

NORTHEASTERN CAVE CONSERVANCY, INC.

Minutes

March 20, 2011, 10:00 am Five Rivers, Delmar, NY

Meeting called to order at 10:06

1. Introduction and greetings – President Bob Addis
2. Attendance:
Officers: B. Addis, P. Youngbaer, B. Folsom, C. Hay
Trustees: M Chu, K. Dumont, T. Engel, A. Hicks (10:10-11:55), V. Kappler, B. Simmons, A. Traino, M. Warner, P. Woodell,
3. President's Report – Bob Addis- Attachment A
4. Vice President's Report –Peter Youngbaer – Attachment B
5. Treasurer's Report –Bill Folsom - Attachment C
6. Secretary's Report – Christa Hay
 - Status quo
 - Help setup bat counts with DEC
 - February EC meeting minutes – Attachment D
7. Science Committee – Larry Davis
8. Acquisitions Committee Report –Chuck Porter
9. Bylaws Committee Report – Joe Levinson
10. Publications/Publicity Committee Report - Christa Hay
 - Status quo
11. Fundraising Committee Report – Open
12. Office Committee Report – Emily Davis / Mike Warner
 - **Plans:** None
Progress: We sent out tax/progress letters to all members. I would like to discuss sending these out via email next year. The cost is becoming rather expensive as we get more members and donors. Also, passed the membership responsibilities on to Donna.
Problems: None.
13. Knox Cave Preserve Report –Emily Davis
 - **Progress:** Bat count completed. Count:354 Little Browns, 5 small footed. Update of management plan.
Problems: The cave merits a second person on the managerial staff.
Plans: Work with Amy on summer use. Mow trail as soon as weather permits
14. Onesquethaw Cave Preserve Report – Thom Engel
 - Limited visitation – too much snow for parking
15. Sellecks Karst Preserve Report – Alan Traino –Interim Position has been advertized with no response.
16. Clarksville Preserve Report – Mike Chu, Thom Engel, Chuck Porter
 - People have been going in all year, parking area now clear of snow
17. Benthleys Preserve Report - Jonah Spivak
18. Ella Armstrong Preserve – Alan Traino
 - County approved to install, Alan will set up a work day on a Saturday for
19. Education Committee Report – open
20. Membership Committee – Donna Stanley
21. Website Subcommittee Report – Mike Chu
22. Legal Committee Report – Open

23. Special and Group Use Coordinators –Amy Cox
24. Financial and Investments Committee – Joe Levinson
25. Volunteer Value Committee – Vince Kappler

Progress: VV totals for 2010: 1234 hours of work and 10949 miles driven to/from projects for a total value of \$42211.00.

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	10,949	\$42,211.00

VV totals to date for 2011: \$7334.00.

The web page to submit hours, http://www.necaveconservancy.org/add_vv.php is working very well and some members are using it regularly. I encourage all Officers, Committee Chairs and Property Managers to check it out.

The IRS has increased the standard business mileage allowance to \$.51 per mile. That is the amount I will use in calculating VV for 2011.

I can provide 2010 VV totals for any member that needs a record of his/her contribution to the NCC. NOTE: the mileage rate used to calculate VV is not the rate the IRS allows as a deduction to not for profit organizations. Contact your tax advisor for more information.

Plans: I will send periodic VV reminders to the membership, monitor data collection, and try to answer questions as they come up.

