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WHITE MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST CERTIFICATION TOUR - OCTOBER 2017

03 Nov 2017 2:29 PM | [Kelly Bryer \(Administrator\)](#)



We had such an incredible day with our friends Colleen & Matt of the White Mountain National Forest. Not only am I a local to the WMNF, I have been on every single tour we have done, every single year -- you would think that this annual tour would be old-hat by now. NEVER! Every year, I learn more and more. This year, they took us on roads I had never been on, and furthermore, didn't even realize existed. Here are what some of our GSAs had to say about our adventure.

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For me, The morning started off with a bit of rain, some light fog, and with me wondering if, like the forecast has said, the sun would actually be making an appearance.

That feeling dissipated the further north I got on my drive to the White Mountain visitors center where we were meeting. While the sun was peaking through the clouds, it was still a bit on the cool side but not a cools as it might have been for a New Hampshire October morning.

After checking in, we headed for our cars and headed even further north for our tour. We made several stops throughout the tour and discussed what was available for the visitors to those specific areas.

At Boise Rock we learned about both Franconia Iron and the Rock itself and how, during a major snowstorm, a teamster was able to survive the storm under the ledge. Not a place I'd want to spend a night, even in the middle of the summer!

Trail heads and there kiosks, filled with information, including with warning about the danger you might run into, and information on the type of gear you should be carrying (or wearing!) were prevalent. It's surprising, for me anyway, that people that go out to climb mountains, sometimes don't realize that the weather can be quite different up above tree line and so in many cases don't have warm clothing, even in July. The one sign I remembered clearly pointed out the 'Many have died above timberline from exposure'. One comment made, almost in jest, was that you also needed to be wearing proper footwear. Most people would expect this would go without saying BUT even I have seen people out mountain climbing in flip-flops!





Campsites, and open tenting areas as well as fee's that were collected for parking in different lots was discussed. The need for these fees, and uses was also covered. While you might be surprised at how little they were, when you heard what they were used for you might ask why they weren't higher.

One thing that surprised me was that this area of the state was already past peak foliage season. At home in Nashua, most of the trees hadn't even started to show signs of change but, while there was still spots of good color, the vibrant reds and oranges that I see most years was already dulled a bit. Well, winter does come a bit earlier in the mountains so I guess it should be expected that the falling leaves do also.

It was a wonderful tour and I would highly recommend any and all GSA's that haven't done a tour in this area join one when next available.

Tim A

Participating in the White Mountain Certification Training is an inspiring experience. This year Matt and Colleen shared places that I did not know existed. You know those places you drive by when you are in the mountains but have never ventured into. They shared areas where the camping is free to first come first served near trails accessible by foot or by Appalachian Mountain bussing service. Views that I had never seen before and now will ensure I visit again. And, of course, waterfalls that are just a short jaunt off the road. Did you know there is a wonderful babbling river in Crawford's Purchase not far from the Cog Railway? Both this one and the one near Crawford Connector Trailhead provide views and a perfect place to picnic and enjoy mother nature. The White Mountains are a hiker's dream but what this tour reinforced is that there is much to see a little off the beaten path. White Mountains National Forest experiences a huge influx of visitors during peak seasons such as leaf peeping. They reminded us that our visitors need to be prepared when they visit with the appropriate equipment and be ready for any weather situation. It is so beautiful there that some of us forge into the wilderness without thoroughly planning for what may lie ahead. I am now a certified WMNF person but there is no way that 2 trainings even scratches what they have to offer. I look forward to participating in another one next year. Thank you White Mountain National Forest for bringing us up to speed on what you have to offer.

GSA Kathryn S



What a wonderful White Mountain National Forest Tour we had. The weather started out cool and crisp and blossomed into an amazing day. Every so often we caught a glimpse of the Mt Washington summit and it was as clear as could be.

I thought of this as the 'road less traveled' view of the area. We traveled into areas I hadn't seen or experienced before. Instead of the more known attractions we were able to see more of the areas that hikers and naturalists are interested in. It was absolutely beautiful. One take away was that when speaking to folks headed north, we should definitely steer them to talk to some of the folks from the White Mountain National Forest.

They also told us about the Weeks Act Legacy driving trail and it looks fabulous.

www.weeksactlegacytrail.org I can't wait to try it. Sue G

The WMNF tour on October 12 was so interesting. Living right here, I also learned a lot that I did not know. In Franconia Notch, I was not aware of the large parking area at the base of the Bridal Path trail, nor was I aware that there was such a nice picnic area at Boise Rock! Often when travelling home from Seabrook on Friday nights I have stopped at the Boise Rock area, but had never seen the small sign for the picnic area.

The large camping area off of Route 3 in Twin Mountain also surprised me. I always thought that it was an entrance to a parking area for the gale river. Taking the back road across from Base Road to Crawford notch blew me away. I had to make a return trip the next day to see that fantastic view of the back of the Omni Mount Washington Resort! It was great to see and learn about these places and the difference between the paid camping sites and the free



camping sites and the amenities that are offered at each type. I was also a little shocked at how much \$ is brought in by the Fee tubes. I've debated on purchasing the license plates and always decide that it's just as easy to put money in an envelope to park at places like Glen Ellis Falls and Dianas Bath.
Angie C

This was my 2nd White Mountain National Forest Tour and it continues to impress me with how many unknown places there are. Matt and Colleen are so enthusiastic about the WM you cannot help but want to share the information with everyone. Was very pleased that they are looking into handling the large number of tourists without just adding more parking lots. The shuttle is such a great idea.

