



United States
Department of
Agriculture
Forest
Service

June 2003



Moose Mountain Shelter Facility in the Appalachian Trail Corridor Hanover, NH

Decision Memo

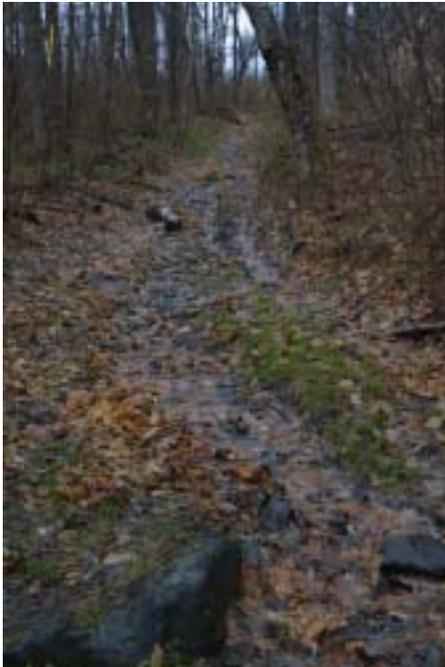
**Ammonoosuc/Pemigewasset Ranger District
White Mountain National Forest**



For Information Contact: Arthur V. Gigliello
Ammonoosuc/Pemigewasset Ranger District
White Mountain National Forest
RFD #3, Box 15
Plymouth, NH 03264-9103
603-536-1315
www.fs.fed.us/r9/white

*Cover Photo:
Deteriorating Moose Mountain
Shelter to be Replaced*

Photo 1: Wolfboro Road



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Table of Contents

1.0 Decision 5

 1.1 Background 5

 1.2 Purpose and Need 5

 1.3 Description of Decision 5

 1.4 Alternatives Considered But Eliminated 7

2.0 Reasons for Categorically Excluding the Decision 8

 2.1 Category of Exclusion 8

 2.2 Relationship to Extraordinary Circumstances 8

3.0 Public Involvement 11

4.0 Findings Required By and/or Related To Other Laws and Regulations 11

 4.1 Forest Plan Consistency (National Forest Management Act) 11

 4.2 Vegetation Manipulation (National Forest Management Act) 11

 4.3 Endangered Species Act 11

 4.4 Sensitive Species (Forest Service Manual 2670) 12

 4.5 Clean Water Act 12

 4.6 Wetlands (Executive Order 11990), Floodplains (Executive Order 11988) 12

 4.7 National Historic Preservation Act, Archaeological Resources Protection Act, Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act 12

