

# The Connecticut Section Of The Green Mountain Club

## The Trail Talk

April 2011



### President's Message May 2011

There are a couple of items that I would like to address with the leaders and participants. The first item is carpooling: please carpool whenever possible. Cutting our dependency on foreign fuel and protecting the environment are everyone's responsibility. Every vehicle we get off the highway counts.

The next item is membership. I would like to increase our membership and need everyone's help. The officers of the Connecticut Section of the Green Mountain Club have made a decision to pay you \$5.00 for enrolling a new member. Each existing member can earn up to \$20.00 off of their renewal during the year 2011. I have extra newsletters and applications for anyone who needs them. You will need to e-mail or call me with the name or names of prospective new members. Once the main club sends us the acknowledgement of the new member, you will be given credit. Members who bring in new members will receive a check and recognition at the Annual Dinner.

We are not looking to inflate our membership numbers. We are looking for people who want to be involved. Do you know someone? If so, sign them up!!!!

Let's get out and enjoy the outdoors – we have another great schedule of activities for you to take part in.

Think Sun and Have Fun!!

*Carol A. Langley*  
President



### Another Set of Eyes

Throughout the year, many of you members of the GMC Connecticut Section head up to the Long Trail on your own, with other GMC'ers, or with other groups. I wish I could go up there more often than I do.

As Trails Chair, I'd like to ask each of you to act as my 'eyes on the ground' when you're on our section of the Long Trail. Please take the time to observe the status of the trail, shelters and privies. I'd like feedback on blowdowns, condition of blazes, brushing needs, drainage problems, broom and logbook replacement needs, building conditions, etc. This information will help me schedule trail maintenance trips. Thanks.

*Dick Hart, Vice President, Trails & Shelters*



### Talcott Mountain October 31, 2010

The annual foliage hike up Talcott Mountain to the Heublein Tower has seen a variety of weather conditions through the years. Today there was much sun, a promise for good views from atop the tower. Our leader, Jim Robertson, needed to be elsewhere this day and so passed the leadership

## The Trail Talk

### Club Information

<http://www.conngmc.com>

#### Officers & Executive Committee

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The Trail Talk is published four times a year in January, April, July and October. Activity schedules are included in each issue. Reports of activities and articles must be sent to the editor no later than the tenth day of the month of the publication. Send articles to:

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Wallingford, CT 06492

### Membership

When filling out the form to join or renew, circle the Connecticut Section on the application to receive, at no extra charge, the Connecticut Section's newsletter and activity schedule.

#### Dues:

Individual Adult \$ 40.00

Family \$ 50.00

Senior (70 or older) or Limited Income \$ 22.00

Nonprofit or Youth Group \$ 50.00

Business or Corporation \$150.00

Send annual dues to:

The Green Mountain Club

4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road

Waterbury Center, VT 05677-9904

(802) 244-7037, <http://www.greenmountainclub.org>

### Connecticut Section Of The GMC

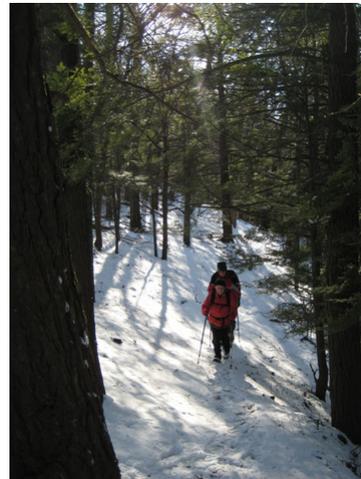
Post & Receive Messages, Photos, Other Activities

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ct\\_green\\_mountain\\_club/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ct_green_mountain_club/)

torch to another. However, it had been a few years since she had hiked here and was uncertain of the usual route up to the tower. Rich, Bill and I reached back into our memories and pieced together the twists and turns of the trail. With Tom's faithful pup, Buckeye, in the lead, we made our way with success.

As usual, it was blustery at the top. After a climb to the top of Heublein Tower for the 360-degree view we had lunch at the pavilion. A quick break it was as we were anxious to get back into the woods where we were sheltered from the wind. We set off with Tanya and Natasha taking turns holding Buckeye's leash. At the junction with the Metacomet Trail we weighed the option of following it along the reservoir to lengthen our five mile hike or to just head back to our cars. It was decided that we had had enough for the day. The walk around the reservoir will have to wait until next year's trek. It had been a fine woodland walk to close another foliage season.

