

NORTHEASTERN CAVE CONSERVANCY, INC.

Minutes

December 7, 2014, 10:00 am at Speleobooks, Schoharie, NY

Management Plan Review Schedule

March 2015 Bentleys
June 2015 Clarksville
September 2015 Ella Armstrong
December 2015 Knox
March 2016 Merlins
June 2016 Onesquethaw
September 2016 Sellecks
December 2016 Benson
Continue rotation

Meeting called to order at 10:08

1. Introduction and greetings – Bob Addis
2. Attendance
Officers: B. Addis, V. Kappler, B. Folsom, C. Hay
Trustees: M Chu, T. Engel, P Youngbaer, M. Berger, P. Woodell, M. Ingalls (10:25) A. Traino, K. Dumont, T. Rider
3. Nominating Committee Officers Elections for 2015:

Officers Search; no new candidates have been put forward. Existing Officers Slate is nominated.

President – Robert Addis
Vice President – Vince Kappler
Secretary – Christa Hay
Treasurer – William Folsom

4. Addis moved to convene a meeting of the Trustees to elect Officers. A. Traino will preside over the elections as Chairman of the Trustees and will report.
2nd by Woodell
Passed unanimously

The officers and guests were asked to leave for private conversation of the Trustees.

5. The Trustees welcome the EC back. Officers are seated.
6. President's Report – Bob Addis- Attachment A
7. Vice President's Report –Vince Kappler – Attachment B
8. Treasurer's Report –Bill Folsom - Attachment C
9. Secretary's Report – Christa Hay
 - Status quo
 - Sent out thank you letter to USCC
 - Set up Mail chimp account
 - October EC meeting minutes – Attachment D
10. Science Committee – Larry Davis
 - I will do my best to get a report to you, but I will have to contact all the researchers. I have very, very limited internet access here in New Hampshire and very, very limited time here at camp. I'll do my best. - This was from last meeting. We need to get final reports.
11. Acquisitions Committee –Chuck Porter
12. Bylaws Committee Report – Joe Levinson
 - Nothing to report
13. Publications/Publicity Committee Report - Christa Hay
 - Newsletter sent out with new mail chimp account.
 - I have been working with Whispering Pines Design for brochures. Need photos of preserves. Risk committee has wording that needs to go on the brochure. Peter will send out
14. Fundraising Committee – Open

15. Legal Committee Report – Open
16. Office Committee Report – Emily Davis / Mike Warner
- **Progress;** Status Quo, reports as needed, waiver info to the Special use committee as it arrives.
Plans; keep on keeping on (unless a board member or EC member has any suggestions for improvement.)
Problems; None
17. Knox Cave Preserve Report –Emily Davis , Mitch Berger
- **Progress:**
We issued 14 Knox permits since the last report.
We issued 1 Crossbones permit, which was subsequently not used.
We received notice on August 27 that the fieldwork portion of the WHC research project is complete and all data loggers have been removed; the final report has not been issued yet.
Mitch did trail maintenance on September 23.
We issued a hunting permit to our neighbor on October 17.
Plans:
Periodic checkups over the winter.
Trail maintenance (both trails) after snowfall season ends.
Problems:
We received two requests for Crossbones permits which were not issued. One was a group that had never been vertical caving, and the other was looking for an interesting day of caving, having already seen Knox. We spoke with each of them, and both were convinced that Sellecks was a better fit for what they wanted..
18. Onesquethaw Cave Preserve – Thom Engel
- No much to report. Trips have been going into the cave. Since the last report there have been 17 permits issued.
19. Sellecks Karst Preserve – Alan Traino
- Still needs a work day, for markers and trail maintenance
20. Clarksville Preserve – Mike Chu, Thom Engel, Chuck Porter
- A few things to report. The K crew came over and cleared out Osborn Cave. They did a fine job. We have had a request to film in the cave. This would be a professional, but independent production. At his request, I met on-site with the writer/director so he could scout the location. The restaurant has been sold to the chef. June consulted with Chuck regarding his continued use of that part of the main parking lot that we own. The ATVs returned. They made two large trails from the back of the parking area. These were fenced and, remarkable, the fencing remains. It may help that within a day of the fencing, our northern neighbors complained to father about the ATVs going on their property.
21. Bentleys Preserve Report - Jonah Spivak
- On September 14, I led a group of cavers from the NRO to Bentleys Cave. While we were there we met another group from the Rensselaer area for a total of 24 people in the cave that day. While there, I did some cleanup around the parking area, and removed some of the new graffiti from the cave (Thank you Peter for the article on graffiti removal!).
- The condition of the access to the parking area remains fair, but will likely need some work next spring. I tried to contact the excavator that did the original work for us, but received no response, and the business appears to have closed. I'll explore alternatives in the spring, assuming the work is needed.
- I saw the response of the board that a sign about "leave no trace" either at the kiosk, or at the cave entrance, was desirable. I have not done any work yet towards getting that done, but plan to this winter.
22. Ella Armstrong Preserve – Alan Traino
- All good Nothing to report
23. Merlins Cave Preserve – Morgan Ingalls
- **Progress:** Revised MP was submitted to Christa and Mike and is now up on the NCC website.
Plans: New loop trail still needs to be cleared. Since the fall has mostly, passed, this will be a project for the spring.
Problems: Shelter builders have been identified. Further discussion during Committee of the Whole.
- May-October- 3 groups visited Merlins plus NRO
24. Bensons Cave Preserve Committee -Luke Mazza
- **Progress:** The kiosk was completed the day of the last meeting during the opening ceremony. Conducted property inspection on 10/17. Nothing of note.
Plans: Nothing planned for the winter, except for possibly putting up the remaining boundary markers. Previously mentioned plans still apply for the warmer months next year. The top priority will be establishing parking in the ROW if we're allowed. The kiosk will need some better plexiglass at some point since the current

