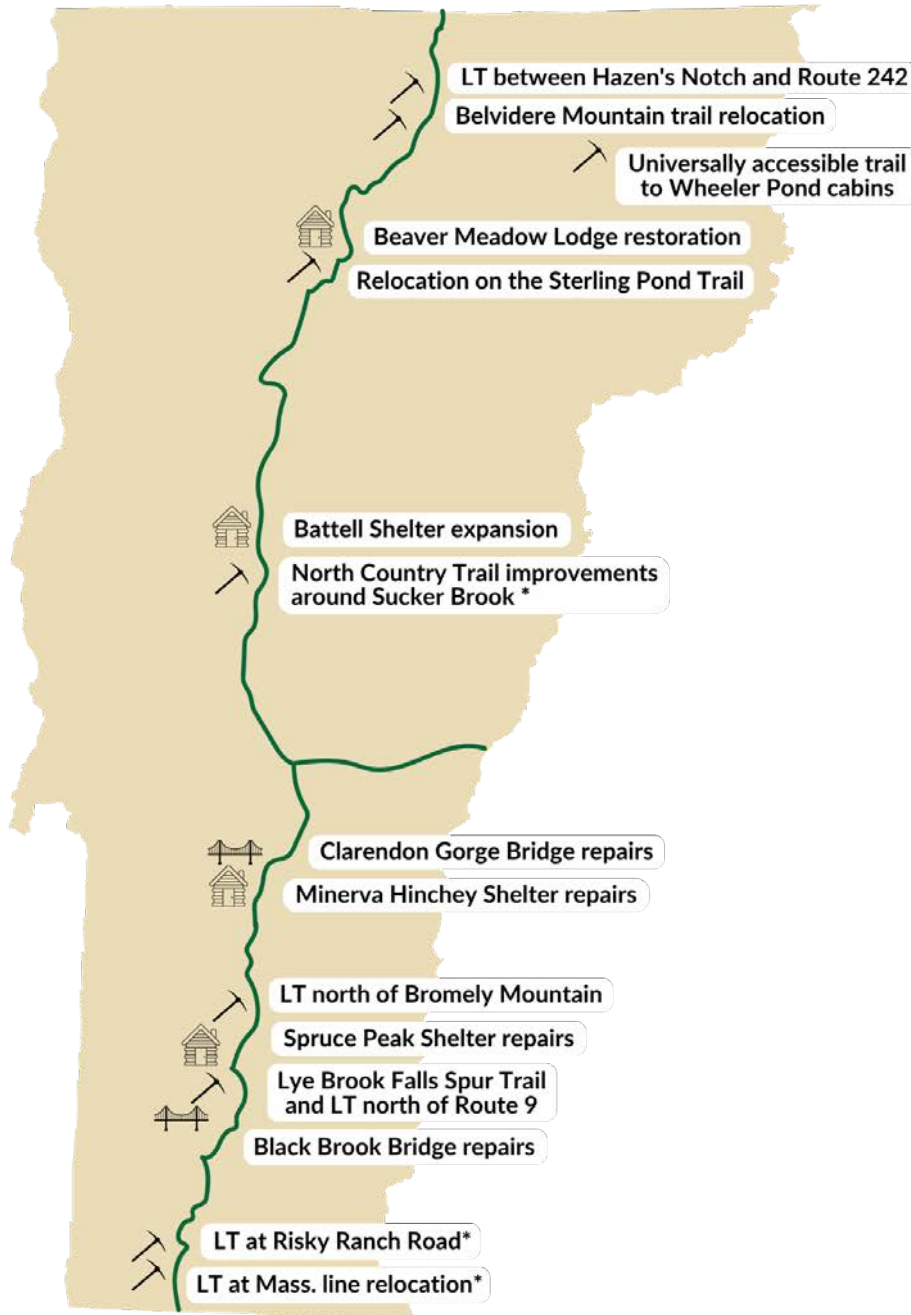


Green Mountain Club
116th Annual Business Meeting

Celebrating the work you made possible in 2025



June 13, 2026 | Waterbury Center, VT

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Agenda

9:00 a.m. to 9:05	Call to order and welcome by GMC President Don Taylor
9:05 to 9:10	Secretary’s Report
9:10 to 9:20	Treasurer’s Report
9:20 to 9:30	President’s Report by Don Taylor
9:30 to 9:40	Executive Director’s Report by Michael DeBonis
9:40 to 10:00	Awards
10:00 to 10:15	Break
10:15 to 10:50	Vote to Approve Bylaw Changes
10:50 to 11:40	Long Trail System Trails and Lands Update from Keegan Tierney, Director of Field Programs and Mollie Flanigan, Director of Land Conservation
11:40 to 11:50	Nominating Committee Report
11:50 to 12:00 p.m.	New Business
12:00 p.m. to 1:00	Adjourn for Lunch (provided by GMC) GMC Board of Directors meeting
1:00 to 4:00	Hikes/Outings

Proposed Bylaw Changes

Members will have the opportunity to vote on proposed bylaw changes during the Annual Meeting. Review GMC's current and proposed new bylaws here.

<https://www.greenmountainclub.org/about/thegreenmountainclub/bylaws/2026-proposed-bylaw-changes/>



Green Mountain Club

115th Annual Business Meeting Minutes

June 14, 2025 | Waterbury Center, VT

Present: *(see attached list)*

Meeting called to order at 9:04 a.m. by Nancy McClellan, President.

Nancy M. asked Anne Houser, Secretary, to present the minutes from the last annual meeting on June 15, 2024 for approval. Motion to approve was made by Dave Hathaway and seconded by Marge Fish. The motion passed unanimously.

Nancy M. called on Nancy Thomas to present the Treasurer's Report. Nancy highlighted the great work of the GMC staff during Fiscal Year 2025. Milestones for the year included the opening of the new Rothberg-Birdwhistell Visitor Center in Waterbury.