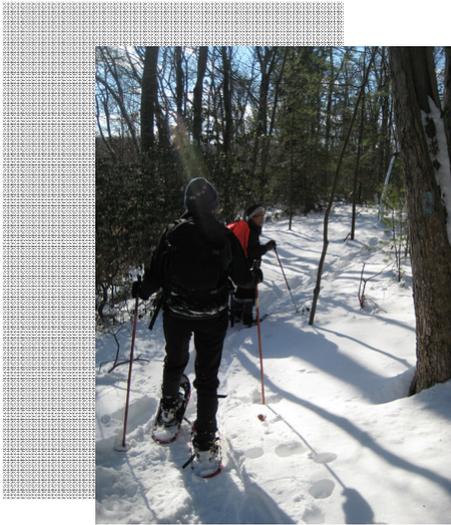
*Hikers: Richard and Leslie Chandler, daughters Tanya and Natasha, Bill Falconer, Sarah O'Hare, Tom Marston and Buckeye*



*Metacomet Trail  
January 9, 2011*



## The Trail Talk



*January 16, 2011  
Tunxis Trail*



### **Great Bear Cabin and North Kinsman Mt. February 11-13, 2011**

Mandy Brink, Grace King, Allen Freeman and Dick Hart headed up north to enjoy another round of winter in the woods. Mandy picked up Grace, and Dick picked up Allen. We all met at the cabin.

Like the John Rand Cabin, which we've stayed at for the past two years, Great Bear Cabin is owned by Dartmouth University. It is a good, sturdy place – roomy, well insulated and a very enjoyable place. There are four bunks downstairs and a loft with a sleeping platform for four to five additional people. Each has a four-inch mattress for cushy sleeping. There is a porch that wraps around three sides of the cabin and has a three-person-wide wooden swing on its west-facing side. Mandy declared the cabin to be adorable.

The promotional material from the Dartmouth Outdoor Club says cut firewood is provided, but it's not split. An ax is provided for that purpose. Surprisingly, the wood had been split - a nice

benefit! Once we got the stove going, it cranked out lots of BTU's. The loft was almost too hot for sleeping.

The outhouse, dedicated to Lloyd Iverson, is extremely unique! It is a two-holer and has facing seats, each topped with legless wooden armchairs. The 'piece de resistance', however, is a fold-down chessboard to keep both occupants entertained while using the facilities. To really appreciate Iverson's house (or is it Iverson's house? I have a problem with apostrophes), you have to look at the pictures on our web site.

Dinners consisted of stew and shepard's pie. Wholesome, hale and hearty. Breakfast for Saturday was to be bacon and eggs. However, the author forgot the eggs. So it was Mandy to the rescue - never fear if she is here. She whipped up some bacon and cheddar sandwiches on Italian bread that were filling and tasty.

Friday night, we played Outdoor Trivia (with the requisite arguing about the accuracy of the official answers) and talked about Allen's through hike of the Appalachian Trail. Saturday night, we just crashed after being on the trail all day.



Saturday's plan was to hike to North Kinsman Mountain (4,923 feet) from the west via Mount Kinsman Trail, but it wasn't to be. This trail is not a heavily used one. It wasn't broken out at all above the side trail to Bald Peak. Given that there was a few feet of snow on the ground, we decided

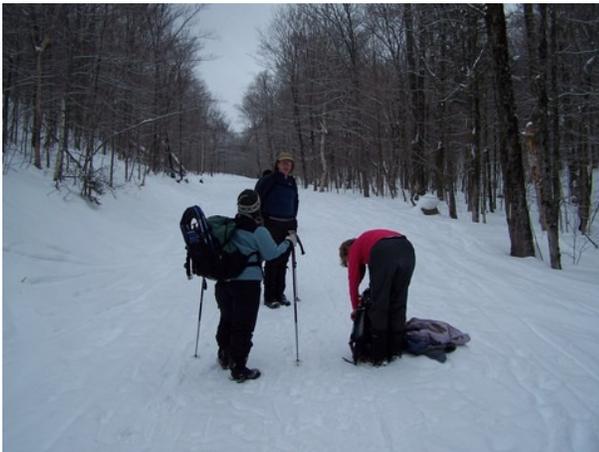
## The Trail Talk

to turn around once the slope got steep and the time got late. There was a large sugar house on the side of the trail waiting for the maple sap to start running.

