

MAC Meeting Minutes

Date: November 18, 2021

Time: 4:00 pm

Location: Monadnock State Park Store.

ATTENDEES	AGENDA
✓ Ann Royce (Town of Jaffrey)	1. Welcome & roll call
✓ Will Kirkpatrick (Monadnock State Park)	2. Review of minutes from previous meeting
✓ Carrie Deegan (SPNHF)	3. Membership
<input type="checkbox"/> Dave Adams (Town of Troy)	4. Treasurer's report
✓ Don Upton (Town of Troy)	5. Division of Parks & Rec & Monadnock update
✓ Sterling Abram (Town of Dublin)	6. SPNHF Update
<input type="checkbox"/> Hiel Lundquist (Town of Fitzwilliam)	7. Division of Forests and Lands update
✓ Dan Rogalski (Town of Marlborough)	8. MERE update
✓ John Smith (Town of Jaffrey)	9. Open
✓ Peter Palmiotto (Antioch, MERE)	10. Set date for next meeting
✓ Phil Bryce (Parks & Recreation)	11. Adjourn
✓ Robin Blais (Chair, Town of Fitzwilliam)	
✓ Katy Wardlaw (Town of Dublin)	
✓ Tara Blaney (Parks & Recreation)	Guests:
<input type="checkbox"/> Brian Hotz (SPNHF)	Logan Thorner – Monadnock State Park
<input type="checkbox"/> Wendy Weisiger (SPNHF)	
✓ Matt Scaccia (SPNHF)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Scott Rolfe (Forests and Lands)	

1. Welcome & roll call

- Roll call

2. Review of minutes from previous meeting

- Minutes from 4/15/2021 meeting approved

3. Membership

- 2 members have stepped down – Ed Germain (Dublin) and Polly Pattison (Marlborough).
- Welcome to Katy Wardlaw now on for Dublin
- Marlborough Selectmen's Assistant will look into a new member. Terry Magueri was identified as someone who may be interested.

4. Treasurer's Report (Ann)

- \$2758.38. This has not changed in several years. No additions or payments, and the account does not draw interest. The bank now charges for printed statements, and Ann prefers not to bank on-line. She has been doing this for 25 years and would like to have someone else manage it. Dan Rogalski volunteered to take it on.

- Where does the money come from, and how are requests made? Mostly from donations from rescued hikers, but other philanthropy as well. Years ago a former MAC member passed on, and the family suggested well-wishers make donations to MAC. That was the largest boost to the fund. E-mail the treasurer to make requests, if over \$500 the Commission needs to vote to approve. In the past the fund has been used for rescue- or trail-maintenance-related purchases. Lights, radios, first aid supplies, training costs, trail tools, etc.
- Will is sure he can make it more active, both in requests and in donations. We have purchases we've been considering, and often get asked where people can donate to our SAR operations.

5. Division of Parks & Recreation/ Monadnock update (Will)

- Park Managers' report reviewed.
 - Revenue slightly up for Calendar Year (though slightly down for Fiscal year, July-June).
 - Retail much better than 2020, when retail was cut off for much of the year for the pandemic, but still down from 2019 levels.
 - Visitation is down from 2020 levels for day-use, though camping remains quite high.
 - We tried having a staff presence at Dublin and Marlborough trailheads this year in response to the overcrowding of 2020. We only staffed on sold-out weekend days, and weren't able to do that as consistently as we wanted. Staff at Marlborough were well-received, Dublin less so. Hurdles to staffing regularly are staff availability, fee package questions to be worked out, and logistical hurdles (communication, ticket-selling logistics, on-line capability if reservations used). Solvable problems if we have the staff, but we didn't see the same degree of over-use this season. Maybe we can do more with Iron Ranger? Improved signage could help. We will continue to consider.
 - Mtn Patrol – busy year for rescues, though not as much as 2019. Many more were provided enough assistance to walk out on their own rather than require a carry-out, which has saved staff time, risk, and resources.
 - How do people contact us for rescues? Often they call the main park number (on the map) 532-8862, or they call 911. 911 is better, even though they often call us first, because they can get the coordinates from the person's cell phone which is often very helpful.
 - Rhodo: Staffed as we were able on July weekends. Did comparable business and visitation to 2020.
 - How is the Patch Cottage doing? It's still there, unused. Stairs to second floor dangerous. On the list for upcoming foundation work and possibly a new wooden roof.
 - Is the Fitzwilliam Garden Club still active? Robin will send Will K. a contact.

6. SPNHF update (Matt & Carrie)

- Monadnock Trails Week was July 30 – Aug 3. Andy Crowley (SPNHF) organized it, made it more of a community outreach event than it has been, with things like trivia night at a local pub. Gap Mtn, Marlborough Trail, and White Arrow Trail all saw a lot of work. It was well-attended, though their goal was to keep group sizes small. Drone videos taken of some of the projects.
 - Next year looking to use \$20K RTP funds for an SCA crew on the Marlborough Trail, timed to coincide with Trails Week. Building stone stairs to harden trail surface against erosion.
- Tahawus Trails (pro trail crew) starting work on "Troop Rock" on the White Cross trail. So far just quarried and shaped stones (around 52 of them), in May they'll come back and start construction.
- Tahawus will also work on a re-route/stone stairs project on the Marlborough Trail (further up than the SCA/MTW project) after they're done on the White Cross.

