

NORTHERN FOREST LANDS

Living in the Northern Forest I have become convinced that we must find the balance between logging, recreation, agriculture, and industry, and of the need to protect our shrinking wildlands before it's too late. Greed and excess growth are our greatest enemies, and our best weapons against that are common sense, tolerance, and a good old Yankee distrust of waste and excess.

Andrea Sabata, Jefferson NH

Each generation is presented with an opportunity to participate in protecting some of the Nation's remaining natural resources. In the early 1900's WODC members responded to the opportunity by actively supporting federal legislation to purchase private lands in eastern States in order to create National Forests. The resultant 1911 Weeks Act was the mechanism for creating the White Mountain National Forest. In the 1980's WODC members worked with other New England individuals and organizations to establish the Sandwich Range and Pemigewasset Wilderness Areas. In the late 1990's the challenge is to find ways to protect part if not all of the 26 million acres of undeveloped forest land extending through the northern portions of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York. This large land mass, known as "The Northern Forest Lands" (NFL), is the largest remaining block of undeveloped forest land within the United States in the ownership of private individuals and corporations.

Prior to 1988, the NFL were thought to be well protected from exploitation. Unbridled real estate development in the 1980's, fueled by high personal incomes as well as banking and investment deregulation, led to conditions where large timberland owners, especially corporations, became aware that their acres could provide greater returns to stockholders by selling land rather than by harvesting and processing timber. In 1982 Sir James Goldsmith, a British financier, in a hostile takeover, acquired ownership of the Diamond International Corporation

holdings of 976,000 acres of timberland in the states of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and New York. Six years later, in 1987, the French utility and telecommunications firm Cie Generale Electricite purchased the Goldsmith assets. With no interest in managing lands for timber, CGE, through a real estate broker, began to sell its holdings.

In May of 1988 the NFL issue came to public attention when Rancourt Associates, a development consortium dealing mostly in mobile home parks and headquartered in Nashua NH, purchased 90,000 acres of the former Diamond International property in New Hampshire and Vermont. This sale came as a shock to citizens of New Hampshire who had recently funded a Land Conservation Investment Program to protect undeveloped land. Through last minute negotiations and funding by the State of New Hampshire, 39,500 acres of the Rancourt Associates property, the "Nash Stream" tract, were purchased.

In response to public outcry following these events, Congress appropriated \$250,000 for a NFL Study, and the governors of the four states appointed a Governors' Task Force on NFL. These two groups were formed to assess the current and the historic patterns of land ownership, to identify the threats to the current ownership situation, and to provide a series of strategies which might be used by Congress and the affected States should they decide to take any action. In 1990, final reports by both groups recommended formation of a Northern Forest Lands Council (Council) to further study key issues. Congress accepted the recommendation, and appropriated \$4 million for a four year study.

There are seventeen members on the Council, four from each of the four northeastern states, and a representative from the USDA Forest Service. Nine of the members currently hold or did hold an office in state government. Several others are foresters or are employed by timber corporations. (Continued on Page 5)

TRAILS PLANS

As the snow gradually recedes from the mountains, it's time to start thinking about the upcoming trail season. In between skiing, keeping warm, and earning a living, the WODC Trails Committee has been planning an exciting schedule of events for 1994. Since a day with a 16 pound crow-bar isn't everyone's idea of fun, this year's trail schedule has been broadened to include:

- Joint work trips with other organizations, including Trailwrights, the AMC Wonalancet Cabin, and the Chocorua Mountain Club.
- Overnight opportunities ranging from a backcountry work trip to free camping at White Lake State Park, to a nearly free all-expense-paid weekend at the AMC Wonalancet Cabin.
- Great meals including the annual WODC barbecue, pot-luck suppers, a spaghetti dinner, and a night out for pizza.
- Special events including a trails presentation at Annual Meeting, a lunchtime trail inspection walk, and even a chance to find out more about the use of llamas in the Sandwich Range.

While we obviously need volunteers to participate in work trips, we're also looking for people to help arrange meals, lead special outings, make arrangements for trips, and just have fun. We even have a trail available for adoption. To get involved or find out more, call any member of the Trails Committee. We'd love to hear from you.

