

THE ALPINE STEWARD

Newsletter of the Guy Waterman Alpine Stewardship Fund

December, 2004

www.watermanfund.org

Fund Helps Support Stewardship Gathering

The Northeast Alpine Zone consists of roughly 13 square miles or 8,320 acres. (One square mile is equal to 640 acres.) New Hampshire is home to about seven of those square miles; Maine has six square miles. New York and Vermont each have about 100 and 300 acres of alpine areas respectively. So, how big (or little) is 13 square miles? Lake Winnepesaukee covers 78 square miles. Martha's Vineyard is about 100 square miles. Protecting 13 square miles should be a piece of cake, right? Think again!

High above on our alpine summits, and unbeknownst to most of us, alpine researchers are quietly observing butterflies and birds, studying the flora and fauna, and analyzing hikers' impact on the trails. Down below, park managers are working with trail stewards to help educate the hikers. And out and about are our land managers, who are constantly balancing the use and spread of technology (cell towers and wind power) and recreational activities (ski resorts) with public interest within our wilderness and national forest areas.

On June 18 and 19, 2004, these very alpine researchers, park managers, and land managers from around New England met for the Northeastern Alpine Stewardship Gathering. The mission of the bi-annual Gathering is to share and exchange knowledge, science, experience, and management on the Northeast's alpine ecosystem. The conference, co-sponsored by the Waterman Fund, was held at the Appalachian Mountain Club's Highland Center in Crawford Notch.

Representatives from the Green Mountain Club, the White Mountain National Forest (WMNF), Baxter State Park, the Adirondack Mountain Club and the Parc de la Gaspésie reported on challenges

and lessons in managing alpine areas. Members of the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC), Appalachian Trail Conference (ATC), Audubon Society of New Hampshire, and the Vermont Institute of Natural Science presented their perceptions of the status of the northeastern alpine flora and fauna. And, finally, speakers from the University of Vermont, the US Forest Service, NESCAUM, AMC, ATC, WMNF, and Green Mountain National Forest presented attendees with the external challenges facing our alpine areas. Dr. William Malm, guest speaker from the National Park Service, delivered a detailed but comprehensible talk on visual air quality, describing how pollutants, both organic and chemical, impact our view from the top of that 4,000-footer you just climbed. (That haze on a hot day? It's not humidity; it's pollution.)



From the Summit of Moosilauke

The Fund would like to thank those attendees who participated in the Waterman Fund's mission session held at the end of the day. Your comments were valuable, and we greatly appreciate your time. We'd also like to thank our co-sponsors: specifically, Walter Graff at the AMC, Tom Wagner with the White Mountain National Forest, and the Appalachian Trail Conference for helping coordinate this event.

— Sue Painter

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Ketchledge Wins 2004 Alpine Steward Award

Over 50 supporters shared an evening of good food and fellowship at this year's annual dinner, held at the Mist Grill in Waterbury, Vermont. In addition to presenting the latest news on the Fund's activities, Chuck Wooster and Laura Waterman presented Dr. Edwin "Ketch" Ketchledge with the annual Alpine Steward Award.

In over four decades of work with the State University of New York, Ketch has been instrumental in advancing our ecological understanding of the alpine plant communities in the Adirondacks. In the 1960's and 1970's he pioneered efforts to repair damaged plant communities in the High Peaks and was a prime mover behind the Adirondack Summit Stewardship Program. Ketch has been a huge influence on his many students, summit stewards and on alpine rehabilitation efforts throughout the northeast.



Edwin Ketchledge receives the 2004 award from Laura Waterman and Chuck Wooster

In presenting him with the award, Laura Waterman noted, "Ketch had applied his scientific knowledge in practical ways that bridge science and solutions. Perhaps even more important, he has infused countless students and the public at large with the spirit of stewardship that springs from his own passionate commitment to alpine habitat."

Ketch received a large, framed photograph taken on Algonquin Peak in the Adirondacks by noted mountain photographer Peter Cole.

In addition to honoring the work of Ed Ketchledge, the annual dinner was a great chance for new and old friends to catch up on news and show their support for the fund. Stay tuned for details on the 2005 dinner!

To nominate for next year's award, go to www.watermanfund.org!

Waterman Fund Web Site Update

The Waterman Fund web site, at www.watermanfund.org, has two purposes. First and foremost, it is the official online source for information about the Fund, including downloadable grant applications, a history of funded projects and corresponding evaluations, alpine steward award winners and nomination criteria, fund news and upcoming events and—lest we forget—the details for anyone who would like to support the Fund.

