

# WONALANCET OUT DOOR CLUB

Newsletter

June 1 1991

## WODC TRAIL DAY

The annual WODC Trail Day will be held on June 8. Members and friends who are willing to help with trail clearing meet at 8:30 a.m. at the kiosk off Ferncroft Road.

This past year there have been unusually high winds, and hikers have reported a large number of blowdowns. Although these blowdowns may not be removed that day, there are many other jobs which must be done, such as cutting brush, clearing trails of fallen branches, and cleaning water bars. Bring your own tools; some tools will be available for workers needing them. For further information call Dana Steele at 323-7287.

A pot luck supper will be provided for the workers at 5:30 p.m. at the Zinks'. Members unable to work on trails, but wishing to help provide food for the hungry workers, call Barbara Sidley at 323-8694 or Sally Zink 323-8693.

Do join us for a day of work and fun.

## NEW SIGNS

For several years it has been recognized that signs on WODC trails need attention. Many should be replaced because they are barely legible; others are poorly designed. Signs within the Wilderness do not meet National Forest standards. To fill this need, Doug Mayer, Club member living in Sandwich, offered to make new signs using equipment provided by the Randolph Mountain Club. The signs have routed letters, and bear the logos of WODC and WMNF. Doug has been making signs throughout the winter months, and in mid-May began their installation.

On behalf of WODC, thanks to Doug and the RMC.

## THE BROMBERG MAP

In 1987 a plea went out to the general membership urging a revision of the WODC map. We had an adequate map, but one with no contours, and no editing changes since 1952. An immediate response came from Mike Bromberg, a WODC member who knows the White Mountains well, and who hikes the trails and climbs the peaks from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

He was willing to undertake the project of map making.

It would be tedious to count the days

including the Sandwich Range Wilderness. Come to the Wonalancet Chapel on Friday, July 26 at 7:30 p.m. for an episode in Wonalancet history.

## WHITE MOUNTAIN TRAILS DAY

The Sixth Annual White Mountain Trails Day is Saturday, July 13, 1991. This program, modeled after one designed by the California Department of Parks and Recreation, will bring together New England volunteers for a

day of hard work on the 1200-mile network of trails traversing the White Mountain National Forest. One day projects will be undertaken on trails maintained by the White Mountain National Forest, Appalachian Mountain Club, WODC, Dartmouth Outing Club, New Hampshire State Parks, Sandwich Range Conservation Association, Audubon Society, and others.

WODC will participate in the program this year by providing work crew leaders, tools, free camping, and a barbecue for volunteers. Club members are needed to help with the

barbecue. The Executive Committee will provide crew leaders. This Trails Day is open to WODC members, but is a special program for the general public, requiring pre-registration, and payment of an application fee of \$2.00. Further information may be obtained from John Mersfelder, Sally Zink, or Barbara Sidley.

Volunteers need no special skills. Projects include trail clearing, bridge repair, installation and clearing of water bars, dips, and ditches, repair of rock steps, cribbing on eroded sections of trail, and blazing.

## SCHEDULE OF SUMMER ACTIVITIES

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| June 8    | WODC Trail Day: meet at Ferncroft Kiosk at 8:30 a.m. Rain date June 9.                              |
| July 13   | WMNF Trails Day: meet at Ferncroft Kiosk at 8:30 a.m.   |
| July 26   | Mike Bromberg: "The WODC Map", Wonalancet Chapel at 7:30 p.m.                                       |
| August 3  | AMC Leader: "Map and Compass Workshop," Wonalancet Chapel at 9:00 a.m.                              |
| August 10 | Jean Hurley: "Mushroom Walk," Wonalancet Chapel at 9:30 a.m.  |
| August 17 | Cooperators' Conference, Wonalancet Chapel from 9:00 am to 4:00 p.m.                                |
| August 18 | Dave Thurlow: "Antarctica," Wonalancet Chapel at 7:30 p.m.  |
| August 25 | WODC Potluck Supper and Annual Meeting: Wonalancet Chapel. Supper at 5:30 p.m. Meeting at 7:30 p.m. |

and weeks he has spent checking trails, mileages, landmarks, streams, elevations, conditions in summer, and in winter under three feet of snow. In between his trips to Wonalancet from his home in Brookline, New Hampshire, he maintains a busy life.

The map is now at the printer; the project near completion. We will have an opportunity to meet with Mike, to learn something of the work that goes into map making, to see the finished product, and to purchase a copy of The Wonalancet Out Door Club Map

## EDITORIAL

It seems inevitable that an organization depends upon a few individuals for its continued existence. This is true of WODC. A few people, less than a dozen, are responsible for making it a vibrant Club.

WODC is engaged in several activities.

- Maintains 49 miles of hiking trails through an annual Trails Day, an Adopt-A-Trail program, and by hiring a trails crew for a few weeks each summer (\$500 to \$1000 is budgeted annually).
- Works with the White Mountain National Forest and conservation groups to preserve the Forest from unwise development and overuse, especially the Sandwich Range Wilderness, which we played an important role in forming.
- Provides education, recreation, and entertainment with our summer programs.
- Keeps our membership informed and alert through publication of newsletters.
- Publishes a topographic map of trails.