Trail Events

On Saturday, May 14th, WODC and the AMC Wonalancet Cabin will work together to drain and harden a wet section of Blueberry Ledge Trail. Free accommodations and/or tenting will be available at the AMC Cabin, as well as free dinner on Saturday night for all volunteers. Reservations for the Cabin and/or dinner should be made by May 1st with Melinda Lyon at 508-887-5755. Reservations are not required for the work trip.

On Thursday, May 26th, the Over-The-Hill-Gang invites everyone to join them for a spring clean-up of the Big Rock



100 Years of Caring for the White Mountains

The Newsletter is published twice each year by the Wonalancet Out Door Club. The mailing address is:

WODC

Newsletter Editor

Wonalancet, NH 03897

The Editor encourages members and interested readers to submit material for use in future issues. Articles, poems, drawings, comments, criticisms, suggestions, are welcomed.

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Cave Trail. For further information contact Stephen Winship at 284-6626.

On the weekend of June 3-5 we'll be conducting a special overnight trip on **Walden Trail**. As our **National Trails Day** project, we'll be brushing and blazing the entire trail. This will restore the remote trail and prepare it for erosion control work by the **New Hampshire Conservation Corp (NHCC)** and the **Sandwich Range Conservation Association (SRCA)** later in the season. Volunteers may camp in the vicinity of **Camp Rich** or join us for a single day. The summits of **Mts. Whiteface** and **Passaconaway** are within easy hiking distance of the camp. Look for mention of this trip in the upcoming **BACKPACKER NTD** issue. Space for this trip is limited and preregistration is required. You may pick up a registration packet at the **Ferncroft kiosk** or by calling **Peter Smart** at 603-323-8666.

On Saturday June 25th we'll work on **Cabin Trail** clearing drainage, brushing, and blazing the entire trail.

Saturday, July 16th, is **New Hampshire Trails Day**, and we'll be working on the **Bennett Street Trail**. Depending on the turn-out, we'll clear drainage, define a section of the treadway, and brush the trail. All volunteers are invited to the **Annual WODC Barbecue** on Route 113A in **Sandwich** at the home of **Julie and Dick Daniels**, 2 miles north of the **Bennett Street** junction and 3 miles west of the **Wonalancet Chapel**. Volunteers are

invited to camp at **White Lake State Park** with one night free. For reservations call the **Park** at 603-323-7350. Limited accommodations are also available at the **AMC Wonalancet Cabin** by calling **Melinda Lyon** at 508-887-5755.

Join us on August 6-7th for a complete **trail volunteers' weekend**. A total cost of \$30 per person covers accommodations at the **Wonalancet Cabin**, Saturday dinner, self-service breakfasts, and bag lunches. Saturday's trail project will be clearing water bars on **Dacey's Mill Trail**, with time remaining to climb to the top of **Mt. Passaconaway**. Sunday is open for a hike, and a presentation on the use of **llamas in the WMNF**. Cabin space is limited, and preregistration required. Please call **Peter Smart** at 603-323-8666 for trip information. (Bed and breakfast accommodations also available at higher cost.) Reservations are not required for the work trip or other events.

Several special events will spice up the **WODC Annual Meeting** on Sunday August 21st. Bring a bag lunch to the **Ferncroft kiosk** at 11 a.m. for an easy hike and a chance to inspect some of this year's trail work. From 4-5 p.m. join us at the **Wonalancet Chapel** for a special slide presentation on trails. The potluck supper will begin at 5:30, followed by the **WODC Annual Meeting** at 7:00.

Saturday, August 27th, is the date for the second annual **WODC-Chocorua Mountain Club joint work trip**. In 1993 the **CMC** joined us for a major restoration of **Big Rock Cave Trail**. This year we'll return the favor by helping them, probably on the **Whittin Brook Trail**. We hope to close the day with a joint potluck supper. The trip will leave the **Liberty Trail Kiosk** at 8:30 a.m.

On Saturday, September 17th we've invited **Trailwrights** to join us in building rock cribbing to repair a section of **Kelley Trail**. This will be a great chance to get to know members of one of the State's most devoted volunteer trail groups. A dutch-treat pizza dinner will follow.