GMC staff managed a budget revision mid-year to address increased costs and inflationary pressures. The updated budget planned for increased efficiency and personnel changes to reduce costs. With careful planning, the year ended with an operational surplus of \$87,000.

Operating revenue for the year was \$2.35 million, up 9 percent from the previous year and 3 percent over budget. Adjustments have been made in the Development Department, including the new Development Manager position, to allow Alicia and her team to increase revenue in this area.

The overall budget for operating expenses was \$2.57 million after the revision and tight fiscal management. This total represents a 1 percent increase over last year's expenditures. The club has been able to contain rising healthcare expenses with changes in the insurance plan.

Professional services were up due to legal fees and contracted work related to the club's ongoing governance review process. Software licensing exceeded the budget due to important transitions to new systems in Finance and Development. Savings were found in reduced interest costs when the Working Capital Fund was used to work with cash flow and limit reliance on the line of credit.

The FY'26 budget builds on the previous year's conservative fiscal management. Potential risks with federal funding adds to the need for fiscal constraint. Donor contributions have made it possible to hire a Land Stewardship Coordinator for a 2-year period to ensure responsible management of the Long Trail corridor and allow Mollie to focus on the Strategic Conservation Plan.

The new visitor center space should allow for increased program revenues. Direct contributions are projected to grow at 7% with recent hiring of the new Development Manager. Funds from the Wissman Bequest will support investment in the trail and land conservation. The Waterwheel Foundation will support a system wide trail assessment.

Nancy T. stressed that GMC has not currently been impacted by shortfalls in federal funds, but a reduction in staffing at USDA Forest Service and National Park Service is evident. 50% of the club's trail projects are funded by federal contracts. This budget has an anticipated surplus of \$190,500 to offset the potential loss of federal dollars.

The endowment has increased to \$8 million due to bequest deposits and market gains. Nancy T. acknowledged and thanked Mike, Alicia, and Jason along with other leadership staff for their vision in maintaining a positive financial position for the club.

Nancy M. began her President's Report by stating that she was honored to serve the club during a time of change and accomplishment. Completion of the new visitor center is a testament to maintaining a vision for the long term. She commended the club's development successes along with expense management. Currently, the governance review process is underway with a goal of updating the structure so the board and committees. Nancy is confident that the club is strong and resilient as she ends her term as president.

Mike DeBonis began his Executive Director's Report with a note of appreciation to the staff for the work involved in planning and hosting the GMC Annual Meeting. He followed by introducing each member of the HQ staff.

2025 has been marked by the potential disruption of federal funding stemming from the White House agenda. Future project funding will be uncertain for the next several years. Stability of GMC volunteers, staff, and government partnerships may be affected. GMC will practice tight fiscal control and manage revenue generation to address this environment.

Milestones for the 2025 fiscal year include:

- Publication of the 29th edition *Long Trail Guide*
 - Special thanks to staff member Chloe
- Bromley Tower completion after 10 years of planning and construction
 - Special thanks to staff member Keegan
- Burrows Trail restoration, a three-year project to repair and improve the heavily used trail to better withstand future weather and hiker traffic
 - Represents a \$700k investment and multiple seasons of field work
- GMC protected a 1.5-mile section of the Long Trail with a permanent right of way in Hancock
 - Special thanks to staff member Mollie and partners including Middlebury College
- Pit privies have been entirely eliminated on the Long Trail
 - Special thanks to GMC volunteers and field staff
 - GMC serves as a leading model for other trail management clubs on the AT
- Construction and completion of the new GMC headquarters building in Waterbury
 - Special thanks to generous donors, David Rothberg and Nan Birdwhistell, who supported this effort
 - Ceremonial opening of the new HQ on Monday, June 16

Mike D thanked Nancy McClellan for her successful and productive tenure as GMC board president. She has worked to update DEI initiatives, governance bylaws, and general club

policies. He especially commended her for her important work evaluating and modernizing the club to align with industry standards. She will continue her work as a member of the board. Mike D. presented Nancy M. with a commemorative blanket with a GMC logo.

Nancy M. presented the annual President's Awards to:

- **Millie Mugica:** Multi-time End-to-End, GMC volunteer, fundraiser, community member and board member
- **Martha Stitelman:** 30 years as Bennington Section leader, volunteer and member of the GMC Executive Committee and GMC Capital Campaign fundraising

Mike D. introduced senior staff to lead three smaller breakout groups for one hour of round robin workshops on trail work, land conservation, and volunteer education/training.

Nancy M introduced Don Taylor to present the Nominating Committee report. The committee nominated three new general directors and two second term directors

- First term: Lauren Bierman, Marc Vincent, Philip Werner
- Second term: David Hathaway, Nika Meyers

The committee nominated the following list of officers;

- **Don Taylor;** first year President
- **Bob Paquin;** first year Vice President
- **Nancy Thomas;** sixth year Treasurer
- **Anne Houser;** second year as Secretary

The committee nominated two candidates for Honorary Life Membership:

- **Tom Candon:** Longtime GMC hiker, volunteer, board officer and supporter, including serving as GMC president from 2020-2022. Commended for his leadership.
- **Ira Sollace and Cindy Griffith:** Dedicated to GMC through volunteer work, including board service in finance and budget and maintaining accuracy of trail data for LT maps and guides. They manage the Barnes Camp Visitor Center volunteer program and visitor interfacing

Nancy M. asked for a motion to adjourn at 11:23 a.m. Dick Andrews made the motion, Susan Tobin seconded. All in favor.

— *Respectfully submitted by Secretary Anne Houser*

Treasurer's Report

Submitted by Nancy Thomas

Annual Meeting, June 15, 2026

Overview

This report covers Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) which closed on April 30, 2026, and the budget for FY27, which began on May 1, 2026. With extraordinary fundraising results and careful fiscal management, the club ended the year with a surplus for the second year in a row. There have been substantial increases in the GMC endowment and the net assets of the club, all of which contribute to putting the club in a solid position to build on our success and meet our goals.