Problems: None at this time

26. Ad hoc Committee – Surprise Cave – Bob Simmons
 - The Proposed AANR application was sent back to the NYS DEC with our edits a few weeks back. I heard from Ted Kerpez at DEC yesterday afternoon and he apologized that the DEC had not yet had time to complete their review in time for our March Board meeting.
27. Ad hoc Committee- Tory's Cave – Bob Simmons
 - Advertizing for executive director in progress - things are on hold
28. Ad hoc Committee -Merlins Cave - Chuck Porter - see presidents report
29. Nominating Committee: Bob Simmons – interim
 - Candidates for Board Elections for 2011. Three Board seats are up for renewal this year. Two of the three incumbent Board members have confirmed that they will seek another term. I have further solicited several potential candidates whose names were provided to me and a few have indicated that they are seriously considering running for the Board. In order to be able to run an unbiased election and provided no one takes over the Nominating Committee duties in the near term, I will not be running for reelection to the Board this year.
 - Balloting Alternatives. In anticipation of the Board passing the revisions this meeting that will clear the way for alternative balloting procedures, both an online (web-site based) process and an email-based process are being evaluated as alternatives to, or replacements to our present paper/snail mail system. (thanks to Mike Chu and Norm Berg, respectively for developing these systems). I would like to test one or both of these systems this election cycle and/or provide one or both as an alternative to the members needing to send back the paper ballot. There are a number of issues we will need to address to implement this fully

including: a unique identifier for each member to eliminate the potential for multiple votes, and a cut off date for eligibility to vote (e.g. membership list as of a certain date).

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

2nd by Traino

Passed unanimously

- Carol Herzog – Bat specialist with DEC – Indiana bats are in abandoned mines. numbers are constantly reduced, rate of decline is not as steep as it was in the beginning. 5 original caves in this area are being monitored....still need to do Schoharie. 90% decline in little brown bats since WNS. WV, V same results as in the NE. One bright spot.....status of little brown bats in 4 of the 5 shows the decline has stabilized. Maybe not seeing the bottoming out of the decline but it is hopeful...northerns and pips – hard to tell since the numbers are small in this area. Same with small footed bats. Big Brown bats – winter numbers have declined –not as drastic as other species 40% lower. Summer data is showing abundant numbers...now the most common in NYS. Acoustic studies will start. Outside of NYS effort for this study has grown. Potential on the endangered species for NYS – VT, PA, MA adding new species to endangered list, little brown SEE BOBs notes, what does this mean for rec. caving? State will discuss with organization...the path is not obvious. Mainly no caving in winter...could become illegal.....?? Any level of disturbance not allowed in winter.... Caving in summer Each state will have to decide. There will be an official public comment time....but Carl would like to reach more recreational cavers. Asking the community to be self policing....
- Emily –Carl H asked for a one day rescue class for his staff.
- Fox Creek Farm – (Emily) has requested a karst walk at their farm on June 18th.
- Planned Giving – we should have Planned Giving brochure. We should advertise on the newsletter and the NCC brochure.

31. Youngbaer moved to close the Committee of the Whole.

2nd by Engel

Passed Unanimously

32. Addis moved the NCC donate \$250.00 to the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy for their 2011 Matching Challenge.

2nd by Chu

Against: Rest, Abstained: Dumont, Engel, Hay

Motion failed

33. Kappler moved: Bylaw V.6 is amended to read -

6. Elections. Trustees shall be elected by all eligible members in an election held before the second quarterly meeting. The Board shall establish procedures and timelines to conduct the election. *and Bylaw V.6.a is deleted.*

2nd by Simmons

For: Rest (6 members in audience) Abstained: Engel

Motion Passed

34. Kappler moved an election tie shall be broken at the meeting following the election by a written ballot of those current officers, continuing trustees, and newly elected trustees, excluding any trustee who is involved in the voting tie.

2nd by Traino

Passed unanimously

35. Youngbaer moved that the NCC provide a \$500 sponsorship to the 2011 National Cave and Karst Management Symposium to be held in Utah in October 2011.

2nd by Simmons

For: Rest Abstained: Warner

Passed

36. Hay moved Peter Youngbaer represent the NCC at the NCKMS

2nd by Traino

For: Rest Abstained: Youngbaer

Passed

37. Kappler moved a General Fund is created for the purpose of accounting for routine income and expense operations. Unless directed for a special purpose or temporarily-restricted fund, all income, including member's dues, donations, and fundraising proceeds shall be deposited to the General Fund. The Board may transfer funds from the General Fund to other accounts, as it deems necessary.