Your editor urges you to become involved in these and other Club activities. Attend meetings and programs, adopt a trail or join a trail work day, ask how you can help in preserving the wild nature of the Forest. Most members can participate, even if they live some distance from Wonalancet. There are, nevertheless, members who cannot participate actively. Is there nothing they can do? Not at all. One of our major needs is financial. WODC was blessed this year by a member who made a substantial financial contribution to aid the work of Forest liaison. The contribution helped pay telephone bills, postage, office supplies, and so forth. You can be fully engaged in our programs by making a financial contribution in support of one or all of our programs.

I urge you to participate in our activities.

Sally Y. Zink, Editor

## FOREST LIAISON

Your Club has been very active throughout the winter and spring with Forest Service related activities. Several members attended meetings, studied issues, and composed responses to WMNF project proposals. A brief review of each activity follows.

### WMNF Accessibility Work Group

The successful appeal of the proposed access road to Flat Mountain Pond announced in the December 1990 *Newsletter*, resulted in the formation by WMNF of an Accessibility Work Group. The work group, selected by WMNF, is composed of disabled people. With suggestions from WODC and the Conservation Law Foundation, WMNF opened the meetings to the general public. Club members Ted Sidley, George Zink, John Mersfelder, and Fred Steele, have been in attendance. The charge to the group is to answer three questions: 1) who are the disabled people who will use the Forest resources, 2) what types of recreational opportunities would these users like to share, 3) what on-the-site conditions are necessary for a recreation opportunity to be available? As of this date, the general public has been integrated with Work Group members, and a critique of a Forest Service document, a Design Guide for Accessible Outdoor Recreation has been completed. The work is on-going, and will not be finished for several months. WODC representatives are pleased with the progress to date.

**Sandwich Opportunity Area Analysis.** In late March, WMNF announced its plan to study the Sandwich Notch Region, and asked the public to "provide us input on what types of projects you would like the Forest Service to implement over the next 2-5 years." This announcement was unwelcomed; WODC would prefer to have the Sandwich Notch area protected from development and kept in its present condition, with better monitoring and patrolling by the Forest Service. A formal response was prepared, and members Ted Sidley and George Zink visited the office of the Pemigewasset Ranger District to discuss the study. Messrs Sidley, Zink, and Mersfelder are members of the Interdisciplinary Team (ID Team) which will conduct the study.

An initial meeting was held on May 3 in Campton, NH. The principal objective was to become acquainted with one another. Members of the team were introduced to the process which will be used, and provided with packets of information. Other public representatives are from the Sandwich Conservation Commission, the Town of Sandwich Selectmen, and the Sandwich Range Conservation Association. It was

a useful meeting. WODC urged representation by the Society For the Protection of NH Forests.

We are optimistic that the ID team will conclude that the area should be protected for its present values, with emphasis on its traditional use as a primitive area.

**House Joint Resolution Number 4.** At the urging of Ray Conley, Senators William Boucher and Roger Heath introduced a resolution in the State of New Hampshire Legislature which requests that the Forest Service provide "access to Flat Mountain Pond for members of the public." Although the resolution does not state its real purpose, the intention of the Senators is to demand construction of a road to the Pond. The resolution passed by a voice vote in the House.

At Senate hearings of the Wildlife and Recreation Committee, opposition to the resolution was submitted by Janet Zeller of Northeast Passage and National Chairman of the Disabled Paddlers Committee of the American Canoe Association, George Zink, and Ted Sidley. Elsewhere in the *Newsletter* is a portion of the excellent statement given by Ted Sidley.

Since there is opposition to the resolution within the Senate W/R Committee, its ultimate disposition is uncertain. The resolution is purely a result of political chicanery, so anything might happen.

## MAP AND COMPASS

Motivated by a new map of the Sandwich Range (see article in this *Newsletter*), and an apparent interest in hiking off developed trails (bushwacking), a program is planned to train members in the coordinated use of compass and map. The full day event is scheduled for Saturday, August 3, at 9:00 a.m., and will be under the leadership of the Education Staff of the Appalachian Mountain Club. Bring your lunch, a compass if you own one, and a copy of the new WODC map. A compass is not a necessity, since several will be on loan for the day from the AMC. Maps may be purchased at the event.

For further information, phone George Zink at 323-8693. Please make a reservation if this activity is of interest to you. We must inform AMC of the number of people who will be attending.

## COOPERATORS MEET

Periodically, the Clubs which maintain trails and facilities on the Forest meet to discuss their common interests. The first Cooperators Conference was held in Wonalancet about ten years ago. WODC will host this year's gathering on August 17th. The program will include a morning of discussions on such topics as signing standards, mountain bicycles on trails, and disability access to the backcountry. Following lunch, Nat Scrimshaw of the Sandwich Range Conservation Association and Reuben Rajala of AMC will lead a workshop on trail maintenance.