Fiscal Year 2026 – May 1, 2025 through April 30, 2026

Fiscal Year 2025 ended with a solid surplus of \$87,000 after making substantive midyear changes to the budget and maintaining fiscal restraint. This past year ended with a \$125,000 surplus which will be used to invest in additional staffing capacity for membership, development and increasing working capital to keep pace with the increasing expenses.

Total operating revenue for the year was \$2.28 million or 101% of the budget. Contributions were up 34% year over year at \$1.2 million thanks to the hard work of Mike and Alicia and the development team. Membership came in at \$170,000, down 33% from the previous year. There is a recognition that in this K shaped economy, the capacity for increased charitable donations for those with higher incomes has increased, which we see in increased contributions. At the same time, those with lower incomes have been significantly harmed by tariffs, inflation and soaring gas prices and are less able to continue with even small donations. This continues to be a concern, and staff are using a variety of strategies to support existing members and attract new ones. Grants and fee for service income is down as in this fiscal year due to the specific projects last field season. Instead, \$427,000 in restricted funds were released as planned to support the Strategic Conservation Plan, specific field projects, and other strategic objectives. Planned giving, which is 10% of bequests received, came in at \$79,000. As planned, there was \$324,000 released from the endowment for operating expenses. In addition to operating revenue, an additional \$583,000 was received for restricted use for future projects.

Total operating expenditures this year came in at 100% of the budget, demonstrating the careful planning and tight management of the operation of the Green Mountain Club. While some line items were slightly higher than anticipated, others were reduced. Due to healthy cash flow, the line of credit was not used, saving on interest payments. The operating budget surplus reflects the hard work of both continuing substantial annual increases in contributions and careful management of expenditures. This allowed for a well deserved cost of living one-time payout to staff at the end of the fiscal year.

Fiscal Year 2027 Budget – May 1, 2026 through April 30, 2027

This budget builds on the success and initiatives of last year's budget. Following in line with the 5-year Financial Plan, the budget focuses on the work outlined in GMC's strategic plans while continuing operational efficiencies and investing in our workforce. This fiscal year is, once again, set in economic uncertainty, given the war in Iran, escalating gas prices, and other inflationary pressures. We still do not know what the impact of fluctuations in federal funding will have on the GMC. The direct impact so far has been small, but we are seeing serious reductions in funding and staffing on our partners at the USDA Forest Service and the National Park Service. This budget anticipates a \$60,000 surplus that could help cushion the impact of federal reductions, if needed.

Anticipated revenue from contributions is up 7% or \$63,200 from the budgeted amount for FY26. This target is significantly lower than what was actually achieved in FY26 which may help provide a further cushion against fluctuations in federal funding or inflation. Given the FY26 decline in membership revenue, this budget reduces that target by \$50,000. Expenditure highlights include changes to supplies and contracted services, reflecting specific field projects as well as increases in personnel expenditures with wage and salary increases and anticipated health insurance increases. Release of \$369,000 in restricted funds will provide continued support for the Land Conservation Coordinator in the Strategic Conservation Plan as well as field work, and other strategic priorities.

A very exciting prospective investment this year is the proposed purchase of property in Dorset, Vermont, to be used as Southern Vermont housing for GMC staff. The Board of Directors has set aside \$432 thousand from the Wissman bequest towards the purchase. This is a collaborative venture with the Trust for Public Lands and the Vermont Huts Association that will not only provide GMC housing and bring a permanent GMC presence in southern Vermont, but also provide access for the Velomont Trail corridor as well as the opportunity to transfer a portion of the forested land to public ownership.

The Green Mountain Club is very fortunate to have excellent staff leadership who, with strong connections to partners, outstanding fundraising results and tight fiscal management, have put the Club on excellent financial footing. This has set the stage for the Club to be make investments such as these to expand the Club's ability make the mountains more accessible to the people of Vermont and beyond.

Endowment

The endowment increased 15% from \$8.0 million at the end of FY 25 to \$9.2 million at the end of FY 26 and then to \$9.4 million as of June 1, 2026, due to bequest deposits and (remarkably good) market conditions. This increase contributes to increased net assets of the Club to \$18.8 million, up 8% from the previous year.

In Closing

As we prepare for another annual meeting, I thank Mike, Jason, Alicia and the other leadership staff for their vision in managing the current dynamic economic forces effectively and maintaining a positive financial footing for the Club. It's not easy!

And I thank you, GMC staff, board, and members, for the opportunity to serve the Green Mountain Club as Treasurer. Thank you to Mike and especially Jason, for their patience and support and to the volunteer leaders with whom I have served over the last 6 years. It has been an honor to be a part of this dynamic leadership team of staff and volunteers who care so deeply about the vital work of the Green Mountain Club.



Committee Reports

2026 Annual Meeting

Budget & Finance Committee

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

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 2025 audit; the auditor did not find any deficiencies or material weaknesses.
- Continued oversight of existing financial controls; and
- Recommended the Fiscal Year 2027 budget to the Board.

The Green Mountain Club ended this last fiscal year (May 1, 2025 – April 30, 2026) with an increase in total assets. Total assets and liabilities increased by 8% from \$17.4 million to \$18.8 million. The endowment increased from \$8.0 million to \$9.2 million due to bequest deposits and current market conditions.

With increased revenue through contributions and tight fiscal restraint, this fiscal year ended with an operational surplus of \$125k. Our total revenue and support reached \$2.3 million, while our total expenses were \$2.9 million. We had a net non-operating activity of \$770k from the endowment distribution and use of restricted funds to support operations, resulting in an

unaudited net operating surplus. An additional \$583k was received for restricted use for future projects.