Saturday, October 8th isn't scheduled yet, but its sure to be fun. Meet at the **Ferncroft kiosk** and find out! An updated schedule will also be posted at the **Ferncroft kiosk** throughout the summer.

Important Information

Except as noted, all trips will meet at the parking lot for the designated trail and will depart promptly at 8:30 a.m. Please arrive at least 15 minutes early to allow time to coordinate with the trip leader. If you arrive late, hike up the trail to meet the group. Reservations are not required except as noted. Bring work gloves, safety glasses, heavy boots, lunch, and plenty of water. Bring clippers if you wish, otherwise tools will be provided by the trip leader. For further information call **Peter Smart** at 603-323-8666.

Additional Trail Work

In addition to the volunteer projects listed above, other groups will perform some of the technical and labor intensive work which is necessary to address more serious trail problems.

We're pleased to have the **SRCA** trail crew active again this year. **SRCA** will be working on erosion control on the **Bennett Street** and **Walden** trails. The **SRCA** is funded by the **USFS** and area trail clubs, including **WODC**. This year we're also fortunate to have received a significant additional gift from the **White-Sylvania Trust of Sandwich**, which will be used for our **Bennett Street** project.

The **NHCC** will devote a six-week program to restoring sections of the upper **Walden Trail**. Funded by the **USFS**, the **NHCC** will correct trail erosion on **Mt. Passaconaway** and install suitable drainage to prevent this problem from recurring.

We hope to have the **Shock Incarceration Unit** working on several trails this year, including **Big Rock Cave**, **Cabin Trail**, **Kelley**, **Old Mast**, and **Wonalancet Range**. Work will consist primarily of installing water bars, clearing drainage, hardening wet areas, and repairing treadway.

And finally, the **WODC Trails Committee** will be continuing the work of reblazing and signing all trails, clearing water bars, and coordinating the efforts of the many groups and volunteers who make up our 1994 trail activities. Thanks to you all. See you on the trail!

Peter Smart

WHO IS TAINTER?

Probably you have seen the plaque. High on the windswept summit of Whiteface, near the great ledges that look across the valley of the Bearcamp to the Ossipees, a modest bronze plate has been set into the weathered rock. A brief inscription reads:

In Memoriam
Louis S. Tainter
1862 - 1920

IN THE ACQUISITION OF LANDS
FOR THIS NATIONAL FOREST
HE RENDERED A NOTABLE SERVICE
AND IN CONFORMITY TO HIS WISH
HIS ASHES REPOSE HEREIN.

Who was Louis S. Tainter? What notable service did he render? While the plaque has become a local landmark, the man the plaque was intended to memorialize has been forgotten.

White Mountain history buffs, if musty enough, might recognize the name. Louis Tainter is mentioned briefly in two widely read local histories: *Logging Railroads of the White Mountains* by C. Francis Belcher and *The Tamworth Narrative* by Marjory Gane Harkness. In the former he appears in a listing of lumber company executives, and in the latter he plays a more colorful character bit as a timber baron scheming to get his hands on the Sandwich Range before the government mobilizes to save it.

A more complete picture of Louis Tainter and his "notable service" begins in the White Pine Empire of Wisconsin, where he grew up in the lumber business. His father was a partner in Napp, Stout & Company, a giant lumber operation that shipped between 100 and 150 million board feet per year during its heyday when it controlled and systematically liquidated a vast tract of virgin pine in Western Wisconsin. After studying business and law, young Louis Tainter joined Napp, Stout as assistant to his father, and gradually assumed increasing responsibility, eventually becoming vice-president. He held this position until the company cut the last stick of pine in its domain and abruptly shut down. After working in several less successful ventures, he came east in 1908 or 1909 and accepted a position with the Conway Lumber Company. This concern owned the "big mill" in Conway where it was

sawing White Mountain spruce for the Boston market.

With his extensive knowledge of timber operations — a commodity reportedly in short supply among the other officers of the company — Louis Tainter rose rapidly to become vice-president and general manager of the Conway Lumber Company, and president of Publishers Paper Company, an affiliated corporation which served as a holding company for vast tracts of land in northern New Hampshire and western Maine. He also acquired a significant — but probably not controlling — equity interest in the latter corporation.