- Timber Harvests upcoming:
 - This year on the north side of Gap – not effecting the trail or parking this time.
 - Still planning eventually for an educational harvest along the Marlborough Trail – prescriptive cuts with educational signage. Maybe within the next 2 years.
- Pumpelly Trail update: 90 acre piece of property for sale mentioned last meeting had a potential buyer, there was some confusion around protection. SPNHF does have a deeded restriction already. But complicated since the trail was moved in the 60's. It used to run up this property's driveway, now it's on other land and the trailhead itself is not actually protected, though further up the trail it is.
 - There has been a lot of agitation about parking and the lakeside in Dublin. Sterling as a lead on a possible parking lot off Upper Jaffrey Rd if the start of the trail could be moved over to there. Brian Hotz (SPNHF) was going to approach a landowner for the trail to cross his property – if he could do that, this parking area looks promising, and that could be a much better situation for all involved. There are questions about who would build and maintain such a lot, but if those can be resolved it seems like a promising solution.
 - Would SPNHF be interested in purchasing a parcel on E. Lake Rd for parking, if something could be negotiated? There really isn't anywhere on that road where there's room for a lot.

7. Division of Forests and Lands update

- No representative present.
- From Phil:
 - New Director, Patrick Hackley, who Phil has worked with before and is glad to have him in his new role.
 - Parks has been trying to work more with F&L for law enforcement. May need to bring law enforcement capability within Parks.
 - Exploring the idea of using wood from public land harvests to send to the prison for firewood processing, having "Harvested from NH public lands" on the label.
- From SPNHF:
 - There's still a timber harvest planned by the State off OTR. The Hollisters are informed. Not sure of the timeline for that at the moment.

8. MERE update

- Summarized annual report:
 - Summit Steward - 1418 interactions with visitors, 40 days on the mountain, 261 hours.
 - Worked with Dublin School students collecting crevice community data.
 - Meet the Mountain day went on, but much smaller working with Antioch's restrictions on events. Only Antioch students participated.
 - Collected stories from visitors on their stories and connections to hiking Monadnock
 - Alpine Stewardship survey, working with Jill Weiss of SUNY-ESF about hiker motivations and perspectives, excited to have that data as soon as the results are available. Most questions were general to comply with the larger study, but were able to include 5 Monadnock-specific questions (reservation system, etc.) as well.
 - Summit Stewards are creating technical bulletins to inform the public about their research.
- Phil: asked how MERE was represented on DNCR's website. It's there, but could be better, and link more directly to MERE. Tara sent an e-mail to start fixing that issue, should be an easy fix.

- Additional future research – looking to reproduce an alpine restoration experiment that was vandalized 10 years ago, though do it a little differently this time.
 - There's a pinch-point for hikers right above "Virginia Falls", where it's not clear where to go, it's steep and slippery and drives hikers through a crevice community. Peter would like to have a crew build a 10' section of steps to create a safe and easy to see route.
 - What would that take? A pro crew would have to do it. Difficult, not much soil above tree-line (although this spot may be an exception), materials hard to gather in a non-disruptive way, probably have to pin steps to the rock.
 - Will can contact Tahawus when they're next here, see if they can hike up and take a look, at least give us a professional opinion to move forward from.
 - Being in the alpine area, Peter may be able to access Waterman Fund for help.

9. Open Floor

- Phil: Fee package is being reviewed. Looking at a difference between NH residents and Non-residents?
 - 80-90% of Monadnock visitors are from out of state, mostly MA.
 - It's likely that we'll do this for camping, not sure about day-use.
 - Seems like common practice, members know of plenty of other instances and generally think it wouldn't be unexpected by visitors.
 - Peter: If not done right this kind of thing can serve to further divide people. Thinks it's important how we present it – as a discount to NH residents, not as an increased fee to non-residents.
 - There used to be a "free NH" day (Father's Day). Hasn't been on anyone's radar for a while, but maybe something like that could come back.
- Phil: Extended lease with SPNHF for 1 year to give more time to capture commitment to trail work, etc. from DNCR. Can't commit to future spending which the legislature would need to approve, working on a way to capture this. But SPNHF presence should be better recognized and publicized. Gallows sign on 124 should have "SPNHF" and "Town of Jaffrey" on it. What should be on our website? Wants to get that into the agreement.
- Jaffrey lease is longer, possibly 20 years.
- Sterling: Do we sell or promote Hike Safe cards? We do promote, we have posters up. Might be an issue to sell them as funds go to F&G. Though some parks have sold hunting licenses in the past, so maybe it's something we could work out.
- Peter: Who owns the Poole Reservoir dam? The Town of Jaffrey, though there have been rumors that they might want to give it to the park and we'd create a swimming area. People come to Monadnock to hike though, not sure they're looking for anything else. DNCR already has a lot of dams to look after.

10. Set date for next meeting

- Thursday, April 21, Location TBD – considering Rhododendron if not snowed in.

11. Adjourn