We made our typical visit to see Steve Smith, a friend who owns Mountain Wilderness Map and Bookstore in Lincoln, New Hampshire. Whether it's hike suggestions or last minute trail condition updates, he's got it all. It was he that had forewarned us of the moose carcass on the trail to Owl's Head back in 2009. I've never seen an industry-specific bookstore like this any place else.

Certainly there was no 'snowmagedon' on this trip, but we did get two to three inches of nice powder Saturday night. This made for a scenic hike back to the cars Sunday morning.

*Hikers: Mandy Brink, Grace King, Allen Freeman*  
*Leader: Dick Hart*



*January 28—29, 2011*  
*Mount Mansfield*



**Menunkatuck Trail**  
**February 20, 2011**

Connecticut's newest blue-blazed trail, the Menunkatuck Trail, is a continuation of the New England Scenic Trail. It begins at a junction with the Mattabesett Trail, 1.2 miles east of Route 77 in

Guilford. For eleven miles it gently meanders south through the woods, across Route 80, through the Timberland Trail system, then terminates at the parking area of Guilford's bulky waste site. At this southern trailhead is where we began.

Uncertain of how the snowpack would treat us, we all came prepared with snowshoes and microspikes. We found that on this chilly morning, we needed neither. To prepare for any footing situation change as the sun rose higher and warmed the day, we packed our boot traction devices and lashed our snowshoes to our packs. If we didn't need them, we agreed, the extra weight would be considered strength training for the upcoming backpacking season.

The initial 0.9 mile is flagged rather than blazed. At this time the town has yet to give its final approval, so it is not quite considered official. Deer tracks and game trails made a latticework of the snow covered ground. Often times the leader followed these trails although never far from the flagged path. A white-flagged trail intersected our trail at one point. This is to be a future bridle path.

Once immersed in the splendor of the wintry woods, a dog appeared. She followed us for a bit but at a brook crossing she shied from the slippery rocks and gave up her opportunity for our companionship and attention. After this first 0.9 mile, the newly painted blazes appeared. The deer tracks were everywhere, and many places showed where the deer had turned up the snow and ice to forage for acorns and woody twigs. It must have been a particularly difficult winter for them. There was hope that we would see one, as many were spotted on a pre-hike.

Once crossing into the Timberland area, we were on the lookout for our lunch destination. A perfect placement of rocks overlooking Iron Stream was the spot for our noontime rest. Not too long a rest, however, for it wasn't long before we became chilled through. The blue-blazed trail wound through Timberland, sharing the green, red and white trails, where it brought us out onto Route 80 and to our waiting cars.

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With much interest in this trail, we are all looking forward to exploring the northern 5.5 miles in the spring. Its true character should reveal itself once the snow is a distant memory and the woods spring back to life. Many thanks to Paul Mei from CFPA for his time and effort in ensuring the initial mile was well flagged for our hike.



*Hikers: George Jackson, Kevin Vann, Don Hagstrom, Jim Fritz*  
*Leader: Sarah O'Hare*



### **Appalachian Trail Harriman Park, NY March 18-20, 2011**

Dan slept late, and we all got a late start. We arrived at the Bear Mountain Inn (undergoing extensive remodeling), called a taxi, and were on the trail at Arden Valley Road (Route 17) before noon. Perfect! Just in time for lunch.

The trail was completely free of ice and snow despite the big snowfall this past winter, except for the Lemon Squeezer where footing was treacherous at best. This portion of the trail lived up to its name, and we should plan on a daiquiri mix the next time through. Break time at 2:40 to fill up water bottles.

Birds do it. Bees do it. Let's just say that the

Fingerboard Shelter was being used to capacity when we arrived. Set up tent a little 'way down the trail.

