

# Northeast Kingdom Section-Green Mountain Club

**March Annual Meeting, Lotti Café- East Burke, Vermont, March 29, 2026**

**Attendees** - Steve Agius (Conte Refuge), Charles Hill (North Woods), Debby Dorset (Westmore Association -Trails) , Victor Caamano, Verna Stoddard, Julia Rapczynski, Linda Caamano, Cathi Brooks, Jeff Morris, Janet Steinert, John Predom, Michael Chernick, Allyson Reed, Paul, Trojano, Kevin Williamson, and Luke O'Brien

**Call to Order** – NEKGMC Section President John Predom called the meeting to order at 12:17 P.M.

**Secretary's Report** - The members reviewed the secretary's report, which NEKGMC Secretary , Michael Chernick submitted. One change was the replacement of "Westmore Challenge" with NEK Mountain Challenge, which has been implemented.  
Motion [ Cathi Brooks/Janet Steinert] to approve the secretary's minutes as amended.  
Approved unanimously

**NEK Section Award-** A special NEK Section Award was presented to Kevin Williamson for his many years of organizing trail adoption activities and his numerous roles in leading hikes and other section activities. Cathi Brooks and Luke O'Brien presented the award. Luke spoke of Kevin as the "other young guy" 25 years ago. He referred to Kevin's role as trails coordinator (a role he invented) as incredibly invaluable. Luke also spoke of Kevin's dedication and his return to Monadnock Tower to replace elements when different bolts were needed. Luke further mentioned that Kevin had hiked up Big Jay and Gore in the middle of winter to conduct trail checks. In addition to the actual award, Kevin was presented a wonderful book of photos depicting his years in the NEKGMC.

**Treasurer's Report** – NEK Secretary Angela Smith's report was reviewed in her absence. The report is presented below:

Northeast Kingdom Section ~ Green Mountain Club

Quarterly Financial Statement As of March 20, 2026

## Operating Account

Beginning Balance (as of 01/04/2026)	\$2,144.92
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## Income

### Dues Sharing

Dec	(posted 01/22/26)	\$105.00
Jan	(posted 02/24/26)	\$155.00
Feb (posted	(posted 03/13/26)	\$65.00

### Other Deposits

Cathi- Hats	\$40.00
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## Expenses

01/20 MailChimp	\$13.00
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02/20 MailChimp	\$13.00
03/20 Mail Chimp	\$13.00
Treeline Terr. (award)	\$337.08
<u>Ending Balance</u>	\$2,133.84

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Certificate of Deposit	
CD#1      ....4489/Matures 01/12/2027 @.40%	\$1,630.42
CD#2      ....3785/Matures 06/27/2026 @.40%	\$1,785.79

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Grand Total All Monies	\$5,550.05
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Angela Smith ~ Treasurer

The treasurer's report was accepted as filed.

**Board of Directors Report** - Cathi Brooks, the NEK GMC Director to the Main Club, reported on the March Main Club Board meeting. An initial highlight was the multiple allocations of the recently completed \$2.6 million bequest to the GMC. The recent audit of the Main Club's financial books was successful. This past summer was a good catch-up summer for trail work, with no floods impacting or diverting the crews' attention. The Board voted to allocate \$435,000 for employee (crew) housing construction in southern Vermont. The site is to be determined. Club finances are in good shape.

Cathi reported on the GMC's reorganization process. The change in Board composition is being delayed. The Board has approved transfer of the hiking manager duties for the Kingdom Heritage Trails to the NorthWoods Stewardship Center. GMC volunteers will continue their KHT involvement through a Memorandum of Understanding, which has been entered into and signed, with the NorthWoods Stewardship Center. The Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation must still approve the reassignment of this role to NorthWoods.

GMC membership has been steady but non-membership donations are up. Efforts to improve membership retention are underway. The Main Club Board re-composition vote will not occur until at least 2027. The new Presidents' Committee and an enhanced Trails Management Committee would become central forums for many of the discussions regarding the Main Club's operation.