Meanwhile in Washington, a decades long battle to save eastern forest lands by government acquisition had been raging through all three branches of the federal government. The legal and political issues that had snarled forest legislation were finally untangled by New Hampshire born John Wingate Weeks, a Massachusetts Republican in Congress. On March 1, 1911, President Taft signed into law the Weeks Act empowering the government to buy private land for the creation of national forests.

Less than three months later, Louis Tainter tendered an offer to sell the Forest Service a well-timbered tract along the Ellis River and Wildcat Brook. Failing to secure a deal with the government, Tainter proceeded to cut the best spruce and hardwood from a good part of the tract. Two years later the government bought the land and remaining timber at a price equal to Tainter's initial proposal minus the value of the stumpage liquidated. From this point on, negotiations between Tainter and the Forest Service became increasingly congenial, and Tainter's valuations were seldom quibbled with.

Eventually Publishers Paper Company and Conway Lumber Company sold some 204,000 acres to the White Mountain National Forest, more than a quarter of its present extent. Although timber barons such as J.E. Henry, George Van Dyke, and the Saunders family have become local legends while Louis Tainter has remained obscure, not one of them (and perhaps no two of them) delivered as much land to the public as did Tainter and the two companies he ran.

The importance of these lands to the National Forest rests as much on their quality as their quantity. Mount Washington itself (except for the summit, cog railway, and carriage road) was Conway Lumber Company land; so was much of the rest of the Presidential Range. Other beautiful and beloved areas acquired by the people from Publishers Paper or Conway Lumber include: Mount Chocorua, Passaconaway, Whiteface and the Bowl Research Natural Area, Moat Mountain, Bear Mountain, Attitash, Black Mountain and Doublehead, Humphrey's Ledge, Tripyramid, part of Osceola and Tecumseh, the lands through which the eastern section of the Kancamagus Highway now passes including the Covered Bridge and Blackberry Ledge Campgrounds, Russell Pond where Louis Tainter had a hunting camp, Gordon Pond and Trail, the entire Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest, and part of Mount Liberty.

The Tomb on Whiteface

Unfortunately, Louis Tainter died of cancer before the transfer of lands from his companies to the National Forest could be completed. However it is clear, from documents in the acquisition files and statements made by contemporary lumbermen, that he was the driving force behind the sale of Conway Lumber Company and Publishers Paper Company lands. The momentum of his policy carried the company forward after his death.

By November, 1919, Louis Tainter was seriously ill. In his Boston home he prepared his will, stating:

"I direct that my body be cremated; and it is my desire, if the consent of the department officials can be obtained, that the ashes be enclosed in an indestructible container of copper or other appropriate material, and securely deposited in a suitable excavation hollowed out of the solid rock upon the ledges on Whiteface Mountain which are situated, according to my present recollection, upon Lot 49, in Waterville, New Hampshire, said lot, together with other lands formerly owned by the Publishers Paper Company, having been acquired by the United States of America, through its Forest Service,

as a part of the White Mountain Forest Reserve. If this disposition of my ashes can not be made, then I desire that they be scattered to the winds at some spot in the White Mountains."



Louis S. Tainter

Louis Tainter succumbed to cancer on January 25, 1920. His funeral was held in Boston three days later. The Pilgrim Quartet played for the service. The "big mill" in Conway was closed that day out of respect for the departed leader. On September 19 of the same year his ashes were carried to the summit of Mount Whiteface, placed in a crypt that had been hollowed from the rock and covered with a bronze memorial tablet. The party that made the climb consisted of friends, family, and lords of the timber industry. One intrepid soul lugged a movie camera and shot a film of the proceedings that played as a short subject for three nights in Louis Tainter's home town in Wisconsin.

The Bowl, Threatened and Saved

In the spring of 1914 the Wonalancet intervale was roused by fears that the Publishers Paper Company intended to set up a mill in the midst of the cottages here, and log the slopes of Mount Whiteface. Kate Sleeper Walden, founder of the WODC, sprang into action. When Louis Tainter stopped by the Wonalancet Farm to talk business with her husband, she buttonholed Tainter and obtained an option to buy 3000 acres on the watershed of the Wonalancet Brook for \$50,000 —

money both parties knew she did not have.