Additional work in land conservation and strategic plan initiatives has been made possible with planned giving and restricted donor contributions. Major fluctuations in federal funding present uncertainty for nonprofit organizations such as the GMC and have already had a significant impact on our partners at the USDA Forest Service and the National Park Service. The FY27 budget has been constructed with an anticipated operating surplus of \$61k, which could cushion the impact of federal reductions if necessary.

Thanks to Jason, Mike, and the Finance Committee members for their hard work in this difficult fiscal environment.

Respectfully submitted by Budget and Finance Committee Chair Nancy Thomas

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 representative: Director of Field Programs Keegan Tierney

In 2025, GMC’s Camps Program operated four rental camps: Jean Haigh Cabin and Hadsel Mares Cabin in the town of Barton and Bolton Lodge and Bryant Camp in the town of Bolton. In winter 2025, staff management of the camps program shifted from Mollie Flanigan to Keegan Tierney and Justin Towers. The transition better aligns staff resources and moves rental cabin management under the Field Programs Department.

Rental Data in Fiscal Year 2026:

Camp	Percent Occupancy	Number of Different Rental Parties	Percent of Renters who are GMC Members	Notes
Hadsel Mares Cabin	45%	79	38%	Season: May 1 2025- April 30, 2026
Jean Haigh Cabin	50%	103	52%	Season: May 1, 2025 – April 30, 2026
Bryant Camp	59%	99	52%	Season: August 1, 2025- March 31, 2026

Bolton Lodge	40%	71	48%	Season: July 1, 2025- March 31, 2026
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Respectfully submitted by Camps Committee Chair Paul Trojano and Director of Field Programs Keegan Tierney

Membership & Development Committee

Due to the transition in the membership and development database that was completed in house, the Development Committee and the Membership Committee both paused meeting during FY26 and will resume in FY27 as a combined Membership & Development Committee. The committee will be tasked with supporting ongoing membership and development functions along with evaluating the membership program as outlined in the strategic plan.

The Membership & Development Committee will be tasked with:

- Supporting GMC staff in implementing the member and donor thank you calls
- Developing and implementing volunteer led actions that can support membership growth and retention to help address declining memberships
- Creating the timeline and process for evaluating the membership model per the strategic plan

Membership by the numbers June 2026:

- 8,205 total voting members
- At-Large: 4,997
- Bennington Section: 141
- Brattleboro Section: 114
- Bread Loaf Section: 241
- Burlington Section: 872
- Connecticut Section: 151
- Killington Section: 225
- Laraway Section: 55
- Manchester Section: 207
- Montpelier Section: 378
- Northeast Kingdom Section: 195
- Northern Frontier Section: 63
- Upper Valley Ottauquechee Section: 312
- Sterling Section: 96
- Worcester Section: 158

Respectfully submitted by Deputy Director Alicia DiCocco

Section Working Group

Section Members: Variable, depending on section positions

GMC staff representatives: Development Manager Rhonda Forcier, Communications Coordinator Lily LaRegina

GMC's Section Working Group met regularly throughout the year to discuss section specific issues related to section membership and communications. GMC staff provided information related to the recent database migration and section reporting and received related feedback. GMC staff also provided regular communications content that the sections were able to use on their social media platforms and in their emails, and provided valuable tutorials, so sections can customize templates to meet their specific section needs. Section members enjoyed time sharing best practices related to section activities, communication and membership management, and were able to troubleshoot issues around recruiting and retaining members and volunteers and increasing community engagement.

Respectfully submitted by Development Manager Rhonda Forcier and Communications Coordinator Lily LaRegina

Endowment Committee

Endowment Committee members: Lisa Burns, David Hartman, Terry Hults, Stephen Klein, Bill Lyons, Bruce Peacock, Ken Perine, Nancy Thomas, Jeff Wehrwein

GMC staff representative: Chief Financial Officer Jason Buss

At fiscal year-end April 30, 2026, the GMC endowment's invested assets totaled \$9.2 million, compared with \$8.0 million a year earlier, making it one of the club's most valuable assets from a monetary perspective.

The Endowment Fund distributed over \$323,863 in the past fiscal year in support of operations. The Endowment Committee recommended, and the Board approved, a \$332,607 distribution from the endowment in support of FY27 operations. This reflects an increase in the Endowment Distribution for FY26 by CPI (2.7%). The total distribution amounts to 4.32% of the last 12 trailing quarters and 4.1% of the endowment value as of December 31, 2025, in accordance with the adopted distribution formula.

Morgan Stanley's Alpine Legacy Group, located 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 Club's values and mission reflected in the investment of its assets.

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

Respectfully submitted by Chief Financial Officer Jason Buss.

Governance Committee

Governance Committee Members: Jeff Wehrwein (Chair), Caitlin Miller, Don Taylor, Nancy McClellan, Nancy Thomas, Susan Tobin, Anna Maassel, Michele Kupersmith, Andrew Hood, Anne Houser, Caroline McBride, David Hartman, Bob Paquin

GMC staff representatives: Executive Director Michael DeBonis and Deputy Director Alicia DiCocco

The governance committee was formed in May 2024 with these motivating questions:

- Is the size and composition of the Board right for GMC?
- Do Sections need bylaws?
- Are there liability concerns with how sections manage finances?
- Are the role and decision-making authority of the President, EC, ED appropriate for GMC?
- Are our bylaws up to date and in line with industry standards?
- What committees does GMC need to meet its needs? And how should they function?

The committee has worked hard over the past two years with more than 20 full-time committee meetings, numerous sub-group meetings, and 600+ person-hours of work. Our process included gathering feedback from stakeholders via:

- A board survey
- A sections survey
- A facilitated board retreat and several additional board meeting sessions
- Many 1:1 staff discussions
- A thorough legal review and many discussions with an independent legal expert on non-profit law
- 10+ Section Presidents' meetings

The committee prepared final recommendations on many of the issues in its scope. It has developed a bylaw proposal with changes to be voted on by members at the June 2026 annual meeting.

