

# Wachusett Views



Worcester Chapter  
Appalachian Mountain Club

Fall 2021

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

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

|                                       |                     |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Chair                                 | Kim Beauchemin      |
| Vice Chair                            | Michael Morin       |
| Secretary                             | Peter Eggleston     |
| Treasurer                             | Jose Schroen        |
| Biking                                | Neil Schutzman      |
| Communications                        | Janice Melchior     |
| Communications                        | Chris Pignatiello   |
| Conservation                          | Jonathan DiRodi     |
| Finance                               | Christine Crepeault |
| Families                              | Ingrid Molnar       |
| Hiking                                | Walt Lazarz         |
| Historian                             | Dawn Foster         |
| Leadership                            | Paul Glazebrook     |
| Membership                            | Erin Doolittle      |
| Midstate Trail                        | Mike Peckar         |
| Paddling                              | David Elliott       |
| Past Chair                            | Joe Massery         |
| Programs                              | Michael Hauck       |
| Skiing                                | Ruth Langh          |
| Social                                | Vanessa Butler      |
| Technical Climbing                    | Dave Brainard       |
| Third Wednesday                       | Fred Mezynski       |
| Trails                                | Stephen Crowe       |
| 20s & 30s                             | Zenya Molnar        |
| At Large Social Media                 | Karyn Marciniac     |
| Diversity, Equity,<br>Inclusion (DEI) | Alexandra Molnar    |

## Fall 2021

### *Letter from the Editors*

Where did that summer just go? There was so much to do and so many people to see! We hope you were able to get out and enjoy your favorite activities and enjoy your time with your favorite people!

In addition to the regular features, this edition of the *Wachusett Views* has a variety of articles ranging from an update on the new Maine Horseshoe Pond Shelter, information on a new gear shed, a story about a great cycling accomplishment and information about getting started with an indoor cycling program using a smart trainer and apps to keep you engaged.

Fall is a favorite time of year. While it's true that the days get shorter, we celebrate the season's bountiful harvests, fun festivals and we enjoy the cool, crisp air and brilliant colors.

Thank you to all our writers, photographers and contributors. We are always looking for content and photos. If you'd like to contribute to the next edition, please send your submission to:  
[newsletter@amcworchester.org](mailto:newsletter@amcworchester.org).

Enjoy the beauty and bounty of the upcoming season!

*Janice and Chris*

Janice Melchior and Christine Pignatiello  
Worcester Chapter Communications Co-Chairs



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## A Message from the Chapter Chair: Under the Red Felt Crusher August 2021

*By Kim Beauchemin, Worcester Chapter Chair*

**H**ello fellow AMCers! I hope you are all thoroughly enjoying this wonderful summer that we're having—though, as I write this, Tropical Storm Henri is drenching us, but that's okay! Tomorrow is another day filled with opportunity for more outdoor adventure!

I've been getting outside as much I can and just returned from our annual Worcester trip to Gorman Chairback Lodge! Approximately 20 of us headed up and spent 4 days enjoying some great weather, hiking, paddling, SUPing, and most importantly, socializing! I also got to take my new kayak out for a spin on Long Pond. (Ping me if you're interested for 2022!)

We have a few more months in our chapter's fiscal year, and we have a fantastic new slate of folks that will be joining the Executive Committee next year—stay tuned for more info on that! And as always, if there are new ideas or programs you'd like us to consider or have any feedback for the committee in general, please send it all my way—I'd love to hear from our members!

Thank you again for your support and enthusiastic participation with our AMC Club.

Hope to see you on the trails soon!