Since raising that large sum privately was not a realistic option, the efforts of the Wonalancet people turned to impelling the federal government to acquire the land for the nascent White Mountain National Forest. However, the National Forest Reservation Commission, which held ultimate control over each purchase, operated under a stated policy of acquiring forest lands in large blocks. Kate Walden was informed that an isolated parcel of 3000 acres would be a poor candidate for purchase.

On May 21, presumably after further discussions between the lumber company, Kate Walden, and the government, Louis Tainter tendered to the Forest Service an option to purchase 2835 acres in the watershed of the Wonalancet Brook for \$50,000. Together with other land offered at this time and previously, the parcel would meet the government's large block requirement. To give negotiations the best chance for success, Publishers Paper Company delayed the start of their logging operation.

Meanwhile Kate Walden mounted a lobbying campaign designed to apply pressure in favor of the purchase. Her Wonalancet partisans collected signatures on a petition, and enlisted everyone they could find to write a letter to the powers in Washington. Senator Jacob Gallinger of New Hampshire was singled out for particular attention. He was not targeted because of any sympathy with the cause — on the contrary, he had stated flatly that the land offered was not worth the price. Neither was Gallinger's support sought because of his access to the esteemed potency of the United States Senate. His operational importance was far more direct; he was one of the seven members of the National Forest Reservation Commission.

On July 20 the WODC held a special meeting to consider campaign strategy. The option to purchase could be withdrawn by Publishers Paper at any time after July 21. Yet the government seemed to be dragging its feet. In reply to letters from WODC members, Senator Gallinger complained that the government had been able to acquire large tracts of land in North Carolina from the

Vanderbilts for \$5.00 an acre, far less than Tainter was asking.

Edgar J. Rich (Who Is E.J. Rich? *WODC Newsletter*, June 1993, P.3), a prominent Boston lawyer and a stalwart of the WODC, wrote back — Republican to Republican — stating that "The Vanderbilts were individuals and could sell their land at any price they saw fit; the officers of the Publishers Paper Company were trustees for their stockholders and they could not, even if they would, put a price on their property which would be less than its fair value."

The dispute over valuation was probably settled primarily on the basis of timber cruises done by a Forest Service Examiner during the summer. His appraisal was slightly less than Tainter's asking price. In turn he recommended that the government offer ten percent less than the appraised value. This recommendation became the figure at which the National Forest Reservation Commission finally approved the purchase on September 2, 1914.

At the same September 2 meeting the Commission also approved the purchase of Mount Washington and much of the Presidential Range from Conway Lumber Company, another deal designed by Louis Tainter. Naturally this purchase overshadowed the Wonalancet purchase in both the New Hampshire and national press. But we can well imagine that here in the intervale, a collective sigh of relief was brought forth.

Louis S. Tainter and the WODC

The archives of the WODC contain a fascinating series of letters between Edgar J. Rich and Louis Tainter which were exchanged a few weeks after the Wonalancet purchase was approved. They give a rare insight into the possible motives of timber owners who sold their land to the National Forest.

Tainter's office in downtown Boston was just a short walk from Rich's. He wrote to Rich: "I wish some day when you have a little leisure time that you would call in at the office, or let me go to your office and give you a bit of inside history as to the negotiations, which were all open and above board. I want to show you that the Publishers Paper Company and the Conway Lumber Company are not soulless corporations, and that they have

endeavored to meet the views of the Government, actually selling the land and timber for less money than they could have gotten out of it by operating."

Speaking in terms of the business sense which both men shared, Tainter asserted that the "Forest Service has made a purchase at a price that, by the operation of the timber under Forestry methods, will pay them at least 5% upon the investment from now on to the end of time." (In 1914 high-grade 30-year corporate bonds were yielding about 4%.)

Rich wrote back accepting the invitation, and reassured Tainter that: "In talking with men who have been especially interested in the preservation of the White Mountain forests, I find the unanimous sentiment to be that the attitude of the Publishers Paper Company had been entirely fair, although I have found some criticism of the methods employed by the Government."

