TRAILS:

PAST, PRESENT, and FUTURE

As we begin another season of trail maintenance, it's valuable to consider some of the basic issues which underlie our efforts. What are our goals? Is trail work really needed, and why? When should the work be done? Do some problems require urgent action, or can we take a wait-and-see approach? Who will perform this work, how much will it cost, and where will the dollars come from? Has trail maintenance changed over the years?

The First 70 Years

When the first WODC trails were cleared around 1892, it was difficult to reach any of the peaks we now visit so readily. Although lumber roads provided partial access, it still required considerable effort to open trails and keep them clear of the blowdowns and new growth which appears so readily on our New England hills. Trail use was very light by today's standards, so light in fact, that groups of "trampers" were recruited to tramp down the brush.

The need for trampers reflects the fact that early trails were largely covered in herbaceous growth, whose roots bind the topsoil together and keep it from eroding. Some of our less used trails, like the Wonalancet Range and Cabin Trails, still contain sections of undisturbed topsoil. Early trails also benefitted from the use of smooth-soled leather boots, which did little damage to the soil surface.

The primary goal of early trail builders was to improve access to the mountains. Their techniques ranged from the ambitious bridle paths of the Presidentials to the simple ladders and steps of our own Blueberry Ledge Trail.

The Backpacking Boom

The 1960's and 1970's saw an enormous increase in the number of hikers in the mountains, including the Sandwich Range. Over 6,000 people now hike the Blueberry Ledge trail every year, about a 100-fold increase in 100 years. The increase has come about partly as a result of cultural trends, but is also related

to light weight hiking gear, especially the lugged-sole hiking boot. The new soles provide improved traction on many surfaces. Unfortunately, while gripping well, the lugged-sole also churns up soil and tears at roots, leaving trails vulnerable to erosion.

On many trails, erosion combined with soil compaction makes the center of the trail slightly lower than edges, causing water to run down the trail itself, rather than draining off the side. This situation is more pronounced on trails that follow old road depressions, such as sections of the Dicey's Mill Trail. In the early stages this is simply an annoyance to hikers, but as the problem worsens it also accelerates, and the result can be devastating erosion, in places several feet deep.

Some routes, such as the Walden and the Wiggin Trails, have special problems. Early trail builders were trying to find direct routes up the mountains; the trails often went steeply up erodible slopes rather than traversing in a manner that makes them easier to drain and protect from erosion.

The Evolution of Trail Maintenance

At its founding, the primary goal of WODC was to open new trails and to keep them clear. The relatively light usage resulted in few drainage or erosion problems. Early trail workers concentrated on clearing brush, blowdowns, and blazing the route. This work was often carried out during the summer months by one or two people paid by the Club. Much work was also performed by volunteers, which was formalized in the 1970's with the creation of the WMNF Adopt-A-Trail program. With the support and guidance of WODC, volunteer adopters continue to clear trails. They set an excellent example of what can be accomplished by dedicated volunteers.

As use of WODC trails increased, so did the realization that more attention should be paid to growing erosion problems. Due to the heavy, time

(Continued on Page 5.)

SUMMER PROGRAMS

During the months of July and August a series of programs will be presented by the Club. There will be two daytime outdoor programs, two illustrated talks on aspects of wildlife, and a folk concert.

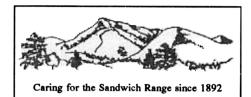
The first program, an illustrated lecture, "The Return of the Common Loon," will take place in the Wonalancet Union Chapel on July 9 at 7:00 P.M. Join Jim Boyle, from the Loon Preservation Committee (LPC), for an entertaining slide show on the life history of the common loon. Since 1975, LPC has been working to restore the loon to New Hampshire where it is listed as a threatened species. The presentation will highlight the negative pressures loons face, and LPC's efforts to minimize those threats. There will be plenty of time afterwards to ask your favorite loon question such as, "Why are their eyes red?" or "Do loons mate for life?"

Jim is a resident of Wonalancet and actively involved with the WODC, and a member of the Executive Committee. He has worked for LPC for the last two years, currently serving as its Director. Jim's previous experiences include working for the Audubon Society of New Hampshire as their Sanctuaries Manager,

(Continued on Page 2)



A well restored trail is durable and goes unnoticed by the passing hiker. Random rock steps on the Bennett Street Trail. (SRCA, '94)



The Newsletter is published twice each year by the Wonalancet Out Door Club. The mailing address is:

WODC

Newsletter Editor

Wonalancet, NH 03897

The Editor encourages members and interested readers to submit material to use in future issues. Articles, poems, drawings, comments, criticisms, suggestions, are welcomed.

