



Connecticut Section of the Green Mountain Club

Volume LII, Issue IV October to December 2020 Fred Clark, Editor

President's Message Fall 2020

I hope all of you have had a safe, enjoyable summer and have avoided the coronavirus. The pandemic and on-going safety measures have required some creative ideas to be able to continue outdoor recreation. The heat and humidity through July and much of August curbed my enthusiasm for any longer, strenuous trips but it certainly feels like fall weather is finally with us. Here are a few status updates on the current response of the GMC and the Connecticut Section to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

Long Trail Maintenance – The State of Vermont still requests that visitors self-quarantine for 14 days upon arrival if they are coming from counties in other states with active infection rates greater than 400 per million of population. Unfortunately, all eight Connecticut counties currently exceed that threshold. There were periods over the summer when some Connecticut counties dropped below 400 per million, but as we've seen and heard in local news, the re-opening of our education system, the colleges in particular, has driven the infection rate back up in our state. So it's highly unlikely we'll be able to get to Vermont for any trail work this year. We'll hope for a better 2021. Vermont updates its cross-state travel guidelines weekly at: <https://accd.vermont.gov/covid-19/restart/cross-state-travel> .

GMC Activities - The GMC continues to request that Sections not publish schedules in their newsletters but may be communicated via email and internal websites to members. Our schedule for the last three months of 2020 is posted on the wiki page <http://www.conngmc.com/newwiki/doku.php?id=start>. Dennis Himes sends his weekly email with events planned for the next few weeks. And event write-ups after the fact are still part of the newsletter. We've had a few interesting trips this summer that are in this issue, including the Allagash Waterway canoe trek in Maine. Closer to home, Connecticut continues to update the most recent information on state parks and forests on the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection website: <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/COVID-19/DEEP-COVID-19-Response> .

There were no objections to the list of proposed Section officers in the summer newsletter. Dick Hart is in the process of turning over the treasurer's role to Linda Hagstrom, although banking interactions remain a bit more challenging due the pandemic. The other officers will continue their terms through 2021, when we can (hopefully) conduct some type of Section annual meeting. In addition, there were no objections to the minutes (published in the last newsletter) of our 2019 annual meeting in the last newsletter, so those minutes are considered to be accepted.

Stay safe and see you on the trail,

Jim Robertson



*Hammonasset
Beach hikers
enjoying
the day*

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Connecticut Section Information

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WANT TO HELP THE CONNECTICUT SECTION REDUCE EXPENSES AND SAVE TREES?

Just send an e-mail to the Editor, requesting that you be e-mailed *Trail Talk*, rather than having it printed and mailed. You'll receive *Trail Talk* sooner, too.

PUBLICATION SCHEDULE: *Trail Talk* is

published four times a year in March, June, September, and December. Articles and activity reports must be e-mailed to the editor no later than the fifth day of the month of the publication. Articles and activity reports must be sent in a Word Document in Times New Roman, font size 10. Reports sent from phones or tablets will be returned.

Editor's e-mail:

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MEMBERSHIP: When filling out an application to join or renew your membership in the Green Mountain Club, circle **Connecticut Section** on the application. You will receive, at no extra charge, the Connecticut Section's newsletter

DUES:

Individual Adult	\$45.00
Family	\$60.00
Senior (70 or older) or Limited Income	\$25.00
Sponsor (Individual/Family)	\$75.00

Send annual dues to:

Green Mountain Club
4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road
Waterbury Center, VT 05677-9904

You may also join or renew online at:

<https://www.greenmountainclub.org/>

SPECIAL THANKS to members Charlotte Hitchcock and David Wells. Each issue Charlotte facilitates the e-mailing of *Trail Talk* by formatting the layout and reducing the file size; and David facilitates the mailing of *Trail Talk* by stuffing envelopes and donating the postage.

INQUIRIES: Please direct all inquiries regarding the Connecticut Section to the President.

ACTIVITY REPORTS

Backpacking on the A.T. in Connecticut June 26-28, 2020 by Mandy Brink

It was another trip altered by the COVID virus. Plans were to backpack a section in Maine but, since Maine was still in Phase 1 of isolation, we had to look for an alternative hike. Jim Robertson was nice enough to plot out a section on the CT AT that worked for overnight camping and still abided by the rules of COVID.

