

NORTHEASTERN CAVE CONSERVANCY, INC

Minutes

March 18, 2018 10:00 AM
MassWildlife Western District Office
Dalton, MA

Meeting called to order at 10:10am

1. Introduction and greetings – Robert Simmons
2. Attendance
Officers: R. Simmons, T. Engel, M. Berger, B. Folsom
Trustees: M. Chu, D. Hedges, M. Ingalls, J. Morris-Siegel, P. Rubin
3. Absent with proxy: N/A
4. Absent without designated proxy: C. Young, W. Russell, A. Traino, 1 open seat
The board may appoint a proxy from the members in attendance.
[R. Armen appointed as proxy for C. Young by unanimous vote]
[C. Gentry appointed to fill the open seat by unanimous vote]
5. Officers' Reports
President: Attachment A
Vice President: Attachment B
Treasurer: Attachment C
Secretary: Attachment D
6. Simmons moves to appoint N. Berg as proxy for W. Russell
[N. Berg appointed as proxy for W. Russell by unanimous vote]
7. Simmons moves to open the Committee of the Whole. The Vice president will preside. Items may be entered as new business.
Second by Berger
For: All
[Committee of the Whole opened]

Topics:

1. Recordkeeping in the age of redactions in published minutes (Berger)
Now that the published archive of minutes (on the website) contains significant redactions of sensitive topics, we need to settle on a recordkeeping strategy (other than "maybe someone can find the last draft in their e-mail") for the official unredacted minutes should they be needed in the future, perhaps for legal reasons. We should also figure out whether we ever go back and unredact things in published minutes after dust has settled.
Possibilities discussed included Google Drive, Dropbox, hardcopies at the Office, a private section of the website, and an HRP industry product; solution to be worked out by Berger.
2. Clarksville Heritage Day participation (Engel)
I met last night (March 6) with the organizing committee for Clarksville Heritage Day. It is scheduled for Saturday August 4. I will be in Montana that day as it is the day after convention ends. They would really like our participation. There will be no car show this year and we could set up in a booth at the Clarksville Community Church. I think it'd be a good way to meet our neighbors and, who knows, maybe learn of caves we don't know about.
The group suggested a virtual cave tour via a power point show. They also suggested a demonstration of gear. I told them I would not be available but would try to find NCC folks to participate.
The NCC always spends \$30 on an ad - this should be a topic on the June agenda.
3. Clarksville Management Plan revisions (Engel)
E-mailed out separately.
4. [REDACTED] (Engel)
E-mailed out separately.
5. Ella Management Plan revisions (Traino)
E-mailed about separately.
6. DEC request to treat tricolored bats as if they were already listed as endangered (Engel)
See Item 1 in the EC Meeting minutes in Attachment D.

This may affect Spider. There was a desire for more info and a formal request from the DEC.

7. C. Hay's request for info about swag for the 40th anniversary (Berger)

See the Publications report in Attachment C.

Eva designed the logo, and that's been circulated. There was some sense that we're not yet in a time crunch. Some discussion of number of shirts, the idea of nice polos, a banner with the new design, and favors for seats. Folsom to get back to Hay.

8. Fundraising for the purchase of the Clarksville addition (Simmons)

Just start doing it; a mass e-mail will be sent out.

9. Fundraising and grant opportunities for [REDACTED] (Simmons/Young)

A grant should be possible similar to what we did with Spider. We'd probably see the money from a "transaction grant" like this next May.

10. Committee and preserve report submittals (Simmons)

Still getting reports very late which delays Officer Reports and then the Agenda going out to everyone. Remember, this is one of the points we have to address to keep the meeting lengths manageable, by working out issues and informing each other ahead of time.

Some discussion about the possibility of scheduling report deadlines at the end of the meeting when we set meeting times.

8. Folsom moves to close the Committee of the Whole.

Second by Hedges

For: All

[Committee of the Whole closed]

Old Business

9. Simmons moves: The proposal submitted by the Acquisitions Committee to acquire the land connecting our existing parcels at the Clarksville Preserve as a new subdivision of Steve Crookes's land is accepted. The Acquisitions Committee and their designees are authorized to enter into negotiations to purchase this land for up to \$18,000 and to negotiate how responsibility for the requisite survey and filing costs will be assigned, up to and including the possibility that the NCC will bear full responsibility for those costs. If the NCC agrees to pay for part or all of the surveying costs, a bid from the proposed surveying firms will have to be approved by the Board before the surveyors begin their work.

Second by Berger

For: Rest

Abstain: Simmons

[Electronic vote conducted February 5-7, 2018. Motion passes.]

10. Engel moves: [REDACTED]

Second by Morris-Siegel

For: Rest

Abstain: Simmons

[Electronic vote conducted February 20 – March 6, 2018. Motion passes.]

New Business

11. Simmons moves: The proposal from [REDACTED] be accepted.

Second by Morris-Siegel

For: All

Discussion: Based on other survey bids we have received and the size and complexity of the parcel, this seems like a reasonable bid. The surveyor was recommended and accepted by [REDACTED] has an excellent local reputation.

[Motion passes]

12. Simmons moves: The offer of Mike Bourgeois for gratis survey services to demarcate the new property line on the Crookes property in furtherance of the property sale and lot line adjustment with the existing Gregory parcel is accepted.

Second by Berger

For: All

Discussion: Obviously this is a significant savings for the Conservancy. Several members have volunteered to assist with the data collection and monument installation to help Mike control costs.

[Motion passes]

Note was made that we should offer a donation letter for tax deduction purposes for these services.

