



NW Camp Committee Annual Report for 2018

Submitted by Rod Parlee, Chair and Conservation Director

The Northwest Camp (NWC) Committee had an active year managing the cabin and its surrounding 125-acres, high on the Taconic plateau. The rustic but cozy cabin is constructed of native American chestnut logs, tucked away under an old-growth Eastern hemlock forest canopy in a remote and environmentally diverse area in the very northwest corner of Connecticut. The Committee volunteers managing this serene self-service facility continue to face the challenge of balancing the needs of its guests with a safe and environmentally responsible self-service camping experience.

The sparkling pristine stream adjacent to the cabin drains to Sages ravine and is part of the 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. Continuously learning and sharing what makes this fragile and vulnerable property and watershed so unique is a high priority. Striving to reduce our impact is paramount!

Many productive NWC Committee, Volunteer Camp & Cabin Committee (VCC) and CT Chapter meetings took place throughout the year. In addition to the Annual Summit, Gathering and Appalachian Trail (AT) Day the two-annual NWC workparties (first Saturday in May & November) resulted in the completion of very many tasks. At the VCC Spring meeting at Lake Ponkapoag, Rich Michna was appointed to a new VCC Safety Committee representing NWC and Merri Fox to a new VCC Task Force Committee representing NWC. The Executive board of the NWC Committee continually contribute a great deal of time and energy to the success of the VCC throughout the year.

For eleven consecutive years, the NWC Committee has been donating funds to the AMC/ATC Ridgerunner (RR's) because they value the program and how the RR's closely monitor the AT and cabin area and promote Leave No Trace (LNT) principles. The NWC Committee continues to observe the 2017 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by the Southern New England Regional Trails Supervisor, Andrea Franklin and the NWC Committee Co-Chairs. The MOU requires that the RR's visit and monitor the camp when possible. While at NWC the RR's run through a checklist of items that help the NWC Committee monitor the cabin and surrounding property. The NWC Committee is very thankful that in 2018 the RR season that begins in May was extended from September to November.

CT AMC Education Committee Chair and LNT Master Educator, Keith Spaar presented his 3rd annual LNT presentation to workparty participants at NWC prior to the May workparty. A lengthy discussion took place on how NWC could be better managed more sustainably and campers could have less of an impact by utilizing LNT techniques.

Two nights of clouds and heavy rain hampered viewing of the 10th annual NWC Perseid Meteor Shower Extravaganza in August for the third year in a row. Before the rain, participants were treated to a dazzling drone demonstration on Bald peak by Vice Chair Rich Michna. Later back at the camp and after a tasty cookout, the NWC Committee made their annual RR donation and a took photo op with Michael Baggot representing the RR's. Happy hour included a drone video filmed from the summit the night before, that was projected out the cabin front door with a portable projector through the pouring rain onto a big screen under a canopy. The rain didn't stop the attendees from having a wonderful time.

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

2018 Committee Roster with Volunteers

Rod Parlee (Chair, Conservation Director) *
Rich Michna (Vice Chair, VCC Safety Committee) *
Merri Fox (Secretary) *
Craig Kennedy (Registrar) *
Donald Klein (Caretaker) *
Paul Thoma (Treasurer) *
Tom McGrath (Outgoing Co-Chair, Moldering Privy Committee)
Al Puches (Chapter Treasurer) *
John Hicks (Past Chair/Caretaker/Registrar – Trails Committee) *
Roy Hoffman (Past Chair/Caretaker/Registrar/Breakfastmaker)
Carol Langley (Cabin Monitor & Green Mt Club, CT Rep)*
Trent Link (Past Chair/Caretaker/Registrar)
John Rek (Past Chair/Caretaker/Registrar)*
Art Mauger (Cabin Monitor)
Ethan Rain*
Josh Michna*
Nick Michna*
Tom O'Connor
Joe Parenteau
Eric Harvey
Collin Deojay

* denotes Stewardship Award with more than 30 volunteer hours