All the Best,  
Kim



August '21 View from AMC's Gorman Chairback Lodge in Maine

## Horseshoe Pond Shelter in the Maine Wilderness

*By: Joe Massery, Past Chair*

The AMC has long aimed to protect the wilderness areas of northern Maine. The Maine Woods Initiative, as it is called, has been one of the principles of the AMC's strategic plan for many years. It called for land conservation goals and actions in the 100-Mile Wilderness to foster outdoor recreation, resource preservation, and responsible forestry. In 2007, the AMC Worcester Chapter funded the construction of the Phoenix Shelter near the shore of Trout Pond, a few miles from the Gorman Chairback Lodge and in the heart of the MWI conservation area. Now, in 2021, the Chapter is supporting the construction of another shelter in Maine—this one at Horseshoe Pond near Little Lyford Lodge.

The MWI comprises a sixty-mile corridor from Moosehead Lake to Baxter Park. The AMC has conserved and/or protected 100,000 acres, which when added to other non-AMC conservation efforts, cover over 650,000 contiguous acres of land that is open to the public for recreational use and protected forever. Abundant opportunities for outdoor recreation are available in this area, including at the AMC's Maine lodges: Medawisla, Gorman Chairback, and Little Lyford. Over 130 miles of AMC-maintained trails, plus hundreds more by other trail organizations, are open for year-round use by the public. Dozens of maintained backcountry campsites are near these trails, some with shelters.

Why Maine? The northern woods of Maine are our nearest truly wilderness area. In addition to miles-long tracts of forests and pristine lakes and streams, the AMC's Maine Woods have received the designation as an official International Dark-Sky Park. It's the first in New England and, as you can see in the figure, one of the only such sites in the East. These places boast near-zero light pollution from civilization—no lights from cities, towns, lighted roadways, etc. Scientists say that reduced light pollution has conservation benefits to wildlife and even health benefits to people. Seeing the stars on a clear, moonless night in northern Maine is an exceptional experience—an emotional one for some. The stars are so bright, you need sunglasses ... almost!



The Worcester Chapter has several ties to the Maine Woods. Thanks to Steve Ciras, former Worcester Chapter Chair and a prime mover for the creation of the Phoenix Shelter (more on this below), the Chapter is the official adopter of the Henderson Brook Trail. This 1.6-mile trail connects AMC's Gorman Chairback Lodge to the Appalachian Trail. A crew from the Chapter makes an annual trek to the Maine Woods to maintain the trail, making the Phoenix Shelter its campsite and base of operations for the weekend, as you can see in the photo from one of our recent trips. Worcester trail crews are often joined by our friends and partners from the Maine Chapter, including Peter Roderick, former head of the trails committee, and Bill Brooke, current AMC Chapter Chair for Maine.



Trail crew at Phoenix Shelter on lunch break during trail work weekend: John Grote (Worcester), Peter Roderick (Maine), and Steve Ciras (Worcester)

The Worcester Chapter's ties to the Maine Woods aren't all about work. Each year, trips are organized by members of the Chapter, such as the Long Weekend at Gorman Chairback in the summer and winter lodge-to-lodge ski and snowshoe trips.

As our Chapter Chair, Kim Beauchemin, has said, "The wilderness of Maine is important to our Chapter in so many ways, whether you get personal enjoyment from visiting this special, remote place, or you just want to support the AMC's mission of conservation and preservation."

When the Phoenix Shelter idea was hatched a decade and a half ago, the vision was for two shelters in the vicinity of the Gorman Chairback and Little Lyford lodges. The trail systems in this area are in use year-round and having shelters along these routes would be popular with backpackers, skiers, and anglers. Unfortunately, resources were constrained, and costs were higher than expected, so the Phoenix Shelter was built, and the second shelter idea was shelved ... until last year, that is. Steve Tatko, AMC's Director of Maine Conservation and Land Management, developed a plan for locating a new shelter at Horseshoe Pond, a beautiful and remote lake about three straight-line miles west of Little Lyford Lodge—right in the heart of the 100-Mile Wilderness. The site was near an existing trail system and not far from an existing boat launch. In addition, it was a short hike from a trail head along a woods road in the area. This meant Steve had an opportunity to make the trail and shelter site ADA-accessible, opening access to the site to a wider audience. Furthermore, the site is a few short miles from Baker Mountain, purchased by the AMC a few years ago.

