



Jordan Valley 45° Chapter Newsletter

Volume 11, Number 1

March 2022

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Don't forget to submit your Volunteer Hours at:

<https://northcountrytrail.org/members/report-volunteer-hours/>

Note: JV45° typically offers a hike on the 3rd Saturday of every month.

The JV45° Newsletter is usually published six times per year, every other month.

Please fill out the VIP

(Volunteer-In-Parks) form for NCTA and NPS (National Park Service). Then print it, sign it, and mail it. Details at:

<https://northcountrytrail.org/volunteer/volunteer-resource-center/nps-vip-form/>



Message from JV 45°

President Kevin Whitley

kjw@torchlake.com

Hello JV 45 members. My name is Kevin Whitley and I am the new President of the North Country Trail Association Jordan Valley 45 Chapter.

I want to begin by sending a big Thank You to Immediate Past-President Mary Campbell. She worked very hard for the trail and left this chapter in great shape, which will make my job easier. I know Mary spent a large number of hours organizing the NCTA Celebration in Bellaire and many hours planning and organizing the Bear River Bridge project. In addition to these two huge projects, she also spent many hours volunteering for everything else to make the trail better. Thank You Mary.

I grew up in a house near downtown Charlevoix and spent a good amount of my childhood playing in the woods between Charlevoix's City Park along Lake Michigan and Fisherman's Island State Park. I have always felt at home in the woods and on the trails. Around seven years ago, I attended a presentation at the Charlevoix Library by Joan Young of her experience hiking the North Country Trail. I knew that night that I wanted to check out where this trail is and where it goes. I joined the JV45 chapter about 5 years ago. I have section hiked all of the North Country Trail from Brevort Lake Road west of St. Ignace to the Little Manistee River near the Lake County Line. I have also backpacked the Pictured Rocks National Lake Shore several times and the Porcupine Wilderness State Park several times. I have been to Rocky Mountain National Park to see the Continental Divide Trail and near Mount Rainier National Park to walk on the Pacific Crest Trail. This last October, I backpacked the first three nights on the Appalachian Trail from Amicalola Falls



State Park to Neel Gap. I have also hiked to the bottom of the Grand Canyon and backpacked Yosemite including climbing Half Dome. I really enjoy visiting National Parks and hope to see all of them someday. I currently live in Atwood in a house I built 21 years ago and I work in Charlevoix.

I accepted this job without any plans or desires to change the operation of this chapter. I believe the Chapter has been well run and I hope to continue. We will do what needs to be done to improve the trail, which will enhance the outdoor recreation experience for all. Feel free to contact me anytime at 231-676-1400 or kjw@torchlake.com

Kevin

Upcoming Events

March 19, Chapter Hike. See p. 5

April 16, Chapter Hike, TBD

June 4, National Trails Day

October 5-9, NCTA Annual Celebration, Walker, MN

December Hike Report

Bob Courtois bcourtois@comcast.net

Deadman's Overlook to Warner Creek Trailhead: 12/18/2021. Several hikers posted cars at the Warner Creek Trailhead on M32, which was helpful so that we could start on time and easily get people back to cars parked at Deadman's Hill after the hike (thank you Mary, Jane & Cliff, Kevin, Jim and Sara).

Although E. Deadman's Hill Rd. is only plowed to within a half mile or so of the trailhead, we were able to drive in. Before the big warm up this week, the road was closed with well over a foot of snow. The road was extremely bumpy and icy and we had to remove a tree at the entrance to the parking in order to get in.

By 10:30 we had 18 hikers and two dogs. We were later joined by a 19th hiker at O'Brien Pond. Two hikers, Mandy and Kevin, just walked a mile in from Deadman's overlook and back with their golden lab puppy. Hikers included representatives from the Grand Traverse, Jordan 45° and Hiawatha Shore to Shore Chapters.