13. Simmons moves: The proposed Management Plan for [REDACTED] is approved.
Second by Engel
For: All
[Motion passes]
14. Simmons moves: The proposed changes to the Management Plan for the Clarksville Cave Preserve are approved pending closure.
Second by Chu
For: All
[Motion passes]
15. Berger moves: The proposed changes to the Management Plan for the Ella Armstrong Cave Preserve are approved.
Second by Hedges
For: Rest
Abstain: Berg
[Motion passes]
16. Folsom moves: Act 10-2 (Bank Authorization) is amended as follows:
“Officers will execute the necessary bank resolutions to authorize signatures on all accounts. Including **Vice** President, Treasurer, and Office Committee Chair.”
Second by Ingalls
For: All
Discussion [from V. Kappler]: Originally, it was Pres, Treas, and Office but with BA resigned, BS as VP could not sign. We changed Pres to Vice Pres in June 2017 because it was handicapping BS. BS needed to be included so instead of re-writing whole act we inserted “Vice” with the intention of removing “Vice” when we had a president. So to be correct, you need to amend by deleting “Vice”. Then you will be back to original list of persons: Pres, Treas, Office Committee Chair.
[Motion passes]
17. Berger moves: Article VI Section 5 of the Bylaws is amended as follows:
“Vacancies. The Trustees may appoint a person to fill any vacancy among the Officers. Such person shall serve only until the next annual meeting, but shall be eligible for nomination and election to **complete the appropriate term remaining, or, if they are appointed during the final year of an officer's term**, for a full term as of that annual meeting.”
Second by Engel
Discussion: See Item 4 of the EC Meeting minutes in Attachment D. This correction should have been made at the time we staggered and extended officer terms. Without it, appointment of someone to fill an officer vacancy during the first year of a two-year term would have the unintentional side effect of unstaggering that position's term as of the next annual meeting. This item will have to be announced to the membership and tabled until the next meeting, at which time all members will be entitled to vote on it, per Article XII (Amendments) of the Bylaws.
Hedges moves to table to next meeting.
[Tabled to next meeting unanimously]
18. Folsom moves: The Board of Directors of the Northeastern Cave Conservancy appoints John Fioroni as Chair of the Investment Committee.
Second by Berger
For: All
Discussion [from J. Fioroni]: I would like to volunteer on the NCC's investment committee. Bill has shared some information about the fund and his goals for it. I am excited to learn about your hopes and concerns. My initial thoughts for the fund are to better manage market risk, reinvestment risk (cash management) and the liquidity risk. Hopefully, we as a committee can generate a long term, stable income for the NCC.
A brief bio: My background is in investment banking, where I worked as a fund manager at a private equity firm. I am relatively new to the Boston Grotto, but I have been caving for a almost 25 years. My first cave was Schoharie. For the past 5 years I have been a member of Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center's Institutional Review Board. I have been involved in emergency medical services and disaster response for over a decade. About 3 years ago I decided to leave the world of finance, and pursue a career in medicine.
[Motion passes]
19. Berger moves: The Summer Board meeting, previously scheduled for June 3, 2018 at 10am at Chu's home, is rescheduled to June 3, 2018 at 11am at Chu's home due to a conflict with the Spring NRO.
Second by Chu

For: Rest
Abstain: Ingalls
[Motion passes]

20. Berger moves: The December 2017 Board minutes are approved.
Second by Morris-Siegel
For: Rest
Abstain: Berg
[Motion passes]

Informational point: Next EC meeting will be May 6, 2018 at 10 AM at the offices of the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy at 425 Kenwood Ave in Delmar.

Informational point: the Summer Board meeting will be June 3, 2018 at 11 AM at Chu's home.

Informational point: the late Summer EC meeting will be August 19th in the Schoharie area.

21. Simmons moves: The NCC Fall meeting will be September 23, 2018 at 10am, location TBD.
Second by Hedges
For: Rest
Abstain: Armen

Executive Session was not held.

22. Simmons moves to thank MassWildlife and J. Morris-Siegel for hosting this NCC meeting.
Second by Engel
For: Rest
Abstain: Morris-Siegel

23. Simmons moves to adjourn.
Second by Morris-Siegel
For: All

Meeting adjourned at 2:29pm

Attachment A President's Report

Since the December meeting we've had an uptick in activity on a number of fronts:

- Acquisitions, has us poised to add significant acreage to unify our Clarksville Preserve, we have a [REDACTED]
- We've renewed the Thacher Park Agreement and have our Stewardship Agreement for Surprise Cave also being renewed.
- Caves for sale: [REDACTED]
- Reopened discussions with the [REDACTED]
- Several folks are scheduled to attend the NY, MA and CT Land Trust conferences this Spring
- Efforts for our 40th Anniversary Celebration are underway for late October at SUNY Cobleskill.
- Thanks to Eva Hunter for her designs, in particular the new 40th Anniversary logo.

Cave Preserve Management Plan Review Schedule

Note: We established a policy of having the Preserve manager doing their MP review to write an article for the newsletter that same period. In retrospect, this is more work for the manager in a short time when he/she should be focused on the MP. I would propose that

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going forward, the article be done by the manager who's plan was just reviewed the previous meeting, that gives a chance to include any new items or issues that were approved under a no pressure situation.

CAVE PRESERVE REPORTS:

Year	March	June	September	December
2018	Ella Armstrong	Knox		Sellecks
2019	Bensons	Merlins		Onesquethaw
2020	Spider	Clarksville		Bentleys
2021	Ella Armstrong	Knox		Sellecks
2022	Bensons	Merlins		Onesquethaw
2017	Spider	Clarksville		Bentleys

1. Bensons (Luke Mazza)

Progress: Walked the trail and property on 02/24 and noted no significant changes since my last visit in late November.

Issues: The ash trees on the property are dying/falling quite frequently, presumably due to Emerald Ash Borer. There are quite a few along the trail but for the most part they've fallen away from the trail, with a few exceptions that necessitate trail maintenance.

Plans: Trail clearing and maintenance once things thaw out

a little.

2. Bentleys (Devon Hedges)

Progress: 4 visitors added to the year's count, 96 logged in 2017. Inspection of wet trail sections during snow melt conditions is adding to my understanding of the regular conditions and thoughts about remediation or reconsidering the scope of work. Brochure bin and Protected Area signage added. Plastic siding/roofing materials located south of parking area.

Problems: Sign of a small campfire near Bentleys lower entrance; cleared, obscured and covered. Small branch left crossing the lower entrance in December is no longer there, whether it fell in or was removed by off-season caving won't be clear until later at the season opening. Driveway is pretty challenging for small car to get up when the gravel/sand is wet.

Plans: Replacing signage at kiosk, rock cairns for trail junctions near old logging paths and areas with sparse overhead foliage, driveway gravel project. Some downed branches and tree areas to clear along with the fording project. Potentially clearing out plastic siding debris.

