

National Speleological Society

Administrative Vice President's Report

Board of Governors Meeting Birmingham, Alabama, November 2009

Ray Keeler, AVP@caves.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

- 1) **Cave Management Division**
- 2) **Conservation Division**
- 3) **Convention Division**
- 4) **Education Division**

INTRODUCTION / SUMMARY

The Department of the AVP consists of 4 Divisions (Cave Management, Conservation, Conventions and Education) and two Commissions (National Cave Rescue and Vandalism Deterrence). Contained within are 19 committees and various subcommittees.

The complete Division reports are presented. Many members on the committees are working very hard to complete their tasks and reports. These reports will be included in the permanent AVP report to act as long term references.

Progress:

Here are some of the Administrative VP highlights:

- The ICS/NSS Convention was a great success with a huge effort by scores of cavers
- Potter Unit Nature Preserve: Paperwork to transfer the Potter Unit Nature Preserve in Oklahoma to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USF&WS) was completed in July and deeds signed. A surprise presentation to the Department of Interior representative at the ICS Convention banquet.
- The owners Crystal Caverns, a small commercial cave operation in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia has expressed interest in donating the property containing the cave, buildings and fourteen acres to the NSS. The review process is just starting.
- Lisa Hall has accepted the position of the Contemporary Cave Use Committee chair. Thanks.
- Gary Moss has accepted the NSS Nature Preserves Committee chair. Thanks.
- A proposal for \$18,000 to the Fish and Wildlife Service was submitted for logging cave use in up to 75 eastern caves was submitted. This will help better understand cave use activity in the states affected by the White Nose Syndrome (WNS) problem. Proposal selection will be at the end of October, 2009. The study will be over a two year period.

Issues:

- NSS Preserves in the northeast and Virginia, with the exception of the Tytoona Preserve in Pennsylvania, are closed for the winter due to WNS.

Cave Management Division

John M. Wilson – Division Chief, jmwgeo@gmail.com
(this is a new email address)
9504 Lakewater Ct., Henrico, VA 23229
phone) 804-741-4274

The Management Division has filled the two vacancies
The NSS Nature Preserves Committee chair is now Gary Moss
The Contemporary Cave Use Committee chair is now Lisa Hall.

Cave and Karst Acquisition Committee - Kim Metzgar - kimmakc@aol.com

I have had no new grant requests and I have no pending grant requests for the Cave and Karst Acquisition Committee, no requests to review management plans and nothing in the works as far as I know.

(Keeler note: The Crystal Caverns property opportunity in Virginia surfaced after this report was submitted. Kim has been sent the relevant information and has started her review)

Cave Conservancies Committee - John M. Wilson - jmwgeo@gmail.com

The 12th Annual Cave Conservancy Round-table was replaced at the ICS by a paper on Cave Conservancy Management held at the symposium “Establishing Cave and Karst Protected Areas.” An informal discussion meeting of representatives of five conservancies took place during the ICS.

Contemporary Cave Use Study – Lisa Hall - caverlisa@hotmail.com

I have plans to print registers when money becomes available for Contemporary Cave Use Studies. I have nothing else to report at this time.

(Keeler note: If the Fish and Wildlife Service accepts the cave use study, Hobo data loggers will accompany the registers and this will become a very busy committee).

REPORT OF THE NSS NATURE PRESERVES COMMITTEE CHAIR

September 28, 2009

Gary Moss, Chairman - kd4itj@amsat.org

Keeler note: Gary Moss has assumed the Nature Preserves Committee Chair Position

Barton Hill: Thom Engel necaver@earthlink.net

No report received

Donald K. Russell Nature Preserve – reporting - Reporting – Steve Hensley -
Steve_Hensley@fws.gov

No report received

Great Expectations- Bob Montgomery WYOCAVER@aol.com

No report received

John Guilday Caves Nature Preserve Report - Dave West d270@bellatlantic.net

Problems: WNS. Positive results from Hamilton and Trout Caves.

Plans: Keep the preserve closed until advised by West Virginia Department of Natural Resources and USF&W that reopening is appropriate. A bat count will be conducted in late winter in all three major caves.

Progress: Preserve has been a subject in a film prepared by the United States Forest Service and USF&W "The Battle for Bats". Has also been utilized in a WNS study conducted in conjunction with WVDNR.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave West
Preserve Manager

Kingston Saltpeter Nature Preserve – Larry O. Blair caveob@yahoo.com

Larry O. Blair
Chairman

NSS 13921LF
192 Sequoia Drive, NE
Marietta, GA 30060-7214
(Home) (770) 422-2174

Kingston Saltpeter Cave Nature Preserve

COMMITTEE REPORT

September 26, 2009

This report will serve as the official record of the Kingston Saltpeter Cave Nature Preserve, a.k.a. the Kingston Saltpeter Cave Preserve of the National Speleological Society for the time since my last report dated June 4, 2009.

To start this report I am happy to report that the cave's bat population still does not exhibit any outward evidence of White Nose Syndrome (WNS). Of course we are very happy to report this and hope the same for the future. We look for any sick bats on every trip into the cave.

On June 11, 2009 I completed the recon trip that I mentioned at the end of my last report. However, it was much more than just a "recon" outing! It became a solo work trip. I had to cut down two small hichory trees that had bent down across the approach fire road. I also cut a lot of vine from the Big Entrance enclosure, evasive thistle plants and also cut sections of a larger tree that had turned over almost blocking the main gate to the cave proper. This was the same tree reported by Kevin Glenn, Committee member, in his trip report back on April 4. [see report dated June 4, Attachment No. 1]. These logs were carried down the hill and placed in the bad erosion ditch I am always fighting. I had also hauled in three arm loads of limbs from my own home to place in this trouble spot.

Down in the twilight zone of the cave I have started to repair the scar created during the fossil recovery of the "main dig" location. It is only proper that this task be undertaken. It will take several work trips to complete as I am hand placing the removed rock in order to effect a more natural look when completed.

There was no new trash located, however, I did remove a good bit of glass shards. I did find what seemed to be tracks of one horse being ridden into thr property. No bats were noted near to the entrance.

On June 13 Committee members Kevin and Shannon Glenn visited the property. They noted the work I had done just two days prior and also discovered the horse tracks. No trash was located.

The Glenns visited again on August 15 finding two dozen bats...all seemingly O.K. No trash was found, however, on all such trips any old trash located is remover.

The Glenns noted that on a September 5th. trip is seems as though someone had crawled under the wire of the Big Entrance enclosure! Active bats were noted but all seemed to be O.K. No damage or trash was found.

On September 24 I visited the Bartow History Center to present a multi-media program to thirty patrons of the Bartow History Museum. This is located in Cartersville, Georgia, home of the Kingston Saltpeter Cave Preserve. The discussion was followed by a book signing session. This was a very good public relations event.

All is well at the Kingston Saltpeter Cave Preserve at this time.



McFail's Cave Nature Preserve – Tom Rider trider@nycap.rr.com

Progress: McFail's Cave is just about to close for the season on 10/1 consistent with the other NSS preserves and NCC preserves in the Northeast. There were 10 trips into the cave this season w/ two more planned early next week for a total of 12. This does not count 1 trip into the cave early last spring to check on the bats. The property and trails are in good shape. Several trees that had fallen across the trails last winter were removed.

Plans: No immediate plans. Consideration should be given to performing a more formal bat count sometime in the near future. The last bat count was performed over 25 years ago.

Problems: No problems to report.

Mill Creek Sink Nature Preserve - Robert Anderson randerson007@windstream.net

ANNUAL REPORT 2009 – October 2009

Introduction

2009 has been a good year at Mill Creek Sink.

Site conditions have been excellent throughout the year despite some significant rainfall and moderate flooding of the rivers in the area. Robert Anderson, a long time guide at Mill Creek replaced Jerry Murphy as Property Manager of the site. Activities included meetings with the Alachua Police Department, grounds cleanup, and repairs to the steps leading into the sink.

Activities:

On April 5, 2009 the Board of Directors voted to remove Jerry Murphy as property manager of Mill Creek Sink. On an interim basis, I took over the day to day management of the site and management of the liability waivers. The BOD then voted to affirm me as property manager. As such there is limited data for the number of dives conducted before April. The guides, on an individual basis have conducted cleanups of the site and the driveway. Maintenance was conducted on the steps leading to the sink and regular mowing of the drive has taken place. In addition, I have met with the Alachua Police Department representatives several times to continue the good relations with the city.

Progress

Eleven dives were safely completed since June first. The guides were: Doug Chappell, Rick Crawford, Wayne Kinard, Bill Main, Mark Messersmith, Jeff Petersen and Ward Beecher. The new system for paperwork is working well and all forms have been received by the PM.

The meeting of the guides was held on September 11th. At this meeting we discussed, whether there was a need for new guides(Which there was not). Making sure all paperwork was being filled out properly. Future events: Tentatively a cleanup in February, and making sure all the guides qualifications were in by January.

The next guide meeting is tentatively scheduled for January.

The availability calendar is up and working. It is through the Yahoo system on the internet and can be viewed at: <http://www.calendar.yahoo.com/alachuasink>.

The Guide Data sheet is attached as Appendix B to this report.

The Alachua Police Department has been notified of, and sent the revised Guides/Science Diver list.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations at this time.

Conclusions

The Diving Program is working well at this point. Few, if any changes need to be made. Currently dives are being conducted and observations are being made. We need to move forward collecting data as we go.

Potter Unit Nature Preserve –Steve Hensley - Steve_Hensley@fws.gov

Keeler note: With the Potter Unit successfully completing the transfer to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in July, this will be the last entry for the preserve. **A HUGE THANK YOU** to Steve Hensley for helping with this effort.

Richard Blenz Nature Preserve – Anmar Mirza anmar.mirza@gmail.com

Progress: A sign for the property was purchased and is awaiting installation. The sign details the new NSS Ownership, rules for conduct while on the property, and contact information to request access.

The Queen Blair entrance has been further stabilized and the pipe emplaced was bolted to bedrock.