 4.8 Environmental Justice (Executive Order 12898) 12

 4.9 National Environmental Policy Act 13

5.0 Administrative Review or Appeal 13

6.0 Implementation Date 13

7.0 Contact Person 13

8.0 Signature and Date 13

Appendix A – Response to Scoping Comments 14

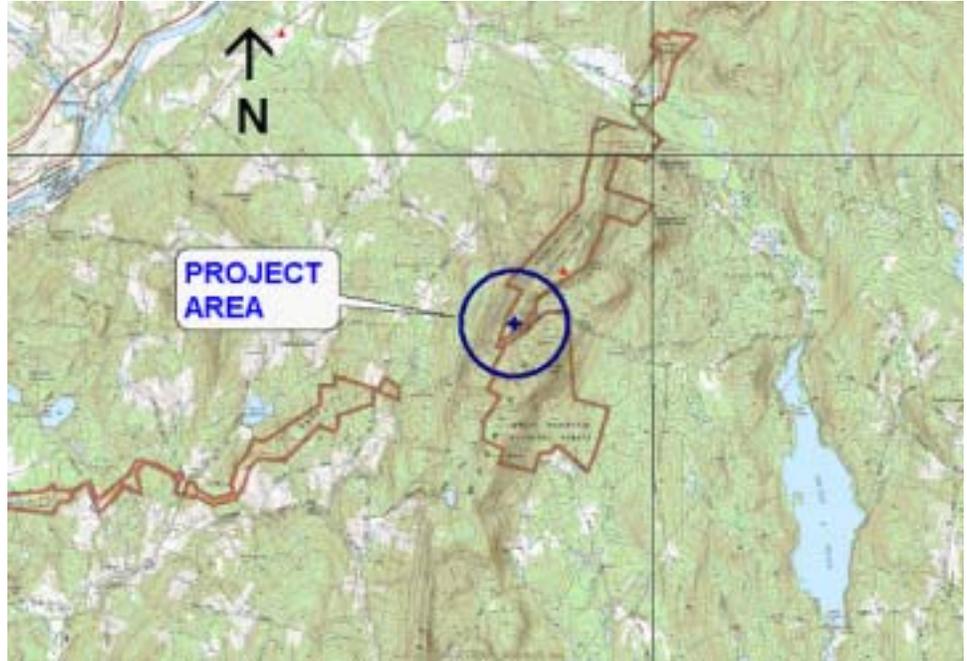
Appendix B – Mitigation Measures 18

Photo 2: Current privy and adjacent bog



Photo 3: Standing water at current shelter





Map 1. Vicinity of Moose Mountain Shelter Project Area



Map 2. Moose Mountain Shelter Facility Project Area

Moose Mountain Shelter Relocation Decision Memo

1.0 Decision

1.1 Background

The Moose Mountain Shelter was built in 1963 for through hikers on the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. It is located along Wolfeboro Road in the Town of Hanover, approximately ¼ mile from the trail. Wolfeboro Road is a Class 6 Town Road (no maintenance), which is regularly traveled by ATV's, snowmobiles, and an occasional full-sized off highway vehicle.

Easy access the shelter by hikers and people using vehicles has contributed to heavy use of the site and has resulted in soil compaction, loss of vegetation, and a general “run down” appearance. The 40-year old shelter is in poor condition (rotten wood, leaking roof).

In a letter dated August 29, 2000, the Dartmouth Outing Club requested permission to relocate the existing shelter site (shelter, pit toilet, and user-defined tent sites) to a location away from the Wolfboro Road to a location more compatible with the experience expected on the Appalachian Trail.

1.2 Purpose and Need

The purpose of the project is to provide a shelter facility in the vicinity of the existing Moose Mountain Shelter that is in keeping with direction from the White Mountain National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, the Appalachian Trail Conference: Local Management Planning Guide (LMPG), and other Appalachian Trail Conference Direction.

There is a need to replace the existing shelter facility with one that:

- Meets the needs of Appalachian Trail hikers (overnight camping, water, and sanitary facilities) and meets, as closely as possible, direction for citing shelter facilities along the trail;
- Is located on a site that will reduce resource damage; and
- Is located away from the Wolfboro Road to prevent the unintended use by off-road vehicle users.

There is also a need to close and rehabilitate the existing shelter site.

1.3 Description of Decision

To address the deteriorating condition of the Moose Mountain shelter and the problems associated with the overuse of the current Moose Mountain Shelter facility, I have decided to proceed with the following activities, which comply with WMNF Forest Plan, as amended, and The National Trails System Act (PL 90-543), as amended, ,

1. Remove the existing shelter and pit toilet.
2. Rehabilitate and revegetate the existing site.

Photo 4 Privy instate of disrepair.