For the remaining issues in the committee's scope, the committee does not yet have a final recommendation. The Board has charged the committee to continue working on these issues and recommend additional changes for a membership vote in June 2027.

Respectfully submitted by Governance Committee Chair Jeff Wehrwein, Deputy Director Alicia DiCocco, and Executive Director Mike DeBonis

Land Conservation Committee

Land Conservation Committee members: Alexis Peters Corseri (Chair), Bob Paquin, Bruce Peacock, David Hindin, Harris Roen, Howard VanBenthuyzen, Joseph Bahr, Kip Potter, Lee Allen, Marge Fish, Melissa Reichert, Michael Howson, Phyllis Rubenstein, Preston Bristow, Richard Andrews, Russ Ford, Sheri Larsen, Matt Stevens (ATC), Becca Washburn (FPR)

GMC Staff Representative: Director of Land Conservation Mollie Flanigan

The committee met twice during the year and the working group guiding land protection met three times. Together with the staff and committee had a productive year:

Land Protection: Strategic Conservation Plan implementation, Year 2:

2025 was the second year of implementation for GMC's strategic conservation plan (SCP). This year we focused on:

- Continuing our outreach strategies for all Tier 1 (LT and AT treadway parcel) projects.
- Developing and implementing outreach strategies for all Tier 2 (Side Trail and trail infrastructure) projects.
- Fundraising for the foundation grant's match requirement of \$162,000 by 2027.

This second year stood out in stark contrast to last thanks to the added staff capacity that the three-year foundation grant is providing. In April 2025, Rowan Kamman joined the team as the Land Stewardship Coordinator and has taken over the annual land stewardship work of the program. As a result, Mollie has been able to spend the majority of her time focused on the SCP workplan and goals. Much of the work accomplished this year has been foundational, laying the groundwork of landowner communication, outreach strategies, and research. The aim is that the seeds planted this year will grow into trail protection projects in the years to come.

Specific accomplishments this year are:

1. **Communications and Public Outreach:** Two articles in the *Long Trail News*, Spring and Fall 2025, to share SCP work and progress.
 - a. Spring 2025: *Big News for Conserving the Long Trail System, GMC Awarded \$250,000 to Support Strategic Conservation Plan*
 - b. Fall 2025: *Land Conservation News: 300 Feet of Long Trail Protected and Gaining Expertise in Land Acquisition*
2. **Tier 1:** Continued implementation of outreach strategies; reached out to 15 landowners.

Three projects that moved in 2025 that affect Tier 1 goals are:

- Deer Camp Tract: 11.95- acre property in Johnson that GMC purchased in 2024 was transferred to the State of Vermont to be incorporated into the Long Trail State Forest with a GMC retained conservation easement. This project protects approximately 300 feet of Long Trail treadway and 11 acres of trail corridor land. Transferring the land to the state relieves GMC of the cost and risk associated with landownership and unifies trail protection and management under the State Forest-GMC easement model the program has worked under for decades.
 - Trail relocations: The two major trail relocations worked on by Field Programs (Belvidere Mountain and Mass Line) this season will together move 0.4 miles of LT off of private property and onto existing public land. Once complete, these two projects will reduce the number of unprotected Long Trail miles down to four.
3. **Tier 2:** The new scope of work for 2025 was outreach to landowners who host a section of designated Side Trail or trail infrastructure and start cultivating trail protection projects for those priority Side Trails. There are 36 prioritized Side Trails that cross 19 private parcels in Tier 2. GMC has a long-standing relationship with six of these landowners and this year we continued to cultivate those relationships. Most of the Tier 2 landowners, however, GMC has not had a relationship with to date and so initial outreach was made via mail this year by sending landowners a handwritten post card and then an information packet in the mail.

The outreach was designed to introduce the landowner to GMC, educate them about the trail they host and GMC land conservation work, open a line of communication about trail management, and express GMC's long-term interest in trail protection. Thirteen mailings were sent out and four elicited responses. For landowners who did not respond, we plan to subscribe them to the *Long Trail News*, follow up with future mailings, and look within GMC's community (local sections, volunteer leadership, etc.) for personal connections to facilitate an introduction.

4. **Fundraising:** The three-year foundation grant requires a \$162,000 match to be raised by 2027, so targeted fundraising has been a priority this year. Through the Spring 2025 LTN article, individual donor asks and three grant applications, we are thrilled to report that the match funds have now been fully raised! Thank you to all the donors who are contributing to this work.

Land 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. At the end of 2025 there were 63 active corridor monitor volunteers who monitor and maintain the boundaries on Long Trail and Appalachian Trail lands and easements.

In 2025, GMC's volunteers monitored and maintained just over a third of the boundaries on GMC's Long Trail conserved lands (55.4 miles out of a total of 170 miles). On the AT, volunteers monitored and maintained just over a quarter of the boundaries (35.1 miles out of a total of 129).

Appalachian Trail Open Areas Maintenance: In 2025, GMC and our partners at the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) and US Forest Service ran another successful year of Open Areas maintenance. Despite the federal government shutdown in the fall, the partners completed the following: invasive plant control and mowing at Dupuis Hill, Arms Hill, and Merrill Hill (in Pomfret); and invasive plant control at Howard Hill (West Hartford), and Korzun Field and Pratt House Field (in Shrewsbury). In addition, a volunteer group assisted GMC and ATC staff in removing sugaring tubing from an abandoned sugarbush on the Pomfret AT corridor, part of an ongoing multiyear effort to clean up an abandoned life estate on federal lands.

Fee Land Management: Program staff secured grant funds to install a new large-capacity beaver baffle on GMC's headquarters property. This device mitigates flood risk to Cabin Lane from the active beaver pond by maintaining a consistent pond depth.

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 completed its multi-year effort to write and adopt a land management plan for every property along the Long Trail corridor that GMC owns and plans on retaining long-term (10 properties!) The program also continued to make strides this past year in its aim to digitize programmatic records.

