

NORTHEASTERN CAVE CONSERVANCY, INC.

Board Minutes

Submitted by Christa Hay

3/30/08 Gallupville, NY 10:00 AM

Meeting called to order at 10:24am

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, D. Lyons, J. Siemion, B. Simmons, M. Warner.
3. Absent with Proxy:
 - Chuck Porter for Vince Kappler - Chuck was sick
4. Absent without proxy:
 - P. Haberland
5. Board votes in Emily Davis as proxy for P. Haberland.
6. President's Report – Bob Addis- Attachment A (attachments at end of minutes)
7. Vice President's Report –Peter Youngbaer – Attachment B
8. Treasurer's Report –Bill Folsom - Attachment C
9. Secretary's Report – Christa Hay
 - Contacted by Al Hicks to set up bat count surveys in Gage, Knox and Schoharie. Gage: Al Hicks, Peter Haberland, Mike Chu, Joe Armstrong; Schoharie: David Newman (DEC), Sue Warzek, myself; Knox: Al Hicks, Emily Davis, Mike Warner, Joe Armstrong, Ed Lucas. Thanks to all that helped.
 - Printed and laminated Cave Closed signs for the NSS and NCC preserves. Thanks to Chuck Porter and Thom Engel for posting.
 - Map of Howes Cave quarry.
 - Attended the KWI banquet – very good bat presentation
 - Summary of EC board meeting in Kerhonkson – Attachment D
10. Science Committee – Larry Davis – no official report received but recent email on WNS
 - My opinion, as science coordinator, is that despite a major effort, very little more is known about the syndrome than when we made our original decision. Given the state of scientific knowledge, a re-evaluation is way premature. Let's wait a month and see what develops. What I want to see/hear first is a) a reasonably certain explanation as to what's causing the syndrome and b) a reasonably certain explanation as to how it spreads. Without these two vital pieces of information, we can't even think about policy moves. Determining these things is not easy and it can't be "rushed". Furthermore, it is in the nature of science that you can't predict when a "breakthrough" will occur.

We are going to have to rely on the opinions and recommendations of those who know the most about this problem. In the end, it would be wrong and counterproductive for us to second guess them. We'll have no more data than they will and we'll have a whole lot less training and experience to interpret it, especially if it is ambiguous, as so much scientific data frequently are. In the mean time, I applaud Peter's efforts to gather all the information together in one place. If nothing else, it will make our deliberations that much easier.
11. Acquisitions Committee Report –Chuck Porter
 - We are meeting with the Columbia Land Conservancy to discuss fundraising ideas for Merlins Cave. The owner of Red Bat Cave in Berkshire County, Mass. is supposedly interested in donating that to the NCC but that would require incorporation in Massachusetts. Bob Simmons is reporting elsewhere on his efforts at Torsys Cave, Connecticut and Surprise Cave, New York.
12. Bylaws Committee Report – Joe Levinson - done after Presidents report
 - I am working on the updates to the board manual, but I am getting swamped with work currently. I am still hoping to have the updates in time for the next meeting.