The weather was great but the trail was extremely icy in spots. Several people had slips and falls but, luckily, no one got hurt. The worst spot was the parking lot at Deadman's Overlook, but the long downhill into the valley was tricky too, a slippery slope. Hey, it's winter! Ice aside, the weather was perfect for December, mid 20's, no wind and snowing. The inch or two of snow that accumulated over the course of the 7.5 mile hike restored the landscape completely to white. It should be a white Christmas!

Along with the warm weather this week we had extremely high winds and, so, there had been a lot of tree damage to clean up throughout the JV45° Chapter. On today's hike we cleared many trees and countless branches and sticks. In anticipation, four people brought along saws and a couple of axes as well.

At Deadman's Overlook a huge tree had fallen and crushed the fence. That foreshadowed the downed trees all along the rest of the hike. The biggest downed tree was near the top of the long downhill trail into the valley southwest of Deadman's Overlook. Although it completely blocked the trail, with a large group, it only took about 15 minutes to saw, chop and haul the mess off the trail.



project DECEMBER 18, 2021 DEADMAN'S TO M32	
Bob Courtois	248
Maryann Dowl + Dog	231
Jim Dowl	231
Mandy Laberge	984
Kevin Laberge + Dog	11
John Schell	231
Paul Ward	231
Kevin Whitley	120
Savannah	23
Ben Sauer	70
Mary (Harden)	23
Annie Matz	23
Wil Spanton	906
Mary Campbell	23
Jane Denney	23
Cliff Denney	23
Jim Dowl	11
Doug Seney	11

After slipping and sliding down the quarter mile or so into the valley, we walked along the bottom of Deadman's Hill, which runs near the Jordan River. All the improvements (benching, bridges and puncheon) and repair work done in this section in 2018 and 2019 seems to be holding up well. With all the twists, turns and marvelous springs, this is one of the prettiest sections in the valley.

After signing in at the trail log (below Deadman's), we continued to Jordan River Rd. and checked on Duane's "Porky Bait" experiment. The porkies crave something in the plywood we have used for trail marker signs and have damaged several signs throughout the valley. As a test, Duane's used stove pipe tubing to wrap a sign post and, above the sheet metal, he placed plywood as "Porky Bait". It had been there a month or so when we hiked and, so far, it didn't appear that the porkies could climb over the sheet metal.

After a half mile on Jordan River Rd., we checked out the half mile of new trail southwest of O'Brien Pond. This interest-



The December Hikers

ing segment moved the trail off a muddy two-track. We also checked out the new bridge along the beaver dam on O'Brien Pond. The famous "beaver deceiver" is holding up well. After O'Brien Pond four people (Dan, Jim, Evelyn & Doug) stayed on the NCT for the shorter one mile back to M32. The thirteen remaining hikers completed the Warner Creek Loop, including the newly cleared half mile bypass to get off the chronically wet trail along O'Brien Pond. After about a mile and a half, the Warner Creek Loop rejoins the NCT. From there it was a mile back to the Warner Creek M32 trailhead. Bonus, all hikers were accounted for!

After retrieving cars from Deadman's, eight of us (Bob, Kevin, Wil, Mary, Dan, Annie, Paul & Julie) went to Larry's for burgers and pops. Luckily, with little snow for their sleds, Larry's was not packed with snowmobilers. Although it looks a bit sketchy from the outside, inside, Larry's is a classic friendly northern Michigan bar.

January Hike Report

Ellen Whitehead

twinlakede@gmail.com

Some people would say that a temperature of -1 degree Fahrenheit is the time to cozy up alongside a warm fire in the woodstove; but on Saturday, January 15, 2022, eleven hardy souls braved winter's frosty breath and ventured out on the North Country Trail for a 6-mile snowshoe adventure – and it was wonderful!!

We began our trek on Cinder Hill Road and headed toward the Five Lake area for a picturesque snowshoe hike through a mixed hardwood and pine forest. One of the landmarks along this trek is an old stump that graces a hillside overlooking Five Lakes, looking like an ancient sculpture.



