

Northeast Kingdom Section – Green Mountain Club, Fall Annual Meeting, October 12, 2025, Barton Vermont- Jean Haigh Cabin at Wheeler Pond Camps

(Note: These minutes are based on transcribed recorded audio that John Predom provided).

Welcome – NEKGMC President John Predom started the meeting with each attendee introducing him or herself. Those in attendance were John Predom, Linda Caamano, Saul Costa, Sue Winsor, Victor Caamano, Luke O’Brien, and Paul Trojano.

Secretary’s Report – In the absence of NEKGMC Secretary Michael Chernick, NEKGMC Vice President Paul Trojano read highlights from the July 2025 summer quarterly meeting. In the belief that a quorum was not present, no vote on approving the minutes was recorded. nor any other vote taken.

President’s Report – NEKGMC President John Predom offered the following comments:

“Recently, while reviewing old documentation, I discovered a document authored in May of 2000 titled “Organizational Meeting Planned” In it, “Dear Northeast Kingdom Trails Hiker,” which would be all of us, were invited to attend a potluck dinner and informational meeting with fellow GMC members who are interested in forming a new Green Mountain Club section, to be named the Northeast Kingdom section. Anyone may attend, whether they are currently a GMC member. “Our new section will be responsible for providing and promoting public input into trail creation and maintenance and will also be a resource for the existing state parks and forest trails, as well as new Nulhegan Basin Division of the Conte Wildlife Refuge. As these trails get more organized, we may also take on the specific maintenance responsibilities. We expect to have a fresh group of people to meet, most of whom have been hiking on these lands on their own. By pooling our energy and enthusiasm, we can help shape our resources and protect them as tourism develops in the area, children are welcome. What we share with them now will be a continued trail legacy.”

“In June of 2000, 15 people attended the meeting and organized this section. Twelve of those people became members, so their goal was “getting together with like-minded people interested in providing and preserving hiking opportunities and land and wildlife stewardship in the Northeast Kingdom that topped the list. Several people raised the need for local participation well beyond this initial start for the section to do its best for the region.” As a tribute to the astounding members, let’s continue their journey. So, you know, we are.

Treasurer’s Report – NEKGMC Treasurer Angela Smith submitted, in advance, the following report dated October 8, 2025.

Northeast Kingdom Section ~ Green Mountain Club, Quarterly Financial Statement, As of October 8, 2025

Operating Account

Beginning Balance (as of 07/19/25) \$2,307.62

Income

Dues Sharing

Jun / Jul / Aug (posted 09/22/25) \$185.00

Other Deposits

Random (anyone know what this is from?) \$70.00

Expenses

John Predom (Reimb. WMC Snacks) \$294.23

NWSC – Chain Saw Class \$258.87

Kingdom Embroidery \$432.60

Ending Balance \$1,576.92

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Certificate of Deposit

CD#1 ...4489/Matures 01/12/2026 @.40% \$1,620.20

CD#2 ...3785/Matures 06/27/2026 @.40% \$1,781.36

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Grand Total All Monies \$4,978.48

Angela Smith ~ Treasurer

In Angela Smith's absence, Paul Trojano read the report aloud. Luke O'Brien inquired regarding the low interest rate on the CDs. Paul explained that you would have to put \$10,000 in to take advantage of a 4.5% rate. There are minimum balances required (for example \$10,000 or \$25,000). Unless the Club would extend us the cash they put in and out." We've looked into it.

Director's Report – NEKGMC Director to the Main Club Cathi Brooks was absent. NEKGMC President John Predom read her submitted report.

"The Board (Main Club) meeting in September didn't have a field report and focused mainly on explaining the governance review with voting planned for our December meeting. A summary of finances had GMC ending [the latest reporting period] with a positive balance of of \$87,000 in revenue. Mike (DeBonis) briefly chatted about field activities, which included Belvidere reroute and Jean Haigh cabin work. Alicia DeCoco reported on Long Trail Day success. I have lots of t-shirts, blue cotton blend for \$15, performance green at \$20, and hats (five left) for \$18. Enjoy the day.

Corridor Management Update – NEKGMC President John Predom asked section member and, VT Department of Forest, Parks and Recreation Specialist, Luke O'Brien, to update the meeting's attendees on the Kingdom Heritage Lands hiking corridor manager transfer from GMC to NorthWoods Stewardship Center. Luke explained that the administrative process to effectuate the transfer of the management responsibilities remains a work in progress. At John's request, Luke also discussed the continuing exploration of overnight camping on the KHT. There are options, although any final decisions are still in the future. Discussions with adjacent private landowners are a critical factor in establishing an overnight camping site.

Forest, Parks and Recreation Update – Luke O'Brien presented a report on FPR activities, aside from the Kingdom Heritage Trail issues. Luke spoke of a busy summer and reviewed a variety of projects that FPR worked on during the summer of 2025. A discussion on aspects of Luke's report followed his presentation.

GMC Bylaws & Governance Review – NEKGMC President John Predom discussed the Main Club's governance review project. He explained that a committee of 10-12 individuals has been formed to examine GMC governance matters and propose recommendations to the Main Club Board. A primary

objective is to reduce the size of the Board from the current 31 members to a smaller 7 to 13 seats. It is envisioned that only one Board member would represent all the sections. The exact size of the proposed new Board has yet to be determined. A final proposal would be subject to a club-wide vote.