Photo 5: Interior of existing shelter



Photo 6: Northern junction of loop trail

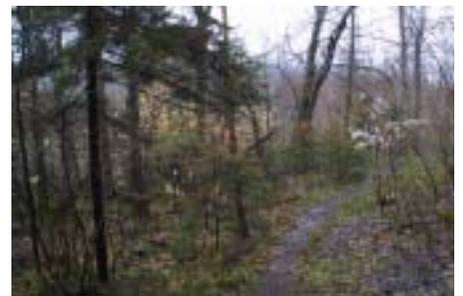
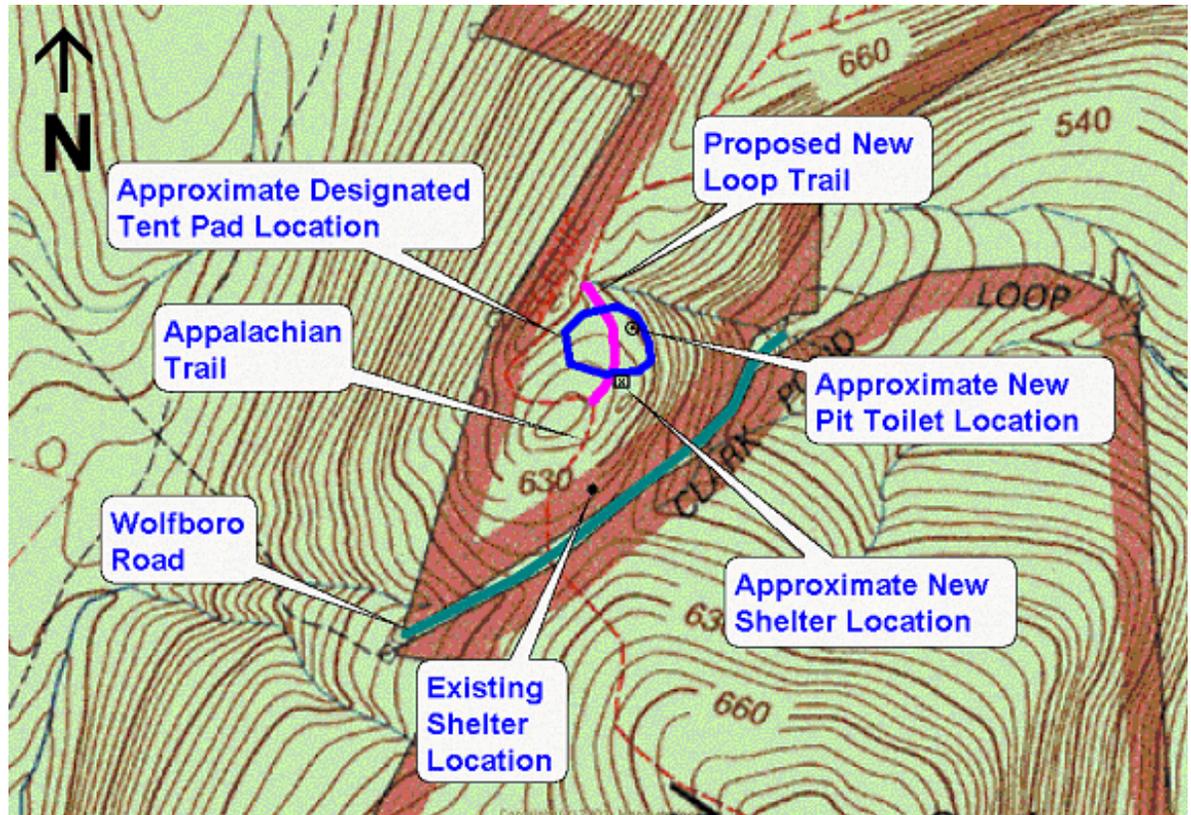




Photo 6: Location of water site to be developed adjacent to trail

3. Construct a 700-foot loop trail to access a new overnight shelter facility. The construction of a loop trail will allow access to the shelter site from the Appalachian Trail. The proposed site would be located in a mixed forest stand with a view east towards Mt. Cardigan. Construction would be compatible with the site using native stone foundation and spruce logs cut on site.
4. Construct a new Appalachian Trail shelter facility along the new loop trail, to include:
 - An 8x16-foot Adirondack shelter approximately 1,000 feet north of the junction of the Trail with the Wolfeboro Road. The proposed shelter would only be accessible by foot from the Appalachian Trail.
 - Four hardened tent pads. The objective would be to provide adequate camping facilities when demand exceeds the capacity of the shelter. Location of these sites would maintain the Appalachian Trail experience.
 - A pit toilet down-slope from the shelter and tent pads. The toilet would provide sanitation at the site.
 - In the spring seep that crosses the Appalachian Trail north of the new shelter site, deepen an existing pool of water and line with rocks. This will serve as a non-potable, unless treated, water point for the site.

Map 3. New Moose Mountain shelter facility.



1.4 Alternatives Considered But Eliminated

Rehabilitate the existing Moose Mountain Shelter at the current location:

This alternative was eliminated because:

- The site is wet and rehabilitation would not be effective in the long term, and
- The deteriorating shelter would continue to fall apart.

Reconstruct a new shelter in the current location:

This alternative was eliminated because:

- Motorized use of the site would continue, and
- The current site does not follow Appalachian Trail Conference: LMPG guidelines for shelter sites.

Locate the new shelter farther than a mile away from the Wolfeboro Road:

Appalachian Trail Conference guidelines note that shelter sites be located near a water source and that sites be located at intervals of approximately 5 to 8 miles. Alternative sites that met other criteria would not have had a good source of water. Moving the proposed site east or west a mile or more from Wolfeboro Road would not meet these interval guidelines.

Photo 8: Upland location of new shelter site.



2.0 Reasons for Categorically Excluding the Decision

Decisions may be categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement or environmental assessment when they are within one of the categories identified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 7 CFR part 1b.3 or one of the categories identified by the Chief of the Forest Service in Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 1909.15 sections 31.1b or 31.2, and there are no extraordinary circumstances related to the decision that may result in a significant individual or cumulative environmental effect.

2.1 Category of Exclusion

The project is within the category of exclusion 31.1(b)(5) that includes repair and maintenance of recreation sites and facilities.