13. Conservation Committee Report - Joe Armstrong – no report received – oral at meeting
 - Bat counts at several caves
 - Numbers given to Al Hicks (DEC)
14. Publications/Publicity Committee Report - Christa Hay
 - Status quo
15. Fundraising Committee Report - Alan Traino – no report received
16. Office Committee Report – Emily Davis / Mike Warner
 - *Problems:* None
 - *Progress:* We have sent out email notices to all due and past due members to March 15. I am starting to get response from this. I will have this in an office report before the March 30th meeting and can update at that time.
 - *Plans:* To work with the Special Use committee on a letter to our 80 group use addresses concerning visitation for the 2008 caving season.
17. Knox Cave Preserve Report –Emily Davis/Jay Siemion
 - New Knox specific posted sign at parking area that explains how to get a parking pass is up as well as a sign at the sinkhole stating the guidelines for entry. Will put up property boundary signs this spring once the snow is gone.
 - Trespassing evident
18. Onesquethaw Cave Preserve Report – Thom Engel
 - Not much to report for Onesquethaw. Cave has been closed. I had only one query on access and I explained the situation. Little or no trespassing.
19. Sellecks Karst Preserve Report – Jason Siemion
 - Waiting for WNS signs to post (this is done now). Will put up property boundary signs this spring once the snow is gone. Planning on a new trail that actually stays on our property as well. Report on usage will be sent to Mike for inclusion in next newsletter. Sellecks – flooded up to ice.
20. Clarksville Preserve Report – Mike Chu, Thom Engel, Chuck Porter
 - We've had several queries regarding access. Spoke with 2 groups that actually came to the cave. One was a guy from Maine actually looking for information on WNS! Norm Berg will be visiting the cave this coming weekend to download data from the datalogger. Undoubtedly, we will have more information on visitation after that. (I did pick up 2 sets of packaging for flashlights in the parking lot this past Saturday. So, I suspect some people have been going in.)
 - "Cave closed" signs for WNS have been posted at the kiosk, changing room, and Gregory entrance.
 - Evidence of trespassing on Sunday. Tore down one WNS – has been replaced.
21. Ella Armstrong Preserve Report – Joe Armstrong – no report received – oral at meeting
 - working on driveway- contacted Layton
22. Education Committee Report – David Lyons
 - Nothing to report.
23. Membership Report – Sean Ryan – no report received
24. Website Subcommittee Report – Mike Chu
 - Website hosting switch to www.1and1.com has been successful. Everything is running smoothly---no problems to report. As of 3/17/08 there have been 573 separate entries made to the WNS trip database by 68 individuals.
25. Land Trust Liaison Committee Report – Jon Allison – no report received
 - MHLIC – easement – they are not showing interest.
 - Representatives to go to their annual banquet

26. Davis moved that the NCC pay from the Presidents budget for two people to attend the MHLC annual banquet.
2nd by Folsom
Amended to include up to \$100.00
Davis moved that the NCC pay from the Presidents budget up to \$100.00 for two people to attend the MHLC annual banquet
2nd by Simmons
Passed Unanimously

27. Legal Committee Report – Mark Seltzer – no report received

28. Special and Group Use Coordinators –Amy Cox

- I do not have a formal report as the caves have been largely closed to visitation since the last meeting. I have been sending polite responses to people requesting information and reservations. I refer people to the US Fish and Wildlife page on WNS for more information, and as a way of indicating that is not just the small group that owns the cave over-reacting to something by closing the caves. I also hope this will deter some folks from simply shifting their caving plans to a privately-owned and less well-monitored cave.

Most people have expressed disappointment but understand why the closure has occurred. Several BSA groups and school instructors mentioned that they would incorporate the WNS information into lesson plans to explain why the annual caving trip is not happening this year.

I have not yet begun getting reservations for post May 15th. They should start rolling in soon.

29. Financial and Investments Committee – Joe Levinson – done after Presidents report

- I was asked to look into brokered CD's, and the rates are 3.5 % for a 1 year. This was last week, when I checked, and the rate will probably drop since the FED's cut the interest rate this week by 100 basis points. As for the NCC's investments with the Foundation, they are riding the market, both up and down. My opinion is the mutual funds with the foundation are on the conservative side, but not as conservative as CD's. Over the long term the Foundation has paid high returns, and have a minimal charge for their services.

30. Volunteer Value Committee – Vince Kappler – Attachment E

31. Ad hoc Committee – Surprise Cave – Bob Simmons – Attachment F

- An Adopt-A-Natural-Resource Application (Attachment F) has been submitted to NYS DEC Region III in New Paltz. Have not heard back as yet (Note: Pat Vissering out of office until 4/2/08)

32. Ad hoc Committee- Tory's Cave – Bob Simmons – no report received – oral

- Working meetings in April
- CCG purchased data loggers and installed in Torys

33. Ad hoc Committee -Merlins Cave - Chuck Porter – see acquisitions report. – Attachment G

- Meeting previous week, Bob, Bill, Chuck

34. Addis moved to open the Committee of the Whole. The Vice President will preside. Items can be entered as new business.