The January Hikers



The JV45 Section on display

in recent years. The trail continues through hardwoods sprinkled with some beautiful hemlock trees and it skirts the open farm fields. These fields are such a large open space that they have Zastrugi. Never heard of this word? Neither had I, but Dan Dueweke taught us a new word that day. Zastrugi is snow surfaces created by the wind into ridges and grooves.

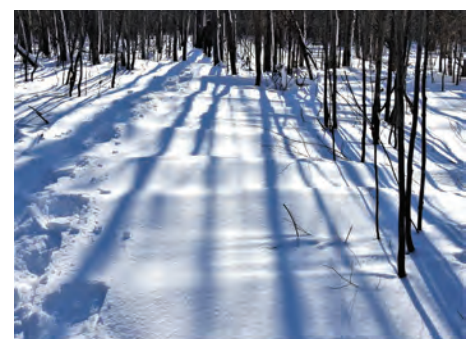
By the time we finished our snowshoe hike and returned to the Sand Lake Road ORV parking lot, it was a balmy 12 degrees! Snowshoeing is great exercise and a fun way to explore winter along the North Country Trail. Hope to see you next month!



Mary Campbell and Kevin Whitley

We then went back to Cinder Hill Road to continue our time on the trail by heading south toward Mancelona Road. Taking a short break before heading in this direction were our outgoing president Mary Campbell and incoming president Kevin Whitley. How lucky are we to have two such dedicated people leading our Chapter?!

There is a variety of terrain in this area from flat, red pine habitat, to quite a large hill leading out of the forest. Then there's some clear-cut spots that unfortunately seem to be popping up quite often



Zastrugi (also spelled sastrugi)

February Hike Report

Bob Courtois bcourtois@comcast.net

In a word, blizzard. No doubt the snow and wind scared off most of those who might have come to the February Hike. In the morning drive over to the trail (Bob from Gaylord, and the three others from Charlevoix) it was slow going and, at times, white out conditions. Although it was a balmy 8 degrees, the wind was brutal at lake sides and along the open fields. We were forecasted to get 2" to 3" of snow but received at least 6" plus of dense powdery white stuff. The wind had completely drifted in the previous snowshoe tracks so we were blazing fresh tracks in most places. In depressions the snow was very deep.

Bob arrived at 10:am at the ORV lot east of the trail crossing on Starvation Lake Rd. (SLR) and posted the event signs. The parking lot had not been plowed and conditions did not look promising for anyone without all-wheel drive. Kevin Whitley, Tammy Krembs (and dog Jack) and Wil Shapton showed up by 10:15. Tammy had her awesome van she has been converting to a camper and promptly got stuck. Sigh, we have someone get stuck every time we hike here.

We first headed one mile south to MacNeil Pond hoping more people would show up later for the hike up to Sand Lake. A quarter mile in Kevin's left snowshoe broke and he had to one-hoof it down to MacNeil and back, not easy to do since he was post-holing in some areas. Despite



On the march!



The intrepid Four

the wind, once in the shelter of woods it was not bad at all. Even at just 8 degrees you heat up pretty quickly and have to loosen your layered clothing. Once at MacNeil we checked out the two good sized beaver lodges. There is evidence of recent beaver activity, but I haven't seen one there since the Celebration in 2019.

After a quick picture we headed back to the ORV lot, but no new hikers had shown up. Let me just say that all you people who wimped out on this hike are losers. :) Jack the dog had a blast in his coat and boots but it was clear he was cold. So, Tammy decided to stay with him in the van to warm up while the rest of us headed up to Sand Lake. Luckily, Kevin was able to borrow a spare pair of snowshoes or he never could have made it in the deep snow.

Other than when in the woods, there was little relief from the wind but we were all dressed for it. The first mile north from Starvation Lake Rd. there is a beautiful red pine forest that was probably planted in the 30's. Along the way, there is a huge tree stump from the late 1800's that dwarfs every other tree you see. After the red pines you wind your way up past an oil collection station and huge new communication tower. In the last mile to Sand Lake is a logged-out area where they kept a nice corridor of trees either side of the NCT. This is the area that got clobbered in August by a fierce windstorm that turned the trail into an impassable salad. I think we cleared over 60 trees and it's still quite a sight to see. Note, the trail adopters for this well-maintained section north of SLR are Ellen Whitehead and Tim & Denise DeKett.

