

Fall Quarterly Meeting, October 1, 2022,

Burke Mountain Clubhouse – East Burke, Vermont

Called to Order- NEK GMC President, John Predom, welcomed everyone (in person and online) and called the meeting to order at 4:08 P.M. The attendees introduced themselves including Geoff Commons, Jeff Morris, Ed Guest , Andrea Kane, Kevin Williamson, Sue Winsor, Gwyn Worthington, Beth Barnes, Paul Trojano, Cathi Brooks, John Predom, and Michael Chernick.

John spoke of his pride in the section's accomplishments Several NEKGMC hikes occurred this past summer, as well as ad hoc events. Meet and Greets are continuing to succeed. The Long Trail Day was a success, both from a hiking and financial perspectives. John thanked both leaders and participants. Next hike is on October 15 after wood stacking

Secretary's Report – NEKGMC Secretary, Michael Chernick, highlighted the minutes of the July 2022 summer quarterly meeting.

MOTION [Brooks/Barnes] moved to approve the secretary's minutes as submitted.

Approved unanimously

Treasures' Report – NEKGMC Treasurer, Angela Smith, submitted the following report, which Michael summarized in Angela's absence:

Northeast Kingdom Section ~ Green Mountain Club

Quarterly Financial Statement

As of September 30, 2022

Operating Account

Beginning Balance (as of 07/13/22) \$5,625.65

Income

Dues Sharing

June \$126.25

Expenses

Beth Barnes (Reimbursement) \$15.18

Northwoods Stewardship Center \$500.00

Burke Mountain Clubhouse \$100.00

Ending Balance \$5,136.72

Main Club sent info for July \$161.25 and Aug \$173.75 but hasn't been deposited yet into our account

Certificate of Deposit

CD#1 ...4489/Matures 01/12/2023 @.40% \$1,592.53

Grand Total All Monies \$8,482.98

Angela Smith ~ Treasurer

GMC Board Report – NEKGM Main Club Board Director, Cathi Brooks reported on the September Board meeting. There was a slight surplus at the end of the FY 2022. The field season has been very busy. The Burrough's Trail project continued, and staff salaries have been raised. The Club is receiving membership income at a slightly lower but acceptable level. The Capital Campaign ended with quite a bit of success. Right at end a million-dollar anonymous donation was received. Going forward the Club is set up very well financially. Endowments are down, as are stock funds generally. Staff cases of COVID still occur, but the Club has implemented a planned response. The process of collecting data to develop a new strategic plan is proceeding forward. Since the Capital Campaign concluded, members who had volunteered time on that effort are working on the strategic plan survey. The plan will set forth goals and policies for the next five years that take into account changing demographics and equity-diversity issues. After the last Board meeting an equity-diversity training session was held.

Among other items, the Club's finances and related revenue receipts are tracking close to last year, noting the slight membership revenue shortfall. Handwritten thank you notes were sent regarding Capital Campaign participation, and Cathi thought this was a nice gesture, which is no longer typical.

An airlift was completed for construction at Stratton Pond. Major donors were invited to celebration dinner and a Long Trail Day Website was launched. A video on Burrough's Trail restoration project being developed. Ridgeline Society contributors are being recognized, A 100th anniversary issue of the LTN will be published for winter 2023. New vehicles are being acquired for 2023. A new road sign on Route 100 will be installed shortly. A new edition of 50 Hikes in Vermont is forth coming.

The Visitors' Center is now opened six days a week. July-Aug total sales (online/onsite) were \$26,000 plus. Two months' worth of AmeriCorps crew participated in the Burrough's Trail reconstruction, along with other excellent crew members from various organizations. New privies were installed at several sites.

The construction of the long anticipated new camp at Wheeler Pond is starting this month (October 2022). The Main Club Board has voted to name the new camp in Jean Haigh's memory.

The latest Hadsel Mares figure was 96 percent full (33 percent GMC members). Hadsel Mares is now closed until construction on the Jean Haigh Camp is completed. Hadsel Mares will house the construction crew.

There is a Land Conservation Committee working to secure land adjacent to the LT. Sterling Pond Shelter is not being named for Dave Hardy in deference to his widow's request.

Cathi has received compliments on GMC activity in the NEK.

T-Shirts – Cathi reported that locally based Kingdom Embroidery was selected to produce the new tee shirts. We are getting the tri-blend version in blue and the performance shirts in a dark green. The productions cost per color is \$25.00. There will probably be four colors per shirt. The tri-blend shirts will cost \$13 a piece and the performance version \$15.00 per shirt. They will be short sleeve (long sleeve could be ordered if the section desires) and both in male and female cuts will be available. There was discussion of the design. It will feature the GMC logo with "Northeast Kingdom" below. The squiggly trail line is removed (it was seen as a distraction), but the trail list remains. The organization of the list may need to be modified.