2nd by Simmons

Passed unanimously

- Davis -KWI –as a board member thanks to the NCC and they will be sending \$100 as a donation.
- Hay-BZ foundation donation –check about bylaws – they can donate and then dissolution clause
- Remove Preserves Committee – Was set up with Thom and Emily when NCC only had the two caves. Needs to reflect that each preserve has its own committee. This is not a by-laws change. EC can direct the bylaws chair to change.
- Membership chair needed – assign the chair to Emily at least temporarily. Possible Rick Pingree as membership chair.
- The Nature Conservation /NSS liaison – anyone here interested? Good PR
- Data loggers- Conservation Chair to work with the cave managers and Jansen Cardy to get data loggers for the caves – light sensors
- WNS- Al Hicks representing NYS DEC -pretty clear that it is spread by bats but not completely known if humans are also helping to spread it. No reason to restrict caving in caves that are already

affected. But good idea to let them sleep more.so probably should keep closed until hibernation is over. Any WNS comments etc needs to make sure we are following DEC/FWS. Much discussion on the issue

35. Youngbaer moved to close the Committee of the Whole.

2nd by Armstrong

Passed unanimously

36. Hay moved to accept the minutes of the special February 10, 2008 meeting.

2nd by Chu

For – all, abstained: Simmons

Passed

37. Folsom moved to appoint Jay Siemions co-chair of the NCC Knox Cave Preserve.

2nd by Hay

For – rest, abstained- Siemion

Passed

38. Addis moved that the next NCC Board meeting will be held on June 15th at a southern Vermont location at 11am.

2nd by Simmons

For – rest, abstained – Hay, Youngbaer

Passed

39. Informational Point: Executive committee meeting will be held on May16 at 4pm at NRO at the Snyder Estates.

40. Addis moved to thank the Gallupville House for the use of their building for the meeting.

2nd by Youngbaer

For – all

Passed unanimously

41. Addis moved to adjourn.

2nd by Hay

Passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 1:08

Attachment A
PRESIDENT'S REPORT

1. White Nose Syndrome (WNS) has without a doubt leaped to the front of all of our attention and, with the Internet, the information (and misinformation) has spread worldwide. Answering inquiries and being interviewed has taken considerable amount of time from the EC, as well as organizing crews of volunteers to do the bat surveys with DEC. Sadly there are no conclusive results to all of the research so far and our cave management practices remain in limbo. Peter Youngbaer has been appointed by the NSS at their 3/15 meeting as liaison between the cavers and the various agencies involved. This makes sense since Peter has been heavily involved with the issue all long and he has the presence and experience to work with government. WNS has been confined to the Northeast at the time of this writing and Peter is a logical choice.

Mike Warner attended the 3/15 NSS Board meeting and gave several repetitions of the WNS presentation that we should see at our 3/30 meeting. He is conferring with Peter in keeping the presentation up to date and available.

2. The Howes Cave Quarry has a permit renewal application into the DEC and its deadline is 4/3/08. On 3/10 I went to DEC's offices in Rotterdam (Schenectady) to view the permit application and photograph the proposed plans. It must be understood that as a renewal, the mining company (first Callanan and now Cobleskill Stone Products) has had an existing permit to mine a much larger area than seen at the quarry. This permit renewal has been rubberstamped by the DEC on 5-year intervals for many years, so the NCC or any public comment may not have much effect on what is permitted. We might as well understand and accept that Bartyes, Wolferts, Hells Wells, Dixie Pit and other karst features in the woods on the east side of Sagendorf Corners Rd. have long planned and permitted for mining. The 2008 renewal application shows that they intent to mine there in the next 5 years (green area). I think that the so-called Life of the Mine permit which had been renewed several times allows quarrying a hole to the east of the Sagendorf Corners Rd. almost as big as the existing quarry and taking the above karst features as well as more to the east. Baugh Cave is not owned by the quarry and is excluded from the mining permit.

What is interesting with this renewal are two areas of white showing up for the first time as owned by the Cave House Museum. No mining is permitted in the white areas. The one to the east near the quarry's center is the Cave House itself – no surprise. There is another Cave House white area in the center or NW side of the quarry and that most likely is over the old Howes Cave - again no surprise. But here's the surprise that I have pointed out to the DEC reviewer of the application – there is a green area to the NW of the white area and this indicates that mining could occur there in the next 5 years if the permit is granted. It appears to me that this green area is over sections of old Howes Cave and rather close to Howe Caverns, the commercial cave and the end of the boat ride. The reviewer, Allen Hewitt, will be making an onsite visit as part of the application review and will consider this information. I will meet with him later in the week of 3/24 to discuss his findings and recommendations and should have an update at the meeting.