Respectfully submitted by Land Conservation Committee Chair Alexis Peters Corseri and Director of Land Conservation Mollie Flanigan

Nominating Committee

Nominating Committee members: Bob Paquin (Chair), Andy Hood, Caitlin Miller, Jeff Wehrwein, Millie Mugica, and Mike Peckar.

GMC staff representative: Executive Director Mike DeBonis.

The Nominating Committee has three functions:

- Nominate General Directors to represent the membership at-large
- Nominate Officers
- Nominate individuals for honorary life membership

1. This year the committee nominated two first term general directors:

- Dave McNally – first term
- Delia Clark – first term

2. Officers

- Don Taylor – second year as President
- Owen Rachampbell – first year as Vice President
- Susan Tobin – first year as Treasurer
- Jeff Wehrwein – first year as Secretary

3. Honorary Life Membership

- The committee made a recommendation to the Board for Honorary Life Membership.

Respectfully submitted by Executive Director Mike DeBonis.

Publications Committee

Publications Committee members: Martha Stitelman, Cindy Griffith, Millie Mugica, Mike Dacey, David Hathaway, and Anna Maassel

GMC Staff Representative: Chloe Miller

Publications Committee members volunteer time supporting projects; writing, editing, and fact-checking trail descriptions, listings, and data (mileage and elevation). The Publications Committee is responsible for assisting staff in the development and updating of printed and digital maps, guidebooks, and other education resources. These items are sold at GMC's Visitor Centers, online store, and at retailers statewide.

This year, the Publications Committee was on a bit of a hiatus following last year's publication of the 29th edition of the Long Trail Guide and a transition to a new staff liaison and structure for the program. Volunteers supported the publication of the *Long Trail Map*, 7th edition, in December 2025 and the new, digitized *End-to-Ender Guide* in May 2026.

In the coming year, we plan to update the Manchester Area Map (it is out of stock and out of date following the trail realignment at Stratton Pond), then examine the state of publications as a whole and create a plan for a sustainable program that supports strategic goals going forward.

Respectfully submitted by Communications Manager Chloe Miller

Trail Management Committee

Trail Management Committee members: David Hathaway (Chair), Martha Stitelman, Wayne Krevetsky, Bruce Bushey, Peter Hildrick-Smith, Phyllis Rubenstein, Cathi Brooks, Mariah Keagy, Dick Andrews, Kathy Astrauckas, Ira Sollace, Lee Allen, Matt Vezina, Marge Fish, Ellen Cronan, Caitlin Miller, Hubey Folsom, Barbara Raskin

GMC staff representative: Director of Field Programs Keegan Tierney

Agency representatives: Matt Stevens, Tracy Lind, Ilana Goll (ATC), Kathryn Wrigley (FPR), and Steve Pytlik (USFS Green Mountain National Forest)

***Charge:** 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 spent its 2025/26 meeting season conducting reviews of the two significant documents that guide its work: the **Long Trail System Management Plan** (LTSMP) and the **TMC Charge and Procedures** (colloquially "governance"). A brief background and current update for each is provided below.

Long Trail System Management Plan Review: MC has been working to review the LTSMP for some time. The current version of the LTSMP was codified by the board of directors in 2002. As chair and staff liaison, respectively, David and Keegan have prioritized the completion of this review as a major focus for the TMC in 2026. TMC has formed a sub-committee consisting of Phyllis Rubenstien (BoD & Montpelier Section), Peter Hildick-Smith (Manchester Section), David Hathaway (Burlington Section & TMC Chair), and Mariah Keagy (BoD & Sterling Section member) with support from staff members Keegan Tierney and Nigel Bates. The LTSMP review process consists of the following iterative steps:

1. TMC conducting an internal review by volunteers and staff
2. GMC's major land and trail management partners (Vermont Dept. of Forests, Parks, and Recreation, the US Forest Service, and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy) conducting a review and providing feedback
3. The Trail Management Committee reviewing, incorporating partner feedback, and creating a final draft of the plan
4. The Board of Directors approving the updated plan

Work on the current update began in 2017. A version was approved for distribution to land management partners in 2019. After interruption from the COVID-19 pandemic, the final partner review was completed in 2025 with the caveat that the FPR review identified significant deviation from state lands policy in numerous areas in the document.

The TMC sub-committee has conducted an initial review of partner feedback and conducted a new internal review of the entire plan to flag areas that may need to be updated since 8 years have passed since the TMC's first review. Several areas have been identified as needing updates. The sub-committee will continue to work on updates and is assessing the best path forward to address the policy discrepancies between GMC's plan and FPR managed state lands policy. Based on current progress this work will likely continue through the 2026 calendar year.

Trail Management Committee Governance: The Trail Management Committee has undertaken an internal review to identify opportunities to improve functionality and effectiveness. This review began in the spring of 2025 after the recognition of a few critical gaps and challenges in how TMC functions.

In the fall of 2025, TMC formed a sub-committee to conduct a full review of the ***TMC Charge and Procedures*** - the document that outlines the responsibilities directed to the TMC by the Board of Directors. This committee consists of Marge Fish (Manchester Section), Bruce Bushey (Laraway Section), Kathy Astrauckas (UVO Section), Ira Sollace (at-large TMC member), and Jeff Wehrwein (at-large member of the Board of Directors and chair of the Governance Committee). Keegan Tierney and Lorne Currier serve as staff members supporting this effort.

The sub-committee has conducted a review of a survey completed by the full TMC on current successes and challenges in its management structure. The committee has worked to build a shared understanding of the committee's existing Charge and Procedures, including reviews of the applicability and effectiveness of the document in outlining the work of the committee.

The sub-committee will continue working over the next few months to develop suggested edits to the Charge and Procedures to pass along to the full Trail Management Committee for review. Ultimately, any proposed changes to the ***TMC Charge and Procedures*** document will be passed to the board of directors for review and approval. This work is expected to continue through the 2026 calendar year.

