:

We are looking forward to the tower being built on Bromley Mountain!



Montpelier Section

About this year:

We were happy to resume indoor meetings this year, both for our section annual meeting, and for slideshow presentations. There was a long dry spell during the pandemic! We are also hoping to get more people interested in leading outings and participating in them so that we can return to pre-pandemic levels of activity.

Upcoming:

We are looking forward to a summer with no flooding!



Northeast Kingdom Section

About this year:

The Northeast Kingdom is happy to report that all but 1 of our 30+ trails are adopted. We had lots of volunteer events with great participation.

Upcoming:

We're looking forward to leading hikes at this year's [Brighton Trail Days](#), Westmore Challenge sponsorship, and our Woodstacking Weekend at Wheeler Pond.



Northern Frontier Section

About this year:

Our volunteers work hard to clear blowdowns and maintain the LT and five shelters between Hazen's Notch and Journey's End parking lot. We have two newsletters and one annual meeting (with a potluck and cookout) each year.

Upcoming:

We are looking forward to our annual meeting on June 9th, which is a bratwurst cookout/potluck as well as a business meeting. We also schedule outings and workdays from June to October and hikes in the winter.



Sterling Section

About this year:

2023 was a wet year for Sterling (like everyone else). At higher elevations, drainage-clearing work we did really held up! At our lowest elevation at the Lamoille River crossing, long-standing questions about trail location and tread hardening were answered (or more accurately, rendered moot) by having the entire area flooded and transformed by both the July and December floods. *(Pictured above)*

Upcoming:

We have lots of trailwork and hikes planned for this summer, and we're really excited that both the Beaver Meadow Lodge restoration and Dry Ridge relocation projects will be moving forward in the next few years!



Upper Valley Ottauquechee Section

About this year:

As usual, we had a very full schedule of well over 150 outings, thanks to Outings Chair Kathy Astrauckas. Also, Trails and Shelters Chair Bob Hagen coordinated effective and efficient maintenance of our 45 miles of the Appalachian Trail, including building about 500 feet of a new benched switchback on a steep slope near Thistle Hill Shelter to replace a failed stone staircase.

Upcoming:

We look forward to continued vigorous outings and trail maintenance activity, and recruiting and welcoming new members.



Worcester Section

About this year:

The Worcester Section of the Green Mountain Club has 141 members. We are the only GMC section in Massachusetts. We maintain a camp on Cedar Meadow Lake in Leicester, MA which is open to the public for picnicking, boating, swimming and fishing. The 5-acre camp was purchased by the Worcester Section in 1956. The Worcester Section maintains a 15-mile section of the Long Trail and access trails from the Winhall River in the north to Kelley Stand Road in Stratton in the south. This includes the section of the Long Trail over Stratton Mountain. We have two sawyers, Mike Peckar and Steve Nordborg, who help clear the trail of blowdowns and other trees. We have two maintainers, Denis LaForce and Steve Crowe, who have helped to maintain this section of the trail for over 30 years each.

Upcoming:

The Worcester Section helps to maintain the 92-mile MidState Trail which runs the length of Massachusetts from New Hampshire to Rhode Island. We work with other organizations in the Central Mass Area, such as the Appalachian Mountain Club, Worcester Chapter; Wachusett Greenways; the Greater Worcester Land Trust, and other Central Mass land trusts to develop and maintain hiking trails and preserve forest land. The Worcester Section members lead hikes, mountain bike rides, canoeing and kayaking trips, snow shoeing and cross country skiing in the Central Mass area. In the summer we pitch horseshoes weekly and play corn hole at our camp in Leicester. In the winter, we have game night once a month at the home of one of our members.