Act 10-13 Dues Allocation is rescinded.

2nd by Folsom

Passed unanimously

38. Folsom moved that Alan Traino be appointed Chairman of the Sellecks Preserve Committee>

2nd by Warner

For: Rest, Abstained Traino

Passed

39. Addis moved that the EC of the NCC be authorized to accept the donation of the Onesquithaw property, Albany County.

2nd by Engel

Passed Unanimously

40. Youngbaer moved Thom Engel be appointed Chairman of the Education Committee.

2nd by Simmons

For: Rest, Abstained: Engel

Passed

41. Hay moved to amend the act 21.41 Management Plan for Knox Cave preserve, as stated in the document

<http://speleobooks.com/knoxrev2.html> 3/20/2011.

2nd by Traino

Passed unanimously

42. Informational Point: Executive committee meeting will be held May 4th at 7pm in Cohoes.

43. Addis moved that the next NCC Board meeting will be held Sunday June 5th Emerald lake VT, Merlins, Surprise at 10:00a. One will be selected.

2nd by Simmons

Passed unanimously

44. Addis moved to thank DEC for the use of Five Rivers for the meeting.

2nd by Traino

Passed unanimously

45. Addis moved to adjourn.

2nd by Hay

For: Rest Against: Traino

Passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 1:34 pm

Attachment A
PRESIDENT'S REPORT
3/20/11

Note surprisingly it has been a quiet winter quarter. Probably our biggest news is the revised Purchase Contract for Merlins. After several discussions, emails, and public hearings the Sellers and the NCC Acquisitions Committee have hammered out what we believe to be is a win-win situation to complete the sale of the Merlins property. The details are very long and perhaps confusing, but the bottom line is:

1. A Vandenberg neighbor is purchasing 5 acres of the original sales parcel in the northeast corner as a buffer zone for him and the housing development there.
2. To maintain our agreed upon 35 acres and the same price, the NCC will gain a strip added onto the western property line. Chuck Porter who is more familiar with the land than I believes that we have the possibility of more karst by moving the line westward.
3. Because the NCC cooperated in #1 above, our parking area and a gate will be provided. We will be responsible for building the parking area and also a changing area; one wall of the changing area serving as the kiosk.
4. From a caver's perspective, the Tunnel Hill Road parking lot and trail is the best possible alternative. Although it is slightly longer (About 3,000 ft. - think how far one walks at either McFails or Sellecks), it is the easiest trail to the cave area – the least steep hills. From the Sellers' and the neighbors' points of view, it is the least visible and therefore the most acceptable.
5. The NCC has signed the Second Amendment to the Purchase Contract, as the above is called, and forwarded to the Sellers' for their signatures. Mike Belknap had minor surgery in February and is in the middle of rehabilitation in NY City so public meetings will now come on the screen to complete this transaction.
6. All parties have until June 30, 2011 to complete the sale. As once before, an extension of this date in writing is relatively easy if we need it.

Your President was asked to speak on the Caves of New York twice over the winter and turned over his honoraria to the NCC. January 19 it was the Cobleskill Historical Society (\$50) and February 21 the GE Global Research Center (\$200). One Power Point focused on the topic of caves in NYS and the second was the short presentation that the NCC used at the Town of Canaan's Planning Board meeting as an introduction to the NCC – its volunteers, committees, and Preserves along with a few photos of the newly-discovered Merlins Cave. He says that he is available for other speaking engagements!

The NCC set a letter to Joe Martens, the newly appointed Commissioner for NYS DEC, reminding him of our association when he was with the Open Space Institute.

Attachment B
Vice President's Report – March 20, 2011

Most of my time as VP has been spent working with the rest of the Executive Committee and Chuck Porter on the details of the Merlins acquisition. We've successfully negotiated a slight change to the borders of the property, to accommodate neighbors' concerns. This actually has resulted in better access, a better trail, and a parking area.