2.2 Relationship to Extraordinary Circumstances

Threatened and Endangered Species or Their Critical Habitat - Effects Determinations to Federal and State-listed TEPS: Implementation of the Proposed Action would cause the direct effect of removing a few small diameter trees to accommodate the construction of the new shelter and additional soft wood trees 15 to 25 to construct the shelter. There would be conversion of minor amounts of forested habitat into a camping area. However, because this is non-suitable and unoccupied habitat there would be no direct or indirect effects to Federal TEPS or State-listed species. (Planning Record, Biological Evaluation/Assessment for the Moose Mountain Shelter Relocation, signed by Biologist Clara Weloth, May 30, 2003.)

Floodplains, Wetlands, or Municipal Watersheds -

Floodplains: Executive Order 11988 is to avoid adverse impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of floodplains. Floodplains are defined by this order as, “. . . the lowland and relatively flat areas adjoining inland and coastal waters including flood prone areas of offshore islands, including at a minimum, that area subject to a one percent [100-year recurrence] or greater chance of flooding in any one year.”

The new shelter location is on the side of a ridge on a dry site.

Wetlands: Executive Order 11990 is to avoid adverse impacts associated with destruction or modification of wetlands. Wetlands are defined by this order as, “. . . areas inundated by surface or ground water with a frequency sufficient to support and under normal circumstances does or would support a prevalence of vegetative or aquatic life that requires saturated or seasonally saturated soil conditions for growth and reproduction. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas such as sloughs, potholes, wet meadows, river overflows, mud flats, and natural ponds.”

The project is not located in or near wetlands. This decision will not affect wetlands.

Municipal Watersheds: This project is not located in a municipal watershed.

Congressionally Designated Areas -

Appalachian National Scenic: The National Trails System Act as amended (PL 90-543), is implemented according to:

- Comprehensive Plan for the Protection, Management, Development, and Use of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail.
- Memorandum of Agreement for the Management of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail between the Forest Service and the Park Service dealing with management of transfer lands, Control # 84-SIE-002.
- Agreement between the USDA Forest Service and the Appalachian Trail Conference Concerning Certain Lands (Transfer Lands) Along the Appalachian National Scenic Trail Control #84-SMU-003).

Management should be guided by the following documents.. When these documents are amended they will provide updated guidance and as such will not require Forest Plan amendment

- Appalachian Trail Conference Stewardship Manual: “Appalachian Trail Design, Construction, and Maintenance (ATC Stewardship Manual, second edition, 2000)”.
- Overnight-Use Management Principles.
- Appalachian Trail Conference: Checklist for the Location, Construction and Maintenance of Campsites and Shelters on the Appalachian Trail.
- Appalachian Trail Conference: Local Management Planning Guide.

Wilderness: This decision does not affect Wilderness. Wilderness is identified on the Forest as Management Area 5.1 (Forest Plan, pp. III-42 through III-46). The project is not located in or near wilderness. The closest Wilderness, Sandwich Wilderness Area, is 25 miles east of the project. The project area is not in or near Wilderness. This decision, with impacts limited to the immediate area of activity, will not affect Wilderness.

Wilderness Study Areas: This decision does not affect Wilderness Study Areas. Wilderness Study Areas are identified on the Forest as Management Area 9.1 (Forest Plan, pp. III-90 through III-92). The project is not in or near Wilderness Study Areas. The closest Wilderness Study Area is the Caribou/Speckled Wilderness Study Area (northeast, 45 miles). This decision, with impacts limited to the immediate area of activity, will not affect the Wilderness Study Area.

National Recreation Areas: There are no National Recreation Areas on the White Mountain National Forest. This decision will not affect National Recreation Areas.

Scenic Areas: This decision does not affect Scenic Areas. Scenic Areas are identified on the Forest as Management Area 8.1 (Forest Plan, pp. III-64 through III-83). The closest Scenic Areas is Greely Ponds Scenic Area

(northeast, 23 miles) and Sawyer Pond Scenic Area (northeast 30 miles). This decision, with impacts limited to the immediate area of activity, will not affect the Scenic Area.

National Scenic Byway: This decision does not affect Scenic Byways. The nearest Scenic Byway, Kancamagus National Scenic Byway, is located approximately 28 miles northeast of the project area.

Inventoried Roadless Areas –

There are no inventoried roadless areas (RARE II or Forest Plan) in the decision area. This decision will not affect inventoried roadless areas.

Research Natural Areas –

There are three designated Research Natural Areas on the Forest. This project is outside these designated areas and therefore this decision will not affect Research Natural Areas.