I also learned that the permit requires monitoring of blasting with two seismographs – one @ Howe Caverns Lodge and one @ the closest residence, Marlow. CSP has twice exceeded the permission velocity of 1.0 inches per second @ Marlow's – 6/25/07 & 10/29/07. Hewitt was successful in fining & getting CSP to pay \$5000 for the last incidence.

There is also a chain of memos (5/16/07 & 5/21/07) in the applications file concerning whether CSP can blast during Howe Cavern's business hours. DEC's Kent Sanders, Stanford, and Allen Hewitt say that it is not permitted, but a Waiver Agreement dated 5/3/07 and signed by Robert A. Holt, Secretary/Treasurer says that blasting may occur during regular day time hours. I will clarify this with Hewitt when I speak to him next week.

3. 2008 Cave & Karst Conservancies Forum has been rumored to exist! The first two, 2004 and 2006 were held in Lewisburg, WV in the fall and individuals from WVCC are looking into another one for this year. It appears that the Texas bid fell through. There is plenty of sharable information to be gathered from this so I would encourage the NCC to support another event and send several attendees.

Attachment B
Vice PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It's hard to believe how much has gone on since our December meeting. With the White Nose situation and our special board meeting, it's difficult to remember that we have a regular ongoing list of activities.

But clearly, the White Nose situation has dominated my time. I've represented the NCC with numerous media in NY, VT, and nationally, as have others. This included drafting the NCC press releases, assisting in their distribution, and responding to requests for interviews. Some of these contacts included: New England Cable Network, WCAX-TV (Vermont's CBS affiliate), North Country Public Radio, Vermont Public Radio (3 times so far), the Burlington Free Press, the Rutland Herald and Barre-Montpelier Times Argus, FOX News, Medill News Service, and BBC America.

These activities have included field visits with biologists Al Hicks in NY and Scott Darling in Vermont, and e-mail communications far too numerous to count. I've fielded many inquiries from cavers around the country, and assisted with distribution of as good and up to date information as becomes available to many folks in both the caving and scientific communities. This will continue for some time, as we all know.

The Executive Committee met early in March, and worked to move all our ongoing initiatives forward. These include acquisition of Merlin's Cave and Tory's Cave, as well as the Stewardship proposal for the management of Surprise Cave.

We finally got a copy of the lengthy transcript of the issues conferences and hearings on Becker's Cave. We worked on updated information to the NSF and CCV as potential major grant sources to help with the legal expenses.

The EC also continually monitors the NCC accounts and investments, as well as the ongoing office activities and correspondence, including working to get our scholarships out for the KWI dinner.

I also had a conversation with Rose Paul of Vermont's Nature Conservancy office. She thanked me for going up to Aeolus with Scott Darling. That's a really bad WNS site. She did inform me that TNC's staff vacancies have now been filled. The WNS situation notwithstanding, that provides a ray of hope for moving forward on the management plan, although the context has clearly changed.

One of the things I believe we need to discuss is what criteria we will use for decisions about re-opening NCC caves, and our ongoing role as an important organization in the investigation and management of the whole WNS situation.

Peter Youngbaer

Attachment C
Treasurer's REPORT

Feb 29, 08

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Checking	1,851.51
Money Market	19,637.86
PayPal Checking	278.83
NSF Account	46,561.00
Total Checking/Savings	<u>68,329.20</u>
 Total Current Assets	 \$68,329.20

As of March 14, 2008, all NCC financial information is now fully entered into Quickbooks, with the invaluable assistance of Ayzha Wolf. You should note that Treasurer Reports going forward will be slightly different than in the past, mainly due to Quickbooks orientation towards GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) as well as alignment with how our finances are reported on our federal tax form 990. How we create budgets will need to change slightly for 2009 to align with same. For example, the cost of Quickbooks needed to be recorded as an Office Expense, as under GAAP, software is treated that way. See the 2nd page of this report for Budget vs. Actual 2008 YTD.