Long Trail Day – NEKGMC President John Predom reported the 2025 Long Trail Day fundraising goal (club wide) was \$80,000. Ultimately, \$74,000, the most ever raised on any Long Trail Day, was tallied. The goal for our section was \$2,000 and the NEK's total raised was an impressive \$2,777. Linda Caamano was the section's most successful fundraiser. The NEKGMC had 39 donors. This was the largest donor group associated with any Long Day Trail team. The section scored the highest amount raised by a section. Only the directors' team raised a larger amount. John spoke of continuing these annual hikes further to the south, with a long-term goal of the NEKGMC having hiked the entire trail.

Membership Update – NEKGMC Membership Chair Victor Caamano, observed that the Club has not been sharing membership data with the sections on a timely and regular basis. Supposedly, after a recent Zoom call of the sections' membership chairs, the data flow would improve. As of this NEKGMC's quarterly meeting that has not occurred. John Predom reported he has received data on 17 members for the months of June, July, and August. Victor and John discussed software problems and the hope the process will improve in the future.

NorthWoods Update - NorthWoods Stewardship Center Executive Director Maria Young summarized a written report that thanked the NEKGMC for its volunteer efforts at the 2025 Westmore Mountain Challenge. John Predom affirmed the NEKGMC's commitment to supporting this annual regional hiking event. She reviewed various NorthWoods 2025 trails related projects along the Westmore Challenge's route, including the Bald Mountain Carry. She cited 2025 efforts at Burke, Groton, the Pisgah South Trail, Sentinel Rock and improving canoe access on the Passumpsic River. Maria also discussed other Vermont projects, including work in the Green Mountain Nation Forest and in various White Mountain National Forest and other New Hampshire sites.

Beaver Deceiver – John Predom and Luke O'Brein discussed the beaver deceiver, which Skip Lyle, who was not present at the meeting, has developed.

John: I was asked so many times what was going on with the East Trail and there was an interesting article in the NorthWoods e-newsletter about the beaver deceiver.

Luke: I was there I worked with them and apparently Skip Lyle invented the term beaver deceiver.

Camps Update – NEKGMC Vice President Paul Trojano as the Main Club Camps Committee Chair, provided an update on the three GMC camps. He expressed pleasure with the leadership and support of GMC field staff Keegan and Justin, stating "We're all here. We see the work that's been done this summer. It's fantastic. Very happy with Keegan and Justin.

With respect to the Wheeler Pond Camps, Paul noted the contribution of Sterling College students at this weekend's tremendously successful firewood stacking. He plans further firewood shifting in November and believes the North Country High School group might assist. Paul reported that the Jean Haigh and Hadsel Mares Camp were full. There is an issue, possibly related to venting at the outhouse. Main Cub has pumped it whenever he has requested.

Paul commented on the greater heating efficiency, compared to the former Beaver Dam Cabin, of the Jean Haigh Cabin. This can be attributed to its insulated walls and other construction features. As a result, Paul is contemplating reducing the wood order from six to four cords. Presently, he does not see the need to construct a fourth bay, but an additional bay, or the expansion of one of the existing bays may occur in the future.

Issues related to the walkway at Hadsel Mares were mentioned and Paul discussed the matter with Kegan and sent him a photo. Linda Caamano suggested the option of involving Lakes Region High School students in future wood stacking activities.

Outings Overview– Outings Chair Sue Winsor reported wet weather scuttled July hikes but there were kayak excursions on Flag Pond in July and, the Clyde River in August, and another on May Pond that included a picnic. Later in the summer and into the early fall, there were the Bald Mountain Carry, a Percy Peak hike in New Hampshire, Long Trail Day, and the Moose to Hor flagging hike.

Trails Update – In the absence of NEKGMC Trails Coordinator Kevin Williams, John Predom spoke of fall trail work activities, such as water bar cleaning that should be occurring. A couple of trails need new adopters, including the South Middle Mountain Trail and possibly Cow Mountain Pond. Steve Farrow is maintaining Unknown Pond to the Junction. John Predom is covering East Gore and Moose Bog.

Newsletter Editor – John Predom, who is serving as interim newsletter editor commented on an option for seeking a successor. He stated that he thought about reaching out to some Bloggers who are consistently blogging and seeing if they would be interested in being our newsletter editor, because there are some people that I follow, who I think might be interested.

Bee App – Saul Costa, the creator of the Bee App presented information concerning its use and suggested possible NEKGMC applications.

Future Outings – A Golden Road hike is scheduled for November 1. Sue Winsor asked for hike leaders and lamented the difficulty securing individuals willing to lead outings. A road race that same morning was mentioned but these are separate activities. No other events were scheduled at the meeting.

Stolen Sign – A key trail sign was apparently stolen and its replacement was discussed.

Merchandise – John Predom reported, as Cathi Brooks report noted, that she has five more hats and a whole new batch of T-shirts They list all of our trails on the back side of the shirt.

Next Meeting – Although the group tentatively scheduled January 11 at NorthWoods, the date was later changed to the 18th of January at that location.

Adjournment – Motion to Adjourn [Caamano/Winsor] move to adjourn at 2:43 PM.

Approved – Submitted by NEKGMC Secretary Michael Chernick