

**NORTHEASTERN CAVE CONSERVANCY, INC.**

**Minutes**

June 5, 2011, 10:00 am Octagon Barn, Knox, NY

Meeting called to order at 10:17 am

1. Introduction and greetings – President Bob Addis
2. The Nominating Chair announces the results of the Trustees' election. The new/returning trustees are seated at this time. – Attachment A-1 Welcome Morgan Ingalls to the board.
3. Addis moves to thank Bob Simmons for being the interim nominating committee chair and for his time as a trustee.  
2nd by Engel  
**Passed unanimously**
4. Attendance:  
Officers: B. Addis, P. Youngbaer, B. Folsom, C. Hay  
Trustees: M Chu, K. Dumont, T. Engel, V. Kappler, A. Traino, P. Woodell, M. Ingalls
5. Absent with Proxy
  - Chuck Porter for Mike Warner
6. Absent without Proxy
  - Al Hicks
  - Board votes Bob Simmons in as proxy
7. President's Report – Bob Addis- Attachment A
8. Vice President's Report –Peter Youngbaer – Attachment B
9. Treasurer's Report –Bill Folsom - Attachment C
  - Onesquethaw will remain off the tax records
10. Secretary's Report – Christa Hay
  - Status quo
  - May EC meeting minutes – Attachment D
11. Science Committee – Larry Davis
12. Acquisitions Committee Report –Chuck Porter – see presidents report on Merlins
13. Bylaws Committee Report – Joe Levinson
14. Publications/Publicity Committee Report - Christa Hay
  - Status quo
15. Fundraising Committee Report – Open
16. Office Committee Report – Emily Davis / Mike Warner
  - Status quo
17. Knox Cave Preserve Report –Emily Davis
  - thanks to Mike, Alan , Judy for mowing the property
18. Onesquethaw Cave Preserve Report – Thom Engel
  - We now own the preserve and I plan to make changes to the management plan. Primarily I plan to simplify the permit system. I want to eliminate the trip waiver and instead, people will e-mail a list of participants and a date and I will e-mail a permit. Other issues are how to delineate the sink in the field to prevent incursion by the farmer and what to do with "long-term" parking on the property. I would like to discuss in the committee of the whole.

As for trips, a very wet spring has kept trips to a minimum. Some chose to do Clarksville after seeing the entrance to Onesquethaw.

19. Sellecks Karst Preserve Report – Alan Traino
20. Clarksville Preserve Report – Mike Chu, Thom Engel, Chuck Porter
  - Nothing to report
21. Bentleys Preserve Report - Jonah Spivak
  - Trail maintenance underway other than that nothing to report.
22. Ella Armstrong Preserve – Alan Traino
  - Cleared rocks from entrance, replace poster
23. Education Committee Report – Thom Engel
  - I participated in the EMS Club day with the valuable assistance of Tom Rider and cameos by Rebecca and Matty Rider. I then participated in Earth Day at Clarksville Elementary School. The school is being closed for budgetary reasons. Amy Price, who has coordinated the Earth Day event at Clarksville will be at Slingerlands Elementary next year. She would like to continue the program.

I also participated in the 4th annual SAGE (Shenendehowa Advocates for Great Education) event. This is an evening event for K-8 and brings together a variety of technological and scientific entities. The great disappointment for many kids was that the groundwater model was not a real ant farm.
24. Membership Committee – Donna Stanley
25. Website Subcommittee Report – Mike Chu
  - Nothing to report
26. Legal Committee Report – Open
27. Special and Group Use Coordinators –Amy Cox
28. Financial and Investments Committee – Joe Levinson
29. Volunteer Value Committee – Vince Kappler
  - **Progress:** Things must be pretty quiet this quarter because there were very few VV hours reported. Year to date totals are 426 hours with a total value of \$13,193.00

The web page to submit hours, [http://www.necaveconservancy.org/add\\_vv.php](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 send periodic VV reminders to the membership, monitor data collection, and try to answer questions as they come up.

