



Lodging for over 60 years



*The Appalachian Mountain Club promotes the protection, enjoyment, and understanding of the mountains, forests, waters, and trails of the Appalachian region.*

## **NW Camp Committee Annual Report for 2015**

*Submitted by Rod Parlee, Co-Chairman and Conservation Director*

The Committee had a very active and successful year managing the cabin and its surrounding 125-acres, high on the Taconic plateau. The rustic but cozy cabin is constructed of American chestnut logs, tucked away under an old-growth forest canopy in the very remote northwest corner of Connecticut. The NW Camp committee volunteers, managing this self-service facility continue to balance the needs of its guests with a safe and environmentally responsible lodging experience.

The sparkling pristine stream adjacent to the cabin drains to Sages ravine and is part of the very unique 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. In support of recognizing this protection, the Committee is seeking professionals that would volunteer their services by conducting an inventory of native flora, invasive plants, wildlife, herpetology, avi-fauna, old-growth forest ecology, calcareous fens, vernal pools, geology, GIS, natural history, hydrology, fish science, global climate change, storm water run-off, etc. Continuously learning what makes this fragile and vulnerable property and watershed so rare is a high priority of the Northwest Camp committee. The results of these inventories should help us manage the property sustainably and heighten the awareness of our guests.

Many productive meetings took place throughout the year and two annual workparties resulted in the completion of many tasks. The Ridgerunners (and program) were once again the happy recipients of a NW Camp committee donation. The Committee strongly supports a longer Ridgerunner season beyond Labor Day to help with cabin monitoring during a very active time of year. Many thanks, to CT Chapter member Bea Holt who made a personal monetary donation to the committee for the purpose of starting a library of field guides. A bookcase was constructed and is now ready to be stocked.

The Committee's high-point of the year was the construction of a 250-foot long bog bridge on the Bog trail for the purpose of reducing impact to a Topogenous, oligotrophic bog that slowly drains to Sages ravine, on its way past the cabin. The bridge material purchase was made possible thanks to a Special Projects Fund grant from the AMC Conservation Programs Committee. Original plans called for the sills to be made with rigid LEAD and Green certified corrugated plastic piping allowing amphibians and water to flow freely under the bridge tread. But, concerns arose regarding aesthetics and durability. The Committee sprang into action searching for a sill material the AMC would approve. After reaching out and networking with numerous associates, it was decided to go with Black-locust which may last as long as 50 years. Big time kudos to Charles Besozzi of New England Naval Timbers, LLC - - thanks to his long-time association with the folks in Salisbury he supplied and delivered the Locust for half the cost! The first Bog bridge workparty was just a weekend in June and with the help of four AMC Ridgerunners, Angel Vega and many volunteers moved the very heavy material that was delivered (and stacked) to the yarding area. The second workparty took an entire week in August and was planned in conjunction with the annual Perseids Meteor Shower weekend cookout and an Owl Prowl, led by Fran Zymont of the Audubon Society. The grand opening ceremony of the Bog Bridge was conducted prior to the field portion of the Saturday night Owl Prowl. The completion of the bridge would not have been achieved without the tireless efforts of the Committee and the leadership of the CT Chapter AT Trails Committee led by trails guru, Dave Boone.

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

**Committee Roster with Volunteers and Hours**

Tom McGrath (Co-Chair, Moldering Privy Chair) 58\*  
Rod Parlee (Co-Chair, Conservation Director) 138\*  
Merri Fox (Secretary) 22  
Donald Klein (Caretaker) 212 \*  
Craig Kennedy (Registrar) 323 \*  
Al Puches (Treasurer) 40\*  
Paul Thoma (Financial Liaison) 139\*  
John Hicks (Past Chair/Caretaker – Trails Committee Chair) 142\*  
Carol Langley (Cabin Monitor & Green Mt Club, CT Rep) 81\*  
Art Mauger (Cabin Monitor) 20  
Roy Hoffman (Past Chair/Caretaker) 16  
John Rek (Past Chair/Caretaker) 8  
Angel Vega 35  
Joe Parenteau 32  
Richard Jewell 22  
Ethan Rain 21  
Marge Hicks 20  
Eric Harvey 8  
Chris McGrath  
Ron Zlotoff

\* denotes Stewardship Award with more than 30 volunteer hours