

Sterling Section News

January 2021 Annual Meeting

In lieu of an in-person Sterling Section Annual Meeting, we're filling you in on all the news right here, right now! In the following pages, you'll find a summary of the great work you all did in 2020, the state of our section finances, and info on what to look forward to in 2021. We've marked questions and calls for input with a star (★) to make it easier for you to get involved!

The Spring eStomper will be sent out as usual in a few months.



Content Guide:

Section President's Statement	-----	p. 2
Membership and Officers	-----	p. 2
Finances	-----	p. 3
2020 Work Summary	-----	p. 4
2021 Work Goals for Trails and Shelters	-----	p. 6
Connect with the Sterling Section	-----	p. 8




President's Statement

Is it cliché yet to say that none of us expected 2020 to look the way it did? The pandemic impacted all of us in so many ways, and it was truly inspirational to see section members continue to make time to continue our work on the Long Trail.

I want to thank everyone who came out of the woodwork to help with clearing trails in the spring, everyone who rolled with the punches and extra precautions to participate in our work trips last summer, and everyone who found some way to help ameliorate the unprecedented levels of use the Long Trail has seen during the pandemic.

While we're certainly not back to normal yet, I'm looking forward to 2021, and I'm optimistic that we can continue to find ways to work together, hike together, and just plain hang out together on the trail. I hope to see you on the trail this year!



Section Membership

Current Membership: 161



Hello to our new members!

We didn't get to welcome you in person at an annual meeting, so help us get to know you through our Spring eStomper! Send us your name, your town, and a sentence or two about yourself that we can include in the newsletter. Bonus points if you send a photo of yourself on the trail!



Section Officers

Because we are unable to vote on officers in person, current officers will serve until 2022 Annual Meeting. Caitlin Miller is stepping down as Section Secretary. Ilana Copel will serve as Acting Secretary until an executive vote can be held.

**Kevin Hudnell, President and Trails
& Shelters Chair**

Ron Lucier, Outings Chair

**Elisabeth Fenn,
Director to the Board**

Dorcas Jones, Treasurer

Ilana Copel, Acting Secretary

Section Finances

2020 Balances, Income, and Expenses:

12/31/2019 BALANCE	\$11,496.46
Income from Dues	\$1,170.25
Income from Donations	\$105.00
Total Income	\$1,275.25
Expenses: None	\$0.00
12/31/2020 BALANCE	\$12,771.71

Planned Expenses:

PROJECT	COST
Co-Hosting 2022 GMC Annual Meeting	\$1,000.00
Beaver Meadow Lodge Repairs - 2022	\$6,000 - 8,000.00
Total Planned Expenses	\$7,000 - 9,000.00

GMC Annual Meeting:

Sterling is co-hosting the next GMC Annual Meeting with the Northern Frontier and Laraway Sections. Each section will contribute \$1,000, though we have agreed to contribute more if needed.

Beaver Meadow Lodge:

Restoring historic Beaver Meadow Lodge is on the GMC's professional Field Program's short list for upcoming major projects (see p. 7). The grants which the club hopes to use to fund the project require financial matches. We have agreed to contribute a share of the cost, which would help the club meet those grant matches.

Potential future expenses:

Sterling Section has a very healthy account balance, which gives us flexibility to plan for future projects. One project on the horizon could be supporting GMC's upcoming series of trail improvements in the stretch of Long Trail from Rt 108 to Canada, as outlined in the GMC Capital Campaign.

If you have questions, please reach out to Kevin Hudnell at khudnell@gmail.com.



2020 Work Summary!



Lizz Lach, Erica Harris, Lucas Harris, Lesley Schuster & Dorcas Jones pulling knotweed.

Despite initial uncertainty about the 2020 field season, you all pulled off a fantastic year of caring for our section, with **270 total volunteer hours!**

Shelter and trail adopters were out in force, replacing signs, hauling out trash, and clearing blowdowns and waterbars.

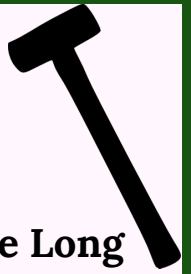
As a section, we held **two successful group work trips** to improve the trail tread.