At his point, John Predom inquired and was informed that the section of the LT between Belvedere and Hazen Notch is now open.

A few current financial highlights for the period May 25-January 26 (with the comparable prior year's data in parentheses)

**Income**

Direct Contributions \$1,155,273 (\$ 767,133); Planned Giving \$76,504 (96,600);  
 Membership Contribution \$118,390 (176,007); Program Revenue \$586,461 (\$910,265);

Sales \$88,576 (\$62,546);  
Total Income \$23,464 (\$18,767); Cost of Goods Sold \$23,464 (\$18,767)  
Gross Profit \$2,1001,739: (\$2,014,185)

#### Expenses

Personnel \$1,527,738 (\$1,407,866); Travel \$5,860 (\$2,385); Contract and Professional \$139,915 (\$94,609); Office Expenses \$261,721 (\$281,976); Insurance \$33,722 (\$29,143);  
Section Payments \$10,083 (\$17,233); Supplies \$73,584 (\$100,569); Vehicle \$77,293 (\$69,941);  
Property & Facility \$102,139 (\$105,603):  
Total Expenses \$2,232,755 (\$2,109,315)  
Net Operating Income \$\$231,116 (\$95,130); Other Income \$1,104,644 (\$686,696); Other  
Expense (25-26 None) (24-25 \$3,plus);  
Net Profit \$873,628 (\$588,211);

**US Fish & Wildlife Service** - Steve Agius - He began his comments referring challenges facing the Conte Refuge. There is no longer a wildlife manager, a visitor's manager, youth conservation funding, or at present a biologist, Conte and NorthWoods will collaborate this summer on two trail crews. There will be work on the North Branch and Pondicherry trails. Some aquatic and restoration work is continuing with use of previously appropriated funds. Non-commercial logging, with scientific related aspects, is currently underway at the refuge. Brook Trout are no longer present in Lewis Pond, whether Brook Trout are restored is a matter under consideration. Steve indicated that if any interest exists in sweeping the refuge's board walks it would be appreciated. There was discussion related to the materials required for a boardwalk. Steve noted that the entire Conte refuge (multiple states) consists of seven million acres.

**NorthWoods (NWS)** - Northern Field Coordinator – Charles Hill – He discussed NWS' assumption of the Kingdom Heritage Trail (KHT) corridor management role, the transition, and the form that volunteers will complete. NWS and the Department of Forests Parks and Recreation (FPR) will be meeting to review the KHT agreement. The construction of camp sites along the KHT is NWS' priority. In the summer, NWS will reach out to stakeholders and local groups. Internally, NWS will create a Kingdom Heritage Committee. In the fall FPR and NWS will hold a public information session. Going into 2027, NWS should receive the official KHT hiking corridor management designation from FPR. But FPR is assuming everything is going forward and acting accordingly in the interim.

Aside from KHT, NWS crews trail will be working at Black Turn Brook, Brousseau, Gore, and Pisgah (biggest project this year). 3 weeks on Pisgah are scheduled with an intent to make the mountain's trails more accessible and sustainable. Trail Work is also planned on Bluff Ridge, the Lyndon State Trail, and at Wheeler Mountain, and a week at Maidstone State Park. Early this summer there should be a reprint of the second edition of the NEK Trail Guide (now and NWS publication).

**FPR** - Luke O'Brien - FPR Recreation Specialist presented FPR's planned trail work projects for the summer of 2026. FPR has received significant financial support for 2026 trail work and July will be busy. Pisgah will be a major focus, continuing a multi-year initiative. There will be a new hiking link between Moose and Wheeler mountains, given the limited parking at Moose. A long-range plan will be released in the near future. He hopes for future funding to improve the Long Trail north of Jay. The public access plans for KHT lands under state jurisdiction should be released soon. FPR is close to acquiring 550 acres of Cole Farm, which will include part of the Telegraph Trail. This acquisition would be folded into Willoughby State Forst. Peacham Bog boardwalk will not be replaced till next year. It will remain largely as it currently exists. There will be 3 weeks of roving crew and one week of roving crew dedicated to accessible trails.