We've also reviewed the Stewardship agreement with the state of New York regarding Surprise Cave. During our discussions, we talked about the formal name of the cave, which has been referred to by several names over the years. We joked that once we have completed the legal documents we should make t-shirts that say "Surprise! – There's no more Mystery." The cave is still temporarily closed due to WNS.

I have filed the NCC's renewal form with the state of Vermont to keep our corporate status legal for the next two years.

We are still not ready to complete the Shingle Gulley map to present to The Nature Conservancy at Sam's Point. I did speak with Chris Goodman at the Fall NRO, but have not heard anything since. We need to get this done to present TNC a map, and doing so as part of a future meeting at Sam's Point would be good.

I have a motion on the agenda to increase our budget (revenue and expenses) by \$500 in order for the NCC to be a sponsor of this coming fall's National Caves and Karst Management Symposium. The last meeting of NCKMS took place here in Albany several years ago. This is a critical meeting of a group of Conservancies, state and federal agencies all involved in cave and karst management. It is very timely that it is located in the West (Utah), as cave managers out West are trying to figure out appropriate strategies for WNS. I am planning to attend as the NSS' WNS Liaison, and would be happy to represent the NCC, and even talk about our own management of WNS.

At the Executive Committee meeting, we had a discussion about creating an Annual Report for the NCC. Thom Engel had raised this issue last year, and I've agreed to take this on and create the first one. This could be used as a template for future years. Ideas we discussed including are: Basic description, President's statement, Mike Chu's Preserves map, volunteer list, donor list, and photos. Other ideas are welcome. If anyone would like to work on this, please let me know.

As usual, WNS continues to take up a lot of my time. Filing the NSS' formal comments on the USFWS draft national WNS plan, working with cavers and officials in numerous states, assisting on planning for the 2011 NSS Convention, and keeping up with WNS news and posting updates on the WNS website is a constant challenge. Closer to home, I had a face to face meeting with Vermont's Secretary of Natural Resources to consult about Vermont's pending listing of the Little brown bat and Northern long-eared bat, and what that might mean for the bats, caving, and private landowners. Finally, as an offshoot of a recent mammal symposium in Kentucky, several members of the Northeast Bat Working Group (NEBWG) are working on a letter to the USFWS suggesting changes to their caving advisory – especially a loosening of restrictions in WNS-saturated areas. The group includes Greg Turner, PA Game Commission, Carl Herzog, NYDEC, Craig Stihler, WVDNR, Barb Douglas, USFWS, and myself. In a nutshell, what is being discussed is essentially the approach the NCC took two years ago, after our meetings with USFWS' Jeremy Coleman and Robyn Niver. The idea is two-fold: first, scientifically, it makes no sense to restrict caving in saturated areas; second, by demonstrating to a national caving community that the restrictions are, in fact, temporary, it would help compliance with closures and decon protocols on the front lines of WNS, and underscore the need to keep WNS-area gear out of unaffected areas.

Peter Youngbaer
Vice President

Attachment C
Treasurer's Report

March 20, 2011

	<u>Mar 14, 11</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Checking	2,034.44
Money Market	97,512.24
NSF Account (12/31 balance)	<u>43,259.00</u>
Total Checking/Savings	<u>142,805.68</u>
 Total Current Assets	 142,805.68

As of March 14, the Merlins Cave Fund totaled \$92,636.17.

The paperwork to make the Bentleys Cave Preserve tax-exempt was filled out and accepted by the Tax Assessor of the Town of Berlin. \$97.70 was paid for the current tax year.