In addition, local tax forms were returned to the Town of Knox completed for 2008, as well as Form REG-1 (Business Taxes Registration Application) with the State of Connecticut, which was generated by the Department of Revenue Services, State of Connecticut as a result of the NCC successfully being registered as a Foreign Corporation in that state.

	<u>Jan - Feb 08</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Donations	200.00	6,200.00
Donations Restricted	0.00	6,340.00
Interest Earned	72.62	200.00
Membership	365.00	2,910.00
Promotional Items	0.00	200.00
Total Income	<u>637.62</u>	<u>15,850.00</u>
Expense		
Sponsorships	70.00	
Acquisitions	0.00	1,000.00
Bank Charges	2.00	
Conservation	0.00	300.00
Donations-outgoing	0.00	200.00
Education	0.00	150.00
Executive		
President	0.00	200.00
VP	0.00	50.00
Treasurer	0.00	400.00
Secretary	0.00	50.00
Total Executive	<u>0.00</u>	<u>700.00</u>
Legal Fees	0.00	2,000.00
Legal Beckers	1,100.48	6,340.00
Miscellaneous	0.00	100.00
Office Expense	327.99	150.00
Postage	41.00	
Preserves-Maintenance		
Clarksville	0.00	900.00
Ella Armstrong	0.00	1,100.00
Knox	0.00	175.00
Onesquethaw	0.00	250.00
Sellecks	0.00	225.00
Total Preserves-Maintenance	<u>0.00</u>	<u>2,650.00</u>
Promotion/Fundraising	0.00	900.00
Publishing		
Website	0.00	120.00
Mailings	0.00	300.00
Total Publishing	<u>0.00</u>	<u>420.00</u>
Total Expense	<u>1,541.47</u>	<u>14,910.00</u>
Net Ordinary Income	-903.85	940.00
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
Volunteer Value	<u>4,467.00</u>	
Total Other Income	4,467.00	
Other Expense		
Volunteer Value Exp	<u>4,467.00</u>	
Total Other Expense	<u>4,467.00</u>	
Net Other Income	<u>0.00</u>	
Net Income	-903.85	940.00

Attachment D

Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc
Executive Committee Board Meeting Minutes

Submitted by Christa Hay
03/02/2008 Kerhonkson, NY

Meeting called to order at 10:10 a.m.

Attendance: B. Addis, P. Youngbaer, B. Folsom, C. Hay, C. Porter

General Discussions: (action items)

- Sales Tax – need to register for a sales tax number if we are going to start collecting. Bill will call CLC (Brenda Adams) to ask them how they handle sales tax (sales vs donations)
- Nominations – Christa to contact Mike M. for June meeting. Broadly advertise, Chu, Kappler, Simmons are up. Should contact Steve Hazelton, Rick Pingree, Jansen Cardy, Yvonne DiMariano
- KWI dinner – Christa to contact Emily about our 2 scholarships- awarded, also what can we have at the KWI – Christa to contact David Lyons will he be there? Bob to find banner
- Novemberkill – letter has been sent to owners – no response though. Bob to have a conversation with Al Hicks
- Research project in Clarksville - Jansen Cardy – since data collection only is not a research project. the data collectors are in the cave.
- Research project for other caves – this is the one Al Hick and Joe Armstrong are doing. Christa to contact them to remind them for update at meeting. Larry needs to send them the letter- I need to contact
- Treasurer report – try to get information from the NSF on our account. Hopefully by our next board meeting. Christa to contact Joe Levinson to check on how the NSF stock ticker indexes doing? Peter Youngbaer to contact Joe Levinson about investment input.
- Spring NRO – should NCC help with trips etc. NNJG might be taking on this NRO. We will wait until we hear that the NRO will really happen.
- Surprise Cave – finally got the forms from the state, need management plan, Bob Simmons get back to Pat Vissering. Bob to contact Simmons about status. We have had offers to help with the gate (\$1,000 matching?) TS3, want to set up a work day. Christa to contact Al Hick and ask if Surprise is on the list for WNS survey?
- Torys – Bob to contact Simmons about status and then Bob A to contact the Land trust about status as well.
- Conneticut incorporation – paper work is mostly completed,
- Red Bat Cave in Berkshire County, MA – used to be a commercial cave. Mike Telladiare spoke to owner, she would like to give it to the NCC. Chuck Porter working on this. Clean up.
- Aeolus Cave – Peter did a WNS survey with Scott Darling (VT DEC) NCC only manage the cave, the Nature Conservancy would still own, they are not responding to any contacts.
- Newsletter - Christa to add to our harcopy list for newsletters for Rose Paul, Robert Klein, Scott Darling, Susie VanOttenburg., maybe some of the CLC people and the Weintraug group, MHLC?, Bob Holt
- Knox Cave Committee – Jay to speak to Emily about being co-manager? Christa to contact to him about this.
- Preserves Committee – needs to be under committee of the whole at the next board meeting? This is a left over from the beginning. Also needs to be updated in this area – Possible bylaws change
- Grant writer – Jay started to fill out a grant for Merlins. He has been in contact with Peter Y. on this. Peter to ask Jay about the Greenways grant and moving forward with a grant writer. What are his thoughts?
- Merlins Cave – Chuck has been trying contact with CLC (Brenda Adams, Tony Kohler-) meeting with them to discuss possible ways to fund raise. But there has been no response from them since Christmas. Bob Addis to send formal letter to CLC president. Bob to work with Chuck on this Chuck to contact Belknap and get his input as well.
- Beckers – NSF wanted to know the status. We did all the work CCF requested but it never got on their agenda. Peter to contact John Pearson (WV) he has all the info that we sent. Peter will see if we can re-apply. On the issue of the legal issue what is going on?? Waiting for the Administration Law judge ruling on un-grandfathering; Bob to contact our attorney to get an update on the status to report at our board meeting also where is our transcripts.