3. Clarksville (Thom Engel)

A work day is scheduled for April 21 with a rain date of 4/28. The main goal will be to rebuild and repair the changing area. Depending on the personnel available and the status of the new property, perhaps we can do some trail work.

DEC did a bat count on 30 January 2018. They counted 7 bats: 3 little browns, 2 tri-colors, 1 big brown, and 1 unknown. Their full report is attached.

I (Engel) am meeting with the organizing committee for Clarksville Heritage Day. The meeting is now scheduled for 3/6. I will likely amend this report accordingly.

4. Ella Armstrong (Alan Traino)

At this time, there are no changes to the management plan. If anyone has suggestions and or changes please advise.

Property is in good shape after a long hard winter. Was there recently and everything looks good for the upcoming season.

No problems to report.

Future plans include replacing the poster, as well as continued clearing of sash on the property.

5. Knox (Mitch Berger)

Progress:
Preserve checkups have been happening. Things are mostly quiet.

Issues:
A pair of gloves was found at the top of the sink after we closed for the season.
There's still a rope at the Great Divide of unknown age/origin.
There's a bunch of poison ivy, and possibly poison parsnip along the trail.

Plans:

Periodic property inspection.

Possible graffiti removal in Knox, and investigation of methods.

Addition of trail markers and re-posting of property.

Boundary marking.

Removal of the Great Divide rope.

Investigation of troublesome plant species.

6. Merlins (Morgan Ingalls & Jacob Morris-Siegel)

Problems

- None

Progress

- Merlins and Dragon Bones have both been closed for the winter due to hibernating bats.
- Digging at Dome 12 continued until the ground froze, we're now down approximately 25 feet into a small alcove/room with what looked like a dirt filled drain in the back. Digs will continue once the sink has melted out.
- Jacob last walked the property on a cold day in early January both Dragon Bones and Merlins had a good plume of steam leaving the cave entrances and Dome 12 Sink was full of ice. There was no evidence of anyone using the property since the last Dome 12 dig

Plans

- The DEC plans to do a bat count at Merlins Cave in March, both preserve managers and John Dunham will accompany them.
- The preserve managers still plan to blaze the boundary (or at least part of it), we were unable to this winter due to bitter cold weather on our scheduled days.
- We plan to do a leader training after the cave opens in the spring. Possibly it could be combined with NRO?

7. Onesquethaw (Thom Engel)

DEC did a bat count on 9 January 2018. They counted 2 little browns. Their full report is attached; nothing else to report.

8. Sellecks (Alan Traino)

Property has had a lot of snow this year and getting on the property has been tough.

Trail needs to be cleared as soon as snow recedes; trail markers need to be checked also.

Future plans include replacement of the poster as well as clearing of the parking lot and trails.

9. Spider (Kevin Dumont)

Progress: Since December, I received inquiries from two parties interested in visiting the cave. I provided clarification about the nature of the cave and details about parking, etc. to both. To my knowledge, neither group has actually visited yet. I visited the property and cave on February 18, 2018 with my son. We visited the "historic" portion of the cave and observed orange/white moths in the first 100 or so feet of the cave from the entrance. According to Thom Engel, the moths are Cave or Herald Moths, *Scoliopteryx libatrix*, as identified from photos that I took and shared with Thom. There were two signs of human visitation to the cave: 1) a small headlamp was retrieved from the cave, found at the bottom of the main passage in about 18 inches of water, and 2) a painted stone with the words "Free Spirit" written on it was found perched on a ledge at the cave entrance; I moved the stone to a less conspicuous position.

Problems: During the visit on February 18th, we found two partial deer carcasses in the ditch adjacent to the trailhead.

Plans: The deer carcasses will be removed before the weather gets much warmer. Creation of a trail along both the base and the top of the escarpment is planned for 2018.

OTHER COMMITTEES (PRESIDENT):

Acquisitions (Chuck Porter)

The Committee has been busy with three pending acquisitions at once. Purchase of the Crookes land between the Ward and Gregory parcels of the Clarksville preserve was approved for \$18,000 and a contract signed by both parties. Now a survey needs to be done,

forms submitted to the Town with a \$50 fee, and the closing. Update: Mike Bourgeois has offered to perform the survey work gratis (see motion under COTW). Thom has circulated update language for the Clarksville Management Plan pending the acquisition of the additional acreage.

[REDACTED]

Nominating (Norm Berg)

Nominating Committee Report for the March 18, 2018 NCC meeting:

An announcement that solicits Trustee candidates was including in the March NCC News, and in at least one regional grotto publication. I will be sending the notice to all regional grottos.

Note: In addition to the three regularly scheduled Board seats up for election this Spring (Alan, Jacob and Thom's Vacant seat), we also need to fill a vacancy (Mitch's seat) for one year as his term runs to 2019. Please start thinking of getting names to the Nominating Committee for the upcoming ballot.

Risk Management (Mitch Berger)

Progress: Mitch completed the Land Trust Alliance's online risk management training program in order for us to continue to qualify for certain Terraforma discounts.

Our Terraforma renewal application was completed and submitted, and our membership and policy has been renewed.

Issues: None.

Plans: Work on our General Liability and D&O policy renewals (due in June).

Assist with insurance updates required by upcoming acquisition activity.

Assemble the rest of the Committee membership.

Pick up other issues that were in-progress with the former ad-hoc committee.

Torys Ad hoc committee (Bob Simmons)

Nothing has happened on this over the winter. Plans are to meet with WHLT staff at the CT Land Trust Conference on March 17th to discuss MP rewrite and cave access going forward.

40th Anniversary Ad hoc committee (Alan Traino)

The following was provided by Emily.

Problems; The College's request for Workman's Comp and disability insurance. The venue only holds 80 people. Need to know if I am expected to work on the program or if someone else can do this?

Plans; Complete budget, make plans for menu and set prices. Ask Communications to publicize a "hold the date" posts on Facebook

and in our newsletter. Ask Christa about a souvenir item for the event. Invite special guests? Who decides on this?

Progress; venue and date are locked in.

Note: As we have no “employees” and are a 501-c-3 corporation, I believe we can get a waiver of the requirement to have Workman’s Comp and Disability Insurance.