Dennis Himes, Jim Robertson, George Papagelis and I met at Hoyt Rd at the CT/NY state line. **Dave Amidon** helped to stage cars and hiked with us for the first mile. He headed back out as we started the uphill climb over Ten Mile Hill. It was down and up again over Schaghticoke Mt. where **Sarah O'Hare** joined us for the remaining 7 miles of the day. It was hot and humid which sucked out more of our energy than the ups and downs of the terrain. We stopped at Thayer Brook for a water resupply before heading up over Mt Algo and into the Mt Algo Lean-to area. There we set up our tents and had a late dinner. We ran into a couple of thru-hikers, who had managed to get to CT despite all the closures on the AT. It had been an 11- mile day and we were tired, so it was early to bed. The weather forecast for the next day was rain starting at 11 a.m. and we wanted to be down St John's Ledges before the rain.

By 6 am we had packed up and hit the trail. The sun was out along with the heat and humidity. It was up and over Fuller Mt. and onto Caleb's Peak where we stopped for the view and a rest. The skies were getting dark, but the rain was now pushed back to around 1p.m. We slowly made our way down St John's Ledges, happy to be doing it on dry rock. We moved along, hoping to make it to Steward Hollow Lean-to before the serious rain hit. We were successful. It started to sprinkle. We had no sooner gotten to the shelter when the rain started to pour down. We had lunch and decided to stay at the shelter for a couple of hours to ride out the worst of the rain. It was only 1:30 so we had time to spare. It was a well-needed rest for all. George decided to push on since he was hiking back out that evening. The rest of us enjoy our respite from the rain. The caretakers for this section of the trail showed up to do trail maintenance but spend a good part of the time under the shelter with us, waiting for the rain to clear. At 3:30 it slowed down enough for us to get a move on. We had a nice flat section along the Housatonic River before we had our final push up Silver Hill to the Silver Hill Campsite.

Our evening was delightful. There were a few other campers there, one who had done the AT in CT 4 times during COVID. We enjoyed dinner and then spent some relaxing time enjoying the view on the deck and swinging

on the swing. Sarah gave us a wonderful concert with her Indian flute. After a hard day of hiking, it was such a relaxing peaceful ending to the day.

In the morning it was an easy hike out to Old Sharon Road. Dennis was missing a short section at this junction, so he headed on the Mohawk Trail to complete the missing mile. The rest of hiked the ½ mile out to the cars. Mileage for the weekend was about 24 miles.

Mattabesett Trail, Mt. Higby July 11, 2020 by Carol A. Langley

Jocelyn Linnekin met me at the parking lot off Rte. 147 and we drove to the Land Trust property off Higby Rd. Looks like another hot one. Starting from the east side of the mountain, we were in shade most of the time. As we reached the ridge line, the breeze really picked up. When we reached the height of land, we went on a scouting mission to find the site of a crash where three planes have gone down and four people have lost their lives. We found the site of the four cairns that had been created many years ago in remembrance of those who lost their lives. Sadly, only one cairn is left standing; the others have been torn down. There is a fire ring that has been created and some type of a wood shelter. We then visited the plane crash site. It is amazing how much steel is still around after all these years. There is not a path to the site or any signage, thank heavens.

Time to move on as we had miles to cover. Each rock cropping gave us great views and a wonderful breeze. This is such lovely place and I could only think of what it must have been for the Indians without the drone of traffic on I-91 and the countryside now covered with homes and businesses.

The CT State Police Academy and training center is down in the valley so we heard several rounds of gun shots as we neared the end of our hike. Reaching Guida's Dairy, we were disappointed to find that they were only taking cash and no credit cards so we were unable to indulge.

Scovill Reservoir July 8, 2020 by Carol A. Langley

The three H'S were the forecast for the day. **Jocelyn Linnekin** joined me for this hike. At 9:30 we started our hike around the reservoir. Many people were out and quite friendly. Gold Finches were sitting on some of flowers, eating seeds. Other birds were singing in the trees as the limbs were dancing and giving us a very nice cool breeze, which was very much appreciated.