	<u>Jan 1 - Mar 14</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Donations		
Auction Donations	0.00	1,000.00
NRO Donations	0.00	0.00
Donations - Other	<u>1,725.00</u>	<u>3,350.00</u>
Total Donations	1,725.00	4,350.00
 Donations Restricted		
Merlin's Cave Fund	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Total Donations Restricted	0.00	0.00
 Interest Earned	62.27	180.00
Membership Income	<u>1,060.00</u>	<u>4,500.00</u>
Total Income	2,847.27	9,030.00
 Expense		
Acquisitions	0.00	500.00
Bank Charges	0.00	15.00
Development	0.00	1,200.00
Donations-outgoing	0.00	200.00
Education	0.00	100.00
Executive		
President	0.00	150.00
Secretary	0.00	75.00
Treasurer	0.00	75.00
VP	0.00	75.00
Executive - Other	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Total Executive	0.00	375.00
 Legal Fees	0.00	2,000.00
Licenses & Permits	0.00	250.00
Meeting Expense	0.00	100.00

Membership Expenses	0.00	100.00
Miscellaneous	0.00	100.00
Office Expense	0.00	100.00
Postage	66.00	200.00
Preserves-Maintenance		
Bentleys	0.00	100.00
Clarksville	0.00	300.00
Ella Armstrong	0.00	1,100.00
Knox	0.00	25.00
Merlins	0.00	500.00
Onesquethaw	0.00	25.00
Sellecks	0.00	100.00
Total Preserves-Maintenance	0.00	2,150.00
Printing	0.00	200.00
Promotion/Fundraising	0.00	780.00
Publishing		
Mailings	0.00	200.00
Website	0.00	60.00
Total Publishing	0.00	260.00
Sponsorships	0.00	100.00
Taxes on Properties	111.14	300.00
Total Expense	177.14	9,030.00
Net Ordinary Income	2,670.13	0.00
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
In Kind donations	0.00	0.00
Net Gain or Loss from NSF Fund	0.00	0.00
Volunteer Value	7,334.00	0.00
Total Other Income	7,334.00	0.00
Other Expense		
In Kind Out	0.00	0.00
Volunteer Value Exp	7,334.00	0.00
Total Other Expense	7,334.00	0.00
Net Other Income	0.00	0.00
Net Income	2,670.13	0.00
Net Gain or Loss from NSF Fund	0.00	
NET Income after NSF Fund Gain/Loss	2,670.13	

Attachment D

EC Meeting
02/06/2011
Kerhonkson, NY

Conference call: Bob, Bill, Peter, Christa, Chuck, Julie and Wayne, Bob Simmons (phone)

Merlins Cave: survey maps handed out, ZBA meeting the NCC did not attend. The current owner asked for extension to April meeting. There are changes to the purchase contract does the board need to approve? No, the board approved the EC to work on the purchase.

Next step to talk to Belknap and go to the Planning Board meeting March 21, 2011. Christine is checking over the last few changes and when she signs off we will be set.

Onesquethaw Cave – MHLC has voted to give the NCC the property. But Albany legislator came back and said though that if NCC is not doing our job by the property then MHLC can take the property back. Christine will work on the contract.

Surprise Cave: We received an agreement from DEC – we will be Stewards. There are a few questions that we need to ask (restricted visits per week, length of contract, amend without having to go thru the whole process again). *Bob Simmons to work with Thom Engel on producing a management plan and pass along to DEC- be proactive*

Surprise Cave: It's no Longer a Mystery T-shirt Idea!!

Bensons – Emily still working on getting it donated. Overnight camping would not be a deal breaker. We need to start thinking of management plan.

NCKMS – we were approached for \$500 donation. *Peter to do a motion for the next meeting. October 2011 in Utah. Make a motion as Peter to be the NCC representation for NCKMS.*

Bylaws – I have the final bylaw wording so that will be *sent out to the membership by email and also put on our website.*

Elections: Simmons would work on it this year but we should try to find another committee head. Bob S needs to talk to Mike Chu about the online voting.

General Committee heads – *need to advertize the openings!!*

Annual report – Peter *volunteered to create an annual report template*

Taxes: paid tax bills for Bentleys (\$97) and also for Gregory (\$13) entrance at Clarksville.