Native American Religious or Cultural Sites, Archaeological Sites, or Historic Properties or Areas –

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires federal agencies to take into account the effect of a project on any district, site, building, structure, or object that is included in, or eligible for inclusion in the National Register. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act also requires federal agencies to afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment. The Archaeological Resources Protection Act covers the discovery and protection of historic properties (prehistoric and historic) that are excavated or discovered in federal lands. It affords lawful protection of archaeological resources and sites that are on public and Indian lands. The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act covers the discovery and protection of Native American human remains and objects that are excavated or discovered in federal lands. It encourages avoidance of archaeological sites that contain burials or portions of sites that contain graves through “in situ” preservation, but may encompass other actions to preserve these remains and items. This decision complies with the cited Acts. Surveys were conducted for Native American religious or cultural sites, archaeological sites, and historic properties or areas that may be affected by this decision. No significant artifacts were found. Consultation on this finding occurred with the State Historic Preservation Office (Planning Record. Cultural Resource Report, CRRR No. 02-4-3 February 4, 2002).

Additionally, the Federal government has trust responsibilities to Tribes under a government-to-government relationship to insure that the Tribes reserved rights are protected. Consultation with tribes helps insure that these trust responsibilities are met. There are no federally-recognized Native American Nations in New Hampshire.

No tribal concerns were identified for this project through scoping.

No other extraordinary circumstances related to the project were identified (Planning Record. Cultural Resource Report, CRRR No. 02-4-3 February 4, 2002).

3.0 Public Involvement

A letter describing the proposed project dated February 26, 2003 was sent to approximately 300 interested groups and individuals.

Comments were used to refine the project, consider alternatives to the project, and to consider environmental effects of the project. See Appendix A – Response to Scoping for the Forest Service response to the comments received during Scoping.

4.0 Findings Required By and/or Related To Other Laws and Regulations

My decision will comply with all applicable laws and regulations. I have summarized some pertinent ones below.

4.1 Forest Plan Consistency (National Forest Management Act)

This Act requires the development of long-range land and resource management plans (Forest Plans). The White Mountain Forest Plan, as amended, was approved in 1986, as required by this Act. It has since been amended eight times. The amended plan provides for guidance for all natural resource management activities on the Forest. The Act requires that all projects and activities be consistent with the Forest Plan. The Forest Plan has been reviewed in consideration of this project. This decision is responsive to guiding direction contained in the WMNF Plan, as summarized in Section **1.0 Decision** of this document. The legal mandate for the lands of the project area are identified in section **Congressionally Designated Areas, *Appalachian National Scenic Trail***: The National Trails System Act, as amended (PL 90-543) This decision is consistent with the standards and guidelines contained in the Forest Plan and the National Trails System Act.

4.2 Vegetation Manipulation (National Forest Management Act)

This Act and its implementing regulations require that manipulation of tree cover for any purpose must comply with seven requirements found at 36 CFR 219.27(b). Relocating the Moose Mountain Shelter will result in no net change in forested area, because the old location will revert to forest over time.

4.3 Endangered Species Act

See above, Section **Threatened and Endangered Species or Their Critical Habitat - Effects Determinations to Federal and State-listed TEPS**.

4.4 Sensitive Species (Forest Service Manual 2670)

This Manual direction requires analysis of potential impacts to sensitive species, those species for which the Regional Forester has identified population viability is a concern. Potential effects of this decision on sensitive species have been analyzed and documented in a Biological Evaluation (Planning Record Biological Evaluation for Moose Mountain Shelter relocation signed by Biologist Clara Weloth, May 30, 2003). This decision will have “no impact” on sensitive species.

4.5 Clean Water Act

This Act is to restore and maintain the integrity of waters. The Forest Service complies with this Act by using Best Management Practices. This decision incorporates Best Management Practices to ensure protection of soil and water resources.

4.6 Wetlands (Executive Order 11990), Floodplains (Executive Order 11988)

See above, Section 2.2.3 Floodplains, Wetlands, or Municipal Watersheds.

4.7 National Historic Preservation Act, Archaeological Resources Protection Act, Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act

See above, Section 2.2.6 Native American Religious or Cultural Sites, Archaeological Sites, or Historic Properties or Areas.

4.8 Environmental Justice (Executive Order 12898)

This Order requires consideration of whether projects would disproportionately impact minority or low-income populations. This decision complies with this Act. Public involvement occurred for this project, the results of which I have considered in this decision-making. Public involvement did not identify any adversely impacted local minority or low-income populations. This decision is not expected to adversely impact minority or low-income populations.

4.9 National Environmental Policy Act

This Act requires public involvement and consideration of potential environmental effects. The entirety of documentation for this decision supports compliance with this Act.