Increasingly, however, the Fund's web site has been serving a second purpose: as a regional clearinghouse for New England alpine stewardship information. Our Alpine Resources Area has grown steadily, and now includes information or links to articles, stories, programs and

conferences around the region. We've just added ADK's alpine steward report for this past summer, Dartmouth Outing Club's fine new alpine steward guide, Presidential Range and Mount Katadhin alpine mapping from AMC's research department, and an article by New England outdoors columnist Marty Basch on the growing interest in alpine stewardship. We're pleased that the Fund site can play this role, sharing and disseminating ideas among our many partners.

We hope you can drop by sometime, and visit our site. If you have an article or other resource you'd like to share, do let us know! You can e mail us via the "contact us" link on the web site.

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Taking Stock: Evaluating the Fund's Work to Date

By Carl Demrow and Doug Mayer

Last summer the Waterman Fund board of directors held a series of brainstorming sessions with key Fund partners and advisors, including representatives from nearly a dozen agencies and non-profits. The results will help focus our efforts on the greatest needs in New England alpine areas.

In taking stock of the effectiveness of our work to date, there are at least two primary ways to evaluate our success. First, one can look at our work quantitatively. An alpine steward that educates only a handful of hikers, or an interpretive display that is rarely seen will, of course, be less than fully effective. Here's a quick look at Fund-supported projects, by the numbers:

- In our four years of grants, the Fund has disbursed \$13,293 to eight organizations.
- That funding, in turn, was matched by \$28,945: that is, our support has leveraged over two dollars for each dollar of ours committed.
- In addition, those eight organizations contributed over 500 hours of volunteer labor to their Waterman Fund projects.
- In 2003, the Alpine Steward on Mount Moosilauke...
 - talked with 2,676 hikers;
 - built or rebuilt a number of scree walls and several dozen cairns;
 - created an impressive manual for future stewards;
 - hiked 355 miles.
- 3,000 day hikers and overnight guests have seen the alpine display at the Randolph Mountain Club's Crag Camp, since being installed just last year.
- Over 200 professional and volunteer alpine managers attended two New England Alpine Conferences supported by the fund.
- 11 groups were visited by the Green Mountain Club Outreach Program and had a chance to see their excellent alpine presentation— before they ventured onto the trails.

- The alpine photomonitoring project the Fund has supported in the Adirondacks has helped alpine managers to create a permanent photographic record to determine how alpine areas are recovering, or being impacted, over time.

- 500 copies of *Wilderness Ethics* and *Backwoods Ethics* were distributed to backcountry facilities, and to seasonal employees at mountain clubs and agencies.

Numbers, though, tell just one facet of the story. Perhaps more compelling is the insight gained by hearing of the personal impact of the fund's work on an individual hiker, an organized group, or a seasonal backcountry worker.

In the Adirondacks, the Waterman Fund provided financial support to enable ADK to undertake an important alpine photomonitoring effort. Chief Summit Steward Matt Diskin wrote,

“The photopoint monitoring project has been remarkably successful in linking the past with the present in the Adirondack Mountains. The most recent photographs connect the tremendous restoration work that was done in the past by Edwin Ketchledge to the current conditions on the alpine summits. The sequence of photographs are also a powerful educational tool that give hikers a sense of ownership in our alpine stewardship mission.”

Christine Evans, an alpine steward at Maine's Baxter State Park this past summer, read a copy of the Watermans' *Wilderness Ethics* while stationed at Chimney Pond. The book was one of a number donated to the Park, as part of a New England-wide effort to place copies of *Backwoods Ethics* and *Wilderness Ethics* in the hands of seasonal employees. Christine recently wrote the Fund,

“I could write all evening about my experiences at Baxter and the comfort that the Watermans' books provided while working there. *Wilderness Ethics* filled in the complexities of the arguments that I was responsible to uphold on a daily basis. And while the ethics were helpful, the companionship was a godsend. Hiking Katahdin and quietly asking

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Taking Stock (cont.)

new parties not to sit on the diapensia and encountering dozens of cellphones on the peak every day, the job often seemed like a never ending battle, fruitless and futile. It was nice to know that others were seriously considering the issues. The placement of *Wilderness Ethics* at Chimney Pond allowed me to feel part of a community, no matter how small or distant, and gave me a bit of reassurance in the value of my job.”