The lunch spot was perfect, best foliage I have seen so far. The Crawford Path, local swimming hole and the "secret road" was just plain fun! Looking forward to next years adventure.
Maureen W



I loved the Clinton Road, it was like four wheeling. Besides it was awesome to see the Mt. Washington Hotel from a different side. I learned about how they are taking care of our forest, hikes that are free and hikes that you need a tag for. I learned about the parking problems, I never realized it, I for one am guilty of parking on the side of the road at Mt. Major. I now know not to park on the road, especially a highway. (not sure why I didn't think before hand). Anyway, our tour guides were so informative.....it's amazing how much there is to know about our great state and all it's forest. I was very impressed with them both. Thank you all for a great informative tour.
Linda D



Dear Matt, The GSA group thanks you for the wonderful day in the woods you gave us. As I volunteer at Exit 32 I was particularly happy to learn about some new places to send hikers. To test them out we took a hike on Middle Sugarloaf the next week and today I went to see both Lower and Upper Ammonoosuc River Falls. With all the rain we have had they were both terrific! I sent several groups there this past weekend.
Thanks Colleen for spending time with us GSAs in the White Mountains. We loved the day and were especially happy to learn about some new places to send hikers when we volunteer at Exit 32. I sent several groups to both Upper and Lower Ammonoosuc Falls this past weekend. With the recent rains, they are spectacular!
Jane A

I just want to thank you all for a wonderful tour in the White Mtns last week. I usually work at the airport and countless times I have been asked what can I do or see. One time I actually had some folks who were meeting up with others to hike part of the Appalachian trail. They came in early and wanted to hike something else while they killed time. I would have loved to tell them about what I just learned. I have lived in NH for 19 years now and am still learning to be a "tourist". This is my 2nd White Mtns tour and I look forward to more in the future. I'm sure we have just dented the surface.
Sue C



Congratulations to our GSAs earning their White

Mountain National Forest GSA Certification! Pictured above with previously certified GSAs are: Tim Adams, Jane Anderson, Susan Caprio, Rose Marie Cusson, Bruce Flegal, Sue Geyer, Connie Loken, Patty Mason, Diane Miner, Mary O'Brien, Joe Reisert, Kathryn Segreti, Marty Wagner, Maureen Walsh, & Liz Ziegler.

Resources:

Weeks Act Legacy Trail - <http://www.weeksactlegacytrail.org>

Recreational passes: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/whitemountain/passes-permits/recreation/?cid=stelprdb5297292>

Website - <http://www.fs.usda.gov/whitemountain>

Franconia Notch – Old Bridle Path – parking alternatives

Dispersed tent camping – we visited Gale River <https://www.fs.usda.gov/activity/whitemountain/recreation/camping-cabins>

Upper Falls: <http://www.nhstateparks.com/waterfalls.html>

Alerts, notices, restrictions: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detailfull/whitemountain/alerts-notices/?cid=stelprdb5228795&width=full>

Clinton Road is what we traveled from Upper Falls area to Crawford Path

Highland Center: <http://www.outdoors.org/lodging-camping/Lodges/highland/index.cfm>

Cherry Mountain (Fabyan Cabin) <https://www.fs.usda.gov/recrea/whitemountain/recreation/hiking/recrea/?recid=74593&actid=50>
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/whitemountain/learning/history-culture/?cid=STELPRD3819338>

Hiking trail pdf's: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/activity/whitemountain/recreation/hiking>

Day hiking areas: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/activity/whitemountain/recreation/hiking/?recid=74405&actid=50>

WMNF Wilderness Areas

* Caribou-Speckled Mountain

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/whitemountain/specialplaces/?cid=stelprdb5186041>

14,000 acres designated by the 1990 Maine Wilderness Act.

* Great Gulf

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/whitemountain/specialplaces/?cid=stelprdb5186045>

Approximately 5,552 acres, designated by the 1964 Wilderness Act.

* Pemigewasset

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/whitemountain/specialplaces/?cid=stelprdb5186443>

45,000 acres designated by the 1984 New Hampshire Wilderness Act.

* Presidential Range - Dry River

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/whitemountain/specialplaces/?cid=stelprdb5186453>

29,000 acres designated by the 1975 Eastern Wilderness Act and expanded in the 1984 New Hampshire Wilderness Act.

* Sandwich Range

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/whitemountain/specialplaces/?cid=stelprdb5186462>

35,800 acres: 25,000 designated by the 1984 New Hampshire Wilderness Act and 10,800 designated by the 2006 New England Wilderness Act.

* Wild River

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/whitemountain/specialplaces/?cid=stelprdb5186473>

23,700 acres designated by the 2006 New England Wilderness Act.

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