5.0 Administrative Review or Appeal

This decision is not subject to a higher level of administrative review or appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 215.8

6.0 Implementation Date

This decision may be implemented immediately. Implementation is expected to begin in June 2003.

7.0 Contact Person

Further information about this decision can be obtained from Arthur V. Gigliello at the Ammonoosuc Office of the Ammonoosuc/ Pemigewasset Ranger District (Address: 660 Trudeau Road, Bethlehem, NH 03574; Voice: 603-869-2626; TTY/TDD: 603-869-3104; Fax: 603-8695844, e-mail: agigliello@fs.fed.us.

8.0 Signature and Date

I have concluded that this decision may be categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement or environmental assessment as it is within one of the categories identified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 7 CFR part 1b.3 or one of the categories identified by the Chief of the Forest Service in Forest Service

Handbook (FSH) 1909.15 sections 31.1b or 31.2, and there are no extraordinary circumstances related to the decision that may result in a significant individual or cumulative environmental effect. My conclusion is based on information presented in this document and the entirety of the Planning Record.

JOHN J. SERFASS
District Ranger

Date

Appendix A – Response to Scoping Comments

To the Decision Memo for The Moose Mountain Shelter Facility Project

A letter describing the proposed project dated February 26, 2003 was sent to approximately 300 interested groups and individuals. This also requested comments on the Livermore Trail Parking Lot Toilet Project.

Twenty-three (23) responses were received for this project (comment letters, E-mails, and a phone comment) were received on this project on or before the close of the comment period March 28, 2003.

Comments received from the Scoping effort were used to refine the project and in the analysis (project file).

List Of People And Organizations Responding To Scoping

1. David & Tanya Tellman, Whitefield, NH
2. Joan Gable, Albany Twp, ME
3. Betty Lou Baily, Schenectedy, NY
4. Lewis Parker, Kents Hill, ME
5. Vincent MacIlvain, Westport, CN
6. Commented only on Livermore project only
7. John Oleary, W. Roxbury, MA
8. Andrew C. Millar, Darien CT
9. Robert Miller, Southwick, NH
10. Commented on Livermore project only
11. Commented on Livermore project only
12. F.K. Mitchel
13. George Gilman, Holliston, MA
14. C.W. Caldwell, Center Harbor, NH
15. Judy Flanders, Henniker, NH
16. Charles Kellog (Email)
17. Robert Cavanaugh (Email)
18. Bruce Sloat, Lancaster, NH
19. Thomas Meler, Beverly, MA
20. Thomas Linell, Hanover, NH
21. Julie Clemons, Dartmouth Outing Club, Hanover, NH
22. Iris Baird, Lancaster, NH
23. George Howard (Email)
24. Matt Stevens, Appalachian Trail Conference, Lyme, NH
25. Bob Sparrow, NH Parks (Phone)
26. Pierce Beij, Ashland, NH

Public 30-Day Comments/Forest Service Responses

The response to the following comments is, “Comment noted”. The number (1:) preceding the comment denotes the commentator.

1: *Seems to be a much needed and worthwhile improvement. Nice that members of the Dartmouth Outing Club are willing to do the work.*

2: *Sounds good.*

3: *It is always better to have shelters away from roads to that unintended users don't have ready access. Nearest shelters are not close, so definitely replace it.*

4: *I agree with this completely.*

5: *I think the proposal to build a new shelter is important since the original shelter is in such poor condition. Also - the heavy traffic in the original area is destroying the site.*

8: *Support*

9: *I support this project.*

12: *Sounds great as planned.*

13: *This is a positive move. Anytime a new shelter replaces an old one is good and to place it in a secluded area off a footpath is even better. This makes it more accessible to hikers for which it is intended and out of sight of local people who use it to party and vandalize. I agree with the proposed plan.*

15: *Much needed project. Sounds great!*

16: *It does need to be accomplished. The DOC is the group to do it, partly due to so many Dartmouth students using it! The further from the better as far as I am concerned.*

17: *I am fully in favor with re-constructing the Moose Mountain Shelter in the new location.*

The Moose Mountain Shelter needs to be more inaccessible to people using vehicles, and the relocation addresses that issue. The tent sites are an

excellent idea, to accommodate backpackers who want privacy or are turned-away from a full shelter situation.