Ongoing graffiti removal and cave cleanup has been done.

Problems: Regular problems with unauthorized access and minor vandalism, nothing of particular egregiousness.

Plans: A work day is tentatively being planned for Oct 31. Sign installation, installation of a gate on the Queen Blair entrance, and general property maintenance is planned.

Purchase of additional gravel for the drive, parking area, and trail to the cave.

A grant to the NSF was applied for purchase of a 4 gas monitor and a CO2 monitor. If received, the monitors will be used to check O2/CO2, H2S and Hydrocarbons in caves on the property on a weekly basis, as part of a larger study involving caves in the region.

Schoharie Caverns Nature Preserve Report - Christa Hay christahay@yahoo.com

The biggest news for the preserve is it has closed as of October 1, 2009 for the winter due to WNS. I have attached a press release.

I have a hobo unit that I want to send in to have the data downloaded from last year but I can;t remember who I send it to. Can you help with that? I will want it back to put in the cave for this year as well. When I took it out before I had a problem turning it off so I wrapped it in paper so its not detecting light...hopefully!

The Preserve this year saw some activity but I would say not as much as before WNS. The cabin is in good shape and the only expenses were for lawn mowing and outhouse pumping both of which have been paid. I still have a few maintenance issues I would like to finish before the snow flies such as painting 3 window frames. These have been stained so they will not get damaged if I just can't get out there but would like them to match the cabin color.

One big maintenance project that will need to be addressed hopefully next year is to have some crusher-run (I think that's what its called) delivered for the driveway. Will also need to have a piece of heavy equipment to grate and spread. With the heavy rains this past year the driveway has washed out. Right now it is still drive-able but this will need to be attended to sooner than later. Its ok for high clearance vehicles but cars will bottom out if not careful.

The caving scene enjoys the cabin very much and every time I was out there the cabin looked good. People are respecting the property.

The website <http://www.caves.org/preserves/schoh/schohari.html> needs to be updated to show that they will be opening in 2010. Also I have asked for a couple years now that the last sentence needs to be changed. I have sent this request in several times but it has not been addressed. The contact info is correct so I am getting those emails at least and can respond to people.

Christa

Keeler note: Northeastern Cave Conservancy announcement closing their caves in parallel with the NSS Preserve closures in the northeast.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 25, 2009

NORTHEASTERN CAVE CONSERVANCY AGAIN CLOSES CAVES DUE TO WHITE NOSE SYNDROME IN BATS

**Contacts: Robert Addis, President (518) 237-1165
Peter Youngbaer, Vice President (802) 272-3802
Christa Hay, Publicity Chair (518) 786-7518**

Schoharie, NY

The Northeastern Cave Conservancy (NCC) announced today it is again closing three of its caves for the winter, effective October 1, to protect hibernating bats in response to the continuing White Nose Syndrome crisis.

The affected caves are Knox Cave, Crossbones Cave, and Ella Armstrong Cave, all in New York State. Barring unforeseen circumstances, the caves will re-open in the spring.

The other caves owned and managed by the NCC will remain open for visitation under regular visitation policies. Details about all NCC caves and visitation may be found on the NCC web site at www.necaveconservancy.org.

Action by the NCC parallels that of the National Speleological Society, which is also closing its three New York cave preserves October 1 – Schoharie Caverns, Gage Cave (Barton Hill Preserve), and McFail's Cave.

The vote to close these caves was taken at the NCC's quarterly meeting Sunday, at Sam's Point Preserve, in Cragmoor, NY. NCC Board member, Al Hicks, bat specialist for the NY Department of Environmental Conservation, advised that closing later would subject bats already gathered for hibernation to unnecessary disturbance.

The NCC also heard from Carl Herzog, also with NYDEC, on the results of summer acoustical monitoring surveys. These surveys showed that certain bat species affected by White Nose Syndrome – Little Brown Bats, Northern Long-Eared Bats, Tri-colored Bats (Eastern Pipistrelles), and Indiana Bats – are virtually gone from the region due to WNS.

NCC President, Robert Addis, said, "Closing these particular caves in conjunction with the National Speleological Society caves, will allow us to study the continuing impact on the bats in these affected sites, and hopefully permit the remaining bats to begin to recover their historic numbers." Bats typically give birth to only one pup a year, so population recovery

Shelta Cave Nature Preserve Report – Paul Meyer paul.meyer@knology.net

No report received.

Tytoona Cave Nature Preserve Report - Garrett Czmor gczmor@verizon.net

September 30, 2009

Progress: The property and cave are in good condition. Very little garbage was found and seemingly, visitation has been less than in most years.

Brochures are still very popular at the site and are restocked bi monthly at the kiosk.

Recently, a group of earth type people were given permission to have their “drum circle” perform at the cave entrance. They use drums and make melodies or rhythms in the art of expression. They are not an occult or religious organization and do come from all occupations. This was a first, for me having never heard of such a thing. They are a very nice and interesting group of people.

All planned projects are currently in process with a completion expected before winter. Some have been set back by unexpected weather and scheduling difficulties.

The final map of the entire system is very close to being printed. The person doing the CAD on the map took a welcomed break and now is completing the final changes that includes topo overlay among other items.

Next month, the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy will conduct their annual conservation property inspection. I plan to accompany them on this property tour.

No bats were noted since my last report.

Problems: One small property sign had some graffiti that was removed. In addition, someone apparently removed the cave register book in mid summer. This will affect my data in comparison to that being generated by the HOB0 unit that is still in the cave. The cave usually requires between 3 to 4 books a year (mostly because of dampness). Therefore, the missing book might only represent a couple of months of data. The missing book was replaced with a new one.

Warren's Cave Report - William Oldacre oldacre@afn.org

No report submitted.

Wells Cave Nature Preserve Report - Larry C. Simpson wellscavecommittee@caves.org

Progress: Wells Cave Preserve remains closed. Lee Florea placed a bat monitor in the Bat Room. Bill Walden volunteered to check the entrance monthly this winter. Some reports of littering by locals. No determination as to what to do about local littering.

Plans: Wells Cave is closed until further notice.

Problems: Litter.

Conservation Division

Jim C. Werker & Val Hildreth-Werker Division Co-Chairs

werks@zianet.com phone 505.895.5050

PO Box 207

Cuna Cueva Hwy 27

Hillsboro, NM 88042-0207

Vision for the NSS Conservation Division

Promote strategic collaborations to advance global karst/cave protection and outreach.

Mission to Support Vision • Develop cooperative partnerships for rapid response karst advocacy, outreach, and resource protection • Implement strategies to reach greater diversity of populations in advancing karst/cave ecosystem awareness and promoting karst groundwater protection • Network karst conservation concerns to protect spelean values through cavers, caving organizations, agencies, and targeted stakeholders.

WNS Critical Calls to Washington Request: Sent 10/7 on NSS Conservation Network via Peter Youngbaer

- Calls and e-mails to four key members of the Conference Committee in Washington, DC. Ask for their Environmental Legislative Aide. Or, if you call their state office, ask for their State Director.
Senator Dianne Feinstein, (CA) (202) 224-3841 <http://feinstein.senate.gov>
Senator Lamar Alexander (TN) State Director is Patrick Jaynes - (865) 545-4253 (202) 224-4944 <http://alexander.senate.gov>
Congressman Michael Simpson (ID) (202) 225-5531 <http://simpson.house.gov>
Congressman Norman Dicks (WA) (202) 225-5916 <http://www.house.gov/dicks>
Environmental Aide is Greg Knadle (202) 225-3081. He is very knowledgeable about WNS, but needs to hear that there is strong support. He needs to hear from you in order for Congressman Dicks to agree to increases.
- Key Words in Message: **"support significantly increased funding for research and prevention of WNS."**
- Background: Federal funding for WNS research will come through the Department of Interior Appropriations Bill. Different versions have passed in the House and Senate. The House added no new money; the Senate only \$500,000 for WNS. The Bill is now in Conference Committee where the differences get ironed out. Significantly increased funding depends on us – they must hear public support from us who understand ecological importance of bats and from constituents in their states.
- We urge cavers and bat supporters nation-wide to make contact.

- We urge constituents to make the contact.
- The Message: Keep it simple. Ask the member to "**support significantly increased funding for research and prevention of WNS.**" Please don't mention a dollar amount or any proposed amendments.
This will only serve to confuse things. Inform of broad-based support for increasing funding to stop this deadly disease that's killing our bats.
- Sample Phone Call: Hi, this is Caver Sue. I'm a constituent of the Senator, living in Sinking Springs. [OR I'm a bat researcher, or I'm a caver with who understands the ecological importance of bats. I'm calling regarding the Interior Appropriations Conference Committee. I'm urging the Senator to support significantly increased funding for research and prevention of White Nose Syndrome, the disease that is killing all the bats. White Nose Syndrome is spreading fast, and I urge the Senator to support significant funding to get out ahead of the disease. Thank you.
- Keep it Simple. They may ask you some questions. Speak honestly, sincerely, but positively. Thank them. Demonstrate the strength and commitment of the NSS and organized caving.

Regional Conservation Specialists—Through the cooperation of cavers throughout the nation, this summer we added a cadre of Conservation Specialists to the NSS Conservation Committee. See their first reports below.

Partnerships in Washington, D.C.— "The Battle for Bats" produced by Ravenswood Media will be screened at the Colorado Environmental Film Festival. NSS, BCI, USDA-FS, and FWS can cooperatively step up to maximize this opportunity to spread the word about WNS. Film-maker David McGowan invites others to take some ownership in the event and make it work for bat support and research funding. http://caves.org/WNS/battle_for_bats.htm

Floyd Collins Crystal Cave Repair/Restoration—Through cooperation with Mammoth Cave National Park and the Cave Research Foundation, Jim and Val are intermittently working in the gypsum encrusted passages of Crystal Cave, repairing limestone and gypsum speleothems. Launching this 5-year study in the repair of important historic passages, May 2009 was recognized as an Explorers Club Flag Expedition. September 2009 marked the second expedition. NSS Members Rick Olson, Doug Soroka, Dean Snyder, Chris Nicola, and Chris Clark assisted.