We also bonded over **monthly workdays pulling invasive Japanese Knotweed** from the Lamoille River shorelines.



Christine Pepe clearing a blowdown on a spring trail walk-through.

2020 Work!



Some of your trail work accomplishments in 2020:

- Installed a ladder on the south bank of the **Lamoille River at the Long Trail crossing** to help hikers up and down the steep, eroding slope. The ladder was still mostly intact in November. A true feat, since many previous ladders were swept downstream or broken within a season!
- Reinforced the top of the **Chilcoat Trail** with turnpike and rock steps in an area that previously felt like a gymnastics challenge! See photos.
- Cleared out four major mudpits on the **Long Trail on the north side of Sterling Mtn.** The pits were retaining water on the trail, leading to bank erosion and vegetation damage. It sometimes felt like we were digging all the way to China but we found dry ground eventually!
- Special recognition to volunteer **Dylan Hancock**, who more or less single-handedly packed out all the leftover roofing and sheet metal from **Beaver Meadow Lodge**.



Chilcoat Trail before and during turnpike installation.

Volunteers Front to Back: Ed, Morgan, Gillian, Alexandra

Work Goals for 2021 and Beyond

2021 Sterling Section Projects

A calendar of work days and outings will be in the Spring eStomper.

- **Whiteface Shelter** work in collaboration with pro GMC Field Programs. Main goal is replacing shelter log step, which requires felling, de-barking ("stripping"), and moving ("skidding") a nearby tree in late spring.
- Monthly **Japanese Knotweed pulls** at the Lamoille River starting in May. As in 2020, these will be on midweek evenings for about an hour. This is an easy access, low stress, low commitment project great for anyone with a limited schedule or looking to dip a toe (possibly literally) into trail work!
- **'Spring Walkthrough'** in May/June to evaluate the state of the trails and determine any immediate work needed. As in 2020, we will likely break up groups by household. Each household/group will commit to hike a designated section of trail, clearing blowdowns inspecting its condition. Schedule for trail sections will be based on elevation/snowpack.
- Monthly **high-elevation work trips** in July, August, September, and hopefully October. This year's theme is going to be drainage.



As always, we're looking for more people who want to contribute however they can! There are jobs for sledgehammer swingers, branch cutters, photographers, and so on.

If you want to go out on your own schedule, that works too - just get in touch with Kevin at khudnell@gmail.com. There's always something to do!



Work Goals cont.

GMC Headquarters-based projects for 2021 and beyond

- **Whiteface Shelter** work in collaboration with Sterling Section (see p. 6).
- Restoring historic **Beaver Meadow Lodge** is scheduled for 2022. This project will be spearheaded by the GMC professional field program, but will require support from the Sterling Section. Needed repairs include:
 - Replacing the floor, windows, stove, and several sill logs
 - Re-decking the bunks, benches, and table
 - Re-staining the cabin exterior
- The GMC Long Trail Patrol is beginning their work on the **northern trail** as laid out in the GMC 2017-2022 Strategic Plan! Work slated for this year will be in Northern Frontier section near Jay and near Tillotson Camp. 2022 work will likely be in the Laraway Section.
- The **Dry Ridge** land acquisition for a Long Trail Relocation near Bear Hollow shelter is still on the table but has been put on hold due to covid.



Beaver Meadow Lodge, November 2017



Call for photos!



We want to include your beautiful photos in the Sterling Section eStomper Newsletter and Facebook Page!

Have you taken pictures of Section group hikes or work days?
Are you wondering what to do with those photos you took that one time you hiked to Whiteface Shelter?

Do your friends enjoy your portraits of local flora and fauna?

Send them to ilana.copel@gmail.com or post to our Facebook page!



Connect with the Sterling Section!

Info on 2021 **work days, group hikes, and more** will be in the Spring eStomper, so stay tuned! If you have ideas for a fun group outing, or if you'd like to lead one, **contact Ron Lucier at lucierj@gmail.com**.

To stay updated about events and to share photos, connect with us on Facebook!

<https://www.facebook.com/GMCSterlingSection/>

For section history and further information, see our website:

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

Missing news? Update your contact info!

Send your updated:

Name

Phone Number

Email Address

to Ilana Copel at ilana.copel@gmail.com.