Passing by the recreation area where there are usually children swimming and swinging, all was quiet. This is not the way summer should be! There were people paddling, fishing on the reservoir and several walking this very well-kept path. All too soon we were at our starting point and, since there was a bench, we decided to take a lunch break. Oh no! Where is my water bottle? Shoot, I must have dropped it, so we decided, since it was early and we still had plenty of energy, we would walk the trail again but we never found the bottle. This particular bottle was very special since it was given to me many years ago when I worked the PGA tournament. Because of the return trip, we ended up with 7 miles for the day

We said our goodbyes. That night when I opened my refrigerator, what was sitting there keeping cool but the missing water bottle. Is this a sign of getting OLD?????

**Enders Island Paddle
July 18, 2020
by Mandy Brink**

I did not have anyone from the club sign up for the paddle, so I decided to work on the percentage of youth participation by inviting my granddaughter, **Haley Kumpf**, to come paddling. She is starting to love kayaking enough that she put a kayak on her Christmas wish list. It was to be a blistering hot and humid day, but we had a lovely breeze on the water. We launched from the Mystic YMCA and went early enough that there were no big boats on the water, only other kayakers. We stopped at Enders Islands and walked around the gardens which were stunning. The views from the island are so beautiful. How lucky are we to live where we have the beautiful ocean and all the coves to explore as we paddle. We switched kayaks so she could try out both models and headed back. After 2 hours of a good upper body work out, we decided to end the trip with DQ.

**Maine A.T., Caratunk to Bog Brook Rd
August 23–25, 2020
by Mandy Brink**

Many thanks to **Jim Robertson** who got our trip off to a good start by locating the ferry while he waited for **Mike Shaw** and me to arrive. We were on a tight schedule to stage cars and catch the ferry by 2 pm. A ferry, which is a canoe ride, is necessary to safely cross the Kennebec River and this is how we started our trip. Rob, our canoe guide, gave us a wonderful description of what we had to look forward to. Our trip started with a slow steady climb to the Pierce Pond Lean-to. On the way, we walked along the river and passed many beautiful waterfalls. We set up our tents, had a little dinner and then sat by the pond to watch the beautiful sunset. The loons were singing on the water. It was so peaceful.

On Saturday morning it was up and over Bates Ridge. It was an easy hike, although a bit hot and humid. Trail magic awaited us. We arrived at Sand Point to have lunch and take a lovely swim in East Carry Pond. There was a little beach there and some thru hikers also taking a dip. On top of that, there was a cooler full of cold Gatorades, trail magic at its finest on a hot summer day. After an hour of playing on the beach, it was time to finish up our last 4 miles. Jim gave us a history lesson on this section of trail where it turns out that Benedict Arnold lead an expedition in 1775 of 1000 soldiers for the small American Army. They crossed West Carry Pond, proceeded to the Dead River and then into the wilderness on the Appalachian Trail between Middle and West Carry Pond, through the winter to attack Quebec. The day finished with our arrival at West Carry Pond Lean-to. There was a brazen chipmunk at the shelter who visited us frequently throughout our stay. Again, after setting up our tents and having a bit of dinner, we wandered down to the pond. There is a pier that we were able to be seated to enjoy quite a spectacular sunset. That night we again enjoyed the singing of the loons.

Sunday was our hardest day. Although only 6 miles out to the car, we had to go up Roundtop Mt. While not a high elevation, it was hot and humid and the most we had to climb the whole weekend. We were spoiled after our 10 flat miles the day before. After one other small hill, we arrived at Flagstaff Lake where we walked along the lake for our last few miles before arriving back to Bog Brook Rd. It was a great weekend with great company. Now to close the gap from Monson to Caratunk. Stay tuned.

**James L. Goodwin State Forest, Hampton CT
August 31, 2020
by Jim Robertson**

On this impromptu hike, **Linda and Don Hagstrom, George Jackson and Patty and Tom Adams** joined leader **Jim Robertson**. Canines Molson and Arlo were at the head of the pack as usual. We decided to do a counter-clockwise loop around Pine Acres Pond, the main body of water in Goodwin SF. Water level was noticeably low, but Patty managed to spot one pink water lily shortly after we started walking. Heading north up the Yellow Trail, we met Cody the horse who has a trail named for him elsewhere in the state forest. Oh, and we met his owner/rider, too, who stopped to chat with Linda about the trails and their maintenance. A bit later, the leader started the group down the wrong side trail, fortunately realizing his mistake before any rebellion occurred (stay tuned). We took the side trail to the viewing platform on Governor's Island, hoping to see some water lilies in colors other than white, but alas the water was so low that the normal yellow and white flowers were nowhere in sight. And no pink lilies there, either.