Luke stated that the new NWS- KHT Committee will be similar to GMC's Trail Management Committee and there should be a slot for the NEKGMC.

**Nominations for the 2026-2027 NEKGMC Executive Committee -**

The following individuals were nominated to serve for the 2026-2027 NEKGMC Executive Committee term:

- President – John Predom
- Vice President – Paul Trojano
- Treasure – Angela Smith
- Secretary – Michael Chernick
- Director to the Main Club - Cathi Brooks

There being no other nominations, the following motion was offered:

Motion [Janet Steinert/Luke O'Brien] to direct the secretary to cast one ballot for the entire slate of nominees.

Approved unanimously

**Membership Update** - NEK GMC Membership Coordinator Victor Caamano offered the following membership information:

	Renewals	New	Income
January	10	2	\$155.00
February	6	0	\$65.00
March	NA	NA	

Victor reported there will be information tables this summer at different trailheads as well as at farmers' markets to increase the section's profile. Overall membership appears stable. The drop number is only released once a year. Rhonda at Main Club is now able to be more helpful in providing Victor with the data.

**Wheeler Pond Camps** – Paul Trojano (who chairs the Main Club's Camps Committee) reported that usage has been good. The Jean Haigh Camp needs to be wood stacked once a month. Paul has been restocking the first Tuesday of the month. Next session is April 7 at 10: 00 AM. Paul discussed the type of wood that he is stocking and its maturation process.

We could get interlocking maps for each cabin. There is the problem of individuals wearing micro spikes and snowshoes inside the cabin. Signs requesting individuals to remove their snowshoes and micro spikes would be helpful. Paul will speak to Keegan at Main Club, Also, there has been an order problem emanating from the outhouse.

**Outings** – On March 28, there was a hike at North Branch. As far as future outings, Julie suggested forming an outings committee. John Predom and Paul Trojano discussed recent experiences, including a trip to the summit of Cow Mountain enabling Kevin Williamson to finish his winter NEK 20.

**Trail Adopters** – Kevin Williamson is just beginning to determine which trails need new adopters. The upper section of Middle Mountain and Wheeler Pond are on the list. Paul Trojano suggested that some of Kevin's work hikes be designated as a section event. This would generate more volunteers and interest. There was discussion of using a battery powered unit to conduct the boardwalk sweeping on Conte. Janet Stteinert offered to send e-mail reminders of the events. Kevin thought that if KHT camp sites were developed the designated trail adopter would be responsible for the camp.

**Annual Donations** – The section made the following donation decisions per the motion presented:

Motion [Luke O'Brien/Victor Caaman] moves a donation of \$100 to Burke Mountain Ski Club and \$500 to NWS (Victor Second)

Unanimously approved

**Future Dates** –  
National Trail Day -June 6

Annual Meeting at Main Club – June 13

Brighton Trail Day – June 20 – John Predom desires to form a committee Luke O'Brien offered to help with the planning, John desires to include NWS and Brighton Recreation Department.

Long Trail Day Sept 19 (Suggestion Frank Post to Route 118 ( 7.8 miles)

Westmore Challenge – Sept 26 (will staff a table)

New Hikes - Possible Mud Season hikes may occur.

Sentinel Rock Parking Lot- Luke O'Brien was able to arrange for this past winter's plowing of the Sentinel Rock parking lot.

**NEKGMC Merchandise** - Cathi Brooks reviewed her inventory of NEKGMC merchandise. There were no exclamation points in this presentation. It was suggested placing clothing or publications at membership tables was an option. Cathi will place a new order for hats. John will apply for a permit to place the tables at designated trailheads including the authority to conduct NEKGMC merchandise sales.

**Next Meeting** – July 12 (location to determined)

**Adjournment** –

Motion [Luke O'Brien/Paul Trojano] to adjourn at 2:45 PM

Approved Unanimously

Submitted by,

Michael Chernick, NEK GMC Section Secretry