pieces are thin and already cracked from drilling and installation. For now the current setup is functioning fine.
Problems: None to report.

There have been 3 trips to Bensons since the last meeting, with 4 permits being issued.

25. Education Committee – Thom Engel

- Represented the NCC at EMS Club Day. Got one new membership and a small donation. Had several conversations with people about caves. One of these led to Chuck Porter and I going out and talking with the new owner of some of Calliope Sinks.

26. Membership Committee – Peter Youngbaer

- I am pleased to report we have our highest membership level yet, and that doesn't count a number of active people whose renewal dates are in November, who haven't sent them in yet, but are expected.

Consider giving an NCC Membership as a Holiday Gift – it's an inexpensive \$15 for a Regular membership – and you can add a Family membership for another \$5. \$20 to take that couple off your holiday shopping list – Such A Deal! Just email me to check and see if they're already members. Let's see if we can hit 200 members by the end of the year! We can do it!

All renewal notices for memberships up through the end of the year have been sent, and new memberships and renewals have been acknowledged and entered into the data base. It is current as of November 27. Second reminders were sent, and lapsed notices (third notices) have also been sent to those who expired since the beginning of the year and have not replied to two notices. This repeated dunning has picked up some stragglers.

Our current membership stands as follows, compared to the baseline of April 22, 2012:

November 27, 2014	April 22, 2012
Life: 34	Life: 18
Family Life: 6	Family Life: 0
Benefactor: 12	Benefactor: 10
Regular: 100	Regular: 88
Family: 15	Family: 16
Student: 0	Student: 0
Institutional: 5	Institutional: 3
TOTAL: 172	TOTAL: 135

27. Website Subcommittee – Mike Chu

28. Special and Group Use Coordinator – Thom Engel

- A year-end report will be circulated in January. This will mirror last year's report. For the year to date I have dealt with over 270 permit requests. After consultation with the necessary preserve managers, permits were issued for Bensons and Bentleys.
- Anyone that has thoughts on what they would like to see on the report contact Thom and he will do it if possible.

29. Financial and Investments Committee – Joe Levinson

- Nothing to report

30. Volunteer Value Committee – Vince Kappler

- **Progress:** VV data has been slow coming in this quarter but we have increased our year to date totals to 1046 hours of volunteer work and 14,993 miles traveling to and from projects. The benefit to the NCC stands at \$42,807.00. Hours were donated to the Bensons dedication while the Knox Preserve, Office, and ad hoc Risk Committees submitted reports of their activities.
Plans: I will send periodic VV reminders to the membership and monitor data collection.
Problems: None at this time.