SUMMER PROGRAMS

(Continued from Page 1)

running a bison ranch in North Dakota for the Nature Conservancy, and working as a door to door salesman.

On July 22 Dr. Vinton Thompson will speak on the topic, "Comparing Insects: Wildlife in Wonalancet and Southern Costa Rica." The presentation will be held in the Wonalancet Union Chapel at 7:30 P.M.

Vinton Thompson has vacationed in Wonalancet for many years; his family owns a summer cottage in the Intervale. He is a nephew of Nancy and Stanley Coville. Dr. Thompson is a graduate of Harvard University in biology, and obtained a Doctorate in Genetics at the University of Chicago. Currently, he serves as Chairman of the Department of Science at Roosevelt University in Chicago.

He has recently returned from Great Britain where he delivered a lecture at the British Museum on the subject, "Spittle Bugs of Costa Rica."

On August 4, Susan Korpi will lead a walk for children ages 5-10 along the WODC Brook Path. Adults will be welcomed. Bring lunches. The walk will start at 11:00 A.M. Meet at the trailhead, which is across Route 113A from the Cabin and Big Rock Cave trailhead, located about ½ mile east of Wonalancet Chapel.

Susan is a resident of Wonalancet, and is well known to all in the Intervale. Susan and her husband, Roger, both serve on the WODC Executive Committee, and have served as adopters of the Brook Path for several years.

On August 11, beginning at 9:00 A.M., Karl Roenke, Ranger on the White Mountain National Forest, will lead an archaeological field trip, "Documenting Historical Resources on the Mountain Road." The objective of the trip will be to search the forest on both sides of the McCrillis Path for remains of the 18th and 19th century farms which existed on the Old Mountain Road connecting Sandwich and Albany.

Karl is a graduate of Hartwick College, and holds an MS degree in Anthropology and Archaeology from the University of Idaho. He was been with the US Forest Service for 16 years, 8 years at the Clearwater Forest in Idaho, and eight on WMNF. He is responsible for prehistoric and historic sites, and site management, within the Forest.

Meet near the kiosk on Ferncroft Road at 9:00 A.M. Bring lunches, cameras, and measuring tapes.

At 3:00 P.M. on August 26, folksingers Peg Loughran and Taylor Whitesides will present an afternoon of music. The concert will be held in the Wonalancet Chapel Grove. You may wish to bring folding chairs.

This will be a repeat of a program held about 12 years ago in which Peg and Taylor entertained Club members and their guests — a memorable occasion. Both Peg and Taylor are longtime friends of the Club. Peg has vacationed in the area for many years; both her parents were WODC officers. She has appeared in many concerts throughout New England, in Montana, and the State of Washington. A critic comments: "Peg Loughran's artistry glows in the round, warm quality of her voice, her pristine guitar playing and the depth of her songwriting."

Taylor Whitesides at one time lived in the Intervale, and has many friends here. He moved to the Portsmouth area a dozen years ago. He has performed throughout New England as an individual, and with several groups, including the "Northeast Winds."

Although not required, it is recommended that anyone wishing to

participate in either the archaeological field trip or the hike along the Brook Trail, make reservations in advance. For further information on any of the above events, phone Susan Korpi at 323-8767, Barbara Sidley at 323-8694, or Sally Zink at 323-8693.

Summer Programs (See article for details)

July 9 "Return of the Common Loon," with Jim Boyle.

July 22 "Comparing Insects," with Vinton Thompson.

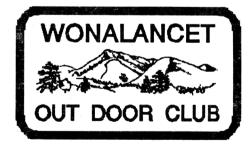
Aug. 4 Hike along Brook Trail, with Susan Korpi.

Aug. 11 Archaeological Fieldtrip with Karl Roenke.

Aug. 26 Folk Concert, with Peg Loughran & Taylor Whitesides.

WODC PATCH AVAILABLE

Our energetic and enthusiastic Trails Committee, with support of the Executive Committee, has designed and created a WODC patch. It is a compact 2"x3" size to fit easily on a pack, shirt, or cap. It features attractive blue and green embroidery on a white background.



