

WONALANCET OUT DOOR CLUB

Newsletter

January 1, 1975

Dear WODC Members:

During the Fall a number of activities and meetings have taken place which may be of interest to you.

On October 8, 1974 George Zink met with the District Ranger of the Saco District of the WMNF, Verland Ohlson, and Resource Assistant, Alan Green. Chief purpose of the meeting was to discuss several decisions made at our Annual Meeting in late August. Specifically: (1) they were informed of the opinions of many of us that the wooden steps placed by the WMNF on the Blueberry Ledge Trail are unsafe and less than satisfactory from an aesthetic point of view. This surprised them. (2) The Rangers were told of the confusion which brings hikers down the slopes to Wonalancet when they had assumed they were descending to the Kancamagus Highway. Greater care in trail marking and identification is a first step in preventing such confusion. (3) There was a discussion of the parking problem on the Ferncroft Road. As many as 50 cars have been parked along the road and on Ned Behr's field on clear October days. There is agreement that suitable parking and thoughtful planning and suitable funding for such a project are necessary, including adequate signs and instructions to hikers. This will assure that inconvenience to landowners is minimal and guidance to hikers is provided.

On October 30, George Zink met with Howard M. Goff, Chairman of the White Mountain Guide Book Committee of the Appalachian Mountain Club to discuss changes which might be made in the Guide so that it will be of greater use and accuracy to the people it serves. Several of the changes suggested were: (1) elimination of the term "Ferncroft Site" as the parking area for trails, and have parking and trail signs in one main area at the junction of the Old Mast Road and the Ferncroft Road. (2) Eliminate confusion between the two McCrillis trails, one on Mt. Whiteface and the other between Wonalancet and Whiteface Intervals. (3) Clear up inconsistencies in the marking of the Sleeper Trail and preserve it in its entirety as the Sleeper Trail in honor of Katherine Sleeper Walden. (4) Describe the Bennett Street Trail as starting at Jose's Bridge. WODC member Fred Steele is a member of this AMC committee. Help in making these suggestions was given by Charlotte and Strearns Smalley and Henry Lamb.

On November 7th the WMNF held a hearing in Plymouth on "Backcountry Management", defined as that area of the national forest without public road access which is managed for dispersed recreation in a substantially natural setting. Several club members attended.

Early this Fall the Forest Service released to the public its Forest Plan, a document completing the second step of a three-step planning process. For detailed planning of the Forest the whole WMNF has been divided into nine "Planning Units", one of which is the "Wonalancet Unit" which extends roughly from Conway to Campton, and from Route 113A to the summits of the Sandwich Range, for a total of 29,500 acres. The WODC has asked to be informed when the WMNF gets down to the business of detailed planning and decisions in this area and any surrounding units which lead into the Wonalancet Unit.

In addition we have been working with the Forest Service in matters of trail maintenance and shelter permits and standards.

To date, no recent information of the Spring Brook Sale of timber on Wonalancet has been received. Bids were opened last summer but no cutting or road building has been started,

To date no document has been received concerning winter OHRV (snowmobile) use for the 1974-75 winter season as concerns Forest lands.

Of real importance at present is a matter discussed at a hearing in Laconia on November 16th, 1974 on the topic of Off-Highway Recreational Vehicle summer use on National Forest lands. This hearing was held to review the 1974 summer regulations, the first made by the WMNF. Members of the WODC attended and spoke as individuals. Among those attending were Peg King, David Bowles, Ted Sidley, Stearns Smalley, and Martha Chandler. Several representatives of OHRV oriented organizations attended as well as representatives of the AMC and Sierra clubs.

Last summer's regulations specified seven trails which were opened to OHRVs (trailbikes, motorcycles, jeeps and other four-wheeled drive vehicles) and none were in our Wonalancet area. However, one trail often used by OHRVs was closed to OHRV use, the old logging Railroad from the Sandwich Notch Road to Flat Mountain Pond and a connecting link from Jose's Bridge. Apparently many of you have suggested that that step be taken by the Forest Service. Many at the November hearing asked that this road be returned to vehicular use. The Forest Service will not make a final decision on 1975 summer OHRV use for a couple of weeks and if you wish to make your thoughts known to the WMNF, please do so soon to:

Ned Therrien
U.S. Forest Service, WMNF
P.O. Box 638
Laconia, N.H. 03246

The National Forest personnel have indicated their willingness to listen and, in fact, are eager to get the thoughts of persons who know, use and love the forest. Your letters with suggestions or requests for information are what they are seeking.

Yours truly

Wonalancet, N.H.

George Zink, President

Postscript from the Secretary-Treasurer - January 2, 1975

As usual, I'd be delighted to receive your dues or contributions (\$3.00 per person, \$5.00 per family annual membership) for the current year ending August 1975

A call to the WMNF this morning brings this late information: The 1974-75 winter OHRV map is being mailed today. There is a limited supply now but more are due in mid-month. The WMNF will consider your suggestions regarding next summer's OHRV regulations provided they are received no later than the end of January.

Martha W. Chandler, Sec.-Treasurer
16 Orchard St.
Laconia, N.H. 03246