Bat Hibernation Ad hoc committee (Emily Davis, Mike Warner, Morgan Ingalls)

Problems-Keeping the board and membership apprised of the cave closures and having them understand there will not be changes as long as there are threatened and endangered bat species in the state of NY.

Plans- Still trying to figure out a method of getting Onesquethaw open in the winter.

Progress-Assisted with counts in both Onesquethaw and Clarksville.

Governance ad hoc (Devon Hedges)

Many sample policies and guiding documents have been shared with the Committee. These will help ensure that our policy and standards development conforms with broadly accepted practice. Documents collected from Christine’s work with the Rensselaer Land Trust include: Code of Ethics and Standards for Board Members, Board Evaluation and Self-Assessment, Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices.

Duties of Officers have been solicited in order to develop somewhat standardized detail of those positions. The resulting documentation will serve to guide current and future Officers in the execution of their duties. President, Vice President, and Treasurer duties have been received. Committee assignment distribution and committee charges are being studied for documentation and any potential restructuring proposals.

Clarksville Cave Survey Report

From: Kate Ritzko

Date: 1/30/18

DEC Staff: Sam Hoff, Mandy Bailey, Casey Pendergast, Kate Ritzko

NCC Cavers: Emily Davis, Mike Warner

On Tuesday the 30th, we met up at Delmar at 8:30AM and packed up waders and cave suits. We met up with Emily and Mike a bit before 9AM in the driveway area around Jake Moon diner. Emily was only expecting to do the Gregory side but they were willing to take us into both entrances.

We donned the cave suites, rubber boots, and headed over to Gregory, entering at 9AM. The previous attempt at a survey two years ago was thwarted by flooding, so we tried to avoid that by moving the survey date up to January. We entered without issue. We slowly made our way through, checking the various cracks and side pockets. There wasn’t a lot of water to walk through but it was definitely rubber boot level. We found one Little brown, one tri-colored, and one surprising Big brown, all in the Colvin Avenue area. We finished the survey and Mandy and I went back to the trucks to get our waders on.

Reaching the Ward entrance, we saw warm humid air being pushed out of the adit. There was evidence of vandalism around the pit of the entrance with lime green spray paint. Mike took Sam and Casey to the “right” to survey the long stretch, and Emily took Mandy and myself to the “left” to go through the wetter section. There was a fair amount of crawling in this area as well. Emily braved the bathtub despite only having a cave suit, and we surveyed that entire section. There was a myotis bat tucked into a small hole, but it’s entire head was obscured and so I was unable to see the ears or tragus. We had to be careful to avoid stepping on the rimstone that could be found in the second half of that stretch, and many of these formed dams holding shallow water. Emily commented that they used to be even more evident 40 years ago. There were several beer bottles/cans within the cave. There is a water channel on the left side on the way in that Mandy and I did not go into as the water looked pretty high, and Emily reported the water level can frequently reach the ceiling. We stayed along the upper walking/crawling section. We exited the cave at 11AM.

In Mike, Sam and Casey’s section, after the larger entry room area they went along the upper crawl. The water section was not checked as they didn’t have waders; It’s unlikely that there were any bats above the water section, as the level can vary here as well. More wader-wearers could be beneficial in future surveys so that the water channel in this section can be surveyed however, should water levels allow. Mike found and removed several beer cans from this section as well. They exited the cave at 11:25AM. This successful survey was made very expedient by both Emily and Mike accompanying us so that we could break up into teams.

Total counts for Clarksville:

Section	Bat Species			
	MYLU	PESU	EPFU	UNK MYOTIS
Gregory Entrance	1	1	1	0

Ward Entrance (Left)	0	0	0	1
Ward Entrance (Right)	2	1	0	0
Total	3	2	1	1

Key:
MYLU= *Myotis lucifugus*, Little brown bat
PESU= *Perimyotis subflavus*, Tri-colored bat
EPFU= *Eptesicus fuscus*, Big brown bat
UNK MYOTIS= bat, clearly within the *Myotis* genus, but unsure of species

For considerations in this cave regarding Northern Long-eared bats and Small footed bats, both species are protected to various extents in New York, and we don't assume zero observation equals zero presence because of the solitary, hidden roosting behavior of both of these species.

This cave had many crevices and shelf areas that would have been difficult to fully survey without having Emily and Mike guiding us. This cave offers some unique geological features as well, such as the 'Slip and Slide' area Emily showed Mandy and myself. This is a large rock (Ward side) where you can see grooves on the rock itself and the rock above where the two had been pushed against each other, 'sliding' under high pressure before separating. Emily remarked that while finding this is common, finding such a large example intact is very uncommon.

K. Ritzko, 2/5/18

Onesquethaw Cave Survey Report

Date: 1/9/18

DEC Staff: Kate Ritzko, Samantha Hoff, Mandy Bailey

NCC Staff: Emily Davis, Mike Warner

On Tuesday, January 9th we met at Delmar at 8:30AM and packed cave suites, neoprene gloves, and rubber boots. It was a balmy 35F, much warmer than the last survey.

We arrived at the parking area just after 9AM, and made sure the permit issued to us by manager Thom Engel was displayed on our dash. Everyone was in the cave by 9:30AM. Mandy had to make a quick trip back to Delmar to fetch her helmet. I stayed in the entrance and waited while Sam, Emily and Mike carried on into the corridor to the first room looking for bats. There was one little brown on the ceiling of that first passage.

We looked for bats around the first larger 'room', and found none. In the second room, we found a little brown high up tucked in a hole. Mike took a photo, saved in the folder. Emily went up into the upper section in this area where we hadn't checked before. There is some surface expression in this area as well. No bats were found. We continued to the area where you can split and go down towards the 'sump' area or into the upper portion Emily found last time. Mike, Sam and Mandy took the lower area and I went up with Emily (this portion is the muddier/more wet of the two options). Theoretically we were supposed to meet up at a given point. It didn't quite work out and the three ended up going back to the junction, and Emily and myself retreated back a bit to wait for Mike to meet up with us. There was another passage Emily wanted to check out to make sure we were thorough in any areas bats were most likely to be found. We explored an area where there was a lot of evidence of wash out; piled pebbles, porcelain and enamelware pieces were found and there was a lot of wet debris on the low walls. It was very warm and humid in this area, with barely enough room to be on hands and knees.

Evidence of high flooding was obvious throughout the cave.