31. Nominating Committee – Bob Simmons

- Trustees up for reelection in 2015 will be: Thom Engel, Alan Traino & Peter Youngbaer. Please let Bob Simmons know if you intend to run for another 3-year term at your earliest convenience.
- Always looking for suggestions for new Board and Officer Candidates; also suggestions for empty committee chairs.

32. Thacher Park Committee – Thom Engel

- The permit from the state has been renewed. Emily Davis and I represented the NCC at the Thacher Centennial Celebration.

33. Surprise Cave Committee– Bob Simmons

- I am still waiting to hear back from Pat Vissering at NYS DEC on the official renewal of our AANR. I have sent multiple emails since last meeting asking if there was anything we needed to do or could do to speed things along. Until we have some confirmation, I am hesitant to schedule any work projects. I have broached the subject of some level of visitation next year for recreational as well as scientific/conservation purposes, but no concrete feedback as of yet.

34. Ad hoc Committee- Tory's Cave – Bob Simmons

- I have been in regular contact with the Weantinoge Heritage Land Trust and they are still in the process of reviewing and editing the draft management plan I helped write for the preserve earlier this year. They will be sending me the final draft soon and I would like to have it reviewed and commented upon by NCC managers for content, issues, etc. I am scheduling a work day to clean out the sinkhole (mostly trees and logs) and to clean out the crawlway to the back part of the cave to facilitate an anticipated bat survey later this winter (one has not been done previously). This will be before the end of 2014, to be scheduled at the CCG meeting this Friday 12/12/2014. I will send a notice of the date, once established, should anyone want to participate. Cave is "closed" for the winter.
- Received the updated management plan. Thom E will help to review.

35. Ad hoc Risk Management Committee - Bob Addis, Peter Youngbaer, Vince Kappler

- Group got together on September 20th going thru the webpages, reviewed management plans for inconsistencies. Working on flow within website, insurance and waiver issue Mitch will report at next meeting.

36. Barn Dance Emily Davis

- Thank you to all of the long time supporters of the Barn Dance. Hard to believe that we just completed our 6th. Special thanks to Amy and Russ.

Sponsorship NBT	\$75.00
Sponsorship Kappler family	\$100.00
Raffle	\$195.00
Auction	\$435.00
Entries paid 53 adults	\$795.00
1 student	\$10.00
(12 children as family members free)	

Total income; \$1610.00

Expenses;

Band \$350 (check 1416 and 1417)

Cider \$42 (paid check 1415 to Schoharie Valley Farms)

Food \$105 (paid cash to Christa)

Total expenses \$497.00

Profit from Dance 2014 is \$1113.00 Again we are down slightly. The band was \$50 more and I had to buy cider this year as I did not have time to make it myself. We had slightly lower attendance. We actually need to push caver attendance more. We are doing well with the community support. Any chance we want to set a date for next year soon and advertise it more (NSS news, NE Caver?) Other ideas for changes?

\$1250 deposit (\$80 outstanding)

37. Informational point: North American Society for Bat Research – Emily Davis

- I know Bob addressed the NASBR in his report. We have also written an article for the NCC Newsletter. There is one quote from the post event survey that we would like to make sure is in the record. "It was also really nice of them to coordinate early morning shuttles for us by recruiting their Northeast Cave Conservancy members. That was a treat for us to meet some of the locals and hear about the caves in the region."

Let it be known we did not recruit anyone. Bob Addis this all on his own and really impressed the folks he drove to the airport.

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

2nd by Youngbaer

Passed unanimously

- Davis: Barn dance – how to handle the band issue? Opinions sought on how to handle will report at march meeting.

- Peter Grant sent me an email - popular Vermont caves, [REDACTED] are for sale for 85k. Is the Conservancy interested? There are non- developing covenants on the land. The purchase includes a 2.5 acre lot on Rt 116 and a part ownership of a 5 acre lot to the west that includes the caves. Youngbaer will investigate more with Peter.
- Ingalls: Unsafe Caving in NCC Caves. Photos on website at NCC properties but no helmets or enough lights. They did not have permission. How to approach in useful professional manner?
- Science committee overview – discussion with board. Vince with contact committee chair.
- Acquisitions wish list: [REDACTED] was approached- no interest on owner's name, Spider cave – meeting with owner went well. Need to survey to figure out a 3 acre lot since that is sub division size. [REDACTED] cave is still officially closed but future discussions are still possible. [REDACTED] – property is for sale . Morgan has a list of Vermont caves that VCA created. [REDACTED]
- Endangered Species –we should invite Carl Herzog to discuss the list.
- [REDACTED] – Kim and Aaron – permit process is a stumbling block due to the nature of their students situations. They would like to see the ability to submit scanned copies