We continued on, crossing the Airline Trail and looping back towards Black Spruce Pond, where we stopped for lunch. Starting out again, the intrepid leader took the group in the wrong direction, heading north, rather than south, on the Natchaug Trail. In his defense, the leader opined that the newly clear-cut area near the pond made the trail turns confusing. Fortunately, again, there was no rebellion, no mutiny, and no talk of tar-and-feathers. In fact, some in the group – the mile and step counters – were actually pleased to gain some “bonus miles” for the day.

Upon returning to the Natchaug Trail southbound, we had a pleasant walk through the forests back to our cars near the conservation center, completing a six-mile hike.

Allagash Wilderness Waterway September 2 to 11, 2020 by Jim Fritz

The illustrious group of GMC paddler—**Joe Conaci**, **Mandy Brink**, Mike Shaw, Barb Kelly, Rob Valley, Marianne Valley, Sven Englund, Mark Stone, Scott Black, and I—met up at Pelletier’s Campground in St. Francis, Maine. Norm L’Italienne, our outfitter and well-natured old time Mainer, gave us the rundown on the waterway and introduced our goal for the trip: traveling downstream from Chamberlain Bridge to Debbie’s – she of the brown building with black tin roof, two cupolas and bent weathervanes located in Allagash village.

After a good night of sleep, we enjoyed an open fire cooked breakfast of eggs and bacon prepared by master chef and fire starter Mark Stone. We meet our driver Stanley and loaded our gear up into Norm’s trailer with our canoes. Norm proclaimed the amount of gear we were bringing as “not too bad,” which in Maine-speak we interpreted to mean “not bad for flat-landers.” We then proceeded on the 3.5-hour drive to our launching point at Chamberlain Bridge on the south end of Chamberlain lake. We then loaded gear into our five 17-foot Old Town canoes. After realizing we had stolen Stanley’s lunch (which we returned to the ranger station), we debated which direction to head before paddling North into Chamberlain lake.

Our first day was calm, sunny, and warm. You couldn’t have asked for a better day for paddling the lake. Our original plan was to spend the night at Ellis Brook campsite, but for a variety of reasons we pushed on to stay the night at Lock Dam campsite. That evening we were treated to a glorious sunset over the far shore of the lake and a fine camp dinner. We realized the bear-bag challenge we had created with our ten days of food for ten people – including what seemed to be several thousand pounds of snack bars. Through the expertise and foresight of Joe, we got our food hung and established an evening tradition for the rest of the trip.

On day two, we portaged over Lock Dam and paddled/walked down the short stream to enter Eagle Lake. A strong wind to our backs made the initial paddling pretty easy going before we turned north and headed up the leeward shore of the lake to Tramway. It was here that we took a short hike and saw artifacts of Maine’s logging industry, including two full size steam locomotives (abandoned in 1930) and the remnants of a steam powered tram used to move logs from Eagle Lake to Chamberlain Lake in the early 1900’s. After lunch at Tramway, we set off for Pump Handle campsite on the far shore of Eagle Lake. The “Smart Paddlers” award for the day went to Barb and Sven for continuing up the leeward shore of the lake before turning to take advantage of the westerly wind. The rest of us decided that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line and took off across the lake with a very strong crosswind, making for difficult and sometimes precarious paddling conditions.

The next morning, we paddled north onto Churchill Lake. We considered a stay at either Scofield Cove or Scofield Point, but decided to push on north to stay at High Bank campsite. We got in early in the day, and had a nice afternoon to relax a little, wash up, and check out the area. A number of fresh moose tracks gave us hope that we’d see some of those wondrous creatures, but alas! We had to settle for the tracks.

Day four brought our first real river paddling of the trip. We loaded up the canoes and headed north to Churchill Dam. For a small fee of \$10, our gear was portaged past the whitewater. While we waited for the water release, Ranger Brown gave us a great tour of small museum he had set up on site as well as some of the features of the dam.