It was a surprisingly quick survey, most likely because we had split the two sections this time. We were out by 11:30AM.

Total bats: 2 *Myotis lucifugus*

Kate Ritzko, 1/31/18

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Attachment B
Vice President's Report

Bylaws Committee (Joe Levinson)

No report received. [See item 17 in the agenda]

Education (Thom Engel)

I was schedule to attend the SAGE STEM event on Friday 20 April 2018. As of 6 March it has been cancelled.

Science Committee (Larry Davis)

There has been no activity since the last report.

Special Use (Thom Engel)

No permits have been issued since the last report. There have been no requests to take groups into any of the caves for this closure period.

We have 46 reservations for the upcoming season. 42 (94%) are for Clarksville, one is for Onesquethaw, one is for Schoharie, and two are for Balls.

Surprise Cave Committee (Al DeMaria)

1) Carl Herzog had mentioned in an earlier email that the bat count could possibly have been affected (it has decreased) when the old second entrance was closed. When this new snow starts to melt, I am going to check the conditions of some of the many sinks both north and south of the Surprise entrance. Some years ago I started a couple of small digs to the north (Janeczko property?) and will see if the snowmelt is changing them. My digs were above the northern parts of Surprise.

2) I will also see if I can find the closed entrance again. Many years ago I found what I think was the closed entrance very close to the stream, on the north side. Bob Simmons had thought of talking to Janeczko, who was building a new house down on the main road. Possible talk about getting an easement if we found something promising.

3) On the bat count possibility, Carl H. has said that, at the present time, the DEC does not consider it a priority, but he will keep it in mind and consider bringing it up again if the time seems like there may be a better chance of DEC approval.

From Bob Simmons: I did a site walk on January 28th. Nothing of note other than there was a tongue of ice going down the entrance and encasing the bottom of the gate in over a foot of ice. I have also contacted Nate Ermer at NYSDEC Region 3, our point person for the Stewardship Permit and asked that it be renewed. I have added a few items to our list of activities we could assist with to include helping Carl Herzog do entrance modifications/climate engineering in the cave should that project proceed and also added geologic/hydrogeologic studies to the list.

Crash Kennedy may assist with replacing the gate this year, and there may be money for it. We may also have an opportunity to dig old entrances back open to get more cold air in.

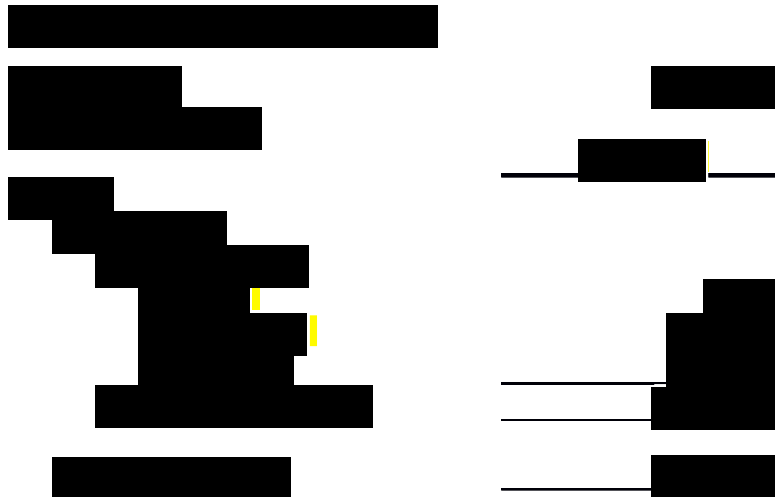
Thacher Park (Thom Engel)

The Research permit for Thacher has been renewed. I have again asked to have talks with OPRHP about a formal agreement at Thacher regarding cave access. I actually got a response from staff in the regional office who were sent an MS Word file for the preliminary management plan so they could comment on it. Subsequently, I had a long conversation with Casey Holzworth in Saratoga. It was agreed we'd work towards a draft plan that will brought to the regional director. (I will have other comments on this that at this time I do not wish to put in writing.)

The following Saturdays in 2018 will be formal work days in Thacher Park: May 19, June 23, July 14, August 25, and September 15. As with last year, work trips to Hailes will be allowed on other days. I will need sufficient lead time to give the Park the required 72-hour heads-up.

I was asked to provide information on caves in the park to searchers looking for a 71-year-old man who is believed to be lost or hiding in Thacher Park. (His car was parked at Paint Mine on 2/19.) The search was "scaled back" on 2/28.

**Attachment C
Treasurer Report**



Northeastern Cave Conservancy Inc
Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual
January 1 through March 12, 2018

03/12/2018

	<u>Jan 1 - Mar 12, 18</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Donations		
Auction Donations	0.00	2,400.00
Donations - Other	1,071.19	7,170.00
Total Donations	<u>1,071.19</u>	<u>9,570.00</u>
Grants	0.00	6,000.00
Interest Earned	3.57	10.00
Membership Income	395.00	3,500.00
Total Income	<u>1,469.76</u>	<u>19,080.00</u>
Expense		
40th Anniversary	0.00	2,000.00
Acquisitions	1,000.00	2,000.00
Bank Charges	5.83	50.00
Donations-outgoing	0.00	200.00
Dues	0.00	350.00
Education	0.00	50.00
Executive		
President	0.00	100.00
Secretary	0.00	50.00
Treasurer	0.00	50.00
VP	0.00	50.00
Total Executive	<u>0.00</u>	<u>250.00</u>
Insurance	812.00	2,000.00
Legal Fees	0.00	1,000.00
Licenses & Permits	0.00	50.00

Meeting Expense	0.00	100.00
Meetings & Conferences	0.00	170.00
Membership Expenses	0.00	100.00
Miscellaneous	0.00	100.00
Office Expense	0.00	100.00
Postage	0.00	100.00
Preserves-Maintenance		
Bensons	0.00	1,000.00
Bentleys	0.00	1,100.00
Clarksville	0.00	1,350.00
Ella Armstrong	0.00	500.00
Knox	0.00	1,100.00
Merlins	0.00	600.00
Onesquethaw	0.00	600.00
Sellecks	0.00	700.00
Spider	0.00	600.00
Total Preserves-Maintenance	0.00	7,550.00
Printing	0.00	1,000.00
Promotion	0.00	1,300.00
Publishing		
Mailings	0.00	50.00
Website	0.00	60.00
Total Publishing	0.00	110.00
Sponsorships	0.00	300.00
Taxes on Properties	11.24	200.00
Total Expense	1,829.07	19,080.00
Net Ordinary Income	-359.31	0.00
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
Net Gain or Loss from NSF Fund	1,840.96	0.00
Total Other Income	1,840.96	0.00
Net Other Income	1,840.96	0.00
Net Income	1,481.65	0.00

Barn Dance Subcommittee - Emily Davis & Mike Warner:

Problems-none

Plans-Set a date in the near future (Hopefully Mr. Folsom will make the contacts and do this as he has in the past).

