

Wachusett Views

Worcester Chapter Appalachian Mountain Club



Spring 2020

A close-up view of our chapter's vibrancy and dedication.

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Trails	Don Hoffses
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Spring 2020

Letter from the Editors

Happy Spring! Despite all that is going on in the world right now, there are many positive things to celebrate: World Water Day (March 22), the 50th anniversary of Earth Day (April 22), and most of all, the vibrant and strong community that is AMC and the Worcester Chapter. Be sure to step away from the chaos from time to time and indulge in a long walk, a moment listening to birds, and connect with friends over the phone or online.

And, enjoy this spring issue, which offers guidance on Leave No Trace with dogs, updates on AMC activities (including the postponed Wilderness First Aid training), inspiration through our star volunteers, and more. Thank you to all our writers, photographers, and contributors!

If you'd like to contribute, please submit any articles, photos, and any other content to: newsletter@amcworchester.org.

Sending healthy wishes to all,
Zenya and Alex



*Alexandra Molnar
Zenya Molnar*

Worcester Chapter Communications Co-Chairs

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A Message from the Chapter Chair: Under the Red Felt Crusher

By Kim Beauchemin, Worcester Chapter Chair

Hello everyone! I hope you are all well and that you are all adjusting to the new environment we find ourselves in. I sit here today in my living room, rewriting this article in its entirety. You see, I had originally planned on highlighting some great spring programs that the Worcester Chapter was excited to bring to you. Alas, some of that content has been canceled or postponed for the health and safety of our members. Regardless, spring is sneaking up on us quickly, and despite the current situation, I'm starting to focus on all the fantastic outdoor activities I will plan once we all come out of all this.

Here is the latest information on some of the spring programs we had planned:

- [Wilderness First Aid \(WFA\) Training](#), Rescheduled to September 12 & 13 2020 - Want to learn more about how to handle first aid situations in the backcountry? Need to get certified or recertified? Come learn with us at our WFA training course!
- [Backpacking Workshop](#), April 11th – This event is still on in virtual session format! Always wanted to learn about backpacking but didn't know where to start? Confused by all the gear available? Overwhelmed by the amount of equipment you think you'll need? Spend the day with us getting some great information on all things backpacking – taught by the nicest folks you'll ever meet, who are very passionate about teaching others how fun backpacking can be!
- [Leadership Training](#), Rescheduled to the Fall– Ever thought about becoming a leader for a particular activity? Maybe you just want to learn what this leadership thing is all about. Perhaps you want to find out how you could be a helpful participant on our trips. Learn from the experts in Leadership Training co-hosted with our friends from the Berkshire Chapter.

Please click on the links above for more information– and if you have any questions, please contact the registrar for the program directly.

Also, I want to provide a quick update on our Planning Meeting that the Executive Committee (Ecom) held in January. It was a great day with most of our time spent by getting to know and work with our new members as well as brainstorming on how we can bring Conservation into the forefront of everything we do. I was really inspired by all the great ideas that emerged during the meeting, and we'll be revisiting our progress on some of those ideas at our Ecom meetings throughout the year.

Finally, my thoughts are with you and our entire extended AMC family during this difficult time. Please stay healthy and be kind to your neighbors. I've never meant it more when I say, "See you all on the trails soon!"

All the best,
Kim

Sunrise view from High Cabin on Mt. Cardigan – Feb 20, 2020
Photo credit: Kim Beauchemin



Volunteer of the Month Awards

February



Congratulations to Steph Keimig, Worcester Chapter's February winner of the Volunteer of the Month award!

Steph is a four-season hiking/backpacking, kayaking, and family leader. She loves teaching and leading folks of all abilities and ages on the water and in the mountains on snow and ice. Steph was nominated by Walt Lazarz, Joe Massery, Pat Lambert, and Debi Garlick for her numerous contributions to the winter hiking program.

January

Congratulations to Denise Guillemette, Worcester's January winner of the Volunteer of the Month award!

Denise is a four season hike leader. Her favorite winter activity is hiking but she enjoys anything that gets her outdoors to enjoy the wilderness. Denise was nominated by Debi Garlick and Neil Schutzman for her help and support of the 2019-2020 winter hiking program by leading hikes to Monadnock and Galehead.



December

Congratulations to Sharon Whalen, Worcester's December winner of the Volunteer of the Month award!



Sharon is a four-season hike leader. Her favorite winter activity is snowshoeing in the White Mountains, but downhill skiing is a close second. Sharon was nominated by Joe Massery and Ingrid Molnar for her help with the 2019 Worcester Chapter Annual Meeting.

Additional congratulations to our other nominees over the past three months: Darryl Gagne, Bruce Wester, and Ed Bajakian, Walt Lazarz, Dan Foster, Will DesRosiers, Mike Foley, and Steve Gabis.