Members of the Executive Committees of the Boston and Maine Chapters partnered with the Worcester Chapter to work out a funding proposal for the construction of the shelter. With guidance from Steve Tatko and from John Mullens, AMC Regional Director for the north region, we developed a plan consisting of financial contributions from each Chapter, plus volunteer efforts where feasible. The Worcester Chapter's financial contribution came from income from our Endowment Fund.

The shelter at Horseshoe Pond is a traditional three-sided design, with a footprint of 10 by 16 feet.

Materials have been sourced locally: red spruce logs harvested from AMC land; flooring from hemlock sourced from a local mill; and cedar roof shingles sourced from Maine.

Specialized construction work will be done by local Maine commercial firms, and volunteers are being recruited for such jobs as log peeling. The spruce logs to be used for the foundation and walls were harvested last year and early this year. Teams from Worcester and Maine peeled the bark off the logs in work sessions in May and June. We peeled almost 70 logs—very "appealing" work, as you can see from the photos!



Horseshoe Pond Shelter log peeling team: Joe Massery (Worcester), Larry Drake (Maine), Dan Rosen (Worcester), Peter Roderick (Maine), Yun Swanson (Worcester), John Grote (Worcester)



Peter Roderick Hard at Work

Construction began this summer with site clearing, trail preparation, and completion of a privy. See the photos for the site and foundation prep work that has been finished, and the brand-new privy.

The shelter is targeted for completion late this summer or early fall, and a dedication ceremony will be held shortly after it is completed. The shelter will

be named for Andrew Norkin, AMC's 20-year Director of Trails and Recreation Management. John Mullens had this to say about the dedication and Andrew: "Many of us knew, worked with, really enjoyed, and valued Andrew for his expertise, willingness to help others, sense of humor, and just all-around good guy-ness." Andrew passed away earlier this year.



Peeled Logs



Logs on Site Ready for Construction



Shelter Footprint



New Privy Ready for Use

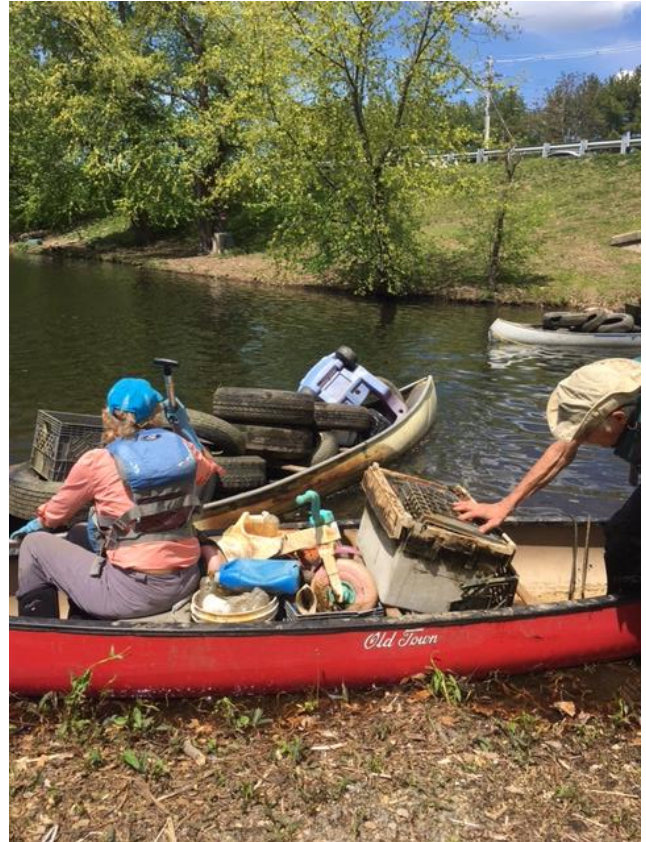
## Looking Back at Worcester Chapter TrailsFest 2021