We only hiked as far at the Sand Lake sign at the southeast corner of the lake, had a snack and then headed back



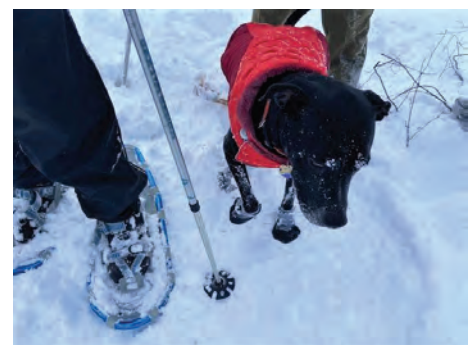
Who brought a shovel?

toward the ORV lot. Sand Lake is a "kettle lake" (it has no feeder creeks or drains) and rises and falls over the years with the water table. Currently, the water table is very high. Most times hiking this area it is very quiet but with fresh deep snow there were a good number of noisy snowmobilers. But there are plenty of snowmobile trails and they have stayed off the NCT.

By the time we got back to the red pines we encountered Tammy and Jack headed north to greet us. Wil signed us all in at the register box and we then returned to the ORV lot. While we were gone, the county kindly plowed the lot and of course piled snow behind all our vehicles. It was not a problem for Bob (Jeep) and Kevin (pickup), but we had to use a towing strap to pull Tammy's van loose. Will was able to dig and rock himself out.

We wanted to stop for pops at the Hide-A-Way Bar but the place was absolutely packed with snowmobilers so we headed on to the Iron Skillet in Mancelona, which has great food but the only beer is root beer.

Next Hike – March 19th, M-32 to Dobleski Rd. and maybe burgers at Larry's afterwards.



Jack, wondering why he's here

March Hike Plans

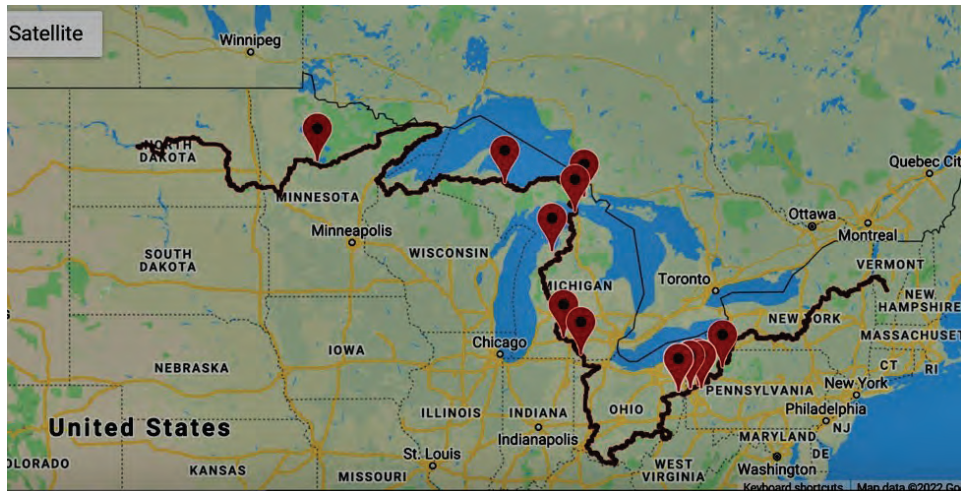
**March 19th, M32 Trailhead to
Dobleski Rd. (via Warner Creek)
Total hike of ~ 7.0 miles**

We will meet at Warner Creek Pathway Trailhead on M32 (mile 648.5), which is about 3.0 miles west of US131. We will gather at 9:30 am and hit the trail promptly at 10:00.