- Bill to ask when should we re-apply for more funds from TRA.
- Howe Cave Quarry – combined one permit – covering existing permit and expansion to the east. The renewal date is April 3rd, 2008. How does this effect Howe Caverns? Bob will be going to the Mines and Reclaimantion Office March 10, and look at the old permit and maybe the new permit. Christa to do GIS map for this area check on ownership
- WNS – website is up-to-date Chuck to send link from DC Grotto to Mike C. Christa to send out email blast to group again. If you have been in these four caves....also this will help with opening the caves again. Bat Surveys – Chuck in contact with Merlins to get a survey - Knox will be going out this week hopefully. Al Hicks contacted Bob A and I will set up these surveys. (Knox, Gage, Schoharie, Hailes) Christa to make the sign and double check on wording. Chuck will post. Only for NCC preserves. Peter what are the criteria that will be used to determine when we can re-open the caves? Christa to contact Al Hicks on asking about this possible criteria and what the board will be needing to discuss the opening of caves.
- Merlins – need to get moving on fundraising. Need to write a contract. Chuck and Bob will draft contract and check with Mark Seltzer

Meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Attachment E

VOLUNTEER VALUE COMMITTEE

Vince Kappler
973-579-2116
vkappler@nac.net

Progress:

VV totals to date for 2008: 4,467 miles, and 111 hours of work for a total value of \$4467.00.

I closed the books in mid January for VV for 2007. The total dollar value for 2007 shows a moderate increase over 2006, which is partially due to the increase in the hourly rate the Board approved last spring. The more important figure is the 13.1% increase in the number of hours members have donated for 2007. The chart below compares some statistics for the years the NCC have been tracking members' work to benefit the organization.

VOLUNTEER VALUE STATS

	Hours	Miles	Dollar Value
2006	1389.5	20,862	\$29,955.00
2007	1571.5 (+13.1%)	14,607 (-30%)	\$35,542.00 (+18.7%)

The web page to submit hours, http://www.necaveconservancy.org/add_vv.php is working very well and some members are using it regularly. I encourage all Officers, Committee Chairs and Property Managers to check it out.

Plans:

I will continue to collect data and maintain totals of the hours, mileage, and expenses members contribute to NCC projects.

I will send periodic VV reminders to the membership, monitor data collection, and try to answer questions as they come up.

Problems:

None at this time

Attachment F

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

ADOPT-A-NATURAL RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

APPLICATION

Participation in the Adopt-A-Natural Resource Stewardship Program is subject to:

- 1) Completion of this application.
- 2) Submission to the Department Office of the Respective Management Authority indicated below.
- 3) Review and approval by that office. The accompanying information on the program should be read carefully before completing this application.