**Problems:** None at this time
30. Ad hoc Committee – Surprise Cave – Bob Simmons
  - The final version of the Adopt a Natural Resource (AANR) Application is attached. DEC made one change to our suggested edits and that is to have us prepare the management plan for their review, rather than prepare it jointly. I see no problem with that and have told them so. The document is ready for signatures and return to DEC.
  - On another note, I have made a contact with one of the adjacent property owners to the north of the cave (next property beyond the parcels with the majority of the cave owned by the Janeczko Family). He has some sinks that are taking water and opening up a bit that likely represent an extension to or abandoned portion of the Hell Section of Surprise. He is also taking an interest in Surprise and has indicated he would keep an eye on things and assist with the gating efforts in the future. The lock and chain were trashed again last Friday, we reported to the DEC and they are replacing this week.
  - Contact Jim Kennedy for cave gate, expenses should be coming from the state
31. Ad hoc Committee- Tory's Cave – Bob Simmons - still looking for executive director
32. Ad hoc Committee -Merlins Cave - Chuck Porter - see presidents report

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

2nd by Traino

**Passed unanimously**

- Bentleys – Peter talked to Jonah about the Spring NRO is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary for VCA and they will be hosting NRO. Will have some traffic to Bentleys.
- Mower- Alan and Mike C did the lawns at Knox and Ella and they used the sickle bar Alan would like to buy one from Mike C. Where would we store it and who would maintain it? Outcome – Mike will keep it and loan it to the NCC and will be reimbursed for gas.
- Member appreciation day – will continue to discuss
- Email list – need to let Emily know the bad emails. Need to get an updated email list from Emily- database.
- Membership database- need to get one database online
- Onesquethaw – we finally are the owners. Thom would like to make some changes to the management plan. First change would be the procedure to give out trip permits. Want to change it to email procedure. Sink in the field was checked and thing seem to be ok for now. We need to know the farmer that is farming the land since we now own it. Long term parking by neighbor needs to be decided.
- Merlins – Morgan is interested as preserve manager. We need to advertize the position but can always make an interim since we will own the cave before the next board meeting.
- Baugh – need a quote to make a motion for help with trash removal. Also need to make sure the NCC has the permission to cross CSP property since we received a letter from their lawyer stating we could not be on their property. Peter will get in touch with the lawyer.
- Retreat - can the board and committee chairs get together and talk about issues. Start thinking about November before we do this.
- Caboose Cave- access thru Kevin Dumont.

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

2<sup>nd</sup> by Kappler

**Passed unanimously**

*Morgan Ingalls had to leave meeting*

35. Hay moved to accept the minutes of the December 5, 2010 meeting.

2<sup>nd</sup> by Porter

For –Rest Absent – Traino, Hay, Ingalls

**Passed**

36. Hay moved to accept the minutes of the March 20, 2011 meeting.

2<sup>nd</sup> by Porter

For – Rest Absent Hay, Ingalls

**Passed**

37. Addis moved Charles O. Porter, the Acquisitions Committee Chairman, can sign on the behalf of the Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc. all necessary documents for the purchase of Merlin's Cave in the event that neither the President nor Treasurer is available at the time of closing.

2nd by Simmons

For Rest; Abstained Porter; Absent Ingalls

**Passed**

38. Youngbaer moved that Morgan Ingalls be the interim manager of Merlins Preserve.

2nd by Dumont

For Rest; Absent Ingalls

**Passed**

39. Simmons moved to appoint Peter Youngbaer as the representative to the 2011 NSS convention.

2nd by Traino

For Rest; Abstain Youngbaer

**Passed**

40. Simmons moved that the NCC authorizthes the president to sign the AANRSP agreement with the NYS DEC.

2nd by Folsom

**Passed unanimously**

41. Informational Point: Executive committee meeting will be held Tuesday August 16 at 7pm – Conference call.

42. Addis moved that the next NCC Board meeting will be held September 25 at noon. Potluck to follow, location to follow.

2nd Kappler

**Passed unanimously**

43. Addis moved to thank Amy and Russ Porkorny for the use of the barn for the meeting.

2nd by Hay

**Passed unanimously**

44. Addis moved to adjourn.

2nd by Traino

**Passed unanimously**

Meeting adjourned at 1:32 pm

### **Attachment A-1 Report of the Nominating Committee**

123 Electronic ballots (email) were sent to the membership as were 5 "snail mail" ballots to those members who have no email address. 56 email ballots were returned (45.5 %) and 3 snail mail ballots were returned (60 %). Vote totals were as follows:

1. Mike Chu 55
2. Vince Kappler 44
3. Morgan Ingalls 37
4. Kevin Flanagan 23

All in all, the election went very well. Only one ballot had an issue on it (two votes for the same person) I did not disqualify the second vote as the procedures I sent out did not specifically state that only one vote per candidate was appropriate. That should be stated in the instructions going forward.

Issues encountered:

1. A lot of manipulation of the member's database was needed to get to the email addresses that were eligible to vote. There were some of out of date email addresses, and some typos, such that a number of emails were kicked back as undeliverable. I managed to correct/update most of them and a few were sent paper ballots. There were also several people that had renewed or joined that were not reflected in the members database as yet, but whose data was supplied by the treasurer.
2. In future, it would be helpful to add a field to the member's database that indicates whether they are eligible to vote or not.
3. The members list also had listed members that had expired since the first of January 2011. I sent emails to those names indicating they would need to renew if they wanted to vote. I believe that got us a few renewals. This process should be coordinated between Nominating and Membership each year as we get close to election time, to get some of the past due members to sign back up.
4. This year we had used a cutoff of January 1 for the listing. We had a few people whose membership had run out in December 2010 that wondered why they had not received ballots. I suggest we expand the list next year to any member that may have been past due for the previous 6 months and send them the same reminder about renewing to be able to vote.
5. A big question for this new process was voter's anonymity, as the person receiving and counting the votes (me) could see who had voted for which candidates. So far only two responses from the members indicated they had any issue with this, and both cast their votes anyway.
6. One member has suggested that it would have been helpful for them if we had included a list of the current Board Members and their terms of office. This should be included in future elections as it may provide useful information to voters.
7. To run the election by email, I set up a separate Gmail account. In future, we should have an account name such as elections@necaveconservacy.org, in case my NCC.Vote.2011@Gmail.com type emails were caught in spam filters, or by similar technology.

## **Attachment A PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Frankly it has been a quiet spring for the NCC, perhaps due to the awful weather. I don't have a lot to report but still there are some important signs for forward movement.

Merlins – Owner Mike Belknap underwent double knee replacement at the first of the year and spent several weeks in physical therapy in New York City so progress has been slow. Finally Acquisitions Chair Chuck Porter and I attended a Town of Canaan Zoning Board of Appeals meeting on May 31 with Mike and his wife. Mike presented the latest and hopefully final walking right of way layout which seems to make the most people happy. The NCC will have access to our 35 acres via a parking area on Tunnel Hill Road. It is approximately a half of a mile walking but the easiest access of all of the previous suggestions. A neighbor on Vandenberg Hill Road has purchased about 5 acres from Mike and Martha, and the NCC western boundary moved downhill one hundred or so feet to keep the parcel at 35 acres. There was no opposition at the ZBA meeting, either in letters written or anyone attending other than ourselves. Mike will pay for the construction of a parking lot and gate at Tunnel Hill Road and the NCC will finish a 3-car parking area, changing area/kiosk, and built the walking trail to the Preserve. Although I said it had been quiet on the Merlins acquisition over the spring, considerable efforts have taken place in the negotiations to reach this compromise.

The actual ZBA motion passed on May 31 was to authorize the walking right of way to be 15 feet in width as opposed to the Canaan law stating that a 60 foot right of way is needed. Obviously considerable other explanations and discussions occurred at the meeting to get to this, and the ZBA has agreed to pass its approval on to the Planning Board so that with luck we can get the final approval on June 20. We should be able to set a closing date after that. For those keeping count, the NCC will sign its third amendment to the Purchase Contract extending the completion date from June 30 not to exceed September 30, 2011. Finally the NCC can begin see a real closing for Merlins sometime late summer.

Chuck and I also explored the idea of the September NCC Board meeting being held on Mike & Martha's property or nearby in conjunction with a Saturday work day at the Preserve. They were receptive and details will follow.

### Other Events:

- April 8-9: the NCC display was at the Eastern Mountain Sports store Club Days in Albany.
- April 15: newly elected Educational Chair Thom Engel gave a presentation at the Clarksville Elementary School Earth Day Fair. He used the NCC ground water demonstration, nicknamed "the ant farm", which is always popular with the children.
- May 14: the NCC conducted a fund raiser auction at the Spring NRO weekend in Newton, NJ.

## **Attachment B VP REPORT**

Wrote the press release for the Onesquethaw transfer to the NCC and included information about the opening of our caves for the summer and WNS.

Discussed the issue of waivers for both our properties and the NSS with the EC, some of the preserve managers and Amy Cox. This needs further attention, but we should be able to streamline our processes. The impetus for this discussion was the change necessary to our website and waiver documents due to the change of ownership for Onesquethaw.

Spent considerable time with the EC, Mike Chu, Bob Simmons, Mike Warner, etc. on issues surrounding the electronic elections and the status of our current data base. I think the election went very well, and Bob S. did an excellent job with what he had to work with. We need to discuss the database issues at the Board meeting and bring us into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This will help the Membership and Office Committees directly, and the NCC over the long run.

The EC has been plenty busy with the Merlins acquisition (see President's report). Kudos to Bob and Chuck for shepherding this through a very lengthy process. I do believe I see daylight at the end of this long cave trip.

Attended the WNS Symposium in Little Rock Arkansas, May 17-19. Pasted below is the summary I sent out to the various NSS networks. We should shortly see a draft version of potential revisions to the USFWS caving advisory with alternatives. They will be requesting feedback, and we should respond as a Conservancy. In other news, the Center for Biological Diversity filed and Intent to Sue letter with various federal agencies. They reiterated their call for closing caves and mines across the U.S., re-defining "take" under the Endangered Species Act, listing the Eastern small-footed and Northern long-eared bats, and naming all caves on federal land "significant" under the Federal Cave Resources Protection Act. Several New England states have been moving forward with listing certain bat species as state endangered (Little brown and Northern long-eared).

### **WNS Symposium Summary:**

By Peter Youngbaer 16161 CM, FE  
WNS Liaison  
National Speleological Society

This year's WNS Symposium took place in Little Rock, Arkansas, May 17-19. 130 federal, state, academic, and non-governmental organization folks working on WNS attended, including a few European guests. 14 attendees were NSS members, and were represented in all of the above groups. This was the fourth annual gathering. Earlier meetings took place in Albany, Austin, and Pittsburgh.

The first day and a half was dedicated to research update presentations. The two highlights here were: 1. 18 American bats were inoculated with the European *Geomyces destructans*; 18 American bats with the U.S. version; and 18 control bats were given sham inoculations. Both sets of inoculated bats developed WNS. This result gives strong support to the hypothesis of introduction from Europe. 2. Hazel Barton reported research from Kevin Keel that shows that 50 degree Celsius water (122F) for 15 minutes kills *Geomyces destructans*. This is hotter than typical wash water, but less than boiling. It provides a non-chemical alternative for decon.

The next day and a half was dedicated to working on the WNS National Plan, which was announced and publicly released on the first day of the meeting. Attendees broke in to working groups as per the Plan, and began fleshing out implementation plans.

Personally, I spent a half-day with the Disease Management working group, then split my time between the Recovery and Conservation Group/Species Recovery sub-group and a special session for state agency personnel. With this latter group, I was part of a panel presentation explaining the role of the NSS and our members/grottos etc. helping with hibernacula identification, public education, and caver education.

There was lots of networking time, too, to catch up with folks the NSS has funded and worked with across the country. Here are some highlight observations from the Symposium:

1. It seemed that most western state officials attending recognized that the USFS Region 2 blanket closure actions, and how they were initiated, were not helpful, and didn't want to duplicate them. NPS and BLM folks spoke positively about the roles cavers have played and continue to play. They and the state folks are skeptical about cave closures, but still feeling pressure from the feds. I spent a couple hours conversing with the Colorado Division of Wildlife Species Coordinator, Tina Jackson, who had positive things to say about the Convention organizers. She expressed a little anxiety about having so many cavers descend (ascend?) at once, but I assured her we've done this before, and that many attending the Convention are busy with meetings and other activities and won't be caving. Again, she seemed very much pleased with the convention planning. I believe it is critical that we continue to build and maintain good relationships like these, with a demonstrated track record of good will and positive results.
2. The Disease Management researchers and field managers seemed to grow increasingly pessimistic about finding any sort of cure, treatment, or magic managerial bullet for stopping WNS. With federal and state budget restrictions, the ability for researchers to have a significant impact in time to affect the natural disease progression is limited. Not that anyone is giving up, but the tone was sobering. Further, there is a serious concern about a shortage of bats for research, and it is likely that some researchers will be denied access.
3. As a result of the Disease Management situation, Field Management seems to be shifting to Conservation and Recovery. How can species be preserved? What field techniques can be applied to assist survivorship, such as habitat manipulation? An example of this was described by Tom Kunz, Boston University, for maternity colonies. It used to be that we would see fairly large (500+ animals) roosts that were able to generate a lot of heat, which is necessary for successful birth, lactation, and juvenile growth. Now, with maternity colonies much smaller in the WNS-hit region, he's found that the addition of wooden baffles in the ceilings of barns, sheds, etc. can concentrate heat and help smaller maternity colonies be more successful.
4. There is still a lot of talk about artificial hibernacula, as well as captive breeding colonies. Re the former, Cory Holliday's Tennessee underground project is on its way to being built, with more than half the funds raised. Re the captive colonies, my suspicion is that lack of funding and continuing controversy over that approach will limit

experiments in that regard.

5. Regarding funding, it was announced that \$1.9 million of USFWS funding was being made available from this year's base appropriation. This is NOT new congressional action, but simply USFWS taking money away from other things within its reduced budget. Next year's budget is clearly looking worse, but that's what we've been working on in DC. This \$1.9 million will be spread out to the states in an as-yet-to-be announced format. However, spread among 27 states, this is about \$70,000 per state - which won't really do much more than pay for some staff time for monitoring and surveillance. Funding realities will be the biggest damper on national Plan activities, and severely limit research.

6. Species listing: there were two impromptu sessions on the subject of list more bat species as Endangered under the Endangered Species Act - one for the Northeast, where states are in various stages of listing certain species, and a second where one USFWS official was leading an effort to have national listing of all hibernating bat species in the U.S.. That was the subject of serious debate, with many people opposing that approach. Reasons given ranged from not enough information on various bat species, to unnecessarily riling up opponents, such as the western timber industry, to taking attention away from the importance of regional or national listing of the Little Brown Bat, which is arguably the most seriously affected and the one species for which the case could be made and a status report request has been filed.

7. A new national WNS website is being prepared for both the public and for the research and management communities. A brief presentation on this was given, but we're probably a good six months away from implementation. The goal of USFWS is to have a single place where everyone can go for information, data, outreach materials, and management policies.

Of course, there were many more details from the workshops and presentations, and certainly from the networking that takes place at these meetings. By the time you read this, the Abstracts of the papers presented should be on line, and further details about the WNS National Plan working groups should be available. For questions or comments, contact me at [wnsliaison@caves.org](mailto:wnsliaison@caves.org).

**Attachment C  
Treasurer's Report**

June 5, 2011

	<u>Jun 1, 11</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Checking	1,902.30
Money Market	97,765.71
NSF Account (3/31 balance)	44,421.00
PayPal Checking	<u>19.26</u>
Total Checking/Savings	<u>144,108.27</u>
 Total Current Assets	 144,108.27

As of June 1, the Merlins Cave Fund totaled \$92,696.17.

The Tax Assessor for the Town of New Scotland has been contacted in regards to getting the newest NCC property off their tax rolls (Onesquethaw).

## Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual

06/01/2011

	<u>Jan - May</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Donations		
Auction Donations	255.00	1,000.00
Donations - Other	<u>1,998.11</u>	<u>3,350.00</u>
Total Donations	2,253.11	4,350.00
 Donations Restricted		
Merlin's Cave Fund	<u>60.00</u>	
Total Donations Restricted	60.00	
 Interest Earned	124.22	180.00
Membership Income	<u>1,856.20</u>	<u>5,000.00</u>
Total Income	4,293.53	9,530.00
 Expense		
Acquisitions	0.00	500.00
Bank Charges	10.67	15.00
Development	0.00	1,200.00
Donations-outgoing	0.00	200.00
Education	0.00	100.00
Executive		
President	0.00	150.00
Secretary	0.00	75.00
Treasurer	0.00	75.00
VP	<u>0.00</u>	<u>75.00</u>
Total Executive	0.00	375.00
 Legal Fees	450.00	2,000.00



Licenses & Permits	305.00	250.00
Meeting Expense	0.00	100.00
Membership Expenses	0.00	100.00
Miscellaneous	0.00	100.00
Office Expense	0.00	100.00
Postage	106.00	200.00
Preserves-Maintenance		
Bentleys	0.00	100.00
Clarksville	0.00	300.00
Ella Armstrong	0.00	1,100.00
Knox	0.00	25.00
Merlins	0.00	500.00
Onesquethaw	0.00	25.00
Sellecks	0.00	100.00
Total Preserves-Maintenance	<u>0.00</u>	<u>2,150.00</u>
Printing	0.00	200.00
Promotion/Fundraising	0.00	780.00
Publishing		
Mailings	0.00	200.00
Website	0.00	60.00
Total Publishing	<u>0.00</u>	<u>260.00</u>
Sponsorships	500.00	600.00
Taxes on Properties	111.14	300.00
Total Expense	<u>1,482.81</u>	<u>9,530.00</u>
Net Ordinary Income	2,810.72	0.00
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
In Kind donations	0.00	0.00
Volunteer Value	13,193.00	0.00
Total Other Income	13,193.00	0.00
Other Expense		
In Kind Out	0.00	0.00
Volunteer Value Exp	13,193.00	0.00
Total Other Expense	<u>13,193.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Net Other Income	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Net Income	<u>2,810.72</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Net Gain or Loss from NSF Fund	<u>1,162.00</u>	
<b>NET Income after NSF Fund Gain/Loss</b>	<b><u>3,972.72</u></b>	

**Attachment D**  
**EC Minutes**

EC Meeting  
05/04/2011  
Conference Call

Conference call: Bob, Bill, Peter, Christa,

Merlins: Heard from Mike Belknap on April 11 stating he would get back to us – Bob to send an email to him to get an update.

Cave openings – May 15<sup>th</sup> or ice out- Caves opening as scheduled put this on website

Membership Chair – data from Emily's database has been cleaned up and is now on the on line membership.

Elections – Bob Simmons recently sent out an email blast to test the email election process. Election ballots will be coming out soon.

Onesquethaw Cave – the paper work is all final and the NCC now owns the cave. Lawyer has been paid. Need to send out a press- release. Peter will talk to Thom and they can work on a draft. Try to get a photo to send out with press-release. Bob will see about contacting Jill Knapp. Now need to file for tax exemption with the town of New Scotland. Bill will deal with this year's tax issue. I need to get section block and lot number to Bill.

Southern Michigan University – the group came without the proper permits and did not do WNS decon even after being told the process last year. Letter went out to professor and university stating the procedure. We will also make the website clearer for groups use.

BSA – they have a change in their policy – now have to be 14 to go on cave trip.

NCKMS – we are providing our EIN for the event for sponsors.

NRO – I will send out an email for remembering auction items.

Northeast Bat Working Group - they are working on having USFW realize that decon within a solid WNS area is not needed. Need to be flexible and to watch the policy – tracking the science and not shutting down all caves.

NSS convention - Peter, Bob and Christa are going

Website updates- add Thom to education chair, add colleges/university to cave visit

Next board meeting – June 5<sup>th</sup> – do a good work day on the 4<sup>th</sup> and meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup>. Need to find a meeting place.