39. Kappler moved to close the Committee of the Whole.

2nd by Dumont

Passed Unanimously

40. Hay moved to accept the minutes of the August 24. 2014 meeting.

2nd by Berber

For – Rest Abstained Hay

Passed

41. Folsom moved that the NCC approve the 2015 budget as presented at the 12/07/14 Board meeting.

2nd by Berger

Folsom moved that the NCC approve the 2015 budget as amended at the 12/07/14 board meeting

2nd by Youngbaer

Passed Unanimously

42. Youngbaer moved that the NCC sponsor the Northeast Bat Working Group meeting in January at the \$200 Bronze Level.

2nd by Chu

For – Rest abstained- Ingalls

Passed

43. Youngbaer moved the NCC amend all management plans to include the risk assumption statement.

2nd by Chu

Passed unanimously

44. Informational Point: NCC will accept electronic signatures with hard copy signatures to follow.

45. Informational Point: Executive committee meeting will February 17, 2015 at 7:00 pm. NCC Conference Call: 605-475-6111, Access Code: [REDACTED]

46. Addis moved that the next NCC Board meeting will be March 22, 2015 at 10:00 in Hawthorne NJ

2nd by Chu

Passed unanimously

47. Addis moved to thank Emily Davis and Mike Warner for hosting the meeting.

2nd by Dumont

Passed unanimously

48. Addis moved to adjourn

2nd by Berger

Passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 2:54pm

**Attachment A
President's Report
11/25/14**

The 6th Annual Barn Dance was held September 27 at the Octagon Barn in Knox. It was a reasonable success financially and in attendance, and it keeps the NCC in the local community's mind.

The NCC was one of the sponsors of the North American Bat Research Symposium held October 22-25 in the Albany Hilton. This year's gathering was one of the largest in North America for bat researchers and the NCC's contributions were noticed: "we could not have run this without the help of several NCC board members and past board members". The symposium definitely strengthened our partnerships in the scientific communities. Christa Hay, NCC Secretary, and I attended the opening ceremonies and the banquet

The big news at Bensons Cave Preserve is the much-touted possibility of a large gambling casino being built nearby on land owned by Howe Caverns. Preliminary plans call for the Sagendorf Corners Road to be demolished and Robinson Road enlarged to handle all north-south traffic in the area. Obviously there could be massive environmental impact to the area from this, but before NCC members start to worry, consider this fact: Approximately 85% of everything that an individual worries about or has concern Never Happens! That means that a large amount of time and energy is routinely wasted on nothing. The State Gaming Commission announces the sites in Upstate New York on December 17. The news media turned bookmakers offered odds of 1 in 10 initially on the Howe Caverns bid. More recently the bid has improved its odds, but it's not here yet, folks. A simple citizen can only postulate how the Gaming Commission arrives at its decisions. So What? Me Worry? (Anybody remember that phrase?)

Attachment B Vice President's Report

NCC Manual

Eight pages of the manual were updated after the August meeting and posted to the web a few days later.

EC Conference Call

The conference call was held on November 5. We discussed several initiatives and issues:

- Progress on identifying cavers willing to serve as advisors to the NCC
- President's end of year letter
- Thank you letters for Bensons donation
- Risk Committee progress
- Fundraising

Other

I received and responded to numerous emails since the August meeting. The majority fell into several distinct categories including: Bensons' dedication, right of way, and boundary lines; special use permits; the Risk Committee project; caving permit for a "quasi" pay to cave group; inquiry from the town of Carlisle; revised management plans; and volunteer value entries.

I was asked about liability insurance for NRO events. I did not check with our carrier but did contact the NSS and was advised that an internal organization could acquire a rider to the NSS policies that would cover a weekend event. It would require some paperwork and the fee would be based on the coverage needed and the type of venue.