Today's historian can only dream of what might have been said when the two men sat down to share "inside history." Just as the forest has grown to obscure the fact that it was stripped and burned in a distant era, so has time covered the events of the past with layers of modernity. It has become impossible to know for sure just how far Louis Tainter went out of his way to help the little hiking club in Wonalancet. Ironically, it is now the club that serves the lumberman, as we are the custodians of the trails that lead to his memorial. In a broader sense it may now be said that we have become custodians not only of the memorial — but of the memory itself.

Douglas McVicar

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In order to thoroughly investigate issues, the Council outlined eight major work areas: biological resources, conservation strategies, land use conversion, local forest based economies, property taxes, recreation and tourism, state and federal taxes, and a natural and economic resource inventory. Each issue was studied in detail by a working group of about 20 experts, using research data compiled by professionals hired for the purpose. During the investigations citizen participation was encouraged and utilized.

1994 Summer Activities Calendar

- May 14** Harden and drain a section of **Blueberry Ledge Trail**. Joint work trip and dinner with AMC Wonalancet Cabin.
- May 26** Spring clean-up of the **Big Rock Cave Trail** by the **Over-The-Hill-Gang**.
- June 3-5** **National Trails Day**: Backcountry overnight to brush and blaze **Walden Trail**.
- June 25** **Cabin Trail** brushing and drainage clearing.
- July 16** **NH Trails Day**: Brush and clear drainage on **Bennett Street Trail** followed by the **Annual WODC Barbecue**.
- Aug 6-7** **Trail volunteers weekend**. Saturday we'll clear water bars on **Dacey's Mill Trail** with Sunday open for other diversions.
- Aug 7** **Deborah Frock** demonstration and slides on **Llamas**. 4:00 p.m. at Wonalancet Chapel.
- Aug 21** 11:00 a.m. At Ferncroft kiosk. **Easy hike and trail-work inspection**. 4:00 Trails presentation at Wonalancet Chapel. 5:30 Potluck supper at Grove. 7:00 WODC Annual Meeting at Wonalancet Chapel.
- Aug 27** Joint work trip with **Chocorua Mountain Club** on **Whittin Brook Trail**. Potluck supper to follow.
- Sept 17** **Kelley Trail** sidehill repair with the assistance of **Trailwrights**. A pizza dinner will follow.
- Oct 8** *Project to be determined*. Watch for notice at Kiosk or phone Peter Smart at 603-323-8666.

As the next to last step, in March of 1994 the Council released a comprehensive package of specific recommendations which it believes will encourage the long-term protection of the NFL, and if implemented will sustain the cultural and economic character of the region. The strategy detailed in the recommendations is based on three interrelated objectives: to strengthen the forest-based economy of the region, to foster long-term stewardship of private land holdings, and to encourage public acquisition of land when that property has exceptional public values.

In all the Council makes 33 specific recommendations — too many and too detailed to present here.

Following two months of public comment, review, and rewriting by Council members, final recommendations will be released in September 1994 to Congress, governors, local elected officials, and the general public.

I have made an effort to follow the process as it has unfolded through the

years, and have studied the draft recommendations in detail. I would like to share my present thoughts and opinions. A good beginning has been made, but protecting forest lands is a long and controversial process. Present recommendations are reasonable and carefully worded, but bland. They are designed to find common ground between members of the environmental community who seek action, and members of the property rights movement who want no part of any state or federal role in protecting NFL. I shall support the recommendations at the April listening sessions because they are a necessary first step.

There are several notable omissions in the list of recommendations. (1) The NFL were studied as a unit unrestricted by political boundaries. Protection of wildlands in all four states is at stake. The forests are contiguous; moose, deer, robins, and brook trout move freely within the forests, seemingly unconcerned with state lines. Yet the Council

recommends no joint action by the states, nor continuation of the working relationships initiated in previous meetings. The formation of some entity, with participation by members from the four states, broadly representative of the people, should be recommended.

(2) There is need of a quick response acquisition program in the northern New England states whereby sums of money are held in readiness for situations where forest land comes on the market quickly, with little prior warning. The program would resemble that of the Nature Conservancy, be broadly based, and utilize the resources of area people, that is, not a national program.