Progress-Starting to think about 10th barn dance.

Membership Committee – Peter Youngbaer:

Progress:

Membership Renewals and New Members:

All renewal notices for memberships up through the end March have been sent, and second notices to anyone who lapsed since December 1. I continue to add a line in the renewal notices and the thank yous about our 40th Anniversary. I understand a dinner is being planned for the fall, but know no details. Anything that becomes available, I would love to have to work into the membership notices and thank yous. If there are other things planned, too, again, please send me the info. The data base is current as of today, March 9.

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

March 9, 2018		April 22, 2012 (baseline)	
Life:	62	Life:	18
Family Life:	9	Family Life:	0
Benefactor:	5	Benefactor:	10
Regular:	81	Regular:	88
Family: 21		Family: 16	
Institutional:	6	Institutional:	3
Total:	184	Total:	135

Institutional Members: We improved from four up to six: *Boston Grotto, Central Connecticut Grotto, Met Grotto, Northern New Jersey Grotto, Vermont Cavers Association, and Camp Echo Lake.* If your grotto or organization isn't listed here, please urge them to renew or join. Thank you.

Problems:

Membership: Membership has come back up since our last report. In January, I was requested to put together a list of members who lapsed in 2017 so the Executive Committee and Board could make personal contacts. I provided that list on January 28 and have included their updated status as of today (see chart below). As these are the most recent drop offs, they are the most likely to renew. We dropped from 174 in the September report to just 160 at the end of November, but had a good end of the year and are now back up to 184. We peaked at over 200 about a year ago. I continue to dun folks 2-3 times by email, but it is most helpful when other NCC Board members and officers take note and nudge their caving friends to re-up.

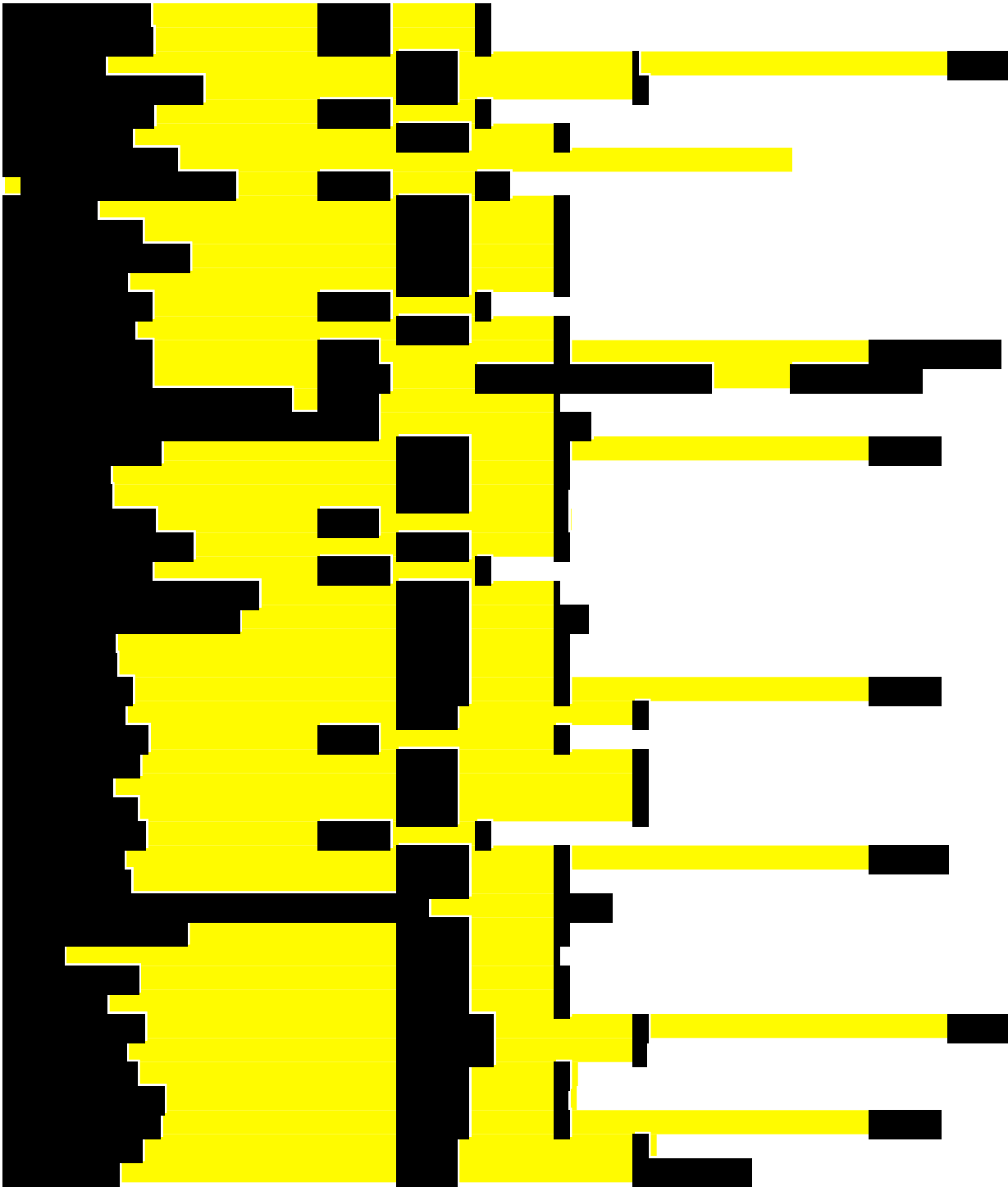
NCC Swag: I would still like to have the NCC window stickers to send to Regular members and new members. If nothing else, this one thing would help say "thank you" in a tangible way and provide more visibility for the NCC. As I've said before, the NCC Board should decide on what is appropriate to recognize those who give at the Benefactor level; right now, we do nothing, which is not much of an incentive. We have had no new Life Members in a while, but with Bob Simmons election as NCC President, we could re-do Life Member Certificates. **However, my priority is simply for the NCC window decals for the moment. If someone would please mail me a supply, that would be a help.**

Plans:

Normal Operations: Will continue to send renewal notices, as well as second and third notices, as applicable.