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

Green Mountain Club

Section Reports



Bennington Section



*Top: Bennington Section outing with Shires Young Professionals on Mt. Anthony
Bottom: A crew of 14 for the spring work day.*

About this year: We had two thoroughly enjoyable hikes last year with the Shires Young Professionals group and look forward to at least two more outings with them this year. We are

delighted that we have continued to draw sizable groups of volunteers for our trail maintenance days.

Upcoming: We're holding our first Trip Leader's workshop later this month after many weeks of planning.

Brattleboro Section



*Left: Hubey, Trish, and Darren with chainsaw, clippers, and a hoe to clear water bars
Right: Replacing the rusted stovepipe elbow at Spruce Peak Cabin.*

About this year: Our section weathered the temporary illness of our social center and main organizer last fall. Bennington and Manchester Sections sent two volunteers each so we could clear ALL of our Long Trail territory.

We rounded up enough volunteers this Spring to again clear ALL of our Long Trail territory, and some of our three miles of Branch Pond Trail.

Upcoming: We are looking forward to clipping our section of Branch Pond Trail, and restoring our outings schedule!

Bread Loaf Section



Left: Spring 2025 trail work day moving a 300-pound rock to use as a stepping stone. (Beth Eliason)

Right: BreadLoaf members enjoy a Taconic Ramble in fall 2025. (Dwight Greisman)

About this year: We held 50 outings this year with more than 300 participants, and we held two public talks with more than 100 people attending. Our trail crew held 10 work trips with a total of 50 participants, focusing on Gen Y and Gen Z inclusion.

Upcoming: We will concentrate on outreach to lapsed members and recruiting our outings participants to recapture and increase our membership numbers.

Burlington Section



Left: Spring work day. Right: Mike DeBonis, Nancy McClellan, and Brian Williams at Burlington Section Annual Meeting.

About this year: We held our section annual meeting on January 31. It was attended by about 75 people. Our speaker was Tori Constantine who presented “The Audacity to Try: Saying ‘Why Not’ and Doing It Anyway.” Tori discussed her Fastest Known Time (unassisted) record setting 2025 thru-hike of the Long Trail. She finished her southbound journey in 5 days, 19 hours and 29 minutes! She shared stories that included hiking with a serious lack of sleep, foot care and sheer perseverance.

We added many new committee members over the past year and look forward to the many new ideas and approaches they will provide: Michelle Leonetti (Annual Meeting), Rachel Frascella (Taylor Series and Education), Jordon Tourville (Outings Co-Chair), Margarite Warner (Historian Co-Chair), Ira Powsner (Shelters Co-Chair), Joshua Golek (Trails Co-Chair). We also said goodbye to Steve Titcomb as he stepped down from the Shelter Chair.

Nancy McClellan, former section VP and past-President of the Main Club, was honored with the Section’s President’s award for her many years of service and successful recruiting (or should I say arm-twisting...) to maintain the staffing of our section committee.

The section also approved funding from our Dot Meyer endowment to progress electronic cataloging and archiving of many GMC artifacts. We hope to pursue this with the main club through identifying a resource to make this happen.

Trail maintenance efforts were under much drier conditions this year versus the 2025 season! Scott Albertson and Pete Saile led more than 20 different volunteers over the course of 4 Saturdays this May to clear over 50 blowdowns along with significant clipping and water bar clearing.

The Burlington Section provided on-the-ground support at Taft Lodge and the Long Trail at the Battell shelter for the two log/material helicopter lifts last summer.

Connecticut Section



CT Section Trails chair Joe Conaci repairing Story Spring privy bin with Kevin Breton and GMC Staffer Gavin July 2025

About this year: During the 2025 work season the Connecticut Section held three trail work weekends and six single days on our section of the Long Trail. A planned fourth weekend was canceled due to restrictions surrounding the federal government shutdown in October. Work focused on blowdown removal and improved trail drainage. Seven volunteers contributed a total of 295 trail work hours.

Volunteers led 51 recreational activities, topped by a 10-day trip to New River Gorge National Park in West Virginia, Red River Gorge State Park in Kentucky, and Great Smoky Mountains National Park in September 2025. The high point of the Smokies was a backpacking trek up to Mt. LeConte Lodge, near the 6593-foot summit of Mount LeConte.

Upcoming: A Fall 2026 excursion to Pictured Rocks National Seashore on Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Killington Section



Unveiling the Long Trail Lodge historical marker in September.

About this year: The Killington Section was pleased to participate in the dedication of a Vermont Division for Historic Preservation sign at Sherburne Pass. It gives a little history of the Long Trail Lodge, the GMC's original headquarters, which burned in 1968. Section President Herb Ogden introduced the program, and the crowd then heard from Mike DeBonis, the Executive Director of GMC; Lindsay Pacheco, of the state Historic Preservation Division; and Killington Section History & Archives Committee member David Wright, who described the Long Trail Lodge, its builder, and its history.

Participating in the sign's unveiling was Killington Section Director Amy Peacock, who led the effort to commemorate the Lodge. We hope to make the Lodge site into an interpretative historical park where visitors can see the remains of the Lodge and its Adirondack-style cabins. We also hope to reroute the Sherburne Pass Trail so it follows the former route of the Long Trail through the Lodge.

One of the other priorities is to resolve the status of Cooper Lodge, the GMC's highest overnight site. The state built it in 1939. Before the Killington ski area opened, Cooper was one of the

gems of the Long Trail. It had bunks for 12, a stove, and a grand view through a row of windows on the north side. By the early 1960s, however, vandalism became a problem. Windows were repeatedly smashed and GMC declared it an open shelter. The Section spent considerable time and effort re-roofing Cooper in 1992, and our newsletter reported “it was a hard job but the new roof should last for decades.” The very next winter, however, folks skied off the roof and sprang the seams, and bullets were fired through the roof. The Section gave up. Adopters tried to keep the place decent for a while but also gave up in 2004. Trashed and unmaintained, the place gives the GMC and the Killington Section a black eye. Within the Killington Section and the Trail Management Committee the consensus has long been that the only way to prevent vandalism is to have a winter management plan to address the misuse and vandalism. That seems impossible, so we have advocated tearing it down and leaving only enough of the masonry to show where it once was. We appreciate that GMC Director of Field Programs Keegan Tierney is bringing state officials up to speed on the situation and hopes to resolve Cooper’s status in the next year.