And then...woosh! We headed down the Class 2 rapids, entailing a fury of splashing water and frantic paddling. Despite one canoe overturning, we experienced no major casualties with the exception of one of Norm’s paddles (which remains missing to this very day). Down river, we stopped to pick up our gear, have lunch, reload the canoes and then progress downstream to Sandy Point campsite on the north end of Umsaskis Lake. We began to appreciate the challenge of the lack of rain in Maine throughout the year – water levels were exceedingly low which led to frequent grounding, rock/canoe pinball, and the invention of new words that shall not be printed herein (given that this is a family publication).

On day five, we packed up and headed north up Long Lake. A strong southerly wind pushed us along, but created a whole new set of treacherous conditions. It’s quite an interesting feeling to be sitting in the stern watching waves pass by that are higher than the gunwales of the canoe you’re steering. Given the strong wind to our backs, we made excellent time and were at our target destination of Sweeney Brook by around noon. It was

way too early to stop, so we pushed up through the low-water rapids of the Allagash to Round Pound and the Inlet campsite. The campsite appeared full, but a couple of the canoes that had pulled in were waiting for the winds to subside before heading further north, so we were able to grab the last remaining campsite for the night.

Day six brought us a land-based adventure as we paddled across Round Pound and did a 5-mile loop hike to the fire tower on Round Pond Mountain. After climbing a vintage and relatively steep steel ladder, we were treated to excellent 360-degree views of the area, including views of the Inlet campsite where we had stayed the previous night and the upcoming “S” bend in the Allagash River. After the hike, we headed north again for a relatively short eight mile paddle (with some frequent canoe dragging) to the Five Finger Brook campsites. Five Finger West did not meet our high standards for accommodations, so we proceeded North to stay at Five Finger South.

Fellow paddlers had mentioned to us the artifacts at Cunliffe Depot campsite, so the next morning we paddled on north with a planned sight-seeing stop. Thanks to Joe’s experience canoeing the Allagash previously, he was quickly able to locate the two main attractions: long since abandoned log hauling vehicles. One was steam powered and one was gas powered. Sven was really in his element as he explained the workings of these historical power plants. A short paddle later, we stopped at Michaud Farms for a nice hot lunch and a chat with the Ranger. He agreed our plan to overnight at Allagash Falls was a good one, and we paddled and pushed canoes north to the portage. After hauling our canoes the 0.3 miles to the downstream launching point (special kudos to Joe for single-handedly portaging two canoes), we moved our gear into one of the campsites and began setting up. Luckily, we had our tents and dining fly up before heavy rains set in, although sporadic downfalls made for a chilly and wet evening. Given that this was the first rain of our trip, we felt pretty lucky despite the rainfall. Thanks to Mark’s fire-building skills (as well as the dry remnants of an old picnic table), we had the pleasure of a warm and strong fire that we were able to enjoy in between raindrops.

After a dark and stormy night, we set off on our last day transit north to Debbie’s (she of the brown building with a black tin roof with two cupolas and bent weathervanes). Paddling and dragging canoes straight through the remaining 14 damp and grey miles (with the creation of additional new words that are also unfit for publication), we all arrived at our final destination by 2:00 p.m. Norm’s crew had moved our cars to the parking lot there, so we moved our gear from canoes to cars, changed into dry clothes, and drove back to Pelletier’s so that Rob could raid the infamous Biscotti cookie jar to pay Norm. We began the drive south towards home, stopping in Fort Kent for a fine dinner and an overnight at the local hotel,

including some hot and some not-so-hot showers. The next morning, we separated into our various carpools and began the long drive home.

Special thanks to the planners and in particular to the chefs for this fine trip. A good time was had by all!

Hammonasset Beach Hike September 12, 2020 by Carol A. Langley

On this lovely late summer with a beautiful sea breeze and bright sunshine, I was joined by my great-granddaughter Ewelina and Jim Robertson with Molson. We started at Middle Beach and walked out to Meigs Point where sat on a log and had a snack. Molson was not going to miss out on a snack so he found rocks to try and chew. Jim soon brought an end to his munching. We then followed a path which led us alongside the road and into the open field, which we followed until we connected with the path out to the viewing platform. The attached photograph was taken at this platform. There were many boats out on the water and even a couple of water skiers.

We then followed an old dirt road which had been paved in the good old days and led to a boat launch for canoes. The viewing stand has also been taken down. The old park bench is still there and was occupied by a couple of senior citizens. We made a loop around and passed by the Nature Center which was closed. On the return trip there were cars parked everywhere and several dogs so Molson had to let them know who the Boss was in the canine world and he barked at just about every dog.