NCC 40th Anniversary: Will continue to highlight the NCC's 40th Anniversary when provided information about how that is being observed. As details about the fall dinner emerge, I plan to include highlights in the renewal messages. I did note the 40th Anniversary logo on the website home page, but I would suggest moving it to the top – near our regular logo – rather than way down at the bottom of the page. It should jump right out at viewers.





Office Committee Report - Emily Davis & Mike Warner:

Problems: None

Plans: status quo

Progress: status quo

Publications – Christa Hay:

Progress: Newsletter sent out a few weeks before Board meeting.

Plans: SWAG for 40th – I would like to get an order in with a local vendor in a timely fashion. What are the items of interest for the event? I have not heard back from the board about a t-shirt design contest.= as in how much money can

we have for a prize. At this point there might not be enough time so I would like to send the 40th logo to Eva and see what she can do.

Problems: Articles for the newsletter still needed. The board requested Preserve highlight in each newsletter does not seem to be working. Plenty of time is given to produce an article and reminders are sent. Board please let me know what we can do to remedy this situation

Technology Committee Report – Mike Chu:

-Website updated to reflect new waiver/special use group policies.

[REDACTED]

-Added 40th anniversary logos to site.

-Added Clarksville work day, NRO, summer NCC meeting, Convention dates to upcoming events.

Volunteer Value Committee – Vince Kappler:

Progress:

2017 was our second-best year for donated VV! 2013 still holds the record but there was a shift in the type of work performed for the NCC in calendar 2017. In 2013, there were 218 data entries whereas we had 128 entries for 2017 and almost half as many miles driven. The 2013 totals included many entries for Bensons and the Thatcher project while 2017 included work on grants and research (both new categories). Many thanks to all who have reported the hours they volunteered for the benefit of the NCC.

VOLUNTEER VALUE STATS

	Hours	Miles	Dollar Value
2006	1389.5	20,862	\$29,955.00
2007	1571.5	14,607	\$35,542.00
2008	1680.5	14,143	\$36,926.00
2009	1440.5	10,442	\$39,564.00
2010	1234.0	10,949	\$42,211.00
2011	1546.0	14,118	\$54,684.00
2012	1483.5	13,951	\$51,605.00
2013	1916.5	20,522	\$70,268.00
2014	1481.0	18,621	\$48,757.00
2015	1634.75	15,664	\$58,450.00
2016	1563.25	12,303	\$52,341.00
2017	2106.5	10,234	\$64,058.00
			\$584,361.00 TOTAL

2018 VV totals to date: \$5,808.00 (with a shout out to Hedges for working on the [REDACTED] acquisition.

Plans:

The IRS has increased the business mileage rate from \$.535 to \$.545 for 2018. Note that this is not the rate that can be deducted from your personal taxes. The NCC adopted the use of the prevailing business rate when it modeled its VV program after the original NSS-USFS VV agreement which permitted the use of the higher rate.

Independent Sector, the national membership organization that tracks VV trends, reports that the 2016 NE average VV was worth in excess of \$26.00 per hour. (2016 is the latest year info is available.) I will use the \$26 amount to calculate VV during 2018.

I will send periodic VV reminders to the membership and monitor data collection.

Problems:

None at this time

Attachment D Secretary Report

Electronic Voting Timelines

We had a conversation via e-mail about the timelines for electronic votes in light of the expectation in our Bylaws that there be an attempt to foster discussion prior to voting, and Bob and I proposed the following standard operating procedure for e-votes. We also invited feedback and offered to add this as a topic for Committee of the Whole at this meeting if we received any. However, no feedback was received.

Realizing that any rigid number of days isn't going to be an awesome one-size-fits-all-topics way to handle discussion and voting, here's what we're going to try out for e-votes for a while to see if it works well:

- 1) By default, once a motion for electronic vote has been seconded, we'll start taking votes one week (7 days) from that point.
- 2) If the discussion stops for an entire calendar day before that point, we'll infer that the discussion has finished and can start taking votes the following day.
- 3) Before either of those the above happens, if anyone asks us to hold off on starting to vote for some reason, we'll generally postpone it as requested.
- 4) Once we start taking votes (the Secretary will let you know when we're beginning), as per the bylaws, you have up to two weeks (14 days) to send yours in, though it would be great if it didn't actually take that long to collect all the votes and tally the results for the sake of expedience (but do, of course, take however much of that time you need to consider the topic carefully).

NCC Executive Committee Meeting

February 4, 2018 at Bill Folsom's home in NYC

Called to order at 10:02am

Present: B. Simmons, T. Engel, B. Folsom, M. Berger, M. Ingalls (until 11:05am – items 1 and 2)

1. Tri-colored bats

Engel reported that NYS has started the process of listing the tri-colored bats (we're unsure whether as endangered or threatened). C. Herzog has proposed it to the DEC Commissioner. If that's okay'd, it goes to draft rulemaking, there'd be a comment period, followed by final rulemaking, and then it would be listed. Our rough guess at the timespan for this is probably a year or two. We've been told that the hibernation closure dates for the tri-colored bat will be the same as for the NLEB, and Herzog has indicated that it would be helpful if we voluntarily choose to manage our caves as if it's already listed. Engel will ask if we can get a list of locations with recorded sightings of the tri-colored, and will draft a resolution for the Board to consider managing our caves as if the tri-colored is already listed. There is no current indication that the little brown is in the process of becoming listed in NYS.

2. "Newsletter" for the Board about between-meetings EC discussions?