Risk Management

I participated in the Ad Hoc Risk Committee's scheduled work project along with Peter, Mitch, and web master Mike. We spent a full day reviewing our web pages. Mike edited pages as we found discrepancies and we brainstormed strategies to update NCC materials - brochures, kiosks, management plans, trip requirements, etc. - and to ensure uniformity and compliance with our attorney's recommendations.

Attachment C Treasurer's Report

I submitted the 2013 Federal Income Tax forms for the NCC prior to the 11/15/14 deadline. Thanks once again to both Lee Del Valle and Ayzha Wolf for their assistance.

The proposed 2015 Budget is outlined below, along with 2014's Actual and Budget figures to compare it with.

Northeastern Cave Conservancy Inc Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual January 1 through November 21, 2014		11/21/2014	
		Actual	Proposed
		1/1-11/21/14	Budget 15
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
Donations			
Auction Donations	2,218.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Donations - Other	6,293.91	4,000.00	4,400.00
Total Donations	8,411.91	6,000.00	6,400.00

Interest Earned	8.53	5.00	5.00
Membership Income	4,689.35	4,260.00	4,260.00
Total Income	13,209.79	10,265.00	10,665.00
Expense			
Acquisitions	1,530.93	855.00	1,000.00
Bank Charges	25.42	25.00	30.00
Development	0.00	1,000.00	500.00
Donations-outgoing	0.00	200.00	200.00
Easements	0.00	0.00	0.00
Education	0.00	100.00	100.00
Executive			
President	0.00	150.00	150.00
Secretary	0.00	75.00	75.00
Treasurer	200.00	275.00	275.00
VP	0.00	75.00	75.00
Total Executive	200.00	575.00	575.00
Insurance	1,366.63	1,200.00	1,450.00
Legal Fees	400.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Licenses & Permits	0.00	150.00	50.00
Meeting Expense	15.94	100.00	100.00
Membership Expenses	0.00	100.00	100.00
Miscellaneous	0.00	100.00	100.00
Office Expense	0.00	100.00	100.00
Postage	48.00	100.00	100.00
Preserves-Maintenance			
Bensons	0.00	0.00	250.00
Bentleys	0.00	100.00	100.00
Clarksville	0.00	300.00	300.00
Ella Armstrong	0.00	100.00	100.00
Knox	0.00	100.00	100.00
Merlins	0.00	100.00	100.00
Onesquethaw	0.00	100.00	1,000.00
Sellecks	0.00	100.00	100.00
Total Preserves-Maintenance	0.00	900.00	2,050.00
Printing	50.00	100.00	500.00
Promotion/Fundraising	422.00	800.00	800.00
Publishing			
Mailings	0.00	100.00	50.00
Website	0.00	60.00	60.00
Total Publishing	0.00	160.00	110.00
Sponsorships	1,000.00	1,000.00	500.00
Taxes on Properties	826.02	700.00	300.00
Total Expense	5,884.94	10,265.00	10,665.00
Net Ordinary Income	7,324.85	0.00	0.00
Other Income/Expense			
Other Income			
In Kind donations	0.00	0.00	0.00
Net Gain or Loss from NSF Fund	2,615.75	0.00	0.00
Volunteer Value	42,807.00	0.00	0.00
Total Other Income	45,422.75	0.00	0.00

Other Expense			
In Kind Out	0.00	0.00	0.00
Volunteer Value Exp	<u>42,807.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Total Other Expense	<u>42,807.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Net Other Income	<u>2,615.75</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Net Income	<u>9,940.60</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>

**Attachment D
EC Meeting**

EC Meeting
11/05/2014
Conference Call

Conference call: Bob, Bill, Vince
Bob took minutes

Bensons – Bob writes letter(s) to Howie, end of year file survey

Rensselaer Plateau Alliance – FYI

Fracking – No NSS involved, Conservation Task Force – not known, perhaps start one,
Vince drafting statement

Personalized letters to Life members – 25 sent, 7 donations, Vince

Barn Dance – lower prices

End of year message – put in newsletter

Managed Risk – Peter, Vince, Bob

Working on web pages, clarifying classes of groups (who needs insurance) Contact Peter for possible motion

NCC Advisory Board – Bob – some names Art, Al Hicks, Fred Stone, Jim Harbison