



NW Camp Committee Annual Report for 2014

Submitted by Rod Parlee, Chairman and Conservation Director

The cabin, constructed of American chestnut continues to stand tall on the Taconic plateau in the very northwest corner of Connecticut tucked away in an old-growth Eastern hemlock forest. The sparkling pristine stream adjacent to the cabin drains to Sages ravine and is part of the Schenob brook watershed drainage basin. This rare watershed has been the target of protection for many years by numerous local, state and national environmental organizations and public agencies. Continuously learning about what makes this watershed so rare is a priority of the Northwest Camp committee. In May, plans were in the works for a botanical study on certain transects. In July, Steve and Rachel Svec of the Allen Bird Club of Springfield, MA volunteered their time and conducted the first phase of a bird inventory.

Members of the Northwest Camp committee had a successful but challenging year of managing Northwest Camp for its 63rd year of lodging. The Committee hosted numerous meetings throughout the year, participated in many conference calls, attended Volunteer Managed Facilities meetings, attended and tabled at the CT Chapter's Annual Gathering and attended, tabled and presented at the 138th Annual Summit.

Both Spring and Fall workparties were very productive with former Caretaker/Chairman, Roy Hoffman serving his gourmet breakfast prior to a day of completing many tasks. Caretaker, Don Klein continues to take pride in organizing the workparties and managing the cabin and the 125 acres, responding expediently to some major repair issues. Registrar, Craig Kennedy took the time to answer the myriad of questions associated with even just one reservation and tracked bednights efficiently. Financial Liaison, Paul Thoma submitted financial reports prior to every meeting. With the report he furnished the committee detailed records of every dollar coming in and going out, projected the budget for the next year and informed the committee when grants were available.

The Committee donated \$200 to the very important Ridgerunner program, led an AT Day hike and hosted its annual Perseids meteor shower party weekend in August. In preparation of the Perseids party from August 8-11th the Committee installed a new Fire pit, solar panel to power an inside LED light strip, added oak slab to bridge tread over stream and measured 250 feet of length for a future Bog Trail bridge. Prior to the meteor shower viewing on Bald Peak, participants enjoyed a tasty cookout at the Camp, then two Power Point presentations powered by the newly acquired battery powered portable projector. The first presentation was titled "Welcome to Northwest Camp" and second, "The Elusive Cougar". Before the showing of the encore movie *The Lorax*, a very loud Barred Owl directly overhead, made his presence known by loudly hooting to another Owl deep in the woods making everyone sit straight up in their lounge chairs. Viewers from the cool clear summit of Bald Peak saw an almost simultaneous Sunset and "Super Moonrise". Most of the streaking meteors were washed out due to the bright full moon, but stargazers with good peripheral vision still counted 14 meteors in one hour. Considering the peak of the shower wasn't to occur for three days, participants were happy with the results.

As stated in the Bylaws the NW Camp Committee must maintain a liaison with the Mt Riga Committee, so on Monday, August 11, 2014 for the first time in modern history representatives of the NW Camp Committee met with members of the Mt Riga Committee. The Mt Riga Corporation owns thousands of acres that abut property maintained by the NW Camp Committee. Issues discussed included management techniques on dealing with invasives, GIS, property boundary monitoring and delineation with drones, a mysterious bridge construction on NW Road, vandalism associated with a timber harvest, overuse of sensitive areas, over advertising, trail management, old growth forests, rare flora and fauna, etc. With the Mt Riga committee recommendation the Caretaker was able to find a more local cordwood supplier. A majority of the cordwood will now come from Salisbury instead of Canaan. Everyone unanimously agreed at this first ever meeting, to plan a summer outing together next year at NW Camp.

The hope remains alive that this well managed and treasured piece of property, through the committee and collaborative process will ensure and sustain its long-term health and viability for future generations to enjoy.

Committee Roster with Volunteer Hours

Tom McGrath (Co-Chair, Molding Privy Chair) 56*

Rod Parlee (Co-Chair, Conservation Director) 123*

Merri Fox (Secretary/Volunteer Hours Coordinator) 31*

Donald Klein (Caretaker) 138 *

Craig Kennedy (Registrar) 158 *

Al Puches (Treasurer) 40*

Paul Thoma (Financial Liaison) 86*

John Hicks (Past Chair/Caretaker – Trails Committee Chair) 64*

Carol Langley (Cabin Monitor & Green Mt Club, CT Rep) 49*

Chris McGrath 44*

Art Mauger (Cabin Monitor) 20

Roy Hoffman (Past Chair/Caretaker) 16

John Rek (Past Chair/Caretaker) 8

Marge Hicks 6

Ron Zlotoff 5

Steve Troop

* denotes Stewardship Award with more than 30 volunteer hours