Your Name: Robert W. Simmons
(Print)

Your Address: 104 Newfield Road
PO Box 57
Winchester Center, CT 06094-0057

Telephone: Home 860-738-1176 Work 860-674-9570 XT 134

The activities of the Steward will be performed as (check one):

An Individual _____; an Organization or Group X

If activities are to be performed as an organization or group, please indicate its:

Group Name: The Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc.
Group Address: PO Box 254
Schoharie, NY 12157

Your office or authority: Trustee

Please describe the activities you would like to perform as the Steward of a natural resource:

Surprise Cave
Bashakill Wildlife Management Area
Town of Mamakating
Sullivan County, NY

See Supplemental Page Below

(Use additional sheets and attach as a part of this application, if necessary)

Under this stewardship agreement, the Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc. propose to perform the following tasks and activities in support of the conservation of Surprise Cave.

1. Prepare a current management plan in conjunction with the Department, on which to base access, visitation and management policies for the cave and the overlying karst area.
2. Serve as the general point of contact for access permits, management and access control for the Department.
3. Perform routine gate and lock maintenance, repairs, inspection and improvements to ensure the security of the cave.
4. Perform periodic inspections of the property both during the caving season and during the closed season.
5. Liaison with local emergency first responders and rescue personnel to pre-plan and coordinate rescue efforts.
6. Provide education and outreach services to local stakeholders (Schools, Regulators, other conservation groups and associations).
7. Assist the department with certain surface improvements such as trail maintenance and relocation efforts, trash removal, graffiti removal, hazard tree removals, etc.
8. Perform visitation surveys to document the use of the cave by permittees.
9. Assist wildlife personnel with resource inventories such as bat counts, etc.
10. Assist other investigators with efforts to map the cave and geologic, hydrologic and biological resources.

Surprise Cave Adopt-a-Natural-Resource Application
March 24, 2008
Page 3 of 3

In addition to this application, it may be necessary to complete administrative forms and provide a copy of the by-laws or charter where formal organizations are involved.

This application should be submitted to the following DEC Office:

Office of Natural Resources

Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources

Bureau of Wildlife

Headquarters, Region 3

21 South Putt Corners Road

New Paltz, NY 12561-1696

Applicant Signature:  Date: 3/24/08

Attachment G
From Email dated 3/28/2008

On 3/27 Chuck, Bill Folsom, and myself met with Tony & Tom of the Columbia Land Conservancy, the ones who will receive the conservation easement when we purchase Merlins. CLC is also an outstanding fund raiser so we were meeting as much to pick their brains as anything.

They readily gave us 12-15 contacts - possible grant sources, wealthy donors, etc.- and several good ideas.

- If we have missed a grant application deadline (and we have), contact them anyway since they may put us in touch with a donor favorable to our cause.

- Tom, their grant writer would be available for a modest fee to either write an application or review our drafts.

- Adjacent to our proposed preserve is a feature on the topo maps called Rattlesnake Den. Chuck says the name came from the scores of rattlers that were flushed from the underbrush during a fire on the ridge a few years ago. CLC suggests that the _____ Heritage Group might be able to offer some matching funds on an effort to protect the rattlers. Cool Beans!

- The WNS might work to our advantage @ Merlins but further discussion is needed.

- CLC suggests that the NCC put on a few public speaking events in Columbia County, talking about WNS, our preserve system, our plans & Merlins to establish another preserve. Although these can't be fund raising events, they will increase public awareness of our efforts and gain support indirectly. A local historical society meets very near Merlins and would be a good start.

- CLC can not allow us to use their mailing list of donors since they have a couple of large fund raisers going on currently and as well, they feel they have to protect their donors from other solicitations.

- CLC's Board is discussing offering us deep discounts on the sums of money they normally require when then accept a conservation easement. Most conservancies establish a fund from which the interest will pay for annual stewardship, but CLC acknowledges the NCC's hands-on involvement with their preserves and will require substantially less. They still have to protect CLC's long term interests in accepting easements.

Bill took notes @ the meeting so more will follow @ the 3/30 meeting.