NSSNews—NSS NEWS 2010 CONSERVATION ISSUE call for articles sent out in October. Cover the spectrum of cave/karst conservation with articles spanning the myriad concerns and issues. All materials must be received by dropdeadline January 15, 2010. Send submissions and photos by Dec 31, 2009 to Val Hildreth-Werker werks@zianet.com Notify Val now if you plan to submit.

NSS Conservation Committee

Jim C. Werker & Val Hildreth-Werker, Co-Chairmen werks@zianet.com

ICS, NSS Convention, ICKMS—During the International Congress in Kerville, Texas. Val served as host moderator with J-P Bartholeyns (Belgium) for two days of ICKMS sessions coordinated by Mike Warner.

Jim and Val hosted a successful half-day Cave Restoration and Speleothem Repair Seminar for ICS/NSS – 40 cavers from around the world attended.

Cooperative Conservation and Grant Opportunities—We are looking for grant opportunities in ecosystem restoration, biodiversity indicator species, program development, and public information outreach

NSS Conservation Specialists

We welcome aboard the newly appointed team of Conservation Specialists throughout the country. We thank each new Conservation Specialist for graciously agreeing to serve the NSS in this capacity.

- Provide reports or networking updates outlining cave/karst conservation issues and project updates. The nature of these reports will vary as they reflect the resources and concerns of the differing karst areas.
- Serve as a "go-to" person in their areas for conservation questions to network the right people and expertise.
- Members Manual will include Conservation Specialists.

Arizona Conservation Specialist

Steven Smith (AR) stevenlsmith@usa.net

- No significant conservation-related activity within the ARA this reporting period.
- The outside parking/camping areas around Onyx Cave (Santa Rita Mountains, AZ) has become increasingly trashed by thoughtless campers and illegal immigrants. Escabrosa Grotto (Tucson) is planning (within a few weeks) to conduct a clean-up of this outside area.

Mid-Atlantic Conservation Specialist

Doug Soroka (PA) snowshoe7@verizon.net

- Huntingdon County Cave Hunters (HCCH) has become somewhat stagnant due to WNS situation. We may even lose some membership. In the past, we have been very active in gating caves for landowners. We also assisted the PA Game Commission on a bat gate. We still manage 6 gated caves—3 are affected by the WNS moratorium. We participate in bat counts and WNS research. HCCH helps with the NSS Tytoona Cave Nature Preserve, doing trash removal, contemporary graffiti removal, and general maintenance. HCCH members also guide educational caving trips for schools, scouts, and church groups.
- Philadelphia Grotto did a few things above ground – Rockin the Run educational event at Alapocas Woods, Wilmington, DE and cleanup at Alapocas Woods prior to the event. Earth Day cleanup of an area near King of Prussia Mall.
- York Grotto –We've been busy with prep for the Fall MAR Field Meet which the grotto is hosting in honor of our 50th anniversary. As part of that celebration we held a meeting in June at our birthplace, Indian Echo Caverns. and found they can use some there help in cleaning up algae around the cave lights. We are planning to begin work with them when they close for the winter.
- Pennsylvania Inner-Earth Grotto (PIG) does not have any conservation or restoration projects going on currently. Most of our projects involved digging in existing caves which has been suspended due to WNS. I will update you when there are any PIG changes.
- Greater Allentown Grotto (GAG) continues to participate in cleanup activities at two commercial caves, Lost River and Crystal Caverns. We remove lint and lamp flora in these caves. A study is underway to look at lint vermiculations and see how they correlate to bio-vermiculations. Two of our members participated in the Floyd Collins Crystal Cave (FCCC) Restoration in Kentucky. One presented on FCCC at the ICS and again at an International Symposium in Canada.

Mississippi Valley – Ozark Conservation Specialist

William R. Elliott (MO) Bill.Elliott@mdc.mo.gov

- In December, 2008, the Springfield Plateau Grotto (SPG) worked with Larry Webb at Ha Ha Tonka State Park to re-gate the upper swallow entrance of River Cave, an important Indiana bat hibernaculum and Gray bat maternity roost. A flood had knocked out the old gate, and the new one is much stronger with improved air and water exchange. See <http://www.spgcavers.org/>
- On April 18, 2009, Jon Beard from SPG, and Bill Elliott and Derek Shiels from Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) taught cave restoration to a group of Master Naturalists and cavers in MDC's Rockwoods Cave near St. Louis. MDC gated the cave in December, 2008, because of rampant vandalism and drug use by local youths. The cave is used for child and adult nature education.
- MDC's "Caves in Crisis" photo exhibit was shown in St. Joseph in April, with evening talks by Bill Elliott and David Ashley, Missouri Western State University. The exhibit began at the 2007 National Cave & Karst Management Symposium, and has been shown at several nature centers. Information on White Nose Syndrome (WNS) was added.
- On April 23 the Mark Twain National Forest hosted a conference on WNS in Rolla. Bill Elliott was the keynote speaker. MTNF Supervisor David Wittekiend announced a general closure of its nearly 600 caves, though few are gated, in defense against the eventual arrival of WNS in Missouri. Several caves may be gated or re-gated.
- WNS has not been found in Missouri yet, but is predicted to arrive in one or two years. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has pledged \$25,000 funding over two years for MDC to protect vulnerable endangered bat caves and prepare for WNS. Funding can be used on public or private lands. MDC's Bill Elliott and Tony Elliott are working on its WNS Response Plan, which may entail cave management changes at certain important bat caves first, then other changes later if WNS comes closer. Scientific monitoring of important bat colonies will continue. MDC uses thermal infrared video for counting outflights of gray bats, and improved observational and photographic methods for estimating hibernating bat colonies. Caves will be soil-sampled for *Geomyces*. Some cave gates have been repaired and improved recently.
- June 15-28 saw a clean-up of Frankford Cave by the Chouteau Grotto and other cavers, MO Dept. of Transportation, and MDC. The cave is co-managed by a private owner and MoDOT's Alan Leary because it passes under a highway. Kirsten Alvey led Chouteau and personally packed out a heavy sawmill blade. Dishwashers and trash were hauled out. Bill Elliott and Steve Munoz used infrared video to count 32 gray bats exiting the lower entrance, while none exited the two upper entrances. Ceiling stains indicate a former colony size of more than 100,000.
- Round Spring Cavern, a beautiful show cave in Ozark National Scenic Riverways, was re-gated August 20-23. Scott House, CRF President and project leader, thanked 30 Missouri caver-volunteers and the National Park Service for providing nearly \$7,000. The old round bar gate was replaced with a full, standard, angle-iron gate.
- Jon Beard and many other cavers continue their long-term restoration project in Fisher Cave, Meramec State Park. Many stalagmite fragments have been recovered, cleaned, photographed, matched on a computer, and restored. On September 30 Jon presented a program on cave restoration to the National Caves Association convention in Branson, including slides and a demonstration of an epoxy speleothem repair.
- The 6th National Cave Gating Workshop will be held at Cliff Cave, St. Louis, October 5-16. Contact Bill Elliott or see the Biospeleology website: http://www.utexas.edu/tmm/sponsored_sites/biospeleology/

Northeast Conservation Specialist

Mike Warner (NY) mike@speleobooks.com

- The Northeastern Cave Conservancy is in process with another karst acquisition, a 34-acre site in Eastern New York containing a marble cave called Merlins. The cave was recently discovered in a region which was not previously known to have or even expected to have caves. The site is (or was until recently perhaps depending on the effects of WNS there) a regionally significant bat hibernaculum. Fundraising is underway and a sales contract is agreed to and in the final stages of completion.
- Generally, cave conservation & management efforts in the northeast have been consumed with the continuing impact of WNS. Most or all of the cave-dwelling bats face potential regional extinction. Early word from the NY Dept. of Environmental Conservation is that they will soon begin the process toward state or regional endangered status for those bat species.
- Cave management has focused on containment of any possible spread of WNS to remote regions through education, decontamination, and continued controlled access to many of the managed sites. Managers are attempting to make the most effective choices when dealing with a wide assortment of circumstances in the field. Most conservancy- and NSS-managed caves have been closed as of Oct 1 in order to give respite to ANY remaining hibernating bats. Whatever the eventual outcome of the spread of WNS, it is likely that avoidance of bats in hibernation will be an even more significant management priority for the foreseeable future.
- Grottos have volunteered with bat acoustic surveys this summer, and received appreciation throughout the region as a significant and capable work force. Survey results indicate a substantial decrease in cave species, and provide baseline data on a number of the migratory species.
- Peter Youngbaer, from Vermont, continues his effective networking as NSS WNS liaison. He is in constant communication with researchers, agency personnel and the caving community. Notably, he testified before Congress at one of the two congressional WNS hearings. He is currently working with legislators in an 11th hour effort to include increased funding for WNS research in conference committee. To date, only a small portion of necessary funds have been earmarked in the Senate, with nothing slated on the House side.

Northwest Conservation Specialist

Hester Mallonee (OR) hestermallonee@yahoo.com

- Restoration work at the rimstone area of Oregon Caves National Monument continues—currently we are working lateral stabilization of human-damaged (cut away) flowstone to support the remaining natural rimstone from behind.
- Preliminary scoping trip was conducted plans are in the works to remove a large number of rotting boards from a deep area in a heavily decorated WA lava cave.
- Possible transfer of some WA cave-bearing land into a potential FS protected area is a latent issue but is being watched.