Membership – NEKGMC Membership Coordinator and Newsletter Editor, Beth Barnes, reported that the NEKGMC’s membership number is rising and now stands at 292 (Main Club staff thought “That is Great”) Beth’s goal is to raise it to 300 by the end of October. Beth is proud of this effort. That might be a newsletter notation Everyone is busy selling the idea of GMC. Congratulations to all. Everything went right on Long Trail Day for the NEK Section John welcomed everyone and the attendees introduced themselves.

Wheeler Camps – NEKGMC Vice President and GMC Camps’ Committee Chair, Paul Trojano, reported on the imminent commencement of the Jean Haigh Camp’s construction. A lean-to will be built on the lower level for wood storage and Paul assumes probably a second one on top level. With two camps, there will be need for a 10-cord capacity. On October 15th, a wood stacking session will occur bringing (hopefully) 5 cords from the upper to lower existing sheds. GMC Director of Field Operations, Keegan Tierney, is examining a new camp access pathway, other than the existing steep trail. Keegan still needs a carpenter for the Jean Haigh Camp construction project. Hadsel Mares, as mentioned above, is now closed till the end of the year. Paul indicated the more the better on the fifteenth, in terms of participation. John Predom will pay one-half the expense for fancy doughnut for the event.

Trails Adoption – NEKGMC Trails Coordinator, Kevin Williamson, reported that the Long Pond Trail on Bald Mountain, the East Trail on Mount Pisgah, and the accessible trail at Victory Basin require new adopters. FPR (Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation) Recreation Specialist Luke has a concern about a tree cutting situation in a sensitive area on the South Shore Trail at Lake Willoughby. The tree cutting should not have occurred without Luke’s review. It is a sensitive area as its adjacent to the shoreline of Lake Willoughby.

FPR Update – Luke submitted the following FPR update on trail construction and maintenance activities:

Spurred by the two-year pandemic, recreation use and visitation remained very high in 2022. Activities in the Northeast Kingdom (FPR District 5) were heavily focused on high use areas, as well as routine maintenance to keep trails, shelters, and parking areas in good condition. Work includes special ‘one-time’ capital projects, contracted trail crew and infrastructure projects, annual trail roving, and ‘spot’ maintenance projects to address ad hoc needs such as sign replacement, trail blazing, and shelter work. In addition, District staff have already begun prioritizing work for 2023 and beyond.

Below is a summary of work completed in FY2022:

Capital Projects

- Completed work on the Willoughby State Forest ‘Ballfield’ overflow parking area
- Substantially completed the new 2-tier WSF South End parking area
- Work is on-going to improve cartop boat access near the ‘East Cove’ at Lake Willoughby
- Replaced the Bald Mountain fire tower roof and made minor repairs to sheet metal siding
- Completed minor repairs and stained Bald Mountain summit cabin (NWSC)
- Completed minor repairs, elevated & re-set footings, and stained Umpire lean-to on Golden Trail in Victory SF, Burroughs lean-to and Red Trail lean-to on CCC Fire Road in Darling SP, Peacham Pond lean-to in Groton SF, and Coldwater Brook Camp in Groton SF (FPR staff)
- Completed Bald Mountain Mad Brook Trailhead parking area
- Graded the CCC Road in Willoughby SF

- Completed substantial road maintenance in Bill Sladyk WMA

Contracted Crew Projects

- Completed 2 weeks of trail restoration on Willoughby Shore Trail (NWSC)
- Completed 1 week of shore restoration at Willoughby South End (NWSC)
- Completed 2 weeks of trail work on Peacham Bog Loop in Groton SF (NWSC)
- Completed 2 weeks of trail work at Seyon Lodge SP in Groton SF (STC)
- Installed new puncheon on lower Gore Mountain Trail (NWSC)
- Unknown Pond Trail adjustments (NWSC)

Trail Roving

Roved and maintained the following trails (roving is defined as clearing trail corridors, maintaining drainages and treadway, and repairing bridges, signs, and kiosks):

- Groton SF Trails- Owls Head, Osmore Pond, Big Deer, Little Deer, Kettle Pond, Telephone Line, Coldwater Brook, Hosmer Brook, Peacham Pond, and Peacham Bog Loop trails (State Trail Crew)
- Willoughby SF Trails- Pisgah North and South, Moose Mountain (roved and blazed), Burke Mountain, Moose Bog, Gore Mountain (NWSC, FPR staff)
- Brighton SP trails (roved and blazed) (FPR staff)
- South segment Bluff Ridge Trail (STC)
- Bennet Road ROW to Darling SP (waterbars installed)(NWSC, FPR staff)

'Spot' Projects

- Signpost and sign installation at Groton SF, Moose Mountain, Brighton SP
- Darling SP boundary blazing
- Willoughby area risk management meeting with Glover Rescue
- Continuous monitoring at South End Lake Willoughby

Upcoming (fall 2022)

- Darling SP West Peak and Red Trail lean-to maintenance (STC, FPR staff)
- Burke Mountain summit trail patrol (STC)
- Burke Mountain (upper) Red Trail & West Peak Trail assessment (FPR)
- Pisgah South Trail assessment (FPR)
- Peacham Bog boardwalk assessment (FPR)
- Devils Hill Trail maintenance (STC)
- Holbrook SP roving (STC)
- Darling SP boundary maintenance (FPR)
- Willoughby SF boundary maintenance (FPR)
- New trail signs and signposts at Willoughby SF CCC Camp S-55, Groton SF Osmore Pond area, and Seyon Lodge SP (STC, FPR staff)

2023 and beyond

- Peacham Bog boardwalk replacement
- Pisgah South Trail route adjustments
- Burke Mountain Trails maintenance and adjustments
- Groton multi-use trails maintenance upgrades
- Shelter maintenance at GSF Peacham Pond lean-to, VSF Tug Hill lean-to, DSP West Peak lean-to
- Black Mountain access management

I would like to acknowledge and thank the many Northeast Kingdom Green Mountain Club trail adopters for their good work and service and, particularly, Kevin Williamson and John Predom, for their leadership. Trail adopters provide a crucial service on FPR-managed lands by addressing routine maintenance and reporting incidents, conditions, and needs. Thank you!

Please note that FPR manages trails to meet appropriate trail guidelines and standards. This is an on-going and evolving process. If you have questions about your work or adopted trail, please reach out for guidance especially when it involves potentially substantial work or changes to trail conditions.

NorthWoods Stewardship Update – Maria Young of the NorthWoods Stewardship Center submitted the following NorthWoods update on trail construction and maintenance and related hiking activities:

From Maria Young, Executive Director:

NEK Mountain Trail Guide Second Edition shared as a resource to the community and thanks to the volunteer efforts of Kevin Williamson to distribute those.

Ongoing partnership with the Westmore Association for Westmore area trail projects which supported work on the Westmore Town Forest trails and the Bald Mtn fire warden's cabin upkeep this summer.

The completion of the 6th Annual Westmore Mountain Challenge, many thanks to the GMC NEK Club volunteers and trail adopters.

Partnership with GMC and VTFPR on the Burrows Trail of Camel's Hump, underway now.

We awarded the First Jean Haigh Memorial Award for free entry into the Westmore Mountain Challenge, Ami English was the recipient.

We are happy to be able to be the venue for 2 map and compass workshops, and thank Gordon Dubois for sharing his expertise with the community, and the GMC NEK club for their donation which helps support venue costs.

We've also been sending out a number of NEK Mountain Challenge completion patches, and responding to a wide variety of questions that arise about trail etiquette, descriptions, access etc.

We have increased Kelsey Evan's position from part time communications role to full time communications director. This is very important as it can take quite a bit of work to stay up on being proactive about sharing our work, public accessibility, and responding to community questions.

We are putting in quite a bit of work and \$ on our own trail this fall to make some real upgrades around drainage, which will make a big difference come ski and snowshoe season this year out on the Hopkins Hill Trail. We are looking to establish a backcountry connector that would link the main lodge/campus to the trailheads on Echo Lake and Jordan Road.

Also, we are beginning a feasibility study of an ALL Persons Trail (ADA) at the NorthWoods campus.

We will reach out to GMC NEK Club members to join us to provide feedback as we consider that

route.

From Dusty May, Conservation Corps Director:

BreadLoaf Wilderness/ Long Trail and Appalachian Trail – Green Mtn National Forest – Trail Maintenance and Restoration

Lye Brook Wilderness/ Long Trail – Green Mtn NF- Trail Maintenance and Restoration

Burrows Trail- Camels Hump State Forest- Trails Restoration and Stone structures

Gore Mtn- Trail Patrol and Bog Bridge Replacement

Unknown Pond Trail- Trail Patrol and Trail Adjustments

Middle Mtn Trail- Trail Patrol

Pisgah South and North- Trail Patrol

Burke Mtn Trails- Trail Patrol

Moose Bog Trail- Trail Patrol

Cow Mtn- Trail Patrol, Drainage Construction, Bog Bridge construction, and Signage

Bald Mtn Cabin Restoration- Including Privy maintenance, painting of cabin and roof repair

Assisted with Bald Mtn Fire tower roof Restoration

Bluff Community Trail – Trail Patrol

Westmore Town Forest- Trail Patrol

Bald Mtn Long Pond trail- Trail Patrol

Willoughby Shore Trail- Trail Restoration Projects

Groton State Forest- Peacham Bog Trail- Trail adjustments and Sustainable trail construction

Please thank everyone for their efforts this trail season for me. I look forward to our continued partnership with the GMC and hope to catch up over the winter.

History Project – Andrea will return to the project later this fall once her professional season duties are concluded.

Section Outings Chair – John has been filling both (Section President and Outings) roles and would like another person to fill this role. Susan Windsor is considering accepting the position. The membership in attendance encouraged her to consider it.

Next Meeting – Sunday January 22 (possibly at NorthWoods)

Adjournment – The fall quarterly meeting adjourned by a unanimously offered motion at approximately 5:10 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Chernick, NEKGMC Section Secretary