If you would like to recognize a volunteer for their contributions to the Worcester chapter, please email vicechair@amcworchester.org with subject line "Volunteer of the Month."

Please join us in thanking Sharon, Denise, and Steph and all the nominees for their contributions to the Worcester Chapter!

Leave No Trace: Dogs

By Pete Lane, Worcester Chapter member

I recently thumbed through The Green Guide to Low Impact Hiking and Camping by Laura and Guy Waterman. Toward the back, there are case studies, including one on man's best friend. It offers a code of ethics for both dog owners and dog opponents:

For dog owners:

1. Never let your dog chase wildlife
2. Keep your dog close to you when other hikers approach. If they are nervous or if your dog is aggressive, grab your dog by the collar or attach a leash, even if you know that the dog will not bite. The other hikers don't know that.
3. Be especially watchful of your dog when small children are around. Even the friendliest dog can be terrifying to a child.
4. Keep your dog quiet. There's nothing more annoying than an owner that does nothing about a continually barking dog
5. Keep your dog away from all food.
6. Keep your dog out of all sources of potable water
7. Don't let your dog foul the trail.
8. When another dog comes along, restrain your dog and ask that the other owner do the same
9. If horses come by, hold your dog.
10. Use common sense and courtesy



For opponents of dogs:

1. Show friendliness toward the dog and its owner. Hostile behavior by dogs is often touched off by subtle displays of fear in people.
2. Exert reasonable prudence in keeping food inside packs or out of reach of dogs
3. Be tolerant of other's enjoyment of the outdoors.
4. Refrain from complaining to authorities or asking for restrictions on dogs. Increased regulations are a burden of everyone.

The Green Guide to Low Impact Hiking and Camping is a new title for Backwoods Ethics, written over 40 years ago. What was good advice then is still relevant today.

Interested in learning more about Leave No Trace?

- Take the Leave No Trace online awareness course at: <https://lnt.org/learn/online-awareness-course>
- Attend a Leave No Trace Trainer course, which is two days with an overnight. Search for *leave no trace* in the [AMC activities database](#) or on the [Leave No Trace website](#).

Leader's Corner

By Paul Glazebrook, Worcester Chapter Leadership Chair

The world has changed for the immediate future. The Great Outdoors has not changed—get outside. It is good for your body, your mind, and your soul.

- Note that all AMC activities have been canceled and all AMC lodging is closed until further notice. For more information, visit: <https://www.outdoors.org/articles/newsroom/amc-preparations-for-covid-19>
- The Wilderness First Aid (WFA) training has been rescheduled to September 12-13, 2020. For more details and to register, click [here](#).
- Leaders who need WFA recertification should note that SOLO has extended your current certification to September 30th, 2020.
- Worcester/Berkshire Chapter Leadership Training has been rescheduled to fall 2020. Details to be announced when confirmed. For original posting, please click [here](#).

Early spring is a wonderful time to get outside and enjoy the sun and emerging wild flowers and other plants. We need leaders for short, local nature walks. You do not need to be an expert—just an inquisitive mind. Saying, “I don’t know but will find out” is okay.

With many of us now working from home, mid-week hikes, rides, or paddles are something to consider.

Any questions, contact Paul Glazebrook at leadership@amcworchester.org.

AMC Worcester is on Slack!

Join us at: amcworchester.slack.com

To get started, you'll need to follow this invitation link:

https://join.slack.com/t/amcworchester/shared_invite/zt-d0mvlhd2-BOLkToJGc1mDmQfF_HMuGg

Simply create a username and password, and then you're part of the online community!

Get connected with fellow Worcester Chapter members through our many channels. Share advice, your favorite places to get outside, etc.; see what others are up to; post questions; and stay in touch.



FACT SHEET

ON HEMP, BIDETS, AND BAMBOO: ALL YOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT TOILET PAPER ANSWERED

Chances are, when you're flushing away your toilet paper you're also flushing away part of a majestic old-growth tree. Toilet paper's pervasiveness and low price belie a much, much higher cost: Our consumption of single-use tissue is taking a dramatic and irreversible toll on the Canadian boreal forest and our global climate.¹ As NRDC and Stand.earth highlighted in our report *The Issue With Tissue*, most major household toilet paper brands, including Charmin, Cottonelle, and Angel Soft, are made from virgin forest fiber. Sustainable alternatives exist—these major brands simply choose not to use them. That is why we are calling on companies like Procter & Gamble, the manufacturer of Charmin, to break the “tree-to-toilet pipeline” and end their wasteful and destructive practice.

In response to our report, we have received a number of questions about toilet paper, consumption habits, sustainable alternatives, and more. Here are some answers:

Q: I don't see my TP brand on the scorecard. How do I know if it's sustainable?