Ohio Valley Conservation Specialist

Bill Walden (KY) wdwalden@windstream.net

- Plans are being made to gate Wind Cave in Wayne County, Kentucky to protect endangered Indiana bats and to prevent damage to well-preserved saltpeter vats, which date to the War of 1812. This is a joint project of the ACCA, BCI, KY Dept of F&W, and cavers. The project has the

blessing of the landowner. Project pending funding. Contact is Chris Clark at the ACCA clark_c17@yahoo.com

- Plans are progressing to gate Wind Cave in Rockcastle County, Kentucky. This is a project of the Rockcastle Karst Conservancy (RKC) - <http://www.rkci.org/>
- OVR is cleaning up of several sinkholes in Ohio on October 3-4, 2009. Contacts are Bill Walden, OVR and Erin Hazelton, Ohio Department of Natural Resources Erin.Hazelton@dnr.state.oh.us.
- Trash was removed from Misty Cave August 12, 2009. RKC recently purchased this cave. Contact is Harry Goepel hgoepel2@cinci.rr.com.
- Locals dug into a new section of Peter Cave (Redmond Creek) in Wayne County, KY. They left a mess. August 19 Harry Goepel led a cleanup trip to remove graffiti and trash left by the locals. Bill Walden talked to the leader of the local group about not leaving trash or writing on the cave walls. Contact is Bill Walden.
- The Buckner Restoration Project won the Conservation Award at the NSS convention this year for graffiti removal in Buckner Cave near Bloomington, Ind. They are continuing to clean graffiti in the Volcano Passage (almost done) and the Stream Passage. See <http://www.bucknercave.org/graffitiRemoval.php> .
- Removal of huge amounts of trash from Houghton Hole near Milltown, Indiana is coordinated by Brenda Shultheis. Project started spring 2008 and now nearly completed.
- Cave Capers trash removal from Thompson's Cave near Bedford, Indiana this past August 2009.
- Held two conferences regarding White Nose Syndrome and how to prepare Kentucky to handle this problem. Contacts are Bill Walden and Brooke Slack (KY Dept. of F&W) Brooke.Slack@ky.gov. Will be contacting individual cave owners regarding WNS.
- Posted Wells Cave, an NSS Preserve, as closed due to the threat of White Nose Syndrome. Signage and photos with explanations are posted in the kiosk outside the cave and inside two of the three entrances of the cave. Brochures are in the kiosk with information about the disease and bats. Contacts are Bill Walden and Larry Simpson lsimpson@fuse.net.
- Dr. Lee Florea installed an AnaBat echolocation-recording device just inside the bat room of Wells Cave September 20. The device was left in the cave to check bat entry/exit activity. Object is monitoring for unusual activity that might be connected with WNS. Lee Florea Lee.Florea@wku.edu and Bill Walden will periodically check entrance area for unusual bat activity during the winter and early spring.

Rocky Mountain Conservation Specialists

Rick Rhinehart (CO) nss@rockymountaincaving.com

Camille Pullham (UT) camille_pulham@nps.gov

- The Colorado Cave Survey is working with the Colorado Division of Wildlife to determine a plan of action for when and if White-Nose Syndrome arrives in the state. The Survey helped create a new interagency and interdisciplinary committee consisting of public land managers, biologists, cavers, and recreationists that will consider the issue of White-Nose Syndrome and how its arrival in Colorado might affect recreational use and scientific study of caves. The volunteer committee will periodically meet by telephone and in person to consider how news will be disseminated to both the public media and to cave users, how closure orders will be handled, and how user decontamination procedures will be provided to cave visitors.
- The Colorado Cave Survey has initiated its Web site at ColoradoCaveSurvey.org which is a closed-and-restricted cave listing that will help inform Colorado cavers of any news and changes in access to Colorado caves. This will be particularly useful if White-Nose Syndrome arrives in Colorado.

- Colorado cavers are honoring a closure order by the Orient Land Trust in the San Luis Valley north of Great Sand Dunes National Park. Concerned with the spread of White-Nose Syndrome in the eastern United States, the Trust preemptively closed to all visitors the historic Orient Mine, which includes natural cave segments. The mine is the summer home to Colorado's largest colony of Mexican Free-Tail Bats.
- In northern Wyoming, visitors to caves in the Cody District of the Bureau of Land Management are required to perform decontamination procedures for their gear and clothing prior to entering. Caves included in this new policy are Horsethief and Bighorn on Little Mountain, the Kane Caves along the Bighorn River, and former national monument Spirit Mountain Caverns west of Cody.
- Montana cavers are beginning a dialog with the Bureau of Land Management office in Billings following the preemptive closure of Mystery Cave in the Pryor Mountains. The Rocky Mountain Region's first public cave closure owing to concerns regarding the spread of White-Nose Syndrome—the BLM feared summer visitors from other states might contaminate the cave which contains an important bat colony. Though many Montana cavers are opposed to the closure, at least at this early date, most support protecting bats. Beginning a dialog in Montana can help determine future actions when and if WNS spreads to other states.
- Cavers from the Front Range and Colorado Grottos are working with Jefferson County Open Space in carefully documenting CJ's Crystal Cavern, an unusual granite tectonic cave in Clear Creek Canyon west of Golden that contains extensive calcite decorations. Discovered in quarrying operations in the late 1980s, the county allowed researchers from the Colorado School of Mines to remove selected calcite stalactites, stalagmites, and helictites when it was feared the quarry would completely destroy the cave. Fortunately, the cave was spared when quarry operations were reconsidered by a land developer; the cave and surrounding property later became part of the county's open space program. Though access to CJ's is still very restricted, cavers have been allowed to enter the cave, survey, and fully photodocument. There is a possibility the School of Mines Museum may be willing to return the samples from the cave if a restoration project is initiated.
- Cavers from several Colorado grottos participated in a massive cave cleanup in western Glenwood Canyon in late August. With assistance from local cavers and outdoor rescue personnel from Glenwood Springs, the team used lengthy ropes to slide bags of trash from a large shelter cave above the historic Cave of the Clouds. The trash was left by a homeless man who spent 30 years living in the shelter, dying alone in the cave in early 2008. More clean-up is needed.
- The Colorado Cave Survey is working with the private owner of Fly and Marble Caves north of Canon City in enhancing and adjusting a cave management program that allows cavers and local residents access to these historic caves. Gated and locked since 2007, the caves provide an important training experience for novices. Unfortunately, carelessness in scheduling trips and locking the property access gate resulted in the caves being temporarily closed to all visitation in mid August. Adjustments to the management plan include an online cave trip request form, adjustments for the management team, and new emphasis on visitors following established rules and regulations.
- The Navigators, a private religious organization headquartered in Colorado Springs, contacted cavers in May regarding creating a management plan for the limestone caves in Queen's Canyon, a spectacular canyon north of the famous Garden of the Gods. Cavers representing the Colorado Cave Survey visited the canyon with representatives of The Navigators in mid June and offered various ideas and suggestions regarding protecting the caves and providing access to interested and experienced visitors. The Navigators are considering installing computerized data loggers to track

visitation to the cave above the historic Glen Eyrie Castle in the canyon, a process that can help determine what type of cave management program is necessary. The Colorado Cave Survey could provide long-term access management for the caves of the property, similar to current programs for Fly and Marble Caves and for the federally-owned Groaning and La Sunder Caves near Glenwood Springs.

- The Williams Canyon Project of the Society has undertaken a restoration of the original entrance to the Cave of the Winds, a popular commercial cave at Manitou Springs, Colorado. The cavers are removing a century of rock and clay that has slid down into the entrance region, creating a dam that allows rain water and melting snow to flow into the cave's entrance room. In addition to removing the debris, the team plans on installing an environmental gate on the natural entrance to lessen the chimney-effect airflow through the cave. This strong wind has helped dry out the cave along the commercial route and in chambers and corridors away from the paved trail.
- Management of the popular Glenwood Caverns in west-central Colorado installed a new environmental door in the Darrow Tunnel during the winter of 2008-09. The new door has greatly decreased the wind flowing through the commercial cave, as the 1890s-era tunnel leads from the natural cave to an overlook of scenic Glenwood Canyon. This connection allowed a chimney-effect wind to blow through the cave, drying it out considerably over a century. The environmental gate creates an airlock which allows tour groups to move between the tunnel's locked entrance gate and the environmental gate, never opening both caves at a single time.
- In May, the owners of a long-dormant limestone quarry north of Glenwood Caverns announced they would reopen sometime in the summer of 2009. The quarry is on 16 acres adjacent to the Glenwood Caverns property and has concerned cavers since the early 1960s. The management of Glenwood Caverns has been in communication with the owners of the quarry, who report the current plans are for a relatively small operation. If the quarrying should increase in the future, concerns could increase, as large explosive blasts might be felt within the commercial cave and perhaps even damage natural calcite decorations within the cave.
- The National Park Service sponsored a cave restoration camp in South Dakota's Black Hills in mid-September. The camp included restoration and cleaning along the commercial tour routes in Wind Cave National Park and Jewel Cave National Monument.
- In Utah, the National Park Service is interested in removing aging power poles leading to Timpanogos Cave, high on the wall of American Fork Canyon. The poles provide power for the electric lights in the commercial cave, toured by 80,000 persons annually. Replacing the eight current poles with three new poles would allow fiber optic cable to reach the cave, providing security and phones.
- Cavers and cave scientists from Colorado's Sulphur Cave Project examined the Shoshone Canyon Conduit Cave in Wyoming's Shoshone River Canyon west of Cody in April. The cave, discovered in 1937 by federal Bureau of Reclamation miners excavating a large irrigation canal, has never been fully explored. Rich in sulfur, the cave also has large amounts of leftover lumber and associated trash from the 1937 mining project, and a mid-1980s repair project to a large flume crossing through the cave. Cavers collected tossed lumber from the cave and stacked it for later removal. Efforts are currently underway to schedule an autumn 2009 return trip in which the cave will be further studied and documented, and the construction debris removed from the sulfurous cave environment.