Saturday morning, we woke to temperatures in the 30's, but after two cups of coffee, we were on the trail by 8 am. Several sloppy stream crossings because the bridges were washed out. Ugh. There was a Mob Scene at the Brien S. Shelter at lunch time. It seems as if several hiking clubs, foreign delegations, smaller ensembles of backpackers (some lost, some confused, some merely disoriented), day hikers, dogs, assorted hangers-on, and a guy carrying cross-country skis, all converged here at the same time. Yup. Time to move on. We camped atop West Mountain with beautiful views of a sunset, the Hudson River, and the New York City skyline.

Full moon was so bright that there was no need for a headlamp when it was time to empty the ol' water bottle at midnight. Woke Sunday morning to temperatures in the 20's. This took three cups of coffee to jump-start the day. I can see Bear Mountain through the trees.

By 9:30, it is much warmer: time for shorts and a tee-shirt. At 11 am the trail and map are not in agreement. Initially this is annoying, but a major relocation has taken place: the most amazing set of cut-stone stairs leads to the summit. I mean amazing. It goes on forever. With spirals around and across, and over, and up, and up. It was like something left over from an ancient civilization. Unbelievable. Ya' gotta' go see it for yourself.

The summit of Bear Mountain is the usual collection of parking lots, Porta-Potties, and bear-proof garbage containers. The buildings are still closed for the winter. There are nice views, but it is starting to get crowded again. There are more stone stairs on the way down, but these are of a completely different character: these stairs are six feet wide to accommodate the traffic going up and down. The "trail" is leveled out and filled with crushed stone. It's more like a trail museum than a trail; and, yet, look at all those who are given the opportunity to partake who otherwise would not have been able. This probably is a section to best visit in the off-season.

## The Trail Talk

Leader and biker: Dan Zelterman



*March 26, 2011*  
**Connecticut Section GMC**  
**Annual Dinner**



**Brooksvale Park**  
**Hamden, Connecticut**  
**April 2, 2011**

On this lovely spring day, two old coots took off into the woods with the hopes of an easy day. Sometimes the mind plays tricks on us, and things just don't look the same as they did the last time. As we reached an intersection of the white trail and an unmarked trail, I headed towards the white trail. However, Don insisted that the way we should go was up the unmarked rutted ravine. Since he had been here several times and I had been here only once, I deferred to Don.

We followed the unmarked trail. After a while, we were no longer sure we were going the right way and we were starting to run short on time. *Let's go 10 minutes more.* Finally, Don sees the high tension wires and says he knows where we are.

As the path meandered up and down through wet swampy areas, we started to bushwhack through

briers. *This is not fun – where is the sun and what time is it?* We followed the path under the wires and came to a gate and a dead end road. We are not lost. *There are some houses, but where are we?* We walk up the hill and find Regional Water Boundary Signs and some old dirt road. *This looks promising. They are going in the right direction.*

Soon we hear a lot of Peepers. *There is life out here!* Then the woods road that we were following became a path in the woods and finally disappears. *Are these GMCers going to give up? Not yet!* About this time, Don's left foot starts to moan and cry, so he sits down and pulls out a pair of old boots and puts them on. *Well, we fixed the foot problem, but where are we?*

*Let's eat – our brains need some nourishment so we can think clearly.* Finally, we accept the fact that we are skunked and need to re-trace our steps. Looking up the hill, everything looks the same. *We hear the peepers, so let's follow the sound.* Finding the old woods road again, we became confident. Finally, we knew where we were when we reach the dead end road again. It is a good thing that no one showed for this hike.

Back into the park boundaries, we found different colors of paint on the trees. We followed the purple trail and ended up in the field just outside the park. At this point, our minds were more fatigued than our bodies. Time to go home, take a nap and sleep this one off.

Don said he will lead this one again for all of you who want to join him the next time.

*Two Old Koots: Don Hagstrom & Carol A. Langley*



### **Report to Connecticut Executive Committee**

The meeting started with welcome and introductions of guests, and of new Director of Development Maisie Howard.

1. Officers' Reports: Minutes of Jan. 22, 2011 meeting and treasurer's report through February, 2011 were accepted after brief discussion. The president's report was valedictory. As many of you know, this was Ben's last day as executive director; by the time you read this, he will be in his new position as Northeast

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Regional Director for The Wilderness Society (TWS). Matt Larson will be acting executive director until Ben's yet-unknown replacement starts work. The search committee received over 110 resumes, conducted panel interviews with the top 6 candidates on March 18, and will be inviting 3 of these candidates back for second-round interviews.