By: Zenya Molnar, Worcester Chapter 20's and 30's Chair

The first ever hybrid (in-person and virtual) TrailsFest was a big success this year with over 150 participants and 26 individual events, including a weekly online speaker series. TrailsFest, which spanned one month leading up to National Trails Day on Saturday, June 5, was organized around weekly themes, including Environmental Clean-up, Restorative Value of the Outdoors, Conservation and Private Land Trusts, and Trails Maintenance. From Families to 20s & 30s and everyone beyond, activities that appealed to a wide range of interests were offered in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, including plogging/plicing/plaking (the Swedish concept of picking up trash while jogging/walking/hiking/biking), evening hikes, paddles, river clean-ups on Lake Quinsigamond and Fisherville Pond, cycling rides, socials, and trail work at Mount Wachusett and Kirby Conservation Area in Ashburnham.

The virtual gatherings invited speakers of different backgrounds to share their expertise related to the weekly theme. Former Worcester Chapter Chair, Steve Ciras, kicked off the series with an interactive presentation on Leave No Trace followed in the second week by musician and former New England Trail Artist in Residence Ben Cosgrove, who led a performance and conversation about his music writing inspiration and experience living and performing at several National Parks. Kristen Sykes, Director of Southern New England Conservation Projects and Partnerships at AMC, spoke around the theme of local land trusts, painting a picture of the sights and resources on the lesser known Bay Circuit Trail. And for the final week celebrating National Trails Day, Cristin Bailey from the US Forest Service enlightened attendees about everything that goes into trail maintenance with a specific lens on the trails in the White Mountains of New Hampshire.

Thanks to sponsors Fjallraven, Athletic Brewing Company, Burgeon Outdoor, and REI, 16 prizes—including beer, gift cards, and outdoor gear—were awarded to participants over the four weeks with one grand prize drawing at the end.



During the clean-up paddle at Lake Quinsigamond, 26 tires were retrieved!

Photo Credit: Patrice Thibodeau

## Cycling Goal Achieved - Summer 2021

*By: Denis LaForce, AMC Worcester Cycling Leader*

**M**y wife, Jane, picked me up at the airport after a wonderful, but hard month of cycling. I completed my journey from the Canadian border to the Mexican Border on Wednesday July 22 at 3:00 pm. It was a very interesting, challenging, scenic, and sometimes scary bike tour that was much harder than anticipated but well worth every pedal stroke. The route was mostly along the shoreline of the Pacific Ocean where the mountains meet the water. The shoreline mountains kept the ocean-cooled, damp and foggy air locked along the shore for much of my route. When the route occasionally traversed inland a few miles, the temperatures rose and I had sunshine. For much of my first two+ weeks, I was covered with two, three, and sometimes four layers of clothing.

The Adventure Cycling maps I used for the route showed the elevation profiles for the major climbs (and there were many!), but the profiles did not indicate the number of minor 200- to 500-foot steep winding climbs and descents in between the major climbs. Every minor stream or river that empties into the ocean cuts a deep gap in the mountain that was a long drop down (with brakes firmly applied!), on narrow hairpin turn roads, only to reach the bottom and go directly into my lowest gear to climb to the next hilltop. The narrow roads had limited guardrails and hundreds of cars trying to find the clear sight lines to pass. Drivers in the West were accommodating and I encountered very few impatient drivers. Sometimes, there was only a few feet between the road's edge and the cliffs below and a misstep by me or a passing driver could have been disastrous! This was not a carefree ride around Lake Champlain. Starting from two days north of Los Angeles, the hills, for the most part, disappeared, but the heavy traffic required my full attention. It would be interesting to know the count of the cars and trucks that passed me on this trip. It felt as though at least half the residents of the West passed me on the road.