Southeast Conservation Specialists

John Hoffelt (TN) MossyGuy@comcast.net

Deirdra Hahn (AL) DHahn@adem.state.al.us

Albert A. Krause (FL) aakrause@cox.net

- This is the first report from the Southeastern Region to the NSS Conservation Division for the newly-formed network of Conservation Specialists across the U.S. In order to better track karst conservation issues in southeastern states, regional coordinator John Hoffelt enlisted the help of Deirdra Hahn (Alabama) and Al Krause (Florida). More complete and inclusive reporting may be expected as this network of conservation-issue tracking develops.
- The arrival of White Nose Syndrome into the Region is expected to be evident this winter. All government-owned non-commercial caves are closed in Tennessee, and all caves on U.S. Forest Service lands are closed across the entire southeast. However, cavers continue, and clearly intend to continue, to go caving in privately-owned caves in spite of the unknown risk of a human vector spreading the disease. It is unclear whether additional education outreach would influence caver visitation patterns. The NSS should continue its work with agencies and groups to expand research and develop response plans. Nashville Grotto constructed a decontamination booth and an information booth at the SERA Summer Cave Carnival (see attached photos); and, the SERA Karst Task Force is planning a decontamination booth (similar to the Nashville model) for the TAG Fall Cave-in.
- The NSS should consider updating guidance on decontamination facilities for large-scale caving events. On a Regional level, SERA (a model for nation-wide and other regions?) should consider the following actions:
 - 1) A complete moratorium on caving in infected areas;
 - 2) Sanction caving only in non-bat caves in non-infected areas;
 - 3) Do not allow cave gear from infected areas into non-infected areas, and implement gear inspection procedures for cleanliness before any cave trips;
 - 4) Encourage all grottos to provide “canned” WNS information and decontamination procedures, currently available from the NSS, in a concise format on Web sites and as meeting hand-outs to increase education efforts on the importance of bats and of proper gear decontamination procedures. The NSS should continue to maintain this issue as a “hot-button” with elevated coverage and discussion in the NSS News and other forums to provide up-to-date information and to allow dialogue among differing viewpoints.
- In September 2008, the City of Birmingham officials drained an impoundment at the karstic Roebuck Springs. The impoundment is a Critical Habitat for the Federally Endangered Watercress Darter. The unauthorized draining killed an estimated 12,000 fish. Rehabilitation efforts are underway to restore the habitat.
- In April 2009, a federal judge dismissed a lawsuit aimed to prevent a new dam on the Duck River as a water supply for Cullman County. According to local cavers, the proposed dam may destroy archeological and biological significant caves. Currently, the Cullman Economic Development Agency is arranging funding for the dam.
- The 2009 legislative session saw several anti-environment laws passed, including how the State classifies and evaluates ephemeral and intermittent streams with regard to protection against discharges, filling, and development. Most karst streams are ephemeral or intermittent, as the drainage is predominately underground. Proposed rules are posted for public comment at the following address: http://tn.gov/sos/rules_filings/09-29-09.pdf Any help reviewing or providing comments would be appreciated.
- Existing NSS Cave Preserves continue to operate as planned and are receiving regular monitoring and maintenance under current site management plans. No special problems or issues currently reported.
- Under the continuing operation of the Florida Springs Initiative of 2000, more and more Florida springs and dive caves are being steadily acquired and protected by State, Water Management Districts, local governments and private conservation groups like the Nature Conservancy. Using Florida Forever and other funding sources, much of the land along major spring-fed rivers is being quietly acquired and placed under conservation stewardship. NSS-CDS members have assisted in clean-ups, site maintenance, mapping and other volunteer efforts in conjunction with state agencies to support access and conservation goals.
- Increasing concerns over water quality are leading to a widening of land acquisition/preservation interests to include swallets and major underground conduit systems removed from actual spring heads. Increased research and dye tracing is in process and re-newed public interest is being focused on these issues as Florida's "Water Wars" continue in the political sphere.
- The FSS, in cooperation with other Florida grottos, has gated Ocala Caverns (a featured cave during the 2008 NSS Covention) and is working out a formal arrangement involving the landowner,

grottos, county sheriff's office and county commission to preserve and secure the cave while maintaining access to the caving community. Similar cooperative arrangements are in effect for White Cliff Cave, Briar Cave and others in Central Florida.

Southwest Conservation Specialist

Kathy Peerman (NM) speleobabe@comcast.net

- High Guads Restoration: Work continues in the Guads. Jennifer Foote in charge.
- McKittrick Hill Project: There are plans to finish the restoration work that was started a year ago to work in Endless Cave. Karen Perry will work with BLM to conduct work such as trail building and cleaning on the well traveled areas.
- Fort Stanton Cave Study Project (John Corcoran): Working with Penny Boston and Diana Northup on methods to eradicate or mitigate a fungus contamination of the wood in the shoring of the dig shaft in Don Sawyer Memorial Hall.
- Fort Stanton Cave Study Project (John Corcoran): Ongoing work on Snowy River to clean up various impacts on the calcite deposit.
- Fort Stanton Cave Study Project (John Corcoran): Working on different techniques to allow walking on the delicate floor so exploration of Snowy River can continue.

Texas Conservation Specialist

Linda Palit (TX) lkpalit@sbcglobal.net

- Report covers January through September 2009
- Development of TCMA/AISD education project at Lost Oasis Cave – ongoing
- TCMA/Texas Parks and Wildlife LIDAR (lasar imaging technology) mapping the Devil's Sinkhole Project progressed, with anticipated completion this fall. Preliminary results were presented at the ICS.
- Barton Springs Aquifer Conservation District/TCMA development and execution of first summer continuing education outreach program called "Groundwater to the Gulf" – summer
- TCMA participated in San Antonio Water System, Edwards Aquifer District/St Mary's University karst/water outreach program called "Water: A Living Lesson"— summer
- Bexar Grotto continued maintenance and education programs at Bracken Bat Cave under the management and supervision of Bat Conservation International
- TCC Winter conference Feb 2-25, 09, cedar Park Texas; cave introduction workshops
- TCC participation in National Groundwater Karst Conference with the presentation of a talk by Mike Walsh, TCC President
- TCC Cave Day – April 18, and September 12 Cedar Park Texas with public access provided into Avery Ranch Cave and Dies Ranch Treasure Cave
- TCC Educational Sign Program – TCC is installing 25 educational signs at Discovery Well Cave Preserve in Cedar Park and at the Highland Horizons sub division in Round Rock Texas
- TCMA completion of the Robber Baron Restoration Project to restore entrance to the cave and to ensure better habitat for the endangered species through restoration of the grounds. Educational elements were also incorporated into the grounds. The LIP Grant (Fish and Wildlife Landowners Incentive Program) was completed in September.

- TCC outreach to international cavers during ICS included visitation to TCC headquarters and managed caves, including hosting a Wednesday field trip
- TCMA adopted WINS policies consistent with national guidelines, and used those guidelines for visitation during ICS, closing those caves necessary. Policies will continue to be in place as we move onward.
- TCMA developed outreach brochures for the organization and for Robber Baron Cave, emphasizing education and conservation.
- TCMA is conducting research on air quality changes in caves with St. Mary's University at Robber Baron Cave; preliminary results were presented at ICS.
- TCMA is making Deep and Punkin Caves available for ongoing research on cave formation and hosting visitation by state, national and international cave scientists working in this area. (do you want details on this kind of thing?)

Virginia Conservation Specialist

Meredith Hall Weberg (VA) merecaver@yahoo.com

- Broad Run Cave, Monroe County, West Virginia: January 2009 Bill Balfour, Carroll Bassett, Dave Cowan, Harold "Rocky" Parsons, John Pearson, and Ed Saugstad spent about an hour cleaning trash from Broad Run Cave in Monroe County. Removed an old battery, bottles, glass, rusty metal and old car parts. All the metal was recycled, as was the battery.
- Haynes Cave, Monroe County, West Virginia: March 14, 2009 six cavers from D.C. Grotto and the West Virginia Cave Conservancy spent four hours clearing barbed wire from around the sinkhole entrance and cleaning graffiti throughout the cave. Made mud inside plastic baggies to spread on deeply etched graffiti atop crystals. This worked well—one caver did not recognize the area later when she walked by. (Pauline Apling, Bob Hoke, Harold "Rocky" Parsons, Ed Saugstad, Meredith Hall Weberg, and Susi Weston)
- Grand Caverns Easter Restoration Field Camp, Grand Caverns, Grottos, Virginia: April 11-12, 2009 VAR Conservation Committee sponsors this annual cleanup at a small commercial cave. The sinkhole on the adjacent property was readied for the cleanup that was held later in the month during the Virginia Region Spring meeting. Algae was cleaned and gravel spread in Grand Caverns. A pavilion and the putt-putt rails were painted. Four bat houses were erected.
- Crystal Caverns Karst Trail, Crystal Caverns at Hupp's Hill, Strasburg, Virginia: April 19, 2009 Thirteen cavers from VAR finished the third and final leg of the Karst Trail at Crystal Caverns at Hupp's Hill. Branches were removed, dead wood was moved, the end portion was delineated by railroad ties and chipped wood. This work extended the extant Karst Trail by about one-third. This is the northernmost point on the in-progress Virginia Cave and Karst Trail.
- Crystal Caverns at Hupp's Hill, Strasburg, Virginia: April 24-26, 2009 Eight members of the Shenandoah Cave Team cleaned algae and moss from this "cave museum," the only cave in Virginia operated as a museum.
Volunteer Value = \$756.50
- Cave Hill Sinkhole Clean-Up, Grottoes, Virginia: April 26, 2009 Thirty-nine people participated in the Cave Hill Sinkhole Clean-up. Four dump-truck loads of junk were sent to the dump. Three or four more loads of metal were separated out for recycling. A sediment layer was reached; the bottom of the pit was not. This project will be revisited for completion.
- Persinger Entrance to Benedicts Cave, Greenbrier County, West Virginia: Spring 2009 Six cavers from WVCC worked at the Persinger property, planting trees.