Upcoming: Progress on the Long Trail Lodge site and demolition of Cooper Lodge.

Manchester Section



Left: Sawyers in the Peru Peak Wilderness clearing blowdowns.

Right: Bromley Tower dedication, summer 2025.

About this year: We continue to be successful with engaging school groups in trail work, even having an extra school group to send to work with Nigel on a section south of our section. We have started to have newer members showing up for some of our trail work and hikes, increasing the pool of active members.

Upcoming: We look forward to the list of donors for the Bromley tower being installed on the sled shed building next to the new tower, and view finder signs being put up on the tower.

Montpelier Section



*Top: Outing to Millstone Quarries in Barre.
Bottom: Behind the ice waterfall at Laraway Mountain*

About this year: We have had a successful round of trail maintenance hikes, and have been able to find younger helpers, including the Norwich University Athletic Club, to assist us in our work.

One of our members gave a talk at the Kellogg Hubbard Library in Montpelier on trekking in Patagonia. It was a fascinating look at the opportunities for hiking in Chile and Argentina.

Upcoming: We are looking forward to the summer kayaking season and hoping for a flood-free year!

Northeast Kingdom Section



*Top: Long Trail Day group hike on Haystack Mountain summit.
Bottom: Wood Stacking Weekend at Wheeler Pond Cabins.*

About this year: Long Trail Day Progress - So far, we have made it south from the Canadian Border to Tillotson Camp. This year we will hike from there to Rte 118.

Wood Stacking Weekend is an event we look forward to! We stay at the two cabins for the weekend, stack wood, hike, and have our quarterly meeting on the last day. We serve coffee, donuts, and sometimes coffeecake to volunteers. Sitting around the campfire later is always a good time. This year will be October 9-12.

Upcoming: Island Pond Trails Day: Our 7th Anniversary Celebration of the Grand Opening of the Kingdom Heritage Trail happens on June 20th at 9 a.m. (8 a.m. for coffee and treats)! We are offering several hikes along the KHT.

Northern Frontier Section



Top: Northern Frontier Annual Meeting; Bottom: Snowshoe in Enosburg Town Forest

About this year: This year we held our annual meeting on May 30 with a potluck and cookout afterwards. We will also have another potluck and snowshoe get together in winter.

We schedule hikes and workdays during the hiking season and snowshoe hikes during winter.

This season we will help GMC staff with a puncheon project on the LT between Rt 242 and Rt 58 (Hazen's Notch).

Upcoming: Our annual meeting potluck and cookout. Our hikes and trail work days.

Sterling Section



*Top: Before and after photos of a box step staircase built near the Lamoille River LT crossing.
It's survived nearly a year without being washed away!*

Bottom: Emily Benning and Elisabeth Fenn practice crosscut saw technique as Larry Walter supervises.

About this year: In 2025 we supported the Long Trail Patrol's renovations to Beaver Meadow Lodge and worked on trail hardening and relocations at multiple sites. Even though each workday's project was different, each one happened to start with carrying a lot of lumber, leading one volunteer to christen 2025 'The Year of the Mule'!

We were also lucky enough to convince Killington Section's Larry Walters to come up and train some of our members to use a newly-acquired section crosscut saw. While none of Sterling Section is on federal wilderness, crosscuts are just plain fun!

Upcoming: With Beaver Meadow Lodge work done, we'll be returning to the ridgeline this year to continue battling mudpits and erosion. Fingers crossed we won't be carrying any lumber this summer!

Upper Valley Ottauquechee Section



Top: Long Trail Day hike on AT, Cloudland Rd to Stage Rd Pomfret, VT 9/20/25.

Bottom: New Year's Day hike on Mimi's Trail, Thetford, VT, 1/1/26.

About this year: The UVO Section enjoyed a busy year, offering 160 listed outings led by 22 Volunteer Leaders: hikes, road walks, snowshoe & microspike hikes, XC skiing, bike rides, and paddling trips. This list is a bit shorter than past years simply due to the passing of our dear Past President Inge Brown, 91, last August. Inge led easy local walks every Tuesday morning well into her 90th year. UVOers came together on a perfect autumn day in October for a walk in sun-

splashed woods, cider-pressing, and a potluck social with shared stories remembering this truly unforgettable lady.

Our Long Trail Day hike featured an exceptionally beautiful segment of the AT: Cloudland Rd to Stage Rd in Pomfret and attracted 22 participants including several experiencing their first UVO-GMC hike.

Our 45 miles of the Appalachian Trail required significant trail work in the past year, as we, again, experienced a high number of blowdowns. Our sawyer crew of 5 was very busy, and we have recruited at least 4 more to achieve certification. Trail work days in April and May 2026 were well attended. Puncheon replacement has also been a focus this year. Last fall the UVO “mudpuppies” were joined by Lorne Currier for instruction and execution of a significant stretch of puncheon in Pomfret. An additional puncheon project is planned in West Hartford in mid-June 2026 with new recruits to increase the number of UVOers with experience in this valuable skill.

Upcoming: In the next year the UVO section will be working extra hard to engage our members who are affiliated with the UVO section, but who do not often participate in our section’s outings. Of course, we appreciate their support! We also want to see their faces. The UVO section has a packed activity calendar and 45 miles of the AT needing our attention. Reaching out to our members of all ages is key.

The Laraway and Worcester Sections also had a great year, though we do not have a written report for them. Find them at annual meeting to learn more about their work!