

I. Summer Numbers

Here are the season totals. These numbers were collected between 12:00pm and 3:00pm Wednesday-Friday, and 9:00am and 4:00pm on Saturdays and Sundays. Numbers were collected from June 28, 2003 to August 22, 2003. Full season data (daily numbers) are included in an attachment to this report.

Full Season Totals

Hikers Encountered:

Groups of <5	701
Groups of 5-10	86
Group of >10	34
Number of Dogs	191
Total Visitors Encountered	2676

Starting Trails

Gorge Brook	1325
Glencliff	412
Ridge	103
Beaver Brook	473
Snapper	149
Carriage	32
Benton	168
Other	22 (21 slide)

Day Hikers vs. Overnight

Day Hikers	2350
Overnight: Less than 10 days	98
Overnight: More than 10 days	215

Miles hiked by AS 355.7

Notes:

- Overall usage was probably a little less than average this summer due to long periods of rain.
- The number of "thru-hikers" (Overnight: More than 10 days) is under representative of true numbers due to the Alpine Steward's weekday hours. Northbound through hikers tend to stay in a hostel in Glencliff and tend to arrive at and leave the summit before 12pm.

II. Group Contacts

Contact information was collected from all organized summer camp groups who arrived at the summit. Camps are listed in order of usage.

Camp Walt Whitman

Winter:

PO Box 938

Bedford, NY 10506

914.234.5484

800.657.8282

Summer:

1000 Cape Moonshine Rd
Piermont, NH 03779
603.764.5521

Camp Pemigewasset

Winter Contact:

Robert L. Grabill
Director
25 Rayton Road
Hanover, NH 03755
Phone: 603-643-8055
Fax: 603-643-9601

Summer Contact:

Robert L. Grabill
Director
Route 25A
Wentworth, NH 03282
Phone: 603-764-5833
Fax: 603-764-9601

Camp Moosilauke

Winter Address:

P.O. Box E
Orford, NH 03777
Toll Free: 800-353-4546
Fax: 603-353-9103

Summer Address:

Upper Baker Pond
Orford, NH 03777
Phone: 800-353-4546
Fax: 603-353-9103

Camp Kingswood

Winter:

301-656-8406
7101 Clarden Road
Bethesda, MD 20814

Summer:

949 Route 25 C
Piermont, NH 03779
603-989-5556
info@kindswoodcamp.com

Camp Walden

Wendy S. Cohen

Winter Address

P.O. Box 3427

Charlottesville, VA 22903

Phone: 434-293-3730

Fax: 434-293-8802

Summer Address

93 Walden Drive

Denmark, ME 04022

Phone: 207-452-2901

Fax: 207-452-2902

WendyCohen@aol.com

Camp Pasquaney

Winter Address:

5 South State Street

Concord, NH 03301

Phone: (603) 225-4065

Summer Address:

19 Pasquaney Lane

Hebron, NH 03241

Phone: (603) 744-8043

Covenant Hills Christian Camp

RD 2, Box 2945, Cabot, VT 05647

Winter (518) 546-3375

Summer (802) 426-3340

III. Projects Planned and Completed in the Alpine Zone

Planned Projects:

- Construction and maintenance of scree walls and barriers in the immediate summit and foundation area.
- Construction of scree walls on sections of Carriage Road without walls from summit to treeline.
- Construction of scree walls and cairns on the East and South Peaks to begin recovery of those areas.
- Removal of inappropriate cairns across the alpine zone.

Completed Projects:

- Construction and maintenance of several scree walls in the immediate summit area.

Most notably:

One large wall on the western side of the main foundation – needs very frequent maintenance

Reconstruction of the northernmost foundation to protect a patch of Bigelow Sedge.

Construction of small scree walls to protect the NE corner of the summit area.

- Construction of scree walls and rebuilding of cairns on the East Peak to protect the alpine vegetation in that area.
- Construction of several small scree walls on the Carriage Road. Several more still need to be constructed, especially in the immediate vicinity of treeline.
- Removal of some inappropriate cairns. A few more still need to be removed, but access to them is difficult to do without stepping on alpine vegetation. If I'm on top this winter I'll take care of them.

IV. Project Recommendations for next year

I have three large project recommendations for next year. The first requires some thought, and can be done during spare time on the summit. The second requires a fair amount of labor, and would be a good project to work with volunteers on. The third is less urgent and possibly smaller than the other two.