The afternoon workshop will be held on a WODC trail. Trail adopters will find this workshop of interest and value.

Details have not been firmed at this time, but the conference will be in Wonalancet, and will last from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. WODC trail adopters are urged to attend. Phone John Mersfelder at 323-7793 for greater detail.

## MUSHROOM WALK

A mushroom walk will take place on Saturday, Aug. 10, led by Jean Hurley. People interested in learning about mushrooms and their identification will meet in the picnic grove by the Wonalancet Chapel at 9:30 a.m. Bring a bag lunch, a collecting basket, and wax paper bags. Cold drinks provided.

Weather conditions being appropriate, lunch will be in the picnic grove. After lunch Jean will display and identify mushrooms found during the morning.

Jean Hurley, whom many of you may remember from previous mushroom walks, is author of "White Mountain Mushrooms: A Visual Guide to the Mushrooms of the Northeastern Woods," as well as a producer of a video on mushroom identification.

An accomplished artist, Jean will be exhibiting her art work in June at the gallery in the Eastern Slope Plaza in North Conway, under the auspices of the Mt. Washington Valley Art Association. In July, her work will be on display at Pastry Works in Conway.

For further information phone Sally Zink at 323-8693, or Barbara Sidley at 323-8694.

## ANTARCTICA IN COLOR

A highlight of the summer schedule is a slide show and talk on Antarctica by Dave Thurlow of the AMC Education Staff. Dave knows the Antarctic

continent well, as a result of time spent at the South Pole while working for the National Science Foundation. The talk will be in the Wonalancet Chapel at 7:30 p.m., Sunday, August 18th. The program is open and free to Club members, as well as the general public.

## SIDLEY TESTIMONY

Due to space limitations, text has been edited extensively. My apology to Ted.

The Editor

"Members of the Wildlife and Recreation Committee:

In this proposed resolution the Legislature is asking the Forest Service (FS) to 'provide adequate access to ...Flat Mountain Pond for recreational purposes.'

The resolution almost gives the impression that the FS has deliberately tried to prevent access. But recreational access to FMP already exists! The concern of those submitting the resolution is the absence of motor vehicle access. What is desired is a road.

I think the Legislature would want to consider the pros and cons of road construction; i.e., what are the state's interests in the matter?

1. Financial: Benefits: There might be some increase in revenue, such as gasoline taxes.

Liabilities: The state previously committed \$10,000 for construction of the road. It is likely that a more realistic share of the cost would exceed \$100,000.

There are also maintenance and policing costs. Considering the projected use of the road, there would be a high cost per trip. Unless users were assessed a fee (a "Flat Mountain Toll Road?"), the users would be significantly subsidized by taxpayers.

2. Environmental: Benefits: I can't think of any.

Liabilities: The road would border a Wilderness area and would intrude on its values. It would significantly degrade the pleasing naturalness of the existing trail. Some wetlands would also have to be invaded and altered.

If a road were in place, there would be more trash and noise pollution than exist today. The sense of remoteness and privacy that are now obtained at the pond would be attenuated, or even lost.

3. Recreational: Benefits: If a road were in place, some disabled persons would be enabled to visit. It is my belief that the number of such visitors would be very low.

Some people who do not visit FMP

because of the need to walk, would visit if there were a road. Because of the beauty of the pond and surroundings, there would be group visits and parties. Indeed, it would be a desirable place to congregate for drugs and drinking!

More snow machine operators would visit because a road with bridges would render access easier. Access would also be more convenient to skiers.

Liabilities: The drawback of most concern was suggested under the 'environmental' heading; the experience for many people would be compromised.

4. Political: Benefits: By passing the resolution, the Legislature would earn favor with the groups supporting a FMP road. Those include some persons with disabilities, some snow machine operators, and some who would bring boats and canoes to the pond. Please note that snow machines and boats with motors cannot go onto the pond; FMP is federally designated Wilderness.

Liabilities: The Legislature would lose favor with people opposed to a FMP road. (Opponents have outnumbered those in favor whenever the question has been considered.)

While the FS might welcome support from the Legislature for a small or non-controversial project, they might have problems with a publicly made request of a heavily disputed activity. It seems politically foolish to put pressure on the FS if there is not strong likelihood that the road can ever be built.

In addition, because the FS is now sponsoring an ad hoc committee to deal with the access of persons with disabilities, it might be prudent to wait to see if that committee makes any recommendations.

5. Legal: Benefits: I can't think of any.

Liabilities: The FS, as a federal agency, has its own context for what it does. It cannot build a road to FMP without going through extensive analysis and consideration of alternatives; the process is open to public scrutiny and appeals. There are Forest Plans to consider, the National Environmental Policy Act, and constituencies beyond New Hampshire borders.

My expectation is that pressuring the FS would strain relations with the state rather than make them more cordial.

Does the state wish to enter this political thicket without thorough and careful evaluation of the consequences?

Thank you very much for your consideration of my views in this matter."