(3) The Council should recommend and encourage the formation of community action groups such as the Community Action Task Force, a citizens organization of Berlin, NH, which focuses on regional issues of concern to the people of Northern New Hampshire. To paraphrase the words of the Coordinator of the Task Force, its members believe strongly that the communities themselves should not simply wait and see what happens. They feel that the communities should organize and be proactive in resisting in every way possible the sale of the mills. These are our jobs, our families, our communities, and we must do everything we can to protect them.

How can you help protect the NFL? Here are several suggestions. Obtain a copy of the draft recommendations by phoning the Northern Forest Lands Council at 603-224-6590. Attend a public listening session during April and early May. Locations, dates, and times, are available by calling 603-271-2214 or the Council. Most importantly, express your opinions in a letter to the Northern Forest Lands Council at 54 Portsmouth Street, Concord, NH 03301.

The Executive Committee of WODC has approved this brief report to members, and suggests:

- Support the draft recommendations.
- Write to your Congressmen urging them to increase Land and Water Conservation Funds funding to the NFL region. This Congressional fund provides money to the states to purchase land, easements, and to develop outdoor recreational facilities.

In recent years the appropriation of funds to the northeastern states has been disproportionately small when compared with what has been provided other regions of the country.

○ Write to your Congressmen urging them to fund the Forest Legacy Program more consistently and adequately. Emphasize the need of: the option of state ownership of easements, the option of direct grants to states, payments in lieu of taxes to communities for easements, amending the "Purpose" section of the law to include timber management, and funding of states for monitoring easement compliance.

Should you wish further information or assistance, phone or write the WODC Newsletter Editor at 603-323-8693.

George E. Ziuk

TREKKING AND TRACKING

When Dick Fortin, the naturalist from Tin Mountain Conservation Center, began talking to a small group of WODC members about bounders, he was not referring to an Englishman who had cheated on his wife, but to animals which leap, touch the ground with both forefeet, and then place their hindfeet in nearly the same prints. Then again, maybe new meaning is given when one considers that bounders are mostly in the weasel family.

In the middle of March, with two feet of snow on the ground outside the Cook Memorial Library in Tamworth, Dick, surrounded by skulls, bones, and bottles of scat, gave us a primer on identifying signs of animals in their habitats. The field trip which followed presented less than perfect tracking conditions. It had been warm the previous day followed by freezing temperatures at night, making the snow too hard for tracks to be easily observed.

Ragged tips of red maple sprouts which had been chewed by molars, presented the first unmistakable sign, although not recent, of deer foraging. Given the snow depths, the deer, growing leaner during this hard winter, would be in yards under hemlock trees. Farther along the path, bark stripped from trees gave further evidence of deer struggling for survival.

And then TRACKS. A single track showed a canine arrangement of toes in a semicircle around a pad, with the print longer than wide. The prints were evenly placed and directly in front of one another, indicating a "perfect walker." Dogs give erratic tracks and varied gaits. We were in the fox family. The tracks were recent and had not been enlarged by melting, so we felt confident in measuring them. Five centimeters in length. We referred to a wallet size green laminated card, on loan from Dick, which was a compendium of sign information. Try EMS if you want one. Voila! A gray fox.

Onward. Snow tunnels, chewed nuts, tips of hemlock twigs littering the snow. A pit is dug to seek evidence of a subsnow air layer caused by earth warming, in which rodents travel.

No more tracks but a great walk in the woods on a pleasant day. Questions from us for Dick to ponder. Why do deer rub the velvet off their antlers?

We even left a track for the denizens to contemplate. One of our party stepped off the trail and sunk to her waist in snow. A sure sign of a homo sans sapiens.

John Mersfelder

LLAMAS ON TRAILS?

On August 7, at 4 p.m. in the Chapel Grove, the topic will be llamas. Deborah Frock, a resident of Freedom, will demonstrate the virtues of llamas as hiking companions and burden bearers.

Llamas are usually placid animals, intelligent and appealing. They have a natural curiosity. Watching Deborah with her animals, one is aware of her enthusiasm, and the understanding gained by several years breeding and raising them.

Llamas have become increasingly popular as domestic animals in the past ten years in the United States. Deborah would like to see them used more often. This is a good opportunity for children and adults to learn about the animal. Shall we see llamas on our trails in the future?

Sally Zink