- Construction of scree walls and other barriers to protect the East side of the summit (especially the SE corner). This is one of the hardest areas of the summit to protect, especially on nice days with a west wind (often the busiest days). There are several boulders and rocky areas where it is appropriate for people to sit, but they are intermixed with areas of vegetation that people often stepped on passing to and from the appropriate spots. I never really came up with a good solution to this one.
- Construction of scree walls on the South Peak. This peak has a sizeable alpine area, but nothing delineating where we want people to congregate. It gets much less use than the main peak, but is popular with solitude seekers and tired camp groups coming up the Glenclyff and Snapper/Carriage trails. The vegetation also has a different character (more heath and less meadow), that makes it less obvious where to step and where not to step. Here's what the area needs.
 - A sizeable, clearly marked summit "sacrifice zone," where we want people to walk and sit and surrounded by obvious but unobtrusive barriers (small scree walls). This needs to include the actual summit and enough space for people to see the views down into slide brook ravine. If people think that they can get better views by going a bit farther out onto the vegetation, they will. It will take a lot of effort manpower to get enough rocks for the scree walls.
 - A "fragile alpine plants" sign.
 - Screeing in (with scrub) of a couple of herd paths around the scrubby part of the summit.
- Construction of scree walls along the Carriage Road near treeline, and improvement of scree walls on the Benton trail where it levels off about 100 yards above treeline (people like to walk off at high points).
- There is also an unpainted "alpine revegetation area" sign in the Lodge shop.

V. Ideas for refining the position

I want to stress my belief that things worked very well this year

I have two basic ideas for improvement of the position. First, the main hiking season is barely over by the third or fourth week in August when this job ends. Conversations

with AMC, USFS and GMC personnel indicate that September weekends are the busiest times on regional summits, and that until public schools start (possibly as much as 2 weeks after my job finished this summer), summits are quite busy on weekdays as well. I would recommend extension of the Alpine Steward Position at least until September 10th, and possibly longer. Another possibility would be to extend the position through Labor Day, and find volunteers for the weekends in September.

The second area of the position that could use some refinement is the hours that the Alpine Steward spends on the summit. It is hard to reconcile the different responsibilities of the Alpine Steward – protection of the alpine flora, statistics, and assisting the volunteer trails coordinator – when it comes to deciding hours.

The need to collect statistics requires the Alpine Steward to be on the summit consistent hours (this summer it was 12:00pm-3:00pm weekdays, 9:00am-4:00pm weekends), 5 days a week. However, the need to protect the alpine flora requires the Alpine Steward to be on the summit at the busiest times, which are largely determined by the weather. Finally, spending some time helping the Volunteer Trails Coordinator with trailwork (weekday mornings this summer) both increases the amount of trailwork that can be done, and helps prevent burnout of both the Alpine Steward and the VTC.

I'm not quite sure what to do here. If statistics were taken out of the picture, then I would recommend that the Alpine Steward be on the summit from 9:00-4:00 every weekend day, and from 11:30 to 3:00 on most weekdays. On weekdays when it is predicted to steadily rain, the summit temperature is below 55° F, and there is some wind (10 mph or greater) at the summit, it isn't worth it to have the Alpine Steward at the summit. On those days (there were about 5 this summer), usually less than 10 people arrive at the summit, those people don't stop for long, and don't trod on the vegetation, and educational opportunities are compromised by the weather. The Alpine Steward's time is better spent helping the VTC with trailwork, assuming the VTC can be coaxed outside.

However, if a strong emphasis is placed on the collection of statistics, it may be found more advisable to have the Alpine Steward on the summit every day. If this is the case, I would still recommend that he/she arrives at the summit at 11:30am on weekdays, as the large rush of people usually begins at about 11:45. Finally, on exceptionally nice days, large numbers of people still arrive after the set summit hours. I usually stayed later at the summit on these days.

VI. Recommendations for trailwork, outreach, and rules or regulations.

For trailwork recommendations, see section four.

Outreach – We need to do some outreach to local camp groups. Camp groups were by far the most damaging category of hiker this summer, especially in the beginning of the summer. There was also an extremely wide range of camp groups in terms of preparedness, size, experience, and knowledge of the alpine zone. However, there was a marked improvement through the summer as I talked to more and more counselors.

I would recommend mailing a packet to all camps in the spring, covering the alpine zone, our expectations, and possibly other LNT stuff. I would be willing to put this together. In addition, I'd recommend an educational visit to Camp Walt Whitman during their counselor training to give a little presentation on all aspects of Moosilauke, especially the alpine zone. Whitman brings the most kids up Moosilauke, and has

different leaders for many of its trips; therefore a talk at the beginning of the summer with one counselor won't influence the other counselors' actions.

Rules and Regulations –

I don't have much to recommend here. The summit of Moosilauke absorbs people well, and can handle groups of 30 or less quite easily, provided that group members are educated about the alpine zone. I did not see any groups larger than 50 (and very few over 30), but groups larger than 50 would put significant strain on the summit. I don't think that Moosilauke really needs group size restrictions for day hikers, provided that there is someone to educate them.

VII. Training Suggestions

The Green Mountain Club's training program worked quite well, and I would recommend that again for next year. However, I would suggest that 2-3 days should be spent on the summit before the GMC training, and that, if possible, a previous Alpine Steward should spend the first day on the summit with the trainee. (I would love to do this). I've also written up a little supplement to the GMC's training to help get the Alpine Steward on his/her feet quicker, and attached it with this report.