A: There are many brands of toilet paper in the United States, and we had room to include only a select few on the scorecard. But our scoring methodology works for any brand made from recycled content or virgin fiber pulp (which is most brands). To score the brand you use at home, refer to the rules laid out in the Appendix of our report. However, if it's 100 percent recycled with at least 50 percent postconsumer recycled content, you can rest assured it's going to be a top scorer, earning at least a B. If there is no recycled content (as in most major brands), it's time to find a new go-to TP!



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Q: My toilet paper says it's FSC-certified. Doesn't that mean it's sustainable?

Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification is one of the factors we considered in assigning our grades.² FSC is the only credible forestry certification system, and if you're buying a product that has to be made of wood, like a table, it is critical you look for the FSC label.³ However, there is no reason to make single-use tissue products from wood, and FSC certification simply isn't as beneficial to forests as avoiding the use of trees in these products altogether. Additionally, while FSC Canada recently announced strengthened standards for protecting boreal caribou habitat, currently-implemented FSC certification doesn't promise that critical caribou habitat is left unharmed or that Indigenous peoples have consented to logging on their lands, and even the new standard doesn't guarantee the scientifically recognized necessary amount of critical boreal caribou habitat will be protected.⁴ In addition, many major brands including Charmin don't even have full FSC certification. They have what is called FSC-Mix certification, which includes pulp from forests with far less robust protections.

Q: Are tissue products made from bamboo or hemp acceptable alternatives?

While certainly more sustainable than virgin wood pulp, bamboo-based products are not quite as low-impact as postconsumer recycled products or alternative fibers from agricultural residue. That's why the best choice is to look for toilet paper made from postconsumer recycled materials. When you do buy products made from bamboo, make sure that the bamboo is sustainably sourced by checking for FSC certification; otherwise it could have come from land that was deforested for the express purpose of growing bamboo.⁵ Hemp also has potential as a sustainable alternative, but again, only if it is sourced responsibly, without impacting forests. Hemp can typically be grown without the use of pesticides, herbicides, or irrigation, but it requires more fertilizers than other alternative fibers and more chemical additives in its processing.⁶ Life-cycle analyses also indicate that hemp has a significantly higher climate impact than



Young regenerating single-species tree plantation in Quebec.

other alternative fiber sources such as bamboo and wheat straw, though this impact still pales in comparison with that of tissue products made from virgin fiber.⁷ With sustainable safeguards, hemp could be a promising alternative to our destructive reliance on trees for our throwaway tissue. However, there are very few hemp-based tissue brands currently available in the United States.

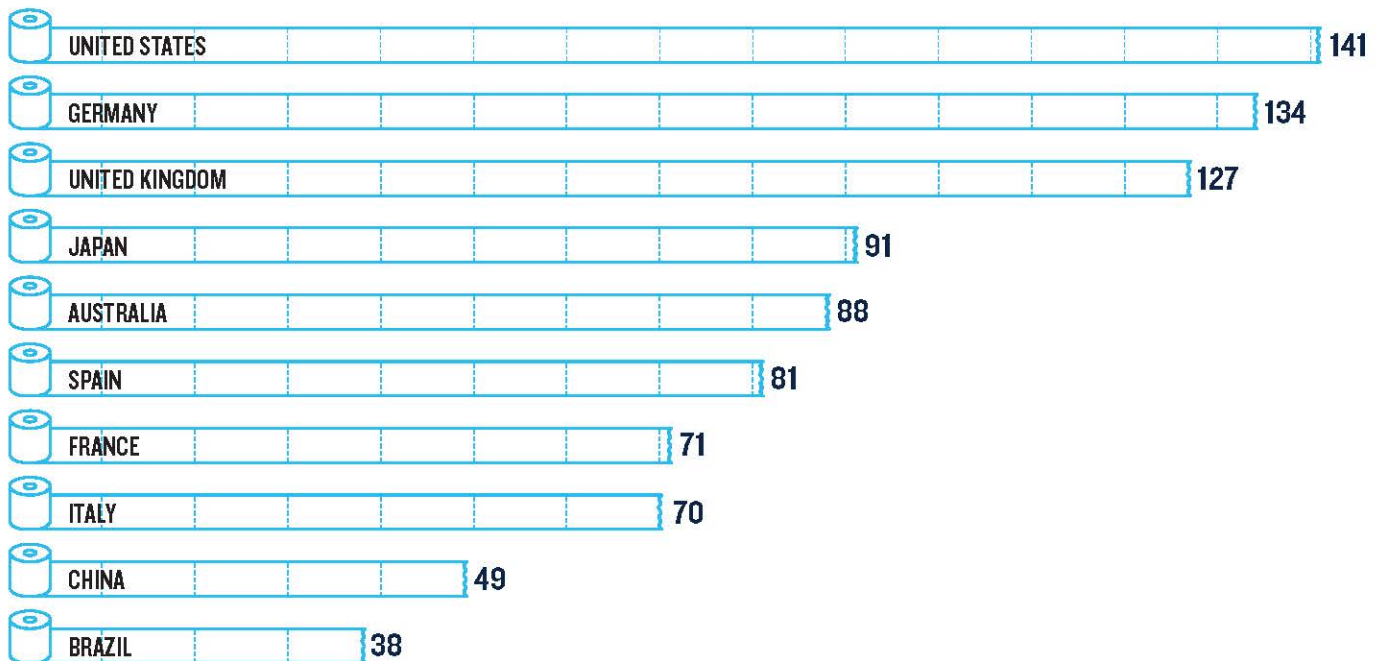
Q: Don't companies replant the trees after they've logged them?