Long Hike Option - Hike counter-clockwise on the Warner Creek Loop (about 3 miles) and stop along the way to check out the new bridge and the beaver deceiver (mile 649.75) on Warner Creek/O'Brien Pond. We will then continue the Warner Creek loop to M32 (647.5) and walk the hilly section between M-32 and US 131 (about 4 miles), cross 131 and hike downhill to Dobleski Rd. (643.75).

Short hike option – To shave off a couple miles, some may want to skip the Warner Creek loop and just stay on the NCT (see map, 4.75 miles).

For more details, see the **NCTA Events Map** (<https://northcountrytrail.org/events/map/>) or our **Chapter's Facebook Page** (<https://www.facebook.com/NCTA-JordanValley/>).



New “Events Map” on the NCTA Web Site

For communicating monthly hikes and other event notices, we’ve been relying primarily on Facebook and, secondarily, emails from the Bob Haack. Now the NCTA has improved its Events web page to include a North Dakota to Vermont map with pins showing the location of upcoming hikes and other events throughout the NCT. In addition to this cool map, the NCTA site also includes a listing of the events and a calendar. When you click on the various event pins, the details pop up.

For now, we plan to continue posting our upcoming events on Facebook and with email, but also having a reliable NCTA go-to place for events will be extremely helpful, especially for those who don’t use Facebook.

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/NCTAJordanValley/>

NCTA Events Site and map - <https://northcountrytrail.org/events/map/>

Excuses to Explore a Trail

Trail events are a great way to show off the treasure that is the North Country Trail. As a chapter our goal is to build awareness of the trail and encourage its use. What better way to do this than to offer an excellent excuse for folks to get out and experience it?

We hope to offer another great “trail hook” on National Trails Day on Saturday, June 4. Please mark your calendars for this special day. Last year’s “Wild Things on a Trail” event attracted several families that came out to look for characters along the Sky-line Trail. Plans aren’t finalized yet, but another fun family event is likely this year, possibly in the area of our chapter’s new Bear River Bridge. What will it be? Photo scavenger hunt? Treasure hunt? Stay tuned!

Dove Day and Sue Bouwense

Kevin Whitley - President
kjlw@torchlake.com

James Howell – Vice President
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Josh Berlo – Website Coordinator
joshberlo@gmail.com

Annie Matz – Secretary-Treasurer
amat57@yahoo.com

CURRENT JV45^o GOVERNING BOARD

Duane Lawton – Project Coordinator
delawton@torchlake.com

Bob Courtois - Hike Coordinator
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**Sue Bouwense & Dove Day – Events
Coordinators**
sbouwense@gmail.com
doveday70@gmail.com

**Vacant – Communications
Coordinator**

Dan Dueweke – Trail Coordinator
dandueweke@gmail.com



LEFT:
Evidence of a
sharp axe - a
“shiny face”



RIGHT:
Evidence of a
chipped axe -
stripes

Comment

from Trail Coordinator, Dan Dueweke dandueweke@gmail.com

Spring will bring melting snow (eventually) and reveal all those previously drifted-over blowdowns. When you do your “spring walk”, please take note of any fallen trees you find that you would like help clearing. Send me a picture and location so I can bring the appropriate tools. Also, the beavers seem to be expanding their range near rivers and wetlands. Be watchful for any newly submerged portions of the trail and report their locations.

Axe CSI— Did you know you can determine how sharp your axe is by looking at what you chop? A keenly sharpened axe will leave a smooth and often shiny face on the cut while the slightest nick on the axe’s edge will leave a stripe. This stripe(s) will look like repeated scores on each chop and show where the nicks are pushing their way through the wood fiber rather than slicing it cleanly.



BUILD IT

Let's Get To Work



Duane Lawton
delawton@torchlake.com

Build It March 2022

Well, we haven’t done anything on the trail since December. So, what’s up next? We will plan to do another workday at O’Brien Pond to remove the old boardwalk, and to build about 200’ of puncheon north of the new boardwalk. We’ll use the old boardwalk timbers for some of the puncheon. At this time, we expect to do

this on June 4th (National Trails Day), