

Northeastern Cave Conservancy News



The Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc. (NCC) is a not-for-profit corporation committed to the conservation, study, management, and acquisition of caves and karst areas having significant geological, hydrological, biological, recreational, historical or aesthetic features. To these ends, the NCC combines the resources and expertise of affiliated cave explorers, educators, scientists, landowners, and conservation officials.

Next Board Meeting

Sunday, March 12th, 2006, 12:00PM
at Southern Vermont College, Bennington VT

Notes from the Last Board Meeting

- 1) Elections for officers - the existing President, Vice President and Secretary were re-instated.
- 2) Joe Levinson did not run again for Treasurer. - The Board thanked Joe for his years of service- he was the first treasurer!
- 3) The Treasurer position is currently open and the Board is looking for a qualified candidate.
- 4) Joe L. was voted in as transition Treasurer for this meeting.
- 5) Paul Murphy resigned as Trustee and Finance & Investments Chair. Paul brought much knowledge as he sat on a planning board. Thanks go to Paul for his service.
- 6) The Board is considering a Bylaws change to deal with Trustee vacancies
- 7) Mike Warner, Chairman for the NCKMS was thanked by the Board for hosting a successful event.
- 8) The 2006 Budget was voted on and passed.
- 9) The basic liability insurance and accident coverage motion (do we get it or not) was postponed until the March meeting as the final numbers from the insurance company did not come in yet.
- 10) The President will be the head of an ad hoc committee to study the possible acquisition of Beckers Cave, Schoharie NY.
- 11) Joe Levinson was appointed to chair the Bylaws Committee (this position has been advertised but remained unfilled).

- 12) Vince Kappler was head of an ad hoc committee that completed its work on volunteer value. This will help us take the next step for applying for grants.
- 13) The Volunteer Value Committee was established. This position will be advertised in the newsletter and committee chair will be selected at the March meeting.
- 14) The Education Committee for coordination of educational outreach to schools and other groups was established. This position will be advertised in the newsletter. We are looking for a qualified person, teaching degree preferred. There are several names in the hat so far.
- 15) Thanks to Speleobooks for hosting the meeting and feeding the board a very good lunch.

In this issue

Notes from the Last Meeting.....	Page 1
Cleanup of Everett Cave at the Next Board Meeting	Page 2
NCC Bylaws change motion for the Next Board Meeting.....	Page 3
NCC Board Initiates Search for Chair of Newly Formed Education Committee	Page 3
The NCC Needs a New Treasurer	Page 3
Volunteer Value	Page 4
Finance & Investments Chair and Webmaster Chair Needed.....	Page 4
Tilting at Windmills in the Berkshires.....	Page 5
Promotional Items for Sale	Page 7
Update on Beckers Cave	Page 7
Upcoming Events	Page 7

Cleanup of Everett Cave at the Next Board Meeting

The next NCC board meeting will be Sunday, March 12th at 12PM at Southern Vermont College in Bennington VT. SVC owns Everett Cave, a short marble cave that unfortunately receives more than its share of vandalism. The NCC will hold a cave clean up before the meeting, starting at 10 AM. See below from Peter Younbaer:

A few years ago, three of us VCA members did a thorough cleanup of the cave, taking out four bags of trash (mostly broken beer bottles), as well as rotting wood from the numerous impromptu ladders built in the large entrance room to reach the upper passage (which goes nowhere). We lowered the floor about three feet - just to give you an idea of how much rotting wood there was. I have no idea what to expect in terms of trash, other than the usual bottles and litter, so I think just a few trash bags will be sufficient. I do not recall much, if any graffiti, so we'll have to play that by ear. I will have a couple spray bottles and brushes and a bucket, which should handle anything we find.

Directions: Folks will be arriving via U.S. Route 7 (either from the North or South), or Vermont State Route 9 (East or West). The intersection of these two main roads is the main Bennington downtown intersection. When Route 9 crosses the VT/NY border, it becomes NY State Route 7, which comes over directly from Troy. Assuming that everyone can figure that out, here are the local details:

Coming from the NY border on VT Rte. 9, you will come into Old Bennington. The Bennington Monument looms to your left - the Old First Church and green are straight ahead. Rte. 9 makes an "S" through this area, but you want to go straight for just a car length or so, then bend immediately right (South) on Monument Ave.

Follow Monument Ave through a residential area and a stone archway. The road will fork. Bear right onto Foothills Road. This winds up to the base of Mt. Anthony, through the campus of Southern Vermont College, and up to the parking area by the old stone mansion. We are meeting inside the mansion. From the church, this is a total of about a mile or so. The cave is a short 10 minute walk from the mansion.

Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc.		
Officers		
President	Bob Addis	(518) 237-1165 raddis@capital.net
Vice President	Bill Folsom	(212) 427-7256 rockeater@mindspring.com
Treasurer		
Secretary	Christa Hay	(518) 237-1165 c.hay@ctmale.com
Trustees		
Jon Allison		(518) 383-1465 allisj2@alum.rpi.edu
Jeff DeGroff		(518) 296-8990 jeffd@howecaverns.com
Vince Kappler		(973) 579-2116 vkappler@nac.net
Mike Chu		chum2@rpi.edu
Joe Armstrong		gonecaving@hotmail.com
Peter Youngbaer		(802) 454-7752 Youngbaer4@aol.com
Open		
Jason Siemion		(518) 928-4300 jaysiemion@hotmail.com
Bob Simmons		rwsimmons1@msn.com
Committee Chairs		
Acquisitions	Chuck Porter	(518) 274-4863 necaver@acmenet.net
Bylaws	Joe Levinson	(973) 208-9049 jlevinson@tellurian.net
Conservation	Joe Armstrong	gonecaving@hotmail.com
Finance & Investments	Open	
Fundraising	Alan Traino	PollackOpticians@aol.com
Land Trusts	Jon Allison	(518) 383-1465 allisj2@alum.rpi.edu
Liaison		
Legal	Dan Werner	danwern@hotmail.com
Membership	Sean Ryan	bellog@juno.com
Nominating	Mike Martuscello	mikemart@superior.net
Office	Mike Warner	(518) 295-7978 mike@speleobooks.com
	Emily Davis	(518) 295-7978 emily@speleobooks.com
Preserves	Thom Engel (Onesquethaw)	(518) 478-9664 necaver@earthlink.net
	Jay Simion (Sellecks)	(518) 928-4300 jaysiemion@hotmail.com
	Emily Davis (Knox)	(518) 295-7978 emily@speleobooks.com
	Michael Chu	chum2@rpi.edu
	Thom Engel Chuck Porter (Clarksville)	necaver@earthlink.net necaver@acmenet.net
	Joe Armstrong (Ella)	gonecaving@hotmail.com
Publications and Publicity	Christa Hay	(518) 237-1165 c.hay@ctmale.com
Newsletter Editor	Jon Allison & Michael Chu	allisj2@alum.rpi.edu chum2@rpi.edu
Website	Norm Berg	(860) 621-2080 nb.website@cox.net
Science Coordinator	R. Laurence Davis	(203) 932-7108 rldavis@Newhaven.edu
Special Use Coordinators	Aaron & Amy Cox	(203) 426-4602 Amycaves2@aol.com
<p>The Northeastern Cave Conservancy News is published quarterly by the Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc. The Northeastern Cave Conservancy promotes the study and preservation of speleologically significant properties in the Northeastern United States. Annual membership is \$15 (Regular), \$5 addtl. (Family), \$10 (student), \$50 (Benefactor), and \$100 (Institutional). All checks made payable and sent to:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc. P.O. Box 254 Schoharie, N.Y. 12157</p> <p style="text-align: center;">www.necaveconservancy.org</p>		

If you are coming from the North or South on Rte. 7, or East on Rte. 9: from the main intersection in lovely downtown Bennington, take Rte. 9 West (Main St.). In less than a mile, you will pass the famous Hemming's Motor News home on the right (probably some vintage cars parked there). Immediately after, the road rises and comes into the "S" by the church, and intersects Monument Ave. (The Monument is on your right, in this case).

Bear left (South) in front of the church, then follow Monument Ave. South as described above. Meet at the Southern Vermont College parking lot by the stone mansion for cleanup of Everett's Cave.

After the cleanup there will be a pot luck lunch (working lunch) during the board meeting.

NCC Bylaws change motion for the Next Board Meeting

At the March Board Meeting the NCC will be voting on two bylaws changes. The membership gets to vote on these changes, not just the board, so come make your voice heard. The proposed changes are as follows:

DELETE. Art III, Section 2.f, Life membership.

SUBSTITUTE. Article V, Section 5, Rotation and terms of Trustees. All subsequent elections will be to fill vacant offices with three-year terms. If more than three vacancies exist, the winning top three shall fill the three year terms, and the top runners up shall fill the remaining vacant position(s) for either one or two years to complete the appropriate term remaining.

ADD NEW SECTION. Article V, Section 9, Vacancies.

The Trustees shall appoint a temporary Trustee(s) to fill the vacancy (ies) until the next scheduled election of Trustees.

NCC Board Initiates Search for Chair of Newly Formed Education Committee

The need for this position came out of the idea when we started managing Clarksville that the NCC should have someone doing outreach pro-actively to school groups instead of meeting up with them haphazardly at the parking lot. Other than the description approved at the December Board meeting "to coordinate outreach to schools

and other groups", the Committee's work will be what the future Chair wants to make of it. Ideally we can find someone who has taught before and is good with kids, etc. A start probably would be to draft a letter to send to as many high schools/youth groups we can determine in the "local" radius of Clarksville, say 120 miles or thereabouts? We already have a list of groups to draw from that Amy & Aaron Cox have built from their contacts with groups in the past year when they obtained certificates of additionally insured, naming the NCC of course. Introduce the NCC and the outdoor classroom resource that Clarksville Cave provides, with pointers on safe caving techniques, etc. You might even develop classroom materials that a high school science teacher could use in preparation for a field trip.

Bob Addis adds:

"The interface with the Cox's Special Use Groups would be important in that the Ed Comm could once again preach the document of an insurance certificate required for groups. The Comm would be reaching so many more school & colleges that the exchange of information can only be helpful for the NCC.

I would also add that in terms of teaching materials, the Ed Comm does not have to re-invent the wheel. NSS's Project Underground has great acclaim and has functioned for several years now - maybe more than 10-15? They focus on Grades thru 12 and have bundles of teaching aids, visuals, computer stuff, etc. This position should be viewed as covering colleges as well."

Any interested parties please contact an NCC Board member, including their qualifications of course. It would be ideal to have this position in place before the Spring 2006 caving season begins.

The NCC Needs a New Treasurer

By Bob Addis

After nearly 7 years, Joe Levinson is stepping down as Treasurer and giving someone else a chance working it. Joe was one of the charter officers when the NCC became membership-based in 1999. It has been a pleasure working with Joe, and we all thank him for his untiring efforts. The other Officers and myself have included below some of their thoughts on a possible candidate. If you are interested or know

of someone, contact any NCC Board member. We need to fill this position as soon as possible to make a smooth transition and to position the NCC for future growth.

Bylaws Article VI, Officers, Section 3, Duties, (d) Treasurer: "The Treasurer shall be responsible for the safe-keeping of organizational funds and for maintaining and reporting financial records and statements to the Board of Trustees, and for filing all financial documents required by local, state, or federal regulations."

I see that we are looking for a Chief Financial Officer following these descriptions.

1. Prepare the annual budget & be prepared to defend its entries.
2. File state & federal income tax returns.
3. Assist in getting our books audited. A CPA audit is usually required for any grant proposals from the Fund Raising Committee and will be required by the IRS as our assets increase.
4. Interface with the Finance & Investments Committee. Will coordinate with the National Speleological Foundation (investor of our largest assets) and make suggestions to the F & I Committee.
5. Continually monitor/maintain our local property tax exemptions and make new applications as properties are acquired.
6. Attend 4 Board meetings and in addition 4 Executive Committee meetings.
7. Set up & maintain software with the Office Committee to track our finances on a timely basis.

Finance & Investments Chair and Webmaster Chair Needed

Finance & Investments - Watching & prudently investing our assets so as to maximize growth with an acceptable level of risk. This position reports to the Treasurer.

Website - The webmaster establishes and maintain our presence on the World Wide Web. Provide viewers with information about our organization and how to join. The Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc. Website may or may not include all or portions of our newsletter, Board Manual, minutes of the last meeting and/or the next meeting's preliminary agenda. This position reports to the Secretary.

Contact a board member if you are interested in either position.

Volunteer Value

By Vince Kappler

Volunteer Value (VV) is the monetary value of recourses, time, and expertise that individuals donate to a recognized non-profit organization.

Northeast cavers have worked tirelessly over the years to study and protect the caves and karst for the benefit of the landowner, governmental agencies, and/or just good public relations. Exploration and surveys, bat counts, hydrology reports, and property clean ups are some of the projects undertaken. Typically these projects were initiated by and carried out by local cavers working independently of any larger goal. Now however, the Northeastern Cave Conservancy is in a position to benefit greatly by documenting these projects and tracking the resources and time volunteers donate to complete them. Formal VV documentation will enhance NCC funding proposals and grant applications, add legitimacy to governmental reports and expert testimony, and is considered evidence of charitable contributions.

The NSS has been long involved with VV and even has a formal agreement with the National Forest Service to track VV cavers donate to Forest Service projects; see <http://caves.org/nss-business/bog/app-an.html>. A quick search of the NSS web site (<http://caves.org/search.shtml>) yields over 150 pages of articles, committee and officer reports, and convention abstracts where Volunteer Value is discussed. A Google search for Volunteer Value will lead you to countless millions of pages on how VV is calculated and used by not for profit organizations. VV is well documented as being a valuable asset to the goals of non-profit, conservation minded organizations.

At the December 2005 NCC board meeting, the Board formally adopted the VV concept, created a permanent committee to implement VV, and the Board is currently advertising for a committee chairperson. There is an article explaining VV on the NCC web site at <http://www.caves.org/conservancy/ncc/default.php> with links to forms that can be down loaded and used in the field. The NCC Board would like to begin tracking Volunteer Value in calendar year 2006.

Project organizers, property managers, and NCC committee chairs are urged to become familiar with the concept and goals of VV so that we can begin to accumulate the documentation to place value on our volunteer work. Every mile driven (at 40.5 cents per) every hour worked (at \$10.00 each) and all supplies consumed on a project (batteries, gloves, fuel) counts. The time committee chairs and board members spend on official business also counts. We are even credited for the time it takes to drive to and from these activities!

Some Examples:

- A property manager visits the preserve and mows the parking area several times a season. The actual time spent working on the property, the time spent driving to and from the property, as well as gas for the mower is VV.
- Volunteers plan and build a kiosk on a preserve. The time spent planning and on task, the *un-reimbursed* cost of supplies as well as mileage to and from the site for each driver is VV.
- The NCC schedules a cleanup. Everything listed above applies as well as the value of donated services; the hourly rate of the donated dump truck, the backhoe and the dumpsters as well as the disposal costs can be credited to the NCC's account.
- The NCC maps a cave and installs a gate for a private landowner. Driving time, mileage, supplies and hours spent mapping and drafting the map count as in above examples. The professional services donated by the welder to fabricate and install the gate are credited at the professional's typical hourly rate.

It is easy to see how NCC projects could generate thousands of dollars of Volunteer Value that can be credited to the organization.

The only thing cavers need to do to make this all happen is supply and collect information. If you are a project organizer, download a form from the NCC web site and list the names of your volunteers, the hours they worked, the miles they drove to get there (and back home), and your expenses for the project. If you are a volunteer, note your mileage from home to the site, the time it took to drive to the site, and be sure you check in with the project manager. Then the managers should send the reports to the Volunteer Value

Committee Chairperson who will collect the raw data and maintain the VV Database.

Let's make a conscious effort to track the volunteer work we donate for the benefit of the NCC. In a matter of months I think we will be surprised at how much work we collectively do and we will have the documentation to legitimately claim we are putting thousands of \$\$ into karst conservation. Until the NCC appoints the VV Committee Chair you should direct any questions, comments and your VV data to vkappler@nac.net.

The NCC board is looking for an individual interested in chairing this committee. Any interested parties please contact an NCC Board member, including their qualifications of course.

Article excerpts and links to the Board of Governors Manual are used with permission of the National Speleological Society (www.caves.org). Volunteer Value forms on the NCC web site are from originals provided by Jim C. Werker & Val Hildreth-Werker, NSS Conservation Division Co-Chairs, edited, and used with permission.

Tilting at Windmills in the Berkshires *By Bill Folsom*

On Friday night December 2nd I was on my way upstate and called Chuck Porter to discuss caving plans for the weekend. It turns out Chuck had just been contacted by Mike Eaton, caver local to the Berkshires and an NCC member. Mike had solicited Chuck's help in doing a bat count on the potential hibernacula situated in the Pettibone Falls Quarry, home to Pettibone Falls Cave of course, birthplace of the NSS. Knowing only that this was a trip to a cave normally closed, organized by Green Berkshires (all I knew at the time was that they were against wind power in the Berkshires), we figured let's check out the situation. We expected a mix of folks there: Green Berkshires, local cavers and government agency-types.

After meeting up with the group on a chilly Saturday morning, I found upon inquiring that no government agency from Massachusetts was represented. Mike Eaton and Jacques Veilleux, a biologist from Franklin Pierce College in New Hampshire, were being paid for their services, and the rest of the crew were from Green Berkshires. It turns out that caver assistance was greatly needed, especially as this was Jacques's first trip

into a cave and none of the Green Berkshires' members had been caving before either.

After a full day of counting bats in Pettibone Falls and Farnham's Mine Tunnel, we ended up finding approximately around 40 bats total, all of the garden varieties. Not exactly a major hibernaculum, to say the least, but we were not able to access Phantom Cave as the entrance was sumped shut. Rumor has it there may be a significant population in Phantom, referencing Alan Plante's work done there in the 70's and 80's.

On the surface, Eleanor Tillinghast, co-founder of Green Berkshires, provided gourmet food support, with homemade pea soup, sandwiches and tea. Sorely needed on a 20 degree F. day with the wind whipping around the quarry!

While I am glad I met the Green Berkshires folks and assessed the situation, I have misgivings about my participation. I don't want to become a pawn in another organization's tactics for forwarding their agenda, potentially to the detriment of the NCC and our stated mission. Even though I realize winter is the ideal time to get an accurate bat count I did not feel entirely right helping when our delicate cave-dwelling friends are already asleep for the winter. We identified 14 bats in Pettibone and all were disturbed.

Seriously, we walk a tight line here. All of us as cavers and particularly as Board members need to focus on this when we are asked to help another group or to supply information. We have to ask ourselves, is this the NCC mission or will it help the NCC in pursuing its stated mission? The NCC's purposefully narrow mission is:

"to promote the study and preservation, in an ecologically sound manner, of speleologically significant properties in the Northeastern United States. "

Green Berkshire's stated mission from their website:

"Green Berkshires, Inc. is dedicated to protecting from inappropriate development the mountains and ridgelines of the Berkshires. The region is considered part of the northern Appalachians, and comprises the Berkshire Hills of western Massachusetts and northern Connecticut, the Taconic Mountains stretching along the junction of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York, and

the southern Green Mountains at the border of Massachusetts and Vermont. Current projects of Green Berkshires, Inc. include preserving the 1,063-acre Greylock Glen at the base of Mount Greylock, studying the old-growth forest on the eastern slope of Mount Everett, surveying the summits of the Southern Taconics, and safeguarding Berkshire ridgelines from wind power plant industrialization through research and public education. "

Green Berkshires website:

<http://www.greenberkshires.org/>

Green Berkshires position on wind power:

http://www.greenberkshires.org/wind_power.html

Eleanor Tillinghast, co-founder of Green Berkshires, wrote this op-ed:

<http://www.gardnermountain.org/reviews/86>

It is human nature to want to help when asked. Most people are flattered to be asked their opinion. A few seek the publicity - interviews, TV. We have to field these inquiries very, very carefully. Research the group, and then quickly communicate the findings to as many cavers as possible. Please think it through when/if approached. Money speaks, but please consider the long term effects of your actions as cavers. Keep in mind that we are all just visitors underground. Bats and other biota live there and depend on cavers to help protect their habitat.

Please contact a Board member if you have any questions.

Update on Beckers Cave

By Jon Allison

In the last issue of the NCC newsletter we included a copy of a letter the NCC sent to the DEC regarding a proposal by Cobleskill Stone Products to expand their quarry in the town of Schoharie. This quarry is very close to Beckers Cave, and could destroy this well visited cave. The DEC recently replied to CSPs Draft Scope and requested CSP to address concerns raised from the NCC and others. The letter specifically requests information on the impact to Beckers Cave and the local groundwater. The letter also raises issues regarding the new mining capacity, required approvals, increased traffic, noise, surface water, air quality, transportation, zoning, and blasting.

The NCC continues to follow this project and work with the DEC and CSP as the process continues. Look for more updates in the next newsletter on the NCC discussion forum.

Promotional Items for Sale

By Christa Hay

The NCC has a variety of promotional items for sale with the profits going toward cave acquisition. The baseball caps are limited and come in tan, green and maroon. The polo shirts are very nice and come in three colors; light blue, light yellow and grey. I will be putting in an order for the shirts so if you want one please email me (christahay@yahoo.com) and let me know color and size. I will be putting in the order by the end of February. All these items will be available at the Spring NRO. Please contact me if you want something before the NRO.

Trustee Elections

Trustee elections will be held in May 2006, and there are four openings. The top three each get a three year term and the fourth place fills a two year opening. Indicate your desire to run for Trustee to Mike Martuscello, mikemart@superior.net or call 518-842-2189.



A sample of the promotional items for sale.

Upcoming Events

NCC Board Meeting

Sunday, March 12th 2005, 12:00PM
at Southern Vermont College, Bennington VT
Cleanup of Everett Cave starting at 10 AM

Spring NRO – Natural Stone Bridge

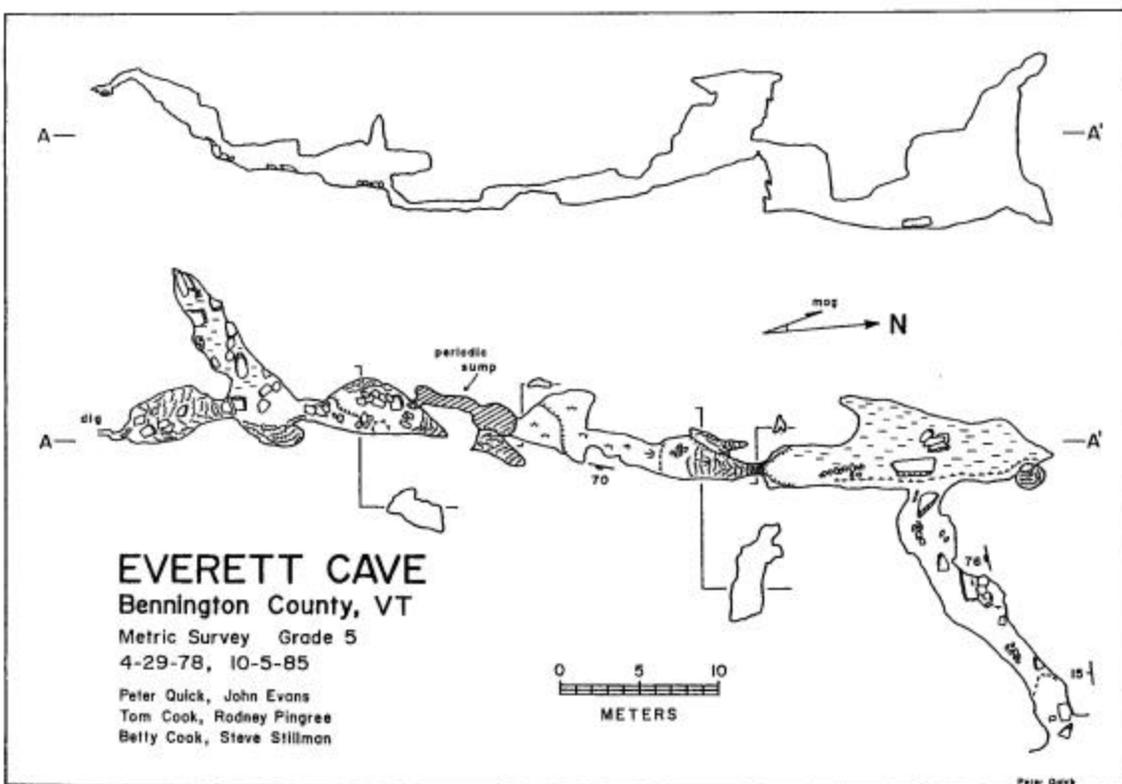
There will be an auction at the Spring 06 NRO for the benefit of the NCC. Please bring items to donate. Contact Bob Addis for more information.



Water rising out of the Osborn Entrance of Clarksville Cave, picture by Mike Chu



Water flowing out of Clarksville Cave, picture by Mike Chu



The NCC will be cleaning up Everett Cave in Bennington VT before the next meeting. All NCC members are invited to attend!