18: *Thanks for the information on the above project. I have reviewed the material and see no reason to not implement the project.*

19: *It is always a blessing, when hiking, to come upon a shelter that is in a condition that is accommodating, especially during inclement weather. We are in favor of this project.*

21: *On behalf of the Dartmouth Outing Club I would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed relocation and new construction of the Moose Mountain Shelter near Hanover, NH.*

There are several reasons we proposed rebuilding AND relocating the shelter and we are still looking forward to the project. Obviously the shelter is old and dilapidated and needs rebuilding. In addition, its current location on a Class 6 road is far from ideal, allowing access by non-trail users. This has unfortunately led to many incidents of vandalism, littering, and harassment of hikers. The new location is far more desirable in terms of view, hiker access, and a peaceful location.

The Dartmouth outing Club supports this action as proposed and looks forward to working with the Appalachian Trail Conference and the White Mountain National Forest to see it come to fruition.

22: *I 'm all in favor of moving the shelter to a more in accessible location – this has been a real problem for the ATC in many areas, not just for the Whites. Between the ATVs and the snowmachines the problem seems to get worse, if anything. I'm also very much in favor of the DOC involvement – this is a good and useful way of keeping that group actively involved in the trails systems. They did a fine job, so I've heard, on Smarts a while ago.*

23: *I concur with the project as proposed.*

24: *On behalf of the Appalachian Trail Conference, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed relocation and new construction of the Moose Mountain shelter near Hanover, NH*

ATC has worked closely with Dartmouth Outing Club and the USDA Forest Service in managing the section of trail on which the shelter is located. The proposed action will eliminate a dilapidated and potentially unsafe shelter and provide a more desirable location for A.T. users and will eliminate access by motorized vehicles. We believe that it will ultimately lay lighter on the land and therefore support the action as proposed.

25: *Agrees with the replacement of the old shelter in a new location*

Commentor 1: Comment 2

If problems should persist at the new location the town should be asked to at least bar full size vehicles from the area.

Response 1:2

The Wolfeboro Road is a Class 6 town road and, as such, is outside the management control the Forest Service. However, the new shelter facility location will not be legally accessible by ATVs.

Commentor 7: Comment 1

I would like to preview further mailings on both sites before I trust your experience to see that the work will be done properly and your experience in the Forest Service as conditions are today (sic).

Response 7:1

The work will be accomplished by the Dartmouth Outing Club (DOC) under the supervision of a Forest Service representative.

Commentor 14: Comment 1

It appears that you would be happy if the access to all of your facilities was limited to hikers. Perhaps damage could have been controlled with proper maintenance and supervision.

Response 14:1

The shelter was constructed specifically for Appalachian Trail users. The intent of the trail and the facilities along the trail are for hikers. Other uses are not compatible.

Commentor 18: Comment 2

The distance for the shelter of 1000 feet from the old shelter will probably not slow up the ATV use. Strong enforcement of the law by the Hanover Police is what

is required. At present the illegal ATV use is getting little if any attention and as I see it is one of the most serious problems on the public land.

Response 18:2

See Response 1:2

Commentor 20:

1: *The Town of Hanover is currently negotiating to purchase the 20 acre parcel which contains the communications tower, south of Moose Mountain's South Peak. The 34 -acre parcel, on the ridge south of that parcel is already owned by the Town of Hanover and is managed as a Town Forest.*

Response 18:2

Comment noted. Outside the scope of the project.

2: *The location of the Wolfboro Road is shown incorrectly for that portion of the road west of the height on land on Moose Mt. The road actually follows the faint line shown on the map which runs NW from the height of land.*

Response 20:2

Comment noted. See the maps in this Decision Memo.

3: *There is no water source shown for the proposed Moose Mt. Shelter site. Where will it be ?Moving the water source above the Wolfboro Road is a good idea, as this will reduce the chances of oil or grease getting into the water, but the higher you go, the less likelihood of there being water available in late summer or drought .The Velvet Rocks Ledyard Spring in Hanover dried up completely this past summer for many weeks. There is rumored to be a never failing spring north of the north peak of Moose Mountain. Southbound hikers intending to overnight at the new Moose Mountain shelter might like to know this.*

Response 20:3

The new site is located near a water source, which is identified on Map 3 of the Decision Memo. The location of this water source is one of the reasons for not considering alternative sites located further from Wolfboro Road (Decision Memo, §1.0, p.5).

4: *A loop trail has existed on Moose Mt. since about 1980. Is this loop trail the one on which the proposed shelter will be located?*

Response 20:4

No. This will be a new spur for the sole purpose of accessing the new shelter facility (Decision Memo, Maps 2 and 3).

5: *Personally, I think the Hanover owned Goodwin Forest east of the AT corridor should be located on the scoping map. The functional AT corridor north of the Wolfboro Road is considerably wider than the NPS corridor. The Town Forest (purchased with Federal matching funds) and the AT corridor, complement one another .*

Response 20:5

The purpose of scoping is to inform the public of a proposed action. The scope of this Moose Mountain Shelter Facility Relocation Project is limited by the actions proposed. While the Goodwin Forest may, indeed, compliment the Appalachian Trail and corridor, it is not pertinent to the shelter facility relocation project.

Commentor 25: Comment 2

Should consider a side spur trail rather than a loop trail to access the shelter facility. A loop trail might become the main trail, and people may abandon the existing trail.

Response 25:2

While this may be a concern, there are numerous loop trails along the AT, and all do not result in the abandonment of the main trail. Those hikers that are looking for a privy or a place to spend the night will undoubtedly use the loop trail.

Commentor 26: Comment 1

It seems to me that there is a need to put the shelter in "a more secluded location" and the proposed plan does not adequately meet that need.

It appears that the new location would be "approximately 1000 ft" from the Wolfboro Road and would perhaps attract a bootleg trail.

Response 26:1

See Map 3. Because of the location of the new site, a bootleg trail would probably follow the path of least resistance which would be along the AT. Use of the AT by vehicles is illegal, and problems would be resolved by law enforcement.

Commentor 26: Comment 2

It is my impression that shelters should be miles from a road in order to avoid overuse and abuse by parties other than backpackers. Are there any other features of the proposed location that cannot be approximated much further from a road?

Response 26:2

Guidelines recommend placing shelters approximately 2 miles from main roads. Wolfboro Road is a Class 6 town road (unimproved), see Photo 1, this Decision Memo, page 2. Appalachian Trail Conference guidelines note that shelter sites be located near a water source and that sites be located at intervals of approximately 5 to 8 miles. Alternative sites that met other criteria would not have had a good source of water. Moving the proposed site east or west a mile or more from Wolfboro Road would not meet these interval guidelines.

Commentor 26: Comment 3

There is no mention of the ATC; I thought they had responsibility.

Response 26:3

See § 1.2 Purpose and Need, this Decision Memo, page 5.

Commentor 26: Comment 4

There is a need to see the official AT corridor on a map.

Response 26:4

See Maps 1-3, , this Decision Memo, pages 4 and 6.

Commentor 26: Comment 5

There is a need to consider drainage and a water source.

Response 26:5

The existing site is in a wet area (Photos 1-3, pages 2 and 3), and the new facility will be located on an upland site. The water source for the new facility is at the north junction of the new loop trail and the AT (Map 3 and Photo 7, page 6).

Commentor 26: Comment 6

Use of logs from the site should be very cautious as opening the canopy causes dessication and rank growth.

Response 26:6

The number of trees cut for the project will be limited to those necessary to clear the shelter area and the tent pads. This will limit the openings created in the canopy.

Commentor 26: Comment 7

If the shelter were removed and not replaced, would there be an excessive gap in the AT shelter system for AT hikers? Has the ATC commented.

Response 26:7

See Response 26:2 Matt Stevens, Associate Regional Representative – New England, Appalachian Trail Conference (Commentor 24) responded for J.T. Horn, Regional Representative. See his comment on page A-15, above.

**Appendix B – Mitigation Measures
To the Decision Memo for the
Moose Mountain Shelter Facility Project**

The generally applicable Forest and Management area-wide Standards and Guidelines listed in the Forest Plan in sections III and appendix VIIB:18-22 and state Best management Practices (BMPs) are applicable to all action alternatives.

Mitigation Measures for Moose Mountain Shelter Relocation Project

Resource	Location	Mitigation Action & Type	Responsible Party	When To Accomplish	Date Accomplished/ By Whom
Engineering/ Recreation	Construction of new shelter	Meet ADA standards	Dartmouth Outing Club with Forest Service Oversight	During Implementation	
	Tent Pads	Tenting areas will be designated with minimal clearing and leveling.			
	Tree Cutting	Lop and scatter tops to lie within 24 inches of ground. Flush cut stumps after trees are felled. Remove debris 25 feet from trails and tent sites.			
	Fire Ring	The fire ring from the existing facility will be reinstalled at the new facility.			
Soil & Water	Rehabilitation of old site	Disturbed and compacted area will be scarified and seeded with non-persistent annual grasses or native vegetation.			
	Construction of the by pass trail.	Use BMPs including installation of water bars to prevent possible erosion and siltation			
	Disposal of old facility	Removal and disposal of materials from existing site will be conducted in an environmentally safe manner.			