You can purchase a patch by using the Order Form enclosed, or by sending \$3.00 per patch to WODC Member Services, Wonalancet, NH 03897.

WHO IS KATE SLEEPER?

Wonalancet has likewise a central figure in its story whose hand almost fashioned its very fabric. A mere hardworking woman would not ordinarily have had so profound an effect on her surroundings, but it must be remembered of Kate Sleeper that since Bradbury Jewell she was practically the first outsider of either sex when she settled in this pocket of the hills in 1890, as well as the first inhabitant with a talent for organizing, and further, that she was a woman of exceptional charm and originality no matter in what society she might be placed.

Marjory Gane Harkness

Katherine (Kate) Sleeper was born in the greater Boston area in 1862, the only child of Charles F. Sleeper and Zilpha Thomas. Her grandfather, John Sleeper, was a prominent Bostonian of a varied and interesting background: born in Tyngsboro, Massachusetts, a sailor at the age of 15 and Captain of a ship by 28, the editor of the Boston Journal, a writer of children's books, mayor of Roxbury, and a State Senator. After the death of Zilpha in 1872, when Kate was just ten years old, she and her father moved to his parents' home in Roxbury. Not much is known of her early years, except that she was reared in a loving family, with many cousins. She was well educated, and as a young woman entered fully into community activities. As a young adult she took French lessons at the Berlitz School, music lessons, and exercised regularly at an athletic club for women. Later, she tried her hand as a newspaper reporter.

Wonalancet Farm:

Kate knew the Chocorua section of Tamworth, where she visited both friends and relatives. 'It was in 1890 while convalescing at Lucy Blake's boarding house on Gardner Hill Road in Tamworth that she decided to open a country inn. But where? To find an answer, she began searching the surrounding countryside from the seat of a carriage. On one of these drives she viewed Birch Intervale and immediately fell in love with the spot. As she got down from the carriage she announced, "This is where I'm going to live."



Wonalancet Farm circa 1910

In August Kate found the farm she wanted. It was the property of the early settler Theophilous Brown, a few yards south of the same brook that flowed through Bradbury Jewell's front yard. The farm was large, over 600 acres, mostly timbered, but with about 100 acres in open fields. Kate called her purchase "Wonalancet Farm," the name by which it is still known. The main house was built in 1814, a date carved in the living room fireplace chimney.

Wonalancet Farm and the inn she planned were too much for her to operate. Eager but inexperienced, she knew little about running either a farm or inn. Kate asked her young friend and relative by marriage, Arthur Walden, then nineteen, to help her by taking charge of the farm, which he agreed to do.

During the winter of 1890-1891 she renovated and refurbished the main house. By this time neighbors had come to know Kate; her charm and vitality inspired both affection and action. As the snow melted from the front yard of the Farmhouse that spring, piles of rubbish appeared - old boards and other building materials discarded by the carpenters while renovating. Without the slightest suggestion from Kate, her neighbors pitched in and cleaned up the yard.

Kate's appearance belied her courage and determination. She was small — "she couldn't have been five feet tall," — slight, blond, with deep blue eyes, and a high-pitched voice. Though these physical traits may not appear impressive, she was attractive, sociable, sincere, and determined. One of her biographers reveals Kate's leadership mode in this

significant statement, "All her life she possessed the rare quality of inspiring others to want what she wanted."

Wonalancet Union Chapel:

Residents had built Wonalancet Chapel in 1880, ten years before Kate's arrival. The Chapel was on land owned by the Currier family, of timber grown on the adjacent mountain slopes, sawn at the mill then operating near the present kiosk off Ferncroft Road, and raised by the labor of local farmers. Used frequently by residents as a house of worship, the Chapel was undedicated, unincorporated, and of no specific denomination.

Early in June 1891, two of Kate's guests at the Farm were Reverend Treadwell Walden and his wife. At breakfast that Sunday morning, Kate asked Reverend Walden, Rector of St. Paul's Cathedral in Boston, to conduct a service in the Chapel that afternoon. Following a brief visit to the Chapel, Reverend Walden agreed. Notice was spread by word of mouth throughout the Intervale, and at four o'clock the service was held. In Kate's words:

There was a surprising audience. As a result the community insisted that the church be the recipient of a deed from the Curriers, which had been long promised, and which was made, and the Wonalancet Corporation was formed to provide for the Wonalancet Union Chapel.