The scenery was wonderful with views of untouched, unspoiled, inaccessible sandy beaches and rock cliffs followed by climbs to vistas along the rugged shoreline. The western surf is high and the waves curl and crash when they meet the shore. Even when camping a mile away, the thunderous sound of the surf could be heard in the quiet of the night. Most campgrounds I passed had a sign indicating the campground was full, but many (most) state parks had “hiker-biker” campsites that always allow room for one more. A cyclist is never turned away and the campsite cost is discounted.

I have been living in the moment for the last month. From packing up and eating breakfast in the morning, looking for coffee and muffin late in the morning, PB&J or, if I was lucky, a restaurant for lunch and then finally turning into a campground and setting up at day's end—it's all just a blur. Over the next few weeks, the details will all sort out and I'll have a better sense of all the places I saw—Washington and Oregon's evergreen rain forest, major river crossings, high vistas, crashing surf, redwood forests, the Golden Gate Bridge, Big Sur—and the fellow travelers I met along the way and campgrounds I stayed in. And it will become the remembrance of a wonderful journey.

Three goals were achieved with this cycle tour:

- I cycled 1800 miles from Canada to Mexico.
- This journey completed my goal of riding the outer perimeter of the Continental US on a bicycle.
- I have cycled to the “four corner towns” of the United States—that is, Madawaska in Northern ME, Key West FL, Blaine WA, and finally San Diego CA.



Denny at US / Canada Border



Denny at US / Mexico Border



## New Educators Outdoors Outdoor Equipment Shed Installed in Worcester

*By: Nathan Schumacher, Program Implementation Manager, Center for Outdoor Learning & Leadership*

Under AMC's Center for Outdoor Learning and Leadership (COLL), AMC's Educators Outdoors continues to reach young people in the city of Worcester, building exposure and skills for outdoor adventure. To make trips possible for local organizations and schools, AMC has maintained gear services in the city since 2013. Due to COVID and its impact on the non-profit landscape, a new gear shed hosting solution was needed and the pause in programming gave the time to create a new solution to gear access.

A 12-foot by 20-foot rough wood shed at the Greater Worcester Land Trust's (GWLT's) Cascades Trailhead on Olean Street (across from Cook's Pond) will be the new home for equipment that enables groups to camp, hike, backpack, day hike or snowshoe, whether using the gear onsite or further afield. Educators access the gear by first taking an Outdoor Leadership Training and becoming AMC members, which gives them the skills needed to confidently lead up to 10 youth on their excursion. Gear will be ready in its new home just in time for the school year!



Gear Shed – Outside View

In furthering AMC's goals under COLL, gear will be accessible to AMC leaders for trips in the near future, so that they too can remove barriers for outdoor recreation. AMC will be working on systems to make this a reality this fall and to have a pilot program for 2022. We will need volunteers to help us ensure the gear is maintained and available for use, so stay tuned!



Gear Shed – Inside View

AMC is most grateful to the **Stoddard Charitable Trust** for providing a grant to build and outfit this new resource, to the Greater Worcester Land Trust for allowing us to house the gear on their property, to the Worcester Chapter volunteers who provided a network for engaging GWLT, and to the Chapter itself for the generous support it has given to Educators Outdoors (formerly YOP) over the years!

## Indoor Cycling Adventures: Training and Fun!

*By: Bill Caulway, AMC Worcester Chapter Member*

Over the last few years, indoor cycling has become fun, engaging, challenging and affordable. Smart trainers simulate the road via slope, bike angle, road type and feel. They do this by riding the road with equipment to capture that information, including high resolution video and the bumps! When riding up a mountain, you are riding a previously recorded course and you feel as if you are riding that ride. When you bike through mud, you feel as if you are riding through mud. Animated applications manufacture this feeling and augment it with sound such as rolling over cobblestones, rain, etc. It is remarkably accurate and fun to experience. Three popular applications are Zwift, Rouvey and Tacx. All of these have free trial periods and you should try them all to see which you prefer. Zwift alone has over 3 million members – so you will never be alone and the application can be very engaging. I use Zwift for most of my rides and Tacx for when I want to ride alone in the real world, such as a bike tour through French Wine country or the Swiss Alps.