- Pink Helictite Entrance Clean-Up, Pocahontas County, West Virginia: September 4, 2009
Pink Helictite Cave had been used as a dump for many years. Water enters the cave from a spring that pours over the limestone cliff on one side of the sinkhole, and an overland runoff that passes through the household trash-laden sinkhole, carrying pollutants into the area's karst groundwater system. The objective for this clean-up was to remove this source of groundwater pollution. A number of cavers attending the annual Old Timers' Reunion worked on this sinkhole clean-up.
- Skyline Caverns Karst Trail, Front Royal, Virginia: September 26, 2009 About 20 VAR cavers worked on the Karst Trail at Skyline Caverns. This is the second stop on the in-progress Virginia Cave and Karst Trail. A kiosk was erected and a lot of mulch was spread on the path. Thanks to Janet Tinkham and Front Royal Grotto for heading up this project during the Virginia Region Fall meeting.
- Crystal Caverns, Strasburg, Virginia: September 26, 2009 Five VAR cavers (John Fox, Mary Sue Socky, John Walter, Meredith Hall Weberg, and Susi Weston) scrubbed algae and picked moss out of cracks in the cave with tweezers for about an hour during the Virginia Region Fall meeting.

Western Conservation Specialist

Joel Despain (CA) joel_despain@nps.gov

- The annual Crystal Cave restoration hosted by Sequoia National Park will be in November for ten days this year. NSS volunteers will be removing concrete walls and trails from inside the commercial cave. Bill and Mary Roberts from So Cal Grotto will again be supplying food.
- The Western Cave Conservancy continues its efforts with the USFS to re-open sensitive and beautiful Windeler Cave in central California. Once the cave has been accessed again, the WCC plans a major restoration project.
- The WCC is also active in working with the Bureau of Land Management to protect beautiful Crystal Ball Cave in southern Utah from mining claims that are currently being auctioned off on E Bay.
- Lava Beds National Monument in northern California is beginning a new and likely long running project to conduct restoration work in park lava tubes. Decades of use by park visitors and destructive practices during development of the caves will be addresses.
- Both Lava Beds and Sequoia are actively working on major park cave management plan revisions. Public comment has been and will continue to be solicited. Both plans have major implications for cave conservation
in the parks in question.

NSS Karst Partnership Forum (Subcommittee)

Merideth A. Hildreth, Coordinator planning@zianet.com

- KPF is forging ahead with outreach to planners across the country Planners need karst materials to increase stakeholder awareness about karst basics, hazards, and land management practices. KPF is currently developing Web-based programs with materials and PowerPoints™ that communities can download for free to conduct workshops and meetings, provide public information, and distribute to media. The Web-based programs will also provide planners with Karst Model Ordinances that provide guidelines for karst regions to prevent development disasters (groundwater contamination, flooding, subsidence, and collapse). Management plans, other karst protection documents, programs, and conservancy information will be provided as resources.

- KPF appreciates \$2500 NSS funding support for the karst exhibit booth at the American Planning Association 2010 National Planning Conference - New Orleans, April 8-12. The NSS has reserved an exhibit space at the front of the exhibit hall for maximum exposure. Over 5,000 planning professionals from across the nation are expected to attend the conference.
- KPF submitted September grant application to NSF for support to purchase portable 8x10-foot professional trade-show display unit and for funds to augment the existing museum-quality karst photo-information panels produced in 2008 and used at APA in Las Vegas 2008, National Ground Water Association Conference in Florida 2009, ICS in Kerrville TX.
- In August, Merideth submitted a session proposal to the American Planning Association's 2010 Annual Conference in New Orleans to present information about the new NSS Web-based karst programs for communities.

Problems:

KPF needs official NSS line-item financial support to fund exhibit booth fees, displays, and expenses to staff events.

KPF needs NSS budget lines to assure support for similar conservation outreach and networking opportunities.

NSS Grotto Conservation Network (Subcommittee)

Steve Smith, Coordinator StevenLSmith@usa.net

- GCN address list is continually updated as IO Chairs and Conservation Chairs change.
- Sent out important WNS request for cavers to contact four Conference Committee members in Washington.

Cave Conservation Online (Subcommittee)

Hilary Lambert, Coordinator Hilary_Lambert@yahoo.com

- In July 2009 Hilary Lambert gave a presentation at the spectacular ICS-NSS Convention (Kerrville, TX) about "Cave Conservation Online" the Web-based course developed from 2006 authoritative, encyclopedic *Cave Conservation and Restoration* (Hildreth-Werker and Werker 2006). Personal changes for Lambert over this past year have prevented further implementation of this course, but better things are hoped for in the near future!

NSS Brochures (Subcommittee)

Cheryl Jones, NSS Brochures Coordinator cheryl.caver@verizon.net

Mike Dale, Graphic Design

- Revised and updated editions of *Fragile Underground*, *Bats*, and *A Guide to Responsible Caving*, were printed prior to the ICS to replenish dwindling inventory. Mike Dale again adroitly handled the graphics work. AGRC received a great new cover image and design, as well as a new sponsor: Inner Mountain Outfitters. A paragraph about White Nose Syndrome was added to the *Bats* brochure.
- White Nose Syndrome (online) brochure ("What's Killing Our Bats") was updated, and two photos replaced.

Plans:

- With the Safety and Techniques Committee chairman, the project of developing *A Guide to Exploration* has been revived. It will develop initially as an online brochure/booklet. Much work was done a few years ago, so a TOC and chapters have already been developed and have received a first round of editing.

Conservation Web Site (Subcommittee)

John M. Wilson, Webmaster wilsonjml@msn.com

The Web site <http://www.caves.org/committee/conservation/> continues to receive improvements and changes.

Volunteer Value Online Database (Subcommittee)

Jennifer Foote, Chairman bigredfoote@yahoo.com;

Mark Lankford, Co-Coordinator mlankford65@yahoo.com

- The database has been built and the data entry form is online <http://www.caves.org/volvalue/volvalue.php>
- Werkers are working with Todd Chaves to host on the KIP site.
- Potential users of data reports include: NSS annual report, CFC application, P3 reports/officer reports, government agencies we're working for. Potential users need to provide feedback on their needs. Other potential users need to be identified. Additional Beta-testers need to be contacted and we need to get a static report format determined that will best serve the data users.
- Need to obtain feedback from potential report users.

Conservation Grants / Save The Caves (Subcommittee)

John Pearson, Chairman jpearson@rcc.com

- Jim Werker, Val Hildreth-Werker and John Pearson met at ICS in July to discuss merits of various proposals.
- Smithsonian Proposal for facilities to save the endangered Virginia Big-Eared Bat was granted in the amount of \$500 to match VAR grant of same amount.
- Cedars of Lebanon State Park (Tennessee) \$500 for educational display. Still pending. Requested additional information from Nashville Grotto and NSS Board Member. Still waiting for response from Nashville Grotto and the Director couldn't comment as park isn't in their part of TN.
- Timpanogos Cave National Monument. Granted \$1000 to Quincy Bahr for monitoring the affect of visitor foot traffic, moisture and sediment issues within the cave.
- Quintana Roo proposal for karst education. Requested funding for lodging, travel expenses, etc. Grant denied.
- Donna Richards inquiry about grants. The inquiry was referred elsewhere.
- Handled all request except for one, which is waiting for further input from outside source.
- John Pearson attended the 2009 Growing Communities on Karst Symposium held on Septemer 14-15, 2009 held at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown WV. Of particular interest were the Richardson talk on Government Regulatory Action for Environmentally Sensitive Lands and the Orndorff talk on White-Nose Syndrome in Bats. Assisted with the field tour of nearby cave and sinkholes, including decon of participant's shoes.

Geocaching Committee

David Irving, Chairman daveirving@earthlink.net

Nothing to report.

NSS Cave Vandalism Deterrence Reward Commission

Jay Jorden, Chairman jjorden@texoma.net

Current commission members: Gale Beach <raybeach@earthlink.net>; Tom Rea <tomrea@ccrtc.com>; John Wilson <wilsonjml@msn.com>; Aaron Atz <atz@netpointe.com>; Thomas Lera <frontier2@erols.com>

Progress: The commission is following up on the prosecution related to Grassy Cove Saltpeter Cave in eastern Tennessee, in addition to other vandalism allegations.

Problems: None noted.

Plans: The commission will continue to review all successful prosecutions of cave vandals in order to identify those in which a vandalism deterrence reward can be applied. Objectives include rewarding vigilance in reporting and prosecuting cave vandals and publicizing the Society's conservation objectives.

Mammoth Cave Restoration Camp Committee

Roy Vanhoozer RVanhoo@aol.com

- Volunteers with the restoration camp continue working through a list of restoration projects approved by the National Park Service (NPS). Projects range from lint removal and trail repair to removing large wooden staircases and old pipes, wire, and concrete and other artifacts.
- 39 volunteers attended the annual week-long restoration camp held the first week of August. Volunteers are removing concrete and wire installed in Boone and Kentucky Avenues in the late 1970s to cover the vertical runs of the old electrical wiring. Some of these in the taller canyon sections are 30 feet high – a tedious job requiring patience and involving chisel and ladder work.
- Approximately 35 unused rock light boxes constructed of cave rock and concrete and abandoned after the new lighting was installed were dismantled. Concrete was chiseled off the rock, bagged, and removed from the cave along with the old light fixtures and wire.

Problems: Volunteers continue to follow guidelines provided by the NPS for decontamination of caving gear and tools to prevent/inhibit the spread of White Nose Syndrome. Volunteers from Pennsylvania, West Virginia and many other states regularly attend the camps.

Conservation Task Forces

Jonathan B. Beard, Coordinator mokanman@att.net

Conservation Task Forces (CTF) under the coordination of the Conservation Committee are created to focus on local cave conservation issues. Since the Federal Cave Resources Protection Act of 1988 was passed, more CTFs are being recognized by local agencies as the primary representatives of the caving community on conservation issues. If you are involved in a conservation project and think your work would benefit from CTF designation, please contact the chair of this committee or the NSS Conservation Committee.

Boone Karst CTF

Plans are to reactivate this task force due to White Nose Syndrome concerns. The Daniel Boone National Forest (DBNF) is under a mandate for court-ordered and community action issues concerning logging and motorized vehicle use on DBNF land. It is possible that the BKCTF may work as an active subcommittee for the Rockcastle Karst Conservancy to streamline efforts in caving/conservation groups in eastern Kentucky. The emergence of WNS in Kentucky this year may give rise to a new and expanded role for the DBNF and other agencies.

Contact Robert “Chris” Hacker for more information: 1714 Arundel Court, Loveland, OH 45140, SMGCaver@earthlink.net or Robert.Hacker@DHS.gov, 513-383-8954 Mobile (best)

Germany Valley CTF

No report received.

Hawaii Caves CTF

Since 1982 the Hawaii Caves CTF has been active in locating and inventorying the caves of Hawaii. The Hawaii Caves CTF has assisted the National Park Service and other federal and state agencies by assessing cave resources and helping develop management plans for the caves within federal and state boundaries. The CTF also provides public information and assistance to schools and to state and local agencies on matters affecting cave resources. The CTF continues to work with visiting scientists on research related to lava caves.

Projects include efforts to protect Pahoe, Kaumana and Kanohina Cave systems in association with local and state officials and Cave Conservancy of Hawaii. Several faunal studies of cave crickets, cave arthropods, cave moths, and other biota are being conducted to determine conservation needs. Contact Fred Stone for more information: P.O. Box 1430, Kurtistown, HI 96760, 808-966-7361 or Francis Howarth, Hawaii Biological Survey, Bishop Museum, 1525 Bernice St., Honolulu, HI 96817, 808-848-4164, fhowarth@bishopmuseum.org.

High Guads Restoration CTF

Thus far in 2009 (one more trip expected)- 433 hours of volunteer value, \$23k. Typical activities include monitoring, restoration, formation repair, trail flagging repair, summer exit bat counts in the Lincoln National Forest in New Mexico. In 2008 there were 34 participants, and 20 have volunteered their efforts in 2009 on the first three project weekends. Plans for next year are to continue restoration and monitoring activities in various caves in the Lincoln National Forest on a quarterly basis. The HGRCTF can be reached through Jennifer Foote, 1723 Avenida Cristobal Colon, Santa Fe NM 8750, highguads@yahoo.com. Learn more about this group through their Web site www.hgrp.org.

Klamath Mountains CTF

Since 1975 the Klamath Mountains CTF has been engaged in the exploration, mapping, and study of the cave resources in northern California. The CTF continues to operate under two cooperative agreements with the United States Forest Service in the Marble Mountain Wilderness and in the French Creek area, working toward a management scheme for the caves in the area is the main goal. There are over 32 miles of mapped cave in an area of 1.5 miles square. There are many cavers who have made significant contributions over the 35 years of the life of this CTF. For more information, please contact Steve Knutson, P.O. Box 111, Corbett, OR 97019, sssknutson@aol.com, 503-695-6552, or Tom Kline, 4230 SE King Rd, #286, Milwaukie, OR 97222, mtnbiketrail@zzz.com, 503-786-0592 or Mark Fritzke, 565 Upper Creek Rd, Bayside, CA 95524, fritzke@humboldt1.com, 707-822-8566. The KMCTF also has a Yahoogroup – kmctf2@yahoogroups.com where interested parties can discuss ongoing issues and activities.

SERA Karst CTF

The SERA Karst Task Force Inc. is alive and well. There are usually four board meetings a year to discuss and plan activities that have included surface cleanups of karst features and land around karst features. The group has also hosted informational kiosks at the SERA Cave Carnival and the TAG Fall Cave In. Most of the cleanups happen after autumn leaf fall. This past winter, two cleanups of the drainage over Blue Spring Cave were conducted and completed that included almost 100 volunteers from numerous states. Several surface cleanups are planned for 2010 as well as hosting a karst groundwater seminar next summer. For more information, contact Jim Wilbanks, P.O. Box 34, Rising Fawn, GA 30738, Jimgail69@earthlink.net, 706-462-2316 or Maureen Handler, 900 Old Sewanee Rd, Sewanee, TN 37375, tnshotgun@earthlink.net. Their director's Yahoo group is sktfcommittee@yahoogroups.com and their website is www.sktfi.org.

Sloans Valley CTF

The Sloans Valley CTF was organized in 1992 to seek protection for the cave resources in Sloans Valley, Kentucky. Of immediate concern is the active Pulaski County Landfill overlying the 24-mile-long Sloans Valley Cave System. In cooperation with local conservation organizations, Sloans Valley CTF is encouraging state and local control agencies to force the operators to comply with new regulations or close the landfill as directed by state law. Sloans Valley CTF is conducting studies of the geology, hydrology, water chemistry, land use and attitudes, cave mapping, and exploration in order to better understand their relationships. The Sloans Valley CTF is seeking funding to support its research. It hopes to develop a comprehensive regional management plan that can be backed up with hard data and to have the plan adopted by local governments.

Networking Updates to the NSS Conservation Division

The following updates are included to facilitate networking and improve the exchange of information between the NSS Conservation Division and conservation-focused agencies and organizations with national or regional scope.

Updates are received and included here intermittently. Various entities send updates as appropriate.

Karst Environmental Education & Protection, Inc. (KEEP) Update

Hilary Lambert hilary_lambert@yahoo.com

- Two members of KEEP (Barras and Lambert) moved during 2009, and thus long-overdue tasks such as completing the new Web site (www.keepinc.org) remain incomplete.
- A new Board member joined us in 2009, George Phillips, founder-leader of 8 Rivers Safe Development, Inc. of West Virginia.
- Lambert has been honored to be included as "Teams Coordinator" in a proposal to carry out bat monitoring for White Nose Syndrome, submitted by NSS Administrative V.P. Ray Keeler on August 1 to the Fish & Wildlife Service.
- Following our day-long workshop focused on protecting cave rivers, held in Lexington KY in November 2008 and funded by an NSS Conservation Grant, progress has been made in two areas:
 - Roger Brucker has taken the lead in **drafting the *Karst Rapid Response Handbook***, promised to the NSS as part of our grant requirements. Patiently awaiting input from a few laggards, Brucker's goal is to have a final version ready for use by the NSS, its members, and cave conservationists everywhere by early 2010. The Handbook will also be part of a presentation

that Jim Werker, Val Hildreth-Werker, and Merideth Hildreth are developing for the American Planning Association's annual conference in April 2010.

- **Improving recognition of and protection of karst waters in state and federal regulations and laws.** Thanks to the efforts of Deb Bledsoe in Kentucky, karst water monitoring is on the drawing-board for improvement by the statewide Watershed Watch organization, and is attracting interest from state-level agencies. We hope to push this effort forward over the next year or two, and begin to introduce these ideas to other states once they have been worked out in greater detail for Kentucky.

The Nature Conservancy—Activity Networking Update to NSS Conservation

Cory Holliday, Cave and Karst Program Manager cholliday@TNC.org 615-383-9909
Cave and Karst Landowner Incentive Program Coordinator
The Nature Conservancy of Tennessee, 2021 21st Ave. South Ste. C400, Nashville, TN 37212

Ozark TNC Karst Program Project Summaries

Protecting habitat for rare karst species at Foushee Cave

Foushee Cave is one of the more biologically diverse caves in Arkansas. The cave provides habitat for two endangered bats, the Gray Bat and Indiana Bat. This cave is the only known home for the Foushee Cavesnail and the Foushee Cave Springtail. To protect the cave and the species found in it, this project is identifying the surface area contributing groundwater to the system and working with landowners surrounding Foushee Cave to implement best management practices.

Water quality monitoring at endangered species caves in Northwest Arkansas

Urban development in northwest Arkansas is impacting two caves with major populations of three endangered karst species. Logan Cave is home to the largest population of Benton Cave crayfish, the second largest population of Ozark cavefish, and to a maternity colony of 30,000 gray bats. Cave Springs Cave is home to the largest population of Ozark cavefish and a maternity colony of 6,000 gray bats. This project is monitoring the health of these cave systems through continuous water quality monitoring.

Protecting habitat for one the rarest cave crayfishes in the world

The Benton Cave Crayfish is known from only four sites, all occurring in northwest Arkansas. While three of these sites are protected through ownership by US Fish and Wildlife Service and The Nature Conservancy, the fourth site remains vulnerable. The purpose of this project is to work with municipalities near this fourth site to remove trash dumps contributing pollution to this location.

Protecting habitat for a new species of cavefish at Alexander Cave

Alexander Cave in eastern Arkansas is one of two sites where a new species of cavefish was recently discovered. In order to protect the aquatic habitat in the cave, it is necessary to understand where the groundwater originates. This project will determine the amount of surface landscape that contributes water to the cave system.

Prioritizing conservation actions for priority karst species in Arkansas

With over 60 cave species known from Arkansas, conservation actions need to be prioritized to benefit the highest number of habitats and species. However, the prioritization process is hampered by a lack of information concerning these species. This project addresses the lack of information by mapping

historical species distributions, assessing threats, and identifying additional populations of these priority karst species.

Keeping karst species off the endangered species list

While it is important to designate species needing protection under the Endangered Species Act, it is even more important to preemptively reduce the necessity for listing species. This project is studying the populations, habitats, and potential threats of seven extremely rare karst species in Arkansas to determine steps needed to prevent these species from becoming endangered.

Convention Division

Carol Tiderman ctider@ymail.com
7600 Pindell School Road
Fulton, MD 20759-9725
410-792-0742

Progress

- Hosted Convention Planning and Development Meetings at the 2009 ICS/NSS Convention.
- Attended budget workshops for the 2010, 2011 & 2012 Conventions at the 2009 ICS/NSS Convention
- Communicating with the confirmed groups. Checking on their progress and passing along new information, filling requests for data, history and other materials and answering any questions.

- Working with the group who will be hosting the 2010 Convention in Vermont
- Working with the group who will be hosting the 2011 Convention in Colorado
- Working with a group proposing to host 2012 Convention in Fairlea WV.
- Working with group considering hosting the 2013 Convention

Plans

- Attend convention committee planning meetings (any year's) whenever possible,
- Continue working with confirmed groups
- Continue to solicit new host groups.
- Sending an article to Dave Bunnell, for the NSS NEWS, soliciting host groups.

Problems

None at this time

2009 Report

15th International Congress of Speleology

**submitted by
George Veni, Chairman
15th ICS Organizing Committee**

Progress:

The ICS is effectively over. There are still some minor details to finalize, but for all practical purposes it is done. I've heard only praise about the event, which many people from around the U.S. and the world called the best ICS and NSS Convention ever. A summary article has appeared in *The Texas Caver*, another will appear in the November *NSS News*, and a third will appear next year in the *UIS Bulletin*. One main focus of the articles is the volunteers. This ICS was the most ambitious and complex caving event ever, made even more complex by unprecedented problems like WNS which scrambled years of planning. The ICS would not have been possible or successful without its dedicated volunteers.

The registration numbers ran to 1,565, of which 1,490 attended in Kerrville. The missing 75 cancelled due to visa, work, and health issues. Karen Kastning and her team did an outstanding job under grueling circumstances. Karen is still cleaning up some information in the records. Likewise, nearly all financial details have been closed. The following is a report from Treasurers Melissa and Michael Cicherski:

We are swiftly moving to the point of closure for all accounts for the 15th International Congress of Speleology. Since the end of the Congress, we have sent out three announcements asking for all receipts and expenses to be turned in to us for payment. It is our belief that all volunteers have turned in their expense reports and they have all been paid.

We still need to make a final payment to the NSS, UIS, and possibly a few vendors we are attempting to reach in Kerrville. We believe that we can make these payments [by mid-October].

We have closed the Registration Account with Bank of America and moved the funds in that account over to the Operating Account. We have closed the credit card processing machine for the ICS that was tied to the Registration Account. Our intent is to close the Operating Account on October 31, 2009. The reconciliation and closure of this account will effectively write the final chapter for the Congress. Once we have our documentation reviewed and approved by NSS Treasurer Peri Frantz, we will transfer the remaining funds to the NSS.

We are working on a final report that should be ready [by mid-October]. The purpose of the report is to compare the income and expense budget numbers to the actual income and expense numbers of the Congress. It is with great pride we report that the all of the volunteers who worked tirelessly to meet the financial requirements took the event from the edge of financial disaster to a solid surplus for the NSS. Overall, it appears we were able to trim 5% from each Committee as the Congress unfolded. Volunteers met with us daily and with pride turned in their expense reports under budget, or with no expenses at all. On the income side, the volunteers had a great deal of entrepreneurial spirit in play as they found a number of ways to generate new forms of income.

Problems:

1) The only notable complaints I've heard about the ICS were from a couple of people whose papers were not accepted for the proceedings and/or modified. These problems results from the papers not meeting the standards of acceptance.

2) The ICS guidebooks and other materials currently fall under the NSS guidelines that they can't be sold to non-NSS Members. Since this was an ICS as well as an NSS Convention, and people from the international community need to be able to buy those materials, this status needs to be changed. I understand that Wm Shrewsbury will be introducing a motion at this BOG meeting that will allow sale of the materials.

Plans:

1) The ICS website is being modified to show photos of the event and to provide post-ICS information. It should be ready and announced in early October. The website will stay up until May 2010, when the url expires.

2) Except for the guidebook, *Caves and Karst of the USA*, all ICS publications will be posted digitally for viewing and download on the Karst Information Portal. A few corrections have been submitted by authors which will be digitally attached to the appropriate materials. Everything should be posted on the Portal by the end of October.

3) Once all of the financial, registration, and other details are complete, a final report on the ICS will be submitted to the NSS BOG and the UIS Bureau.

NSS 2009 Convention Chair Report
Hazel Medville

Progress: It is over without many complaints other than the menu for the Banquet. My instructions for the banquet to the catering staff were to stay within budget and have a different meal from the Howdy Party and the ICS Banquet. All NSS sections and Affinity groups were contacted and meetings were scheduled as requested. Some sections had informal papers during their extended section meetings.

Plans: None. There was no income so no final report. No suggestions for changes to the convention planning guide.

Problems: None.

2010 Report

Keeler note: I met with the 2010 Convention Chairs and Peter Youngbaer in mid-October for convention planning. The meeting was productive and went well.

2010 NSS Vermont Convention

The planning process is moving along well. As you all know we already have our site, which also includes the campground, contracted and reserved. Our facilities chair, Peter Youngbaer, is in full

swing with gathering information from the various salons as to their needs at the site. The vendor's area and layout has been determined and settled with some vendors already paid for their space. We will also be talking with other businesses in the state such as Cabot cheese among others about sponsorships and having a booth at our convention.

We now have our campground chairs in place. They are working on the set up and arrangement of the camp such as the placement of the hot tubs and their logistics. Also the areas for the family area and that party area of camping. This will of course include a decon area for gear.

The Howdy Party has its caterer and menu set. It is planned to be outside with an inside venue already in place in case of bad weather. Bob Addis and Christa Hay have put this together.

The web site is up and running with a link from the NSS site and also the VCA (Vermont Cavers). The site is growing all the time as more planning comes together.

The activities page is growing with info about many of the area attractions. We have discounts in place from a Lake Champlain cruise boat that gives a great historical tour as well as the geology of the area. The Shelburne Museum is going to be another discount attraction with others to join.

Most outings that are being planned are so that folks can go on their own or with a scheduled group. In the interest of keeping people from paying to play so to speak, all outings will have maps, GPS coordinates and directions provided. On such trips there will be a waterfall tour. As I said there will be guided group trips where people will be encouraged to carpool, just like cave trips. One pay trip that we have on the registration form is a trip to see the Barre Granite quarries. This will include a chance to sandblast your own piece of Barre granite (some of the best in the world) to take home. Also on this trip there will be a stop at the Barre Granite Museum and time permitting, a stop at Hope cemetery. Some of the finest granite carving is there. Most done by hand over 100 years ago.

Slowly but surely we are filling up the rest of our chair positions, but work on those is proceeding along.

So all and all the planning process is moving forward with no major problems at this point

Ken Moore- 2010 Vermont convention chair

CAVERMONT

2012 Convention Report.

Plans. Held core staff meeting on September 5, 2009 at the OTR site in Dailey WV. Most of the core staff was present, as well as several others that were interested in joining the staff. Our logo contest will end on December 21, 2009, and we plan to pick a logo (provided there are entries that are acceptable) in the spring of 2010. We plan no changes to our budget at this time, and we would like to plan to provide a deposit to the fairgrounds and the school ASAP. We need to be informed on beginning the process of retrieving the seed money the NSS provides for deposits so we can lock in our prices.

Progress. Logo contest is ongoing with Carolina Shrewsbury getting speleoartists involved. We have had a couple serious inquiries and a couple commitments from folks that have said they are entering or working on a logo, but to date we have no official entries. Bank account issue with \$ being taken for maintenance fees was actually for the checks and doesn't appear to be an issue.

Problems. No significant issues at the moment that aren't being worked on, other than the question of when we can expect seed money to lock in our prices for our facilities.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Bray and John Pearson

Jeff & John have been advised on the requirements for getting the advance & the steps to follow to get it.

Education Division

Dianne Gillespie
270-404-2034
2421 Hallerins Court
Maryville, Tn 37801
dianne.gillespie07@yahoo.com

Education Division Third Quarter Report Fall 2009

Division Chief Dianne Gillespie has been actively recruiting NSS members to join the efforts of the division adding five new members to its three committee. Gillespie is currently developing protocol for an educator award, and a possible new program.

Environmental Education Committee (EEC)

Kriste Lindberg (Chair) kriste.lindberg@gmail.com

Chairman, NSS Environmental Education Committee/Project Underground

Report prepared by Dianne Gillespie

Kriste Lindberg is very active in Indiana with the success of multiple workshops and Caving Day. Gillespie has recruited NSS members to help Lindberg in her educational efforts. Gillespie met with Lindberg in August to discuss structure and future goals of the EEC. Lindberg, like many others is feeling the pains of our nation's recession and is unable to expend her own funds to conduct workshops. However she is taking steps to build the EEC.

Gillespie and Lindberg met with the Museum of the Midwest to discuss a future cave exhibit. Lindberg was invited to be on the planning committee.

Project Underground

Project Underground (PU) became a casualty of the states recent budget cuts. Gillespie and PU Executive Director Carol Zokaites have been in discussion to strengthen the partnership between the NSS and PU.

Amy Bern NSS Board approved PU board member resigned. Gillespie and Lindberg would like to present Thor Barhman 45063 for BOG approval as her replacement. Thor Barhman Pine Mountain Grotto Conservation Officer, has more than 10 years experience in assisting with cave education programs in southeastern Kentucky. Barhman professionally works as in Information Technology and would be an asset in helping PU redesign its website.

Safety and Techniques

Nothing to report.

Education Grants and Scholarships Committee

Pam Tegelma Malabad (Chair) pmalabad@msn.com

We have received several inquiries requesting additional information concerning NSS grants.

One of these inquiries resulted in a grant submission from Cedars of Lebanon State Park requesting \$500 from the NSS to assist with setting up a permanent cave display in the park's nature center.

Project Title: Cedars of Lebanon State Park Nature Center Cave Display

Contact: Sean Reines, Seasonal Interpretive Ranger on behalf of Mr. Wayne Ingram, Ranger, Cedars of Lebanon State Park, TN

Status: This submission is still up for discussion and awarding this grant has not yet been determined.

Youth Group Liaison Committee (YGLC)

Allen Maddox trailsiter@yahoo.com

Progress:

There have been Regional Coordinators brought on board for the NRO and the WR sections.

Plans:

Need to fill Regional coordinator positions in Arizona Regional Association, Northwest Caving Association, and Southwestern Region.

Promoting the Caving Forum Youth Group Section to get more activity is being planed and pursued.

Problems:

It still seems to be difficult to get the attention of the people who would be interesting in helping on this committee.

National Cave and Rescue Commission

Anmar Mirza, National Coordinator, national@ncrc.info

No report received

Safety and Techniques Committee

Kurt Waldron, Chairman, keystrokeaero@hotmail.com

No report received