

**NORTHEASTERN CAVE CONSERVANCY, INC.**

**Special Meeting Minutes**

Submitted by Christa Hay

2/10/2008C.T. Male Associates, P.C., Latham, NY 11:00 AM

Meeting called to order at 11:00

1. Introduction and greetings – President Bob Addis
2. Attendance:  
Officers: B. Addis, P. Youngbaer, B. Folsom, C. Hay  
Trustees: J. Armstrong, M. Chu, A. Hicks (11:10), V. Kappler, D. Lyons, J. Siemion,
3. Absent with Proxy:  
Mike Warner – Emily Davis  
Peter Haberland – Yvonne DeMarino  
Bob Simmons –Jansen Cardy
4. Youngbaer moved up to \$70 spent to sponsor two students to go to the KWI banquet, to come from the Presidents budget.  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Davis  
For Rest  
**Passed unanimously**
5. Update from Al Hicks, DEC.
  - Power point presentation
  - Recommendations: stay out of caves, try not to go out side of area, take another set of caving gear than what you use here. Helmet and light...disinfect. Buy cheap boots and items.
  - Stay out of cave with bats for one month.
  - Not the final outcome but the “ologist” would be surprised if the fungus is the reason for death but an issue from the sickness.
  - The bats are disappearing...maybe going someplace else. It is not that they have died.
  - No known human diseases from this.
6. Update from Joe Armstrong, Conservation Chair.
  - All caves with bats seem to have the WNS
  - WNS in Clarksville
7. Opinion of Science Coordinator – Larry Davis - Taken from email

Bob-I have read what I can about the White-nose Syndrome and its effect on the bats and also discussed the situation at length with Emily. I know that the Board is meeting about this shortly. Unfortunately, I will be out of town at that time and unable to attend the meeting. However, based on what I've read and heard, I am prepared to make the following recommendation:

I recommend that we close all NCC caves immediately to all entry except for authorized (by the property managers) visits for scientific and research purposes. I suggest that, initially, the closure last until the end of bat hibernation (~May 15?) with the proviso that, pending further studies and recommendations from appropriate state and federal agencies, bat scientists, or others, this closure may be extended or modified. Camps and other groups should be allowed to make plans but be warned that continued closure is possible or even likely and that this will prevent them from visiting our caves this summer.

I am recommending a limited time for closure because I think that this will “go down” more easily and be easier to enforce. We would be saying “Look, this situation is fluid now. We know little about this syndrome except that tens of thousands of bats are dying. It is being actively studied and, in the mean time, it makes sense for us to be extremely conservative so that we don't risk spreading the disease or disturbing the few surviving bats any further. As more information comes in, we will reevaluate the policy when we can do so with more confidence.” I think from a psychological standpoint, it is better to put a time limit on the closure now with the possibility of it being extended later rather than

make the closure unlimited now with the possibility that it might be lifted later. The effect would be the same, but I think that it would be easier to “sell” a policy that has an expiration date attached.

If you should have any questions, I will be glad to respond via email. Of course, like everyone else, I will be following this situation carefully (and with great trepidation).

8. Youngbaer moved the NCC close all NCC caves immediately to all entry except for authorized (by the property managers) visits for scientific and research purposes. The closure last until the end of bat hibernation, May 15, 2008 with the proviso that, pending further studies and recommendation from the appropriate state and federal agencies, bat scientists, or others, this closure may be extended or modified. Camps and other groups should be allowed to make plans but be warned that continued closure is possible or even likely and that this will prevent them from visiting our caves this summer.

2<sup>nd</sup> by Davis

For – Rest, Abstained-Siemion

**Passed**

9. Points of Information:

- Joe Armstrong will contact land owners and also talk with Peter Youngbaer about Vermont private caves. Caves are closed until May 15<sup>th</sup>, same as the NCC cave closures.
- Emily Davis will contact John Layton in the sheriffs department.
- How we can assist the FWS? – Al Hicks is the point person
- Cavers urged to fill in the cave visitation database online
- All communications go thru EC or publicity chair to start with.
- The Clarksville monitoring project – the Clarksville managers can, and they have, approve as this is not scientific research.

10. Davis moved that the NCC recommend that cavers voluntarily restrict their caving until May 15, 2008.

2<sup>nd</sup> by Armstrong

Cardy moved to amend to include caves with bats

2<sup>nd</sup> by Youngbaer

For – Chu, Cardy, Folsom, Youngbaer; Opposed – Kappler, Davis; Abstained- Hay, Lyons, Armstrong, Siemon, Yvone, Hicks,

**Amendment Passed**

**Final motion:**

Davis moved that the NCC recommend that cavers voluntarily restrict their caving and to not go caving in caves with bats until May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

**Passed unanimously**

11. Informational Point: EC Meeting: 3/2, 10 AM, Kerhonkson.

12. Informational Point: Board Meeting: 3/30, 10AM, Gallupville House.

13. Addis moved to thank C.T. Male Associates, P.C. for the use of their building for the meeting.

2<sup>nd</sup> by Kappler

**Passed unanimously**

14. Kappler thanks the EC for calling a special meeting.

2<sup>nd</sup> by Davis

**Passed**

15. Addis moved to adjourn.

2<sup>nd</sup> by Davis

**Passed unanimously**

Meeting adjourned at 3:02

*Note: After the meeting with the permission of Al Hick (representing DEC) and the Clarksville managers a team (Youngbaer, Hay, Cardy) went into Clarksville with the FOX news crew to gather a bat with WNS (gathered in the appropriate manner as described by Al) for study. Peter Youngbaer was the spokes person inside the cave and Al Hicks gave an interview after the trip.*