2. Executive Director's Report—Ben promised his report would be "something unusual but don't worry no singing." Instead, he thanked and recognized the achievements of each staff member. (Singing was deferred till the goodbye party later in the afternoon.)

3. Nominating Committee item—Two people have been proposed for honorary life membership but the Board has promised to keep their identities a secret until the annual meeting.

4. Project 10,000 update—Mari Zagarins and Val Stori reported that after putting the goal of 10,000 members on and off the front burner for several years, the club finally reached this level on March 11, the club's 101st birthday. A lot of one-on-one effort was the key—plus the generosity of several board members (especially Jean Haigh) who gave gift memberships to their friends and relations.

5. Personnel Committee items—A new Publications Assistant job description has been created and approved for a current worker. Per Ben, "In this instance, the job has essentially evolved organically as Matt Krebs has taken on increasing responsibility for wholesale distribution, so I am proposing an internal hire/promotion into the newly created position." This did not require Board approval because it was an internal hire. Matt will handle wholesale sales of GMC publications, interacting with outdoor retailers, book stores, general stores, gas stations, selected lodging and dining establishments, and/or other businesses that retail GMC publications. There was also an update on two new job titles (Director of Trail Programs, Director of Operations) for possible action at June 11's board meeting. These represent new titles for existing positions, rather than new job openings.

6. Budget & Finance Committee—The committee presented a first draft budget for fiscal year 2012 Budget Adoption, showing a far-bottom-line surplus of \$1,135.

7. Marketing update—Megan Duni and Geordie Hall reiterated the need to make the public aware of the club's connection to the Long Trail, as many hikers don't actually know about that relationship. One way to reinforce this is to use "Green Mountain Club" rather than "GMC" in correspondence and publicity materials.

8. Wind Power, continued—

a. Kingdom Community Wind. Rich Windish explained the newest development in the Kingdom Community Wind issue. Although some administrative details remain to be wrapped up, a new stipulation between Green Mountain Power and the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources favorably resolves most of the concerns about mitigation and decommissioning expressed by the GMC and its expert during testimony before the state public service board. The PSB recognized the club's participation in the 2 1/2-week long hearing process as one of the factors influencing the outcome. Legal and other advocacy expenses currently run about

\$36,000 (somewhat over the \$3000 originally authorized) but there will be minimal additional costs. Although other wind projects are in the works, and a decision by the PSB in one case is not required to govern later agency decisions on other cases, Rich and John Page hope that as a practical matter this stipulation will influence the course of future projects—and remove the need for re-deciding similar issues in lengthy hearings such as those just completed.

b. Deerfield Wind Project: The GMC has submitted comments on the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Deerfield Wind Project, which is slightly south of the Connecticut Section's maintenance area on the LT, but nevertheless will be in its 'viewshed.' I asked Rich Windish and Marge Fish to please notify the relevant section leaders of any planned developments that have specific impact on the areas a section maintains. They agreed that in the future sections should have the opportunity to participate in the GMC's internal discussion process as well to sign off on comments submitted.

c. Update on revisions to Wind Power Policy and/or creation of Energy Policy: Pete Antos-Ketcham briefed the board on the stewardship committee's discussion of how and whether to revise the club's current wind power policy or to replace it with a more comprehensive energy policy. Board members expressed concern about 'mission creep' and the dilution of the club's credibility if it spreads itself too thin, as well as the risk that a policy too focused on technical details of today's issues may not be helpful with the as-yet-unknown energy questions in Vermont's future. John Page cited a 1971 resolution of the Vermont legislature recognizing the GMC as "the founder, sponsor, defender, and protector" of the Long Trail System and delegating to it responsibility for developing policies and programs for "the preservation, maintenance, and proper use of hiking trails for the benefit of the people of Vermont," and a few of us agreed that it provided one test for determining what issues the GMC should (and shouldn't) get involved in.

