

Wonalancet, N.H. 03897
December 13, 1974

Dear WODC Members:

During the Fall, a number of activities and meetings have taken place which may be of interest to you. Following is a brief report on each.

On October 8, 1974 your President, George Zuk, met with the District Ranger of the Saco District of WMNF, Verland Ohlson, and Research Assistant for the Saco District, Alan Green. Chief purpose of the meeting was to discuss with them decisions made by members of WODC at the Annual Meeting in late August. Specifically: (1) they were informed of the opinions of many of us that the wooden steps placed by WMNF on the Blueberry Ledge Trail are considered to be both unsafe and less than satisfactory ~~for~~^{from} an aesthetic point of view. They were genuinely surprised at these opinions. (2) The Rangers were told of the confusion which brings hikers to Wonalancet who had assumed they were descending to the Kancamagus Highway! Greater care in the identification of trails would be a first step in preventing confusion. (3) There was a discussion of the problems which have arisen along the Ferncroft Road due to the heavy influx of hikers, and a lack of car parking space on public (WMNF or Town of Albany) lands. WODC members counted 50 cars at one time parked along the Ferncroft Road and on Ned Behr's field, on a warm, bright, October day. Agreement was expressed that a suitable parking area on WMNF land is a "must", and that careful thought and adequate funding must be given for placing signs and other instructions in the Intervale so that inconveniences to landowners and residents are minimized, and essential guidance is provided hikers who wish to use the trails we provide.

On October 30, the President of WODC met with Howard H. Goff, Chairman of the White Mountain Guide Book Committee of the Appalachian Mountain Club (at the suggestion of Verland Ohlson),

to discuss changes which might be made in the Guide so that it will be of greater usefulness to the people it serves, and to ensure that it is accurate with respect to the present situation and the history of the region. Many changes in the Guide were recommended; but all changes suggested were designed to: (a) eliminate the term "Ferncroft Site" and describe the location of our trails from the "Parking Area at the intersection of Ferncroft Road and the Old Mast Road". (b) Eliminate confusion between the "McCrillis Trail" leading from Whiteface Intervale to Wonalancet, and the "McCrillis" Trail" leading from Whiteface Intervale to the summit of Mt. Whiteface. (c) Eliminate inconsistencies and confusions in the designation of the Sleeper Trail. Hopefully, also, to ensure that the trail named in honor of Katherine Sleeper is preserved in its entirety. (d) Describe the Bennet Street Trail on Sandwich Dome in terms of the preferred parking area at Jose's Bridge.

Trail

Fred Steels, who served as Chairman of WODC maintenance for many years is a member of the AMC Guide Book Committee. Charlotte and Stearns, and Henry Lamb were very helpful in wording the suggested changes.

On November 7th, 1974 the White Mountain National Forest held a hearing in Plymouth, N.H. on the topic of "Backcountry Management". "Backcountry" is defined as that area of National Forest land without public road access which is managed for dispersed recreation in a setting which is substantially natural in its appearance. Hiking Trails maintained by WODC are in backcountry. Discussions were general and wide-ranging.

Attending and speaking were WODC members Martha and John Chandler, Sally and George Zink.

On November 16th, the WMNF held a hearing in Laconia, N.H. on the topic of Off-road Vehicle use during the summer season on Forest

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land. This hearing allowed for a review of the restrictions which were in effect during the summer of 1974. Members of WODC attended, and spoke. Among those attending were Peg King, David Bowles, Martha Chandler, and Stearns Smalley. Several representatives of active ORV organizations also presented their viewpoints. ~~It is not too~~
→ late to state your views! Address comments to:

Ned Therrien
U.S. Forest Service, WMMF
P.O. Box 638
Laconia, N.H. 03246

Early this Fall the Forest Service released to the public its Forest Plan, a document completing the second step of a three-phase land use planning process for the WMMF. At this point in the process, nine "Planning Units" have been defined, one of which is the Wonalancet Unit, which extends from Conway on the east to Campton on the west, and roughly from Route 113A on the south to the summits of the Sandwich Range on the north, with a total area of 29,500 acres. Of this area, 20,000 acres are allocated for high quality timber products, optimum wildlife conditions, and varied dispersed recreation use (designated "Management Area I"). Allocated for concentrated, high density recreation (designated "Management Area II") are 250 acres. White Ledge Campground is the 250 acre section. An area of 6,750 acres will be available for dispersed recreation providing a "near natural visitor experience" with some timber cutting. Major summits (Chocorua, Paugus, Passaconaway and Whiteface) are in this area. (Designated "Management Area" III). A total of 1,500 acres are planned for natural recreational use--no roads or timber cutting (Management Area IV). In addition, "the Bowl", 500 acres, will continue as a Natural area.

Officers of WODC have been working on a request from the WMMF for applications for "Special Use Permits". One permit

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application will be filed for each of the three shelters maintained by WODC: Camp Shehadi and Camp Heermance on Mt. Whiteface, and Camp Rich on Passaconaway. Neither the Forest Service nor WODC has any record that a Special Permit has ever been filed or requested. In fact, the involvement of WODC in trail maintenance and the provision of shelters predates the creation of the WMNF---most likely no permits ~~had~~ ever existed.

WODC is being asked to file applications for any areas on which we wish to maintain shelters, toilets, springs, tent platforms, etc. Any suggestions members have which would aid in filing requests would be appreciated.

Two ~~major~~ matters of interest to Club members on which there is no recent information available are the Spring Brook Sale ~~the~~ (cutting of timber on Mt. Wonalancet), and the use of winter use of ORV's ~~the~~ (snowmobiles) on Forest Service lands. Requests for up-to-date information have been made, and we will send you such information as soon as possible.

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Insert this section in the report on page 3 where the arrow occurs.

We have been informed that the WMNF will not make a final decision for several weeks on this topic of ORV summer use, so it is not too late to make your thoughts known. Address your comments to:

Ned Therrien
U.S. Forest Service, WMNF
P.O. Box 638
Laconia, N.H. 03246

To review the status of ORV summer use policy during the summer of 1974, ORV use was strongly restricted. Essential policy decisions were:

- (1) All forest lands closed to ORVs except for Wild River Trail (3 miles), Province Brook Trail (3 3/4 miles), Bickford Brook Trail (4 miles), Hubbard Brook Trail (2 1/4 miles), Mt. Gilley Trail (3 3/4 miles), Cobble Hill Trail (3 1/2 miles), Jerico Road Trail (3 3/4 miles). Not one of these seven trails is in the Wonalancet Region.
- 2) Trails where ORVs were permitted were identified with signs. Closed trails were not posted in any way.
- 3) No restrictions to ORVs by the public on Forest Development System Roads open to the public. Just what these roads are is not specified.
- 4) Forest Officers are authorized to issue citations to people violate the regulations. Maximum fine of \$500.

Of particular interest to many WODC members has been the closing of the road which extends along the abandoned railroad bed from the Sandwich Notch Road to Guinea Pond, thence to Flat Mountain Roads. In addition, there is access by the old wood road leading from Jose's Bridge and connecting with the Guinea Pond-Flat Mountain Pond Trail. The WODC maintained Bennett Street Trail is crossed by *state roads in two places*. The fact that WMNF did not specifically

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post roads which were officially closed to ORV use during the summer of 1974 resulted in continued use of these roads.

The National Forest personnel are listening to your voice. Write at once and let them know what you think. A letter from you may well be decisive.