Incorporation of the Chapel was accomplished in 1893. It is non-denominational, and its object the promotion of religion. Kate's interest in the Chapel was unending: in 1896 the first

tower and bell were added; in 1936 the structure was remodeled, and the present tower, dedicated to Kate, was built. Appropriately, Arthur Walden and Kate are interred close to the northeast corner of the building.

Wonalancet Out Door Club:

Another Wonalancet institution had its beginnings that summer of 1891. In August, two of her guests were Appalachian Mountain Club officers: Charles E. Fay, four times AMC President, and Councillor William Ladd. Kate Sleeper, "ever mindful of the interests of those with whom she had cast her lot, had come to the conclusion that Birch Intervale could improve its condition by becoming more attractive to summer visitors, and invited the AMC members to talk with landowners at her Farm." In the words of Fay,

Such an opportunity to do missionary work for the Club idea was not to be lost. Mr. Ladd clearly set forth what had been done elsewhere, leaving it to me to show what the farmers of Birch Intervale might do: first, to make it the easy point of departure for visitors to Passaconaway, then to resolve themselves into a local association for new improvements and the maintenance of old ones...

Note that Fay and Ladd met with the farmers of the Intervale at the invitation of Kate Sleeper, they were doing missionary work for the Club idea, and suggested the farmers might form a local association.

The earliest By-Laws are quite specific about the economic motivation of forming an outdoor club.

Its purpose shall be the building and maintenance of paths, to improve the place and develop its natural beauties for the attraction of summer guests.

Apparently the suggestions of Ladd and Fay were embraced immediately, for in the January 1892 Appalachia there is a full description of the trail that the farmers and the two AMC missionaries cut several days after the meeting at Wonalancet Farm. The trail led to the peak of Mt. Passaconaway; a trail now called the Dicey's Mill Trail. Such were the simple beginnings of the Wonalancet



Katherine Sleeper Walden. Note key hanging from her waist.

Out Door Club, all traceable to the vision of Kate Sleeper.

Postoffice and Marriage:

A United States Postoffice was established in 1893, with Kate the first postmaster. Postal authorities, fearing confusion with an office named Intervale just above North Conway, urged a name change. Thus, Birch Intervale was renamed Wonalancet.

In 1902 Katherine Sleeper and Arthur T. Walden were married. (See "Who is Arthur Walden?" in the November 1994 Newsletter.)

Preservation of the Bowl:

As early as the 1880's there was growing concern throughout the State of New Hampshire concerning the future of the forests. Greed and ignorance, exemplified by the "timber barons" and supported by an expanding railroad industry, were creating a wasteland of the forests. Vast forest fires were readily ignited by sparks and hot coals spewed out by the railroad engines, and fed by downed tree tops and other slash from timbering. Fires raged for days, and the billows of smoke were viewed with alarm: dust and smoke restricted visibility. Rapid water run-off from rain and melting snow brought on spring floods, and produced low water levels throughout the summer

and fall. Voicing these concerns, the 1908 WODC Guide to the Paths and Trails of the Sandwich Range states,

The trains of logs that daily run to the huge mill at Conway lead us all to hope that Congress will pass the Forest Reserve Bill.

Congress enacted a Forest Reserve Bill, the Weeks Act, in 1911. It was an enabling act, allowing Federal purchase of private lands to create National Forests. At once a second stage of political action followed. What lands were to be part of the new White Mountain National Forest? Of primary concern to residents and visitors to Wonalancet was preservation of the forest lying north of the Intervale, most important, the area known then and now as the Bowl.

Kate Walden in 1914, learning that a logging operation was about to take place in and surrounding the Bowl, on her own initiative conferred with Louis Tainter, President of the Publishers Paper Company, the company that owned the area. With tact and determination, she convinced Tainter to give her an option at fifty thousand dollars on three thousand acres in and surrounding the Bowl. They signed an agreement. (See "Who Is Tainter?" in the May 1994 Newsletter.)