Berger raised the idea of having an infrequent and informal internal "newsletter" of sorts to let the Board know what the EC has been up to between meetings. This would be responsive to Trustee requests in recent years for more transparency and clarity about what the EC is doing without inundating everyone with lots of e-mail (though Folsom confirms that the volume of EC e-mail is notably lower

than it once was). Engel and Ingalls think that perhaps we're no longer having the problems we once were since there's good sharing of important topics with the Board at this time, but that this couldn't hurt. Berger will take up this project, with an ideal goal of the Board receiving one set of EC meeting minutes and about two of these informal updates between Board meetings (the updates will most likely mention what topics have come up in e-mail, whether any interesting conclusions came of those, and the number of e-mails in the relevant thread, and part of the hope is that people considering serving on the EC in the future will have a better idea of what they're signing up for in advance).

3. Officer duties (Act 01-38)

Engel wondered if we should revisit shuffling of committee-to-officer assignments, not as an urgent immediate issue, but perhaps in the next 4 to 5 months. Doing so seemed like an agreeable idea. The discussion then turned to the organizational retreat that had been talked about often prior to the last couple of years. Engel asked about the goals for it, Simmons mentioned a growth plan and sources of funding, Folsom reminded us that Young had suggested we could likely obtain a grant for such a development event, and Berger mentioned the outstanding offer from SCC's Executive Director to be our facilitator.

4. Line of succession of officers

Simmons mentioned that there had been discussion about tweaking Article VI Section 3b to clarify the line of succession in the event of loss of the president (currently the VP assumes the duties, but does not become President), and that we should look more broadly at the issue of succession for any officer. Berger pointed out that the Trustees select the officers, and a following section allows them to appoint a replacement officer until the following elections, and also noted that not everyone qualified for one job would necessarily be the best choice to automatically fill in for another position. There was general agreement that the existing tools are sufficient. However, Berger also noted that we need to make an adjustment to the bylaws to correct an oversight from when we staggered the officer terms – as currently written, filling an officer vacancy mid-term could accidentally resynchronize the terms of the officers. Berger will draft a suitable correction.

5. 40th Anniversary

- a. Founder Awards: Simmons sent “hold the date” notices, but hasn't yet received responses.
- b. Special Awards: There was brief discussion of a couple of non-founders who might be candidates for other awards; I've redacted this since it seems wrong for that to land in the minutes.
- c. Slide presentation: We're hoping Art Palmer would present, though he hasn't been asked yet. Folsom will inquire.
- d. Formal invitations to all paid up members: To be mailed at some point.
- e. Centerpieces (?)
- f. seat favors
- g. Music for happy hour/dinner.
- h. Endowment Fund: We had a discussion about Estate Planning, how to approach bringing that topic up, the “five-year lookback period,” etc.

6. Thacher renewal

Engel reports that the renewal is done – we have a permit for another year, and he's raised the topic of having a more long-term arrangement. He also got asked for a different formatting of the draft management plan, which he counts as progress.

7. Surprise renewal

Simmons contacted the DEC indicating that we'd like to continue, but hasn't gotten any response.

8. Acquisitions

- a. Clarksville: Simmons asks if we should have an e-vote to increase the amount – yes. Engel says he'll increase his matching donation offer to \$6k. There is a survey-related issue: it appears the survey of the Gregory parcel was filed, but not the survey of the Wards parcel. The company that did the Wards survey seems to have been bought; Simmons is trying to track down how to get the actual survey that can be filed. We also still need to get bids to survey for our line adjustment. Mr. Crookes has a suggested inexpensive surveyor, but it turns out the proposed company has some sanctions against them.



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

9. End of Year Letter

This didn't go out at the end of the year because Simmons wanted to be able to tell people what we're doing, and various things were in a holding pattern. There was discussion about whether there's still a point, since if the goal was charitable year-end donations, the time has passed. The sentiment was that it's still worth sending out, and we'll just call it the "President's Update," but we'll wait until the Clarksville deal is signed.

10. Land Trust meetings

- a. CT - Simmons will attend.
- b. MA - Simmons is trying to go, and Morris-Siegel usually goes for work.
- c. NY - Simmons will attend, and Folsom is trying to talk Engel into going.
- d. NJ - Maybe we could talk Kappler into going? Simmons will inquire.

11. Investment Committee Update

Folsom sent in an application to Vanguard for an account. A representative called back and had several questions. Folsom has unsuccessfully tried to reconnect with them. J. Fioroni has volunteered to be the Committee Chair and asked if it would be advantageous to come to the March meeting and introduce himself; Folsom told him "yes" and will prepare a motion to appoint him as Chair of the Committee.

12. Endowment Fund

The topic of what happened with the NSF conversation was raised – they were supposed to be looking at the contract, but there are no signs that it's been going anywhere, so it sounds like we're likely to take our money out. Then we had most of the estate planning discussion referenced earlier in these meeting notes. We think it would make sense to make some proactive checkins with specific folks, and perhaps should ask Young for advice. We also think rerunning the newsletter article that we put out on the topic some 12 years ago would be a good idea... with a frequency greater than "every 12 years."

13. Ongoing landowner relationship management

Berger expressed that comments made by Rubin at a meeting in the past year have caused him to think that we're missing out on an important opportunity for the organization to actively do simple things to keep up (or improve, as the case may be) our relationships with our neighbors and fellow karst landowners. Currently, this is left to the individual preserve managers, and that individual contact is important, but the NCC could centrally do things like send holiday cards, perhaps newsletters, etc. Folsom's suggestion is that we create a database of landowners, asking preserve managers if we have better contact info than the tax maps show, and whether they think those landowners would want to hear from us and what sorts of outreach they might like to receive. Simmons gave some insight about how his company balances the "personal touch" of their contact managers with a central effort. Berger will work on this project.

14. Website

There are still things on it that are inconsistent or have incorrect info, and we've never had the group session to comb through each page that Folsom, Berger, and Chu had talked about in the past, but we should try to get all the info up to date before opening for the season. Folsom will ask Chu to arrange access for Berger and Mazza to we can work on it.

15. Next EC meeting

Engel reports that it will be at the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy offices.

16. Mid Atlantic Karst Conservancy

Engel is a member of MAKC and reports that he'll be attending their Board meeting two days before our next EC meeting to see how another conservancy conducts their business.

Adjourned at 3:18pm