Vermont’s Green Mountain Club has received two grants from the Waterman Fund, both aimed to reach and educate groups before they set foot in alpine areas. Brian Aust, Group Outreach Coordinator, shared with us the impact of the Fund’s support:

“I have seen Canadian outing clubs that used to consist of more than thirty participants now operate in groups of ten at one half hour intervals, never congregating on Mansfield’s Chin or Camel’s Hump summit all at once. I

have worked with Harvard University and the Putney School to install drainage and stairs, revegetate the impacts of trail work, then show them which plant and lichen species can be transplanted. Working on the summit as a steward, I have seen souls aged 3 -73 learn things about the natural world that they’d never even thought of.”

These comments are the greatest testament to the value of our work. Better than any collection of numbers, they point to the success the Fund has had at educating alpine visitors, and enlisting their support in caring for our fragile mountain landscapes. Such individual moments are not so easily quantified, but they point powerfully to the success of the Fund in creating an ethic of thoughtful stewardship for our high peaks.

Grant proposals and evaluations of funded projects are available for further reading at the Waterman Fund web site, at watermanfund.org.

Greetings from the GWASF Board of Directors



A sunny day at Page Hollow. Left to right: Carl, Rebecca, Kevin Peterson, Laura, Chuck, Doug, and Louis. Missing: Sue Painter

To quote our official charter, “The Guy Waterman Alpine Stewardship Fund is a donor-advised component fund of the Upper Valley Community Foundation. UVCF facilitates charitable giving, helps build charitable assets, and supports nonprofit organizations in sixty-one Upper Valley communities. A regional office of the New Hampshire Charitable

Foundation and the Vermont Community Foundation, UVCF helps donors maximize the impact of their giving.” The UVCF, under Kevin Peterson’s able leadership, has provided an indispensable service by managing GWASF’s growing endowment.

The Waterman Fund operates under its own bylaws, which assign the authority to raise and disburse funds to a self-perpetuating volunteer board of directors. Presently, we are Chuck Wooster (President), Carl Demrow (Vice-President and Treasurer), Laura Waterman (Secretary), Louis Cornell (Clerk), Doug Mayer, Rebecca Oreskes, and Sue Painter. We usually meet quarterly at Laura’s log house, Page Hollow, in East Corinth, Vermont, a place filled with memories of the Watermans’ years at Barra and on the heights. Meetings range from the sober to the hilarious, but somehow a good deal of work manages to get done.

In addition, we’re fortunate indeed to have the help of an active group of advisors: Peter Forbes, Gary and Nancy Hirshberg, Mary Margaret Sloan, and Fred Stott.

To donate, please make your check out to Guy Waterman Alpine Stewardship Fund and mail it to Upper Valley Community Foundation, Box 995, Hanover NH 03755.

THANKS TO OUR 03/04 DONORS!

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Some Special Thank-Yous from Page Hollow ...

We here at Headquarters want to send a most heartfelt thanks to the following folks who have found, we think, such interesting and innovative ways to support the Waterman Fund—

Carolyn McHale for her generous help on our new brochure. Carolyn is a climber from the Washington, DC, area who crossed paths with the Fund at a talk Laura gave for **She Climbs** in North Conway. Carolyn has her own graphic and web site design company, **Boldface Design**, and offered to redesign our brochure. We were delighted and couldn't be happier with what Carolyn did for us. So, if you haven't seen it, check it out.

Our new brochure should be in most climbing and backpacking stores in the area: if you don't see it, ask!

Friends of the Fund who raised over \$1,000 by growing older

Waterman Fund board members Sue Painter, Doug Mayer, and Carl Demrow and pal Lisa Troy turned forty this fall. Rather than greeting this morose milestone with the usual Geritol and Grecian Formula jokes, they decided to use their misfortune to benefit the Fund.

On October 2, they threw a birthday party for

themselves in Randolph, NH, in a beautiful field with a commanding view of the



Fred Stott (far right) reads a poem to (from left) Sue Painter, Doug Mayer, Carl Demrow, and Lisa Troy on the occasion of their 40th birthdays.

Northern Presidentials, and asked close friends and relatives to make a donation to the Fund rather than bringing them presents, ie more stuff. To date, over \$1,000 has flowed to headquarters as a condolence to their birthdays. Congratulations to all four on their fifth decades, and finding a creative way to raise money for the Fund!