In furtherance of this objective, sixteen Club members attended a White Mountain Forest Conference meeting in Gorham in July of 1914 to urge support for the addition of the Bowl and adjacent land to the National Forest. The delegation spokesmen were Edgar J. Rich, Kate Walden, and Miss Marjorie Gane. Edgar Rich told the conferees how Kate Sleeper had gotten an option on the Bowl.

A few months later, in September, sections of the Wonalancet forest were added to the WMNF without exercising Kate's option. In passage of the Weeks Act and the inclusion of the Sandwich Range within the boundaries of WMNF, WODC's role was small but significant; it was but one voice in a powerful chorus.

Other Leadership Activities:

Within the space available one can only give a sampling of Kate's accomplish—ments. She organized a festival in 1914 to celebrate the centennial of her farmhouse and the recent passage of the Weeks Act. This was a big affair, with a parade

featuring almost every person in the Intervale, several appearing as Indians. During World War I she organized the women of the Intervale in the preparation of surgical dressings and clothing for suffering people in Europe. For this good work, a decoration came to her from the French Government.

Her leadership role continued during the 1930's; but the great Depression took its toll. As the number of guests at the Farm

diminished, so did the financial resources of its owners. Milton and Eva Seeley purchased the Chinook Kennels. Finally, Kate and Arthur decided to retire from innkeeping; they leased the Farmhouse to others.

Arthur and Kate's life together ended in the winter of 1947, with a house fire that destroyed their home, and in which Arthur died. Kate never fully recovered, though she lived for two years, until March of 1949.

Today, only two or three residents who knew Kate are living; all recall her with affection. Her name will not easily die. As long as there are lovers of these mountains, her name will be remembered: Mount Katherine, East Sleeper, West Sleeper, and the Kate Sleeper Trail.

George E. Zink

(Continued from Page 1)

Trails: Past, Present, & Future consuming, and technical work, a number of professional trail crews were utilized, including the US Forest Service, the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC), and the Sandwich Range Conservation Association (SRCA). Cooperative funding from several sources made it possible to dispatch a crew to work on predetermined problems each year.

Erosion is the major problem on our trails, and the major thrust of professional trail work has been restoring the resulting damage and improving drainage to prevent further deterioration. In extreme cases, such as upper Dicey's Mill Trail, the damage was so far advanced that some



Wes Crane of SRCA places rock cribbing to restore an eroded section of Bennett Street Trail sections of trail were entirely abandoned

in favor of a new route, or relocation. The frequent use of relocation for trail problems is partly a response to trails that were poorly laid out in the first place. Relocation must be very carefully considered, however, lest the new route, usually on similar soils, suffers the same fate as the original. To many people, relocation is rejected because it requires abandonment of a route, and perhaps an abdication of our responsibility as stewards. The preferred alternative is to restore the trail to a stable, functional, condition, even though this can be very time consuming and expensive. A visit to the Walden Trail above the East Loop will reveal just how extensive trail damage can be.

While many trails need restoration, it's equally important to prevent such damage from occurring. The crews of WODC, SRCA, AMC, and USFS employ a number of preventive measures, most frequently the construction of strategically placed waterbars. Constructed of logs, or preferably stone, a waterbar serves to carry water off the trail before it can cause damage. In order to reduce the length of flow along the trail, bars must be placed at frequent intervals. On the Dicey's Mill Trail alone, nearly 200 water bars have been installed, and more are needed. Once built, waterbars must be maintained yearly. If the accumulated leaves, soil, and gravel aren't cleared from the channel behind the bar, water will continue its previous course down the trail. Other measures are also used to prevent or delay erosion, such as the installation of soil retainers, commonly perceived as steps. Retainers and water bars are best used in combination, and afford good protection for steep, poorly drained trails.

Some trails cross muddy areas, and when hikers seek a drier route they often enlarge the very area they are avoiding. The trail could be relocated, but it can usually be restored by suitable drainage, rock stepping-stones, and proper routing.

Another hazard to hiking trails is the blowdown, or fallen tree. Often viewed primarily as an inconvenience to hikers, blowdowns are sometimes left in place, particularly in remote or Wilderness areas. This practice must be carefully considered, since blowdowns can also cause trail widening as hikers seek a route around them. Many trail problems can be avoided by proper treadway definition and good blazing, which provide a subtle, but inviting route for the hiker.

These few examples illustrate how easily human use can damage the forest environment. Some will even argue that there should be no maintained trails in Wilderness areas, but when well established, the trail serves as a valuable sacrifice zone that allows human use with minimal impact.