I use the smart trainer all year now with weekly road/trail rides on nice days. I ride daily and when combined with yoga or strength training, I get an efficient workout that is varied and fun, while also challenging. I also use it to discover new places, ride country tours, ride in groups at my pace or do races and challenges that are based on professional tours. The trainer has become a real asset since riding outdoors on the road for me is problematic. I have postponed road rides due to the weather or have been frustrated with distracted drivers, road closures, untethered dogs, lack of course options, and needing to drive to a location to ride. Since I primarily ride indoors, all the roadblocks go away. There is no excuse—just fun and a good workout!



One of the best things about using a trainer is that you use your own bike, so you are already comfortable and know how things work. Simply mount your rear wheel or remove it and attach your chain to a matching cassette. Then calibrate your bike with an application and start riding. I have a wheel mount type as it is affordable, light and a good introduction. I purchased a spare wheel with a cassette and training tire. I simply swap out the wheel between road and trainer riding. This is easy and takes me two minutes. There are multiple trainer manufacturers but the most popular are Wahoo and Garmin/Tacx. You can try different trainers at bike shops that sell them.

You also need a nice place to put your setup—facing a window is best for fresh air and the view. You should also have a mat to prevent floor damage/reduce noise and have a good high powered fan.

Once your hardware is set up, you can use the included software or try different applications and see which ones you like.

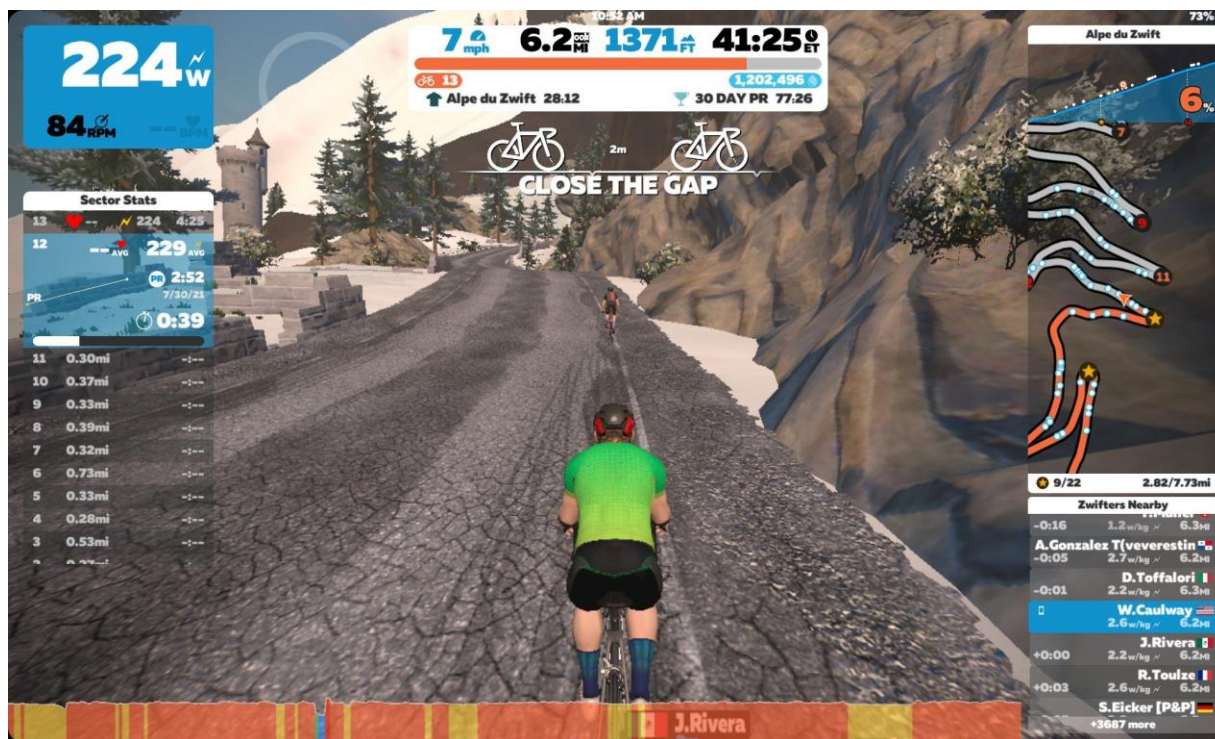
With a trainer, you will perspire a lot. I use wrist sweatbands, a bandana wrapped around my forehead, cycling shorts, and a top that lets air flow. When I do multiple rides in a day, I take a break, shower quickly, change, eat and hydrate. I use the Vega Sports and GU products for my Pre/During/Post ride nutrition and drink one bottle