All too soon we reached the parking lot of Middle Beach and said our goodbyes. Ewelina wanted to walk in the sand since we were at the beach, but we didn’t stay long since Great-Grandma promised to bring her back. Our mileage was 4.1—a good day for 4-year-old Ewelina. Our New Year’s Day hike will be held at Hammonasset this New Year and we will meet at West Beach at 10:00. Hope to see you then.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Upcoming events are listed here: <http://www.conngmc.com/newwiki/doku.php?id=start>.

Maps or Apps

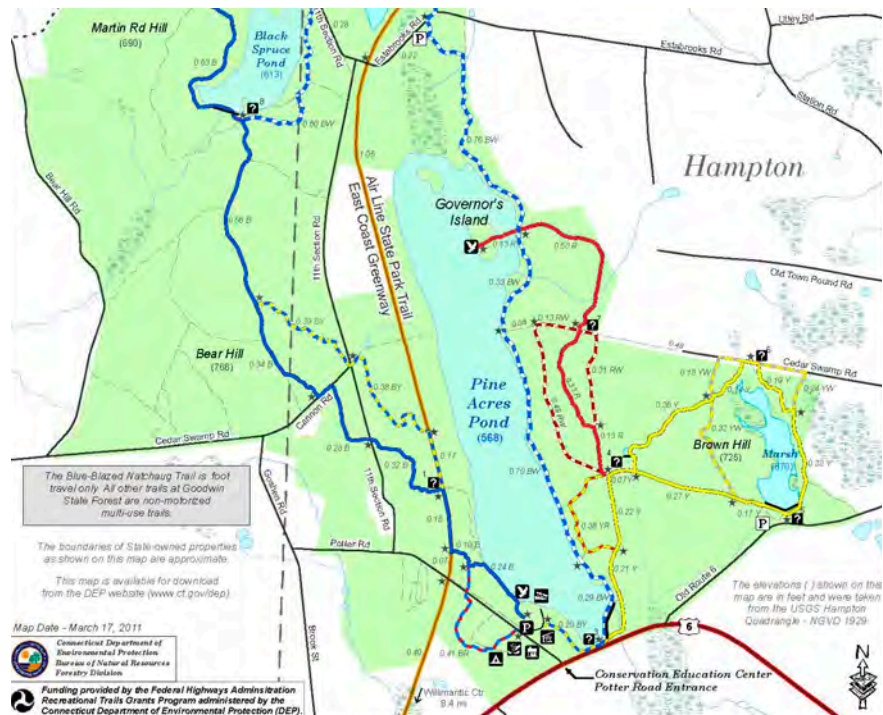
In the previous issue of *Trail Talk*, Editor Fred Clark included an article by Charlotte Hitchcock describing the features and benefits of the *AllTrails* application for smart phones. That and some other useful apps have been introduced over the past decade to assist with trail navigation. Despite the availability of these apps, Jim Robertson prefers maps.

Fred Clark

I carry my maps, either in hardcopy paper form, or saved on my mobile phone as an image file so they're available regardless of wireless phone network coverage. Often, I supplement the maps with guide books where available, and carry copies of the pertinent guide book pages in a zip lock plastic bag along with the maps. Here are several sources of maps that I've found helpful.

For Connecticut resources, maps are available through:

- The state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) website, for state parks and forests (sample at right, Goodwin State Forest).
- The Connecticut Forest and Parks Association (CFPA) *Connecticut Walk Book*, although I find that, while the new version published in 2017 has more detailed maps and mileage tables, it lacks the detailed trail descriptions in the previous version (circa 2005-2006) and no longer contains loose-leaf pages that can be easily removed. I keep and refer to both the old and new versions.



- Land trust and conservation area websites, e.g., Avalonia Land Conservancy, Joshua's Trust, and the many town preserves in Connecticut

For regional resources, the Long and Appalachian Trails in particular, nothing beats the GMC's coated folding map and the venerable *Long Trail Guide* and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's maps and guides.

Looking nationally, *National Geographic* publishes some great maps of popular areas in their *Trails Illustrated* series. I took a copy of the National Geo Mount Whitney map in 2016 when we did a trek on the Pacific Crest Trail including summiting Whitney.

I'd be interested to hear of map sources that you use and find helpful.

Jim Robertson