Technically, logging companies are supposed to regrow the trees they cut down. However, this practice often isn't as rosy as trade groups like the Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC) claim.⁸ New research shows that logging creates scars on the landscape from roads, equipment, and piles of wood waste where the forest has failed to return decades after the logging ended.⁹ Where the forest does grow back, it is almost always irreparably changed.¹⁰ Often, companies will choose to replant monocultures of certain tree types that feed future logging operations, instead of a biodiverse mix similar to the ecosystem that was there before.¹¹ Where companies allow the forest to regrow naturally, regrowth takes years, and even decades later the forest usually has less biological and structural diversity than it had before it was logged.¹²

Q: I've heard the tissue industry just uses scraps left over from lumber production and doesn't itself drive logging. Is that true?

Unfortunately, that just isn't true. A substantial amount of boreal wood pulp destined for tissue production comes from whole logs, also known as roundwood. In Ontario, one of the largest exporters of pulp to the United States, an average of 44 percent of all pulp comes from roundwood, according to estimates from Stand Research Group.¹³ In addition, even if the tissue industry were driven primarily by scraps, those scraps help to keep the logging industry economically viable, incentivizing further incursion into intact forests. Any way you cut it, the tissue industry is, in fact, a key driver of intact boreal forest loss.¹⁴

ANNUAL PER CAPITA TOILET PAPER CONSUMPTION WORLDWIDE (IN ROLLS)



Source: Statista, <https://www.statista.com/chart/15676/cmo-toilet-paper-consumption>

Q: Isn't Canada an environmentally friendly country? I thought we didn't need to be concerned about their forests.

While Canada has cultivated a strong international reputation as an environmental leader, its reckless and wanton use of its natural resources has left many of its ecosystems in jeopardy. From 2000 to 2013, Canada lost the most intact forest of any country in the world, save for Brazil and Russia.¹⁵ Each year, Canada logs more than a million acres of its boreal forests, equivalent to seven NHL hockey rink-size areas per minute.¹⁶ The federal government and the provinces have largely failed to implement key environmental protections including their Species at Risk Act, driving threatened species like the boreal caribou ever closer to extinction.¹⁷ Canada is also not fully accounting for the extensive carbon emissions that result from forest degradation in their reports to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).¹⁸

THE TRUTH ABOUT TOILET PAPER:

While there's a lot of confusing and misleading information out there, especially from tissue companies and logging industry interest groups, a lot of these arguments are as thin as the tissue they're promoting. The takeaway is simple: The tissue industry must switch to manufacturing products that don't flush our forests down the toilet. This current tree-to-toilet pipeline is irresponsible and archaic. With the technology and environmental understanding available to us in the 21st century, we shouldn't be relying on intact forests for products that we use once and throw away. To let the folks at Charmin know you want them to stop sacrificing forests for their toilet paper, you can sign a petition to Procter & Gamble CEO David Taylor at nrdc.org.²³

Q: Is it true that Americans use three rolls of toilet paper a week?

It's surprising but true. People in the United States use an average of 28 pounds of toilet paper every year—more per capita than any other country. If you assume an average roll weighs about 90 grams, that equals just under three rolls a week.¹⁹ Note that this number doesn't include only the toilet paper you use in your home; it also includes away-from-home use (such as at restaurants and workplaces).

Q: Why not just use bidets?

Bidets are a fantastic alternative to using tissue products! In fact, bidets actually require less water per use than the tissue-making process does.²⁰ Doctors have also noted the hygienic benefits of bidets.²¹ In many parts of the world, like Japan, bidets are quite popular.²² However, we know that many people in the United States are reluctant to stop using their tissue products. For those who don't want to make the switch, the best thing to do is follow our sustainability guide and buy only tissue products made from recycled materials.

ENDNOTES

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