(with electrolytes) of water per hour. This is very important as your body is working hard. With a trainer, there is typically no coasting. If you stop pedaling, the bike stops in the application. If I do an easy/recovery day, I still use the nutrition products as they are typically low calorie and help with recovery. They are also a pleasant reward for the effort.

Trainers are just a lot of fun with a global community that is very involved and positive.

*Ride on...*

*Be Well and Kind*



Zwift Climb



Yorkshire Real\*



Yorkshire Animated\*

\*Yorkshire Real (left photo) is the actual road in Yorkshire England, videoed and recorded on a bike (Tacx / Garmin app). Yorkshire Animated (right photo) is the same area (Zwift app). The above photos are a comparison between the two application experiences.

# SAVE the DATE

## 2021 Annual Meeting

### Sunday November 14, 2021

This year's Annual Meeting will be a two-part affair. We'll conduct a virtual business meeting from 4:30 pm to 5:00 pm. Then we'll convene for an in-person pot-luck social gathering and celebration with fun activities, awards, recognition, and a guest speaker.

There are a lot of details to work out yet, including the venue for the in-person gathering, but we're working on it.

*Pass the word and mark your calendar.*

*Watch for future communications with additional details.*



1988-2021 AMC Worcester Chapter Chairs

Left to Right: Bob Gilcrest, Andy Wojcikowski, Jim Walsh, Barb Dyer, Steve Ciras, Pat Lambert,  
Charlie Arsenault, Dave Cole, Joe Massery, Kim Beauchemin

## Leave No Trace: Respect Wildlife

*By: Pete Lane, AMC Worcester Chapter Member*

This Leave No Trace principle addresses the impacts created when we fail to properly respect wildlife.

Like other Leave No Trace principles, there are many aspects of this principle. But, it really boils down to two:

- ❖ Keep your distance from wildlife
- ❖ No feeding wildlife, either intentionally or unintentionally

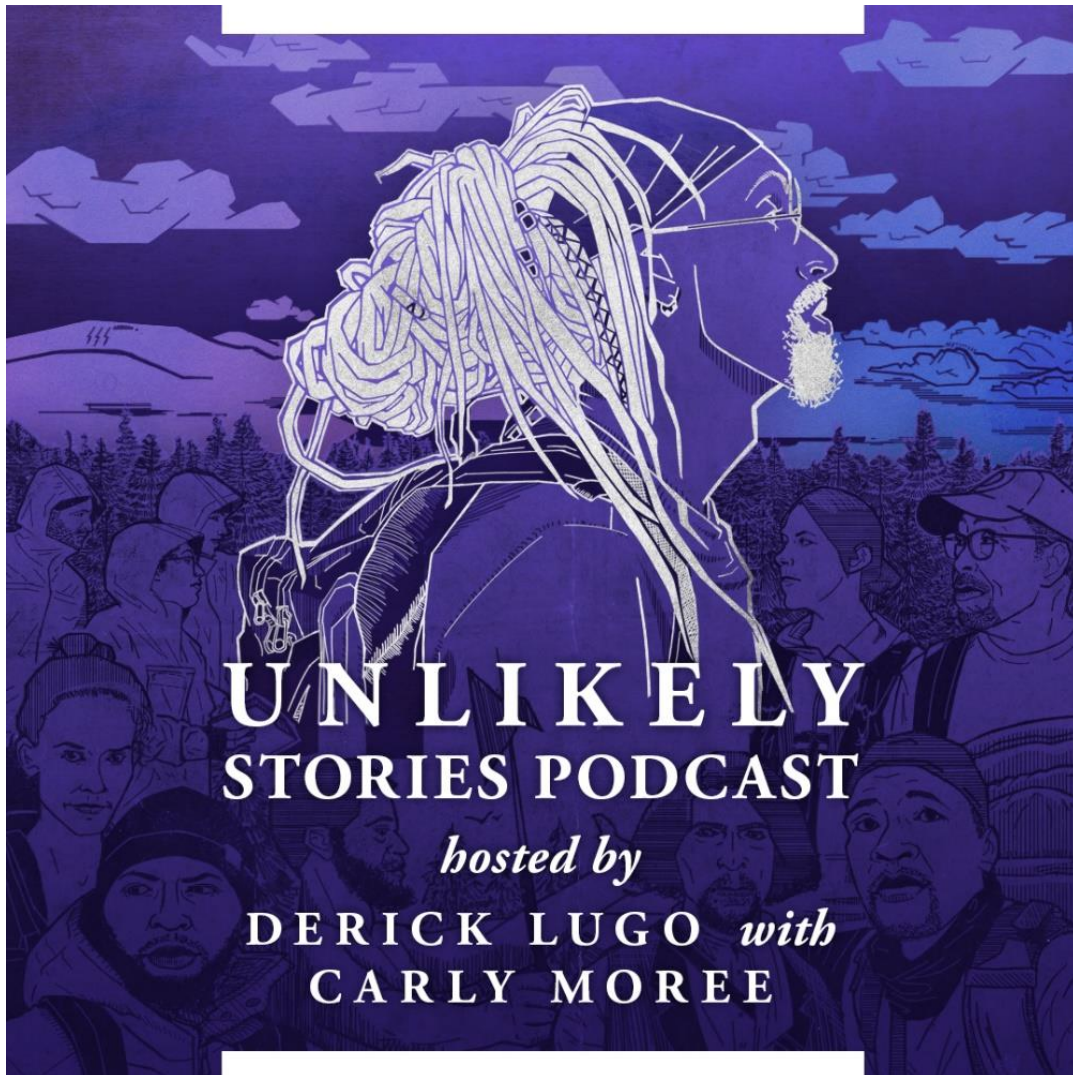
Interested in learning more about Leave No Trace?

- ❖ Take the Leave No Trace online awareness course at: <https://lnt.org/learn/online-awareness-course>
- ❖ Attend a Leave No Trace Trainer course. This is a two-day course with overnight. Search on the AMC webpage at <https://activities.outdoors.org/search/> for Leave No Trace or on Leave No Trace website at <https://lnt.org/learn/courses>



## Check it out! Unlikely Stories Podcast

The Appalachian Mountain Club has once again teamed up with Derick Lugo, author of *The Unlikely Thru-Hiker*, for his next project: Unlikely Stories Podcast. Hosted by Lugo and fellow thru-hiker and outdoors coach, Carly Moree, this new podcast highlights the lesser-known stories of adventurers, explorers, and outdoor leaders. Stories that unite communities with inspiration, information, and entertainment. Elevating unheard and diverse stories. Because everyone is part of the outdoor community.



***Be sure to catch the first three episodes on September 8, available wherever you listen to podcasts. And follow @unlikelystoriespodcast on Instagram for news, updates, and more!***