This account is far from a comprehensive history of foot paths and trail maintenance, but it serves to illuminate the challenges facing all trails crews.

Addressing Today's Challenges

In recent years the WODC has worked cooperatively with such diverse groups as the Department of Corrections Shock Incarceration Unit, the Chocorua Mountain Club, and Trailwrights, as well as the groups mentioned earlier. We've also developed our own volunteer trail crew, which has tackled a wide range of projects that otherwise would have required professional help. While some of these collaborations continue, others, like the Shock crew, have been sporadic due to factors beyond our control. Even the USFS, official custodian of these trails, suffers from erratic budgeting and is

increasingly dependent on other organizations for trail maintenance.

A very hopeful note this year is the AmeriCorps program. This 40 person crew is assigned to the WMNF for a yearlong program of public service. They will be performing a wide range of tasks within the WMNF, including work on hiking trails. Early contacts indicate this is a highly motivated and energetic group, and we are hopeful that they will assist a number of our projects with crews of 4-5 people. Plans are also underway for joint

our experience that it is vital to have a skilled professional crew available annually to tackle significant restoration and repair projects. This work is expensive. While we expect our appropriation to be supplemented by the USFS and perhaps other sources, funding uncertainties make it difficult to implement a dependable, long term trail maintenance strategy. We discovered two years ago just how precarious things can be, when the withdrawal of support from one WMNF district caused cancellation of



Tin Mountain Conservation Center Explorers digging drainage ditch on Old Mast Road

overnight projects, such as on Kate Sleeper Trail, where they can help pack tools and even water to the remote worksite and campsite.

We have worked with the Saco Ranger District to earmark \$4,500 of USFS funds for SRCA work on WODC trails this year. Along with \$1,700 budgeted by WODC, this will allow SRCA to complete a significant amount of restoration and drainage work on the Blueberry Ledge and possibly Dicey's Mill Trails. Heavy use of these trails makes it important that we address problems before they become more serious and expensive to correct.

Finding the Right Balance

Much trail maintenance is being accomplished by volunteer efforts, and through partnerships outlined above. While coordinating these diverse resources is rewarding, it does entail a considerable investment of time and energy to keep pace with the changing landscape of trail resources. It has been

the entire SRCA crew.

WODC's recent growth in membership and contributions has already resulted in an increased trails budget. While our contribution is still a small part of SRCA's total budget, it indicates our commitment to the SRCA. The Trails Committee recommends that we continue to expand our budget for professional trail work.

Funding Options

Although the 1995 season hasn't begun, we find ourselves looking to 1996 and beyond. The reliability of professional trail work is dependent on the level of funding that WODC is able to provide. The high cost and overhead of directly hiring even a small crew is prohibitive, so supporting cooperative efforts like SRCA is essential. To insure an adequate level of funding, the Trails Committee is considering other methods and sources of financial support to supplement the existing WODC dues-based revenue. Among the options being considered are:

Encouraging grants from other organizations. A donation from the White Sylvania Trust in 1994 supplemented the \$1,100 WODC appropriation. Other potential trusts and sponsors are being pursued for this season.

Establishing a Trail Trust Fund. A special trust fund dedicated to longterm trail maintenance would provide a vehicle for soliciting donations and bequests of all sizes.

Providing the opportunity for public support through a donation box at trailheads. While memberships and donations have grown considerably in recent years, members represent only a few percent of the people hiking in Wonalancet. Donation boxes might provide significant revenue by making it easier for a larger number of hikers to contribute. Donation boxes are being used by: the WMNF at campgrounds, the Audubon Society, and the Tamworth Outing Club.

As we evaluate specific fundraising alternatives, we must consider how these might be perceived by members. Who should evaluate the options and make the decisions? Is this the proper function of the Trails Committee, or the Executive Committee? Might it best be handled by a separate fundraising or development committee? Might Club members prefer to continue funding trail work strictly from membership dues?

The Trails and Executive Committees welcome your comments, and invite the participation of all members in these vital issues.

Peter Smart

AMC HUT PERMITS

The Appalachian Mountain Club's 30 year federal permit to provide recreational and educational opportunities at its seven huts and the Pinkham Notch Visitor Center in the WMNF expires in October. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) is responsible for updating the permit.