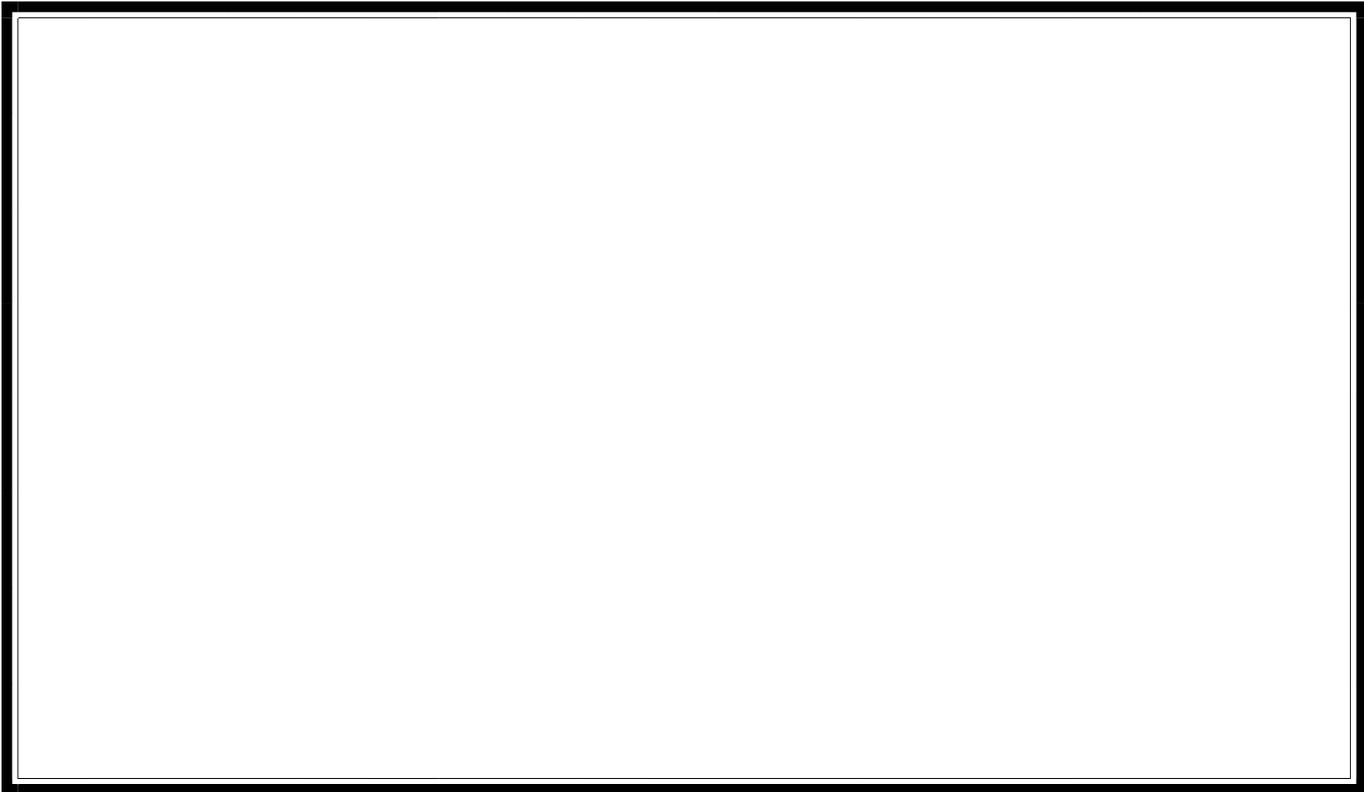
9. Winooski Relocation update

Although Ben appeared hopeful that the club would reach closure on this issue during his directorate, various board members pointed out reasons not to sign off on the license as drafted—in particular, its provisions allowing RailAmerica to set and raise recurring fees at its discretion, rather than annually, and its requirement that GMC purchase supplemental insurance. (Like many other general liability policies, the GMC's current policy does not cover rail-related claims.)

10. Future meeting dates—The next board meeting is set for Saturday, June 11, 2011 at 11:30 a.m., following the annual meeting at Camp Plymouth State Park. I will be on a paddling trip in Montana then and hope Carol will find a designated driver. The fall meeting will be held Saturday, September 17, 2011 at 9:30 a.m. at the Londonderry Rescue Squad.

11. Announcements—The GMC volunteer leadership forum scheduled for Saturday, April 16. One half of the day will deal with liability issues and the other with marketing. Everyone is welcome to attend, including but not limited to trip leaders and section officers.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laurene Sorensen



# The Trail Talk

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