At press time, the AMC was waiting to find out what the USFS will need to begin the decision-making process. "The Forest Service operates under more complex rules and processes than it did in 1965,"

says Mike Torrey, AMC facilities director. "We're still not sure what will be required of us, but we're trying to be prepared for even the most complex, and costly possibilities." Though the AMC may need to gather data about its work, Torrey is optimistic about the future of Pinkham, which celebrates its 75th anniversary this June, and the huts.

"I fully expect the AMC to continue to operate its huts in the White Mountains, and I'm confident the process will yield a number of improvements," says Torrey, who is working full-time on repermitting. "Although the decision-making is out of our hands, we feel confident because we're standing on a record of

stewardship, education, public service, and commitment."

The Forest Service routinely grants and renews permits to work on public land, whether to harvest trees, run a ski area, or provide other recreational opportunities. Its decisions are guided by federal laws including the National Forest Management Act, Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act, and many others. Chuck Myers, deputy superintendent of the WMNF, says it's too early to predict which of these could play a part in the renewal of the AMC permit.

"We're open to whatever process the Forest Service needs to use," Torrey says. "The more we learn from our guests and other forest visitors, the better partner we can be to the National Forest."

In 1993 the AMC generated \$3.4 million from income-producing activities in WMNF. It spent \$4.2 million in its operations and programs in the forest, not including the value of volunteer hours. Those expenses, which help cover services for the estimated 7 million people who visit the Forest every year, otherwise would need to be paid by taxes. The current permit recognizes these contributions, and the Forest Service waives the fee organizations normally are required to pay to run facilities on public land. But some critics charge that the AMC should pay these fees, which would amount to about \$60,000 per year. Other critics, angered by the AMC's activism in environmental issues, says new permits should restrict education and advocacy activities in the huts and at Pinkham. And a few say the organization is trashing the WMNF, even though overnight guests in AMC facilities account for less than 1 percent of total use in the national forest.

Education is inseparable from the services the AMC has provided in the White Mountains for more than 100 years. Torrey says, "We're trying to introduce people to the outdoors ... and we firmly believe that feeds a long-term conservation ethic that benefits all of society."

Reprinted with permission from AMC Outdoors

1995 Trail Calendar

- May 6 Joint project with AMC Wonalancet Cabin clearing drainage and blow downs on the Gleason & Bennett Street Trails. A festive dinner will follow at the AMC Cabin.
- May 13 While not an official WODC activity, Chocorua Mountain Club's Annual Trails Day is a great chance to help out a sister trail club and enjoy a great meal too. Pick your own project, such as clearing blowdowns from the Whitin Brook Trail.
- May 26-29 Celebrate National Trails Day with this backcountry overnight on Kate Sleeper Trail. We plan to clear blowdowns, correct erosion problems, and install new waterbars. Guaranteed to be an exciting trip, and a great chance to meet the AmeriCorps volunteers who'll be helping us.
- June 17 Blazing and drainage work on the Blueberry Ledge Cutoff. This nearby project is a great opportunity for those looking for a less strenuous trip, or for a half-day.
- July 1-4 Treadway repair on Kelley Trail, with help from SRCA and/or AmeriCorps. A convenient opportunity to see various tools and techniques at work. Join us for the weekend or an afternoon. Volunteers are also needed to help with supplies.
- July 15 NH Trails Day: Clear waterbars on Dicey's Mill Trail. Depending on turnout, we'll also address drainage problems on the lower part of the trail. The Annual WODC Barbecue will follow at 6 PM at the home of Barbara and Ted Sidley.
- Aug 5-6 Repair waterbars and steps on the Lawrence Trail. Also a great chance to explore the many hidden features of this remote area.
- Aug 20 4:00 Trails presentation at Wonalancet Chapel. 5:30 Potluck supper at Wonalancet Chapel.
 - 7:00 WODC Annual Meeting
- Aug 26 Drainage and rock work on Bickford Trail with Chocorua Mountain Club. Potluck supper to follow at George and Sally Zink's.
- Sept 9 Drainage work and trail hardening on upper Brook Path. If your time is limited, easy access makes this a great project for a half day.
- Sept 23 Rock work on Kelley or Bickford Trail with Trailwrights. We'll share special tools and techniques that make this heavy work go more quickly. Pizza to follow.
- Oct 14 Close out the season by installing waterbars on Big Rock Cave Trail, Cabin Trail or Old Mast Road. (Specific project depends on what gets done earlier in the season.)

1995 TRAIL CALENDAR

Although the Trail Calendar on page 7 provides sufficient information for those who regularly attend work sessions, it does not emphasize how eager we are to have others join us. Volunteers of all interests, ages, abilities, and vigors, are encouraged to participate in these events. Though scheduled as work trips, you will not be expected to do the heaviest and grubbiest labor. You need not spend a full day; you are welcome to join for an hour or two, or as long as you wish. It's an excellent opportunity to meet other members. We urge your participation.

Fullday volunteers should be ready to leave the respective trailhead at 8:30 A.M. Arrive early to allow time for planning and the distribution of tools. If you arrive late, please hike up the trail to the work site. Bring lunch and plenty of water. For additional details call Peter Smart at 603-323-8666.

Adopters will be pleased to know that a special set of tools is now available at a location very convenient to the Ferncroft trailhead. We'll be sending details to all adopters in a separate mailing this spring.

Volunteers are needed at the trailheads prior to each trip, and for a brief period after the workers depart, to direct late comers to the scene of the day's work. To volunteer for this chore, phone George Zink at 323-8693 or Ralph Weymouth at 323-8201.

A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Editor's note: In June of 1994 eight WODC volunteers celebrated National Trails Day by spending three days clearing the Walden Trail. Among the volunteers was ten year old Rachel Sorlien, whose personal account of her adventure follows.

Late last Spring we went on the Walden Trail to clear off the path. It was hard work, but fun too. I had to clip branches, throw them to the side of the trail, and see if there were any big logs on the trail ahead. It was tiring! I fell asleep right away at night.

Some of the things we needed to clear the trail were bow saws, axes, large clippers and small clippers. Some other supplies we needed were tents, sleeping bags, water filters, dried food, and trail mix. I brought a book, stove, bug nets,



CMC and WODC volunteers working on Whitin Brook Trail in 1994

and extra clothes. We also brought water bottles and a first aid kit.

Now I'll tell you about what our campsite was like. It had a good cooking area because it was flat and there were lots of flat stones to put the stoves on. It was also a good place because it was a little bit of a muddy spot. Later, when it rained, it would wash all footprints and other signs we'd been there away. Also, nearby there was a stream with muddy but filterable water. There were a bunch of boulders close by too. They were great for climbing. That's what I did in free time when I wasn't reading. Climb!

I almost forgot! The people I went with on the trip were: Evelyn MacKinnon, Fred Lavigne, Judy Reardon, Peter Smart, Chris Conrod, and Roger Sorlien. (Ed: Volunteer Wayne Allen departed just before Rachael's arrival.)

One day I went ahead on the trail and read while everyone else cleared. I totally covered myself with <u>one</u> bug net. As I was reading two men came along. (Ed: John & David Mersfelder). They were surprised to see me just reading. I would have been surprised if I were them too!

On our last day my Dad and I decided to hike up Passaconaway ahead of the others because we had to set out for home soon. So we hiked up, and on the way, while my Dad cleared a few trees I went ahead to see the view, and guess what I found on the north side of the mountain? A patch of snow! It was a very hot day and it felt good to stick my head right into it. It was great! After I dunked my head

in the snow I took a handful and went back to my Dad. I said, "Dad, guess what I have?" and I was about to throw it at him but I dropped it. So I told him what I had, and went back to get more. I threw that at him. He said it felt great!

When we got back to camp to pack up we decided to change into cooler clothes. While we were changing and packing we got attacked by bugs! They were so bad on the lower part of the trail we had to run 1½ miles with packs. But all in all it was a great trip!"

Rachel Sorlien

TRAIL SIGNS FOR SALE

The Trails Committee is continually updating and replacing old trail signs. This results in an interesting assortment of old signs, any of which can be yours for a donation of \$25. We even have a few arrows and other trail markers available for \$5 each. If one of these doesn't appeal to you, we can retire almost any existing sign you'd like for just \$35. You get a unique decoration for your home or yard, while your contribution helps defray the cost of making new signs for our trails.

Phone Chris Conrod at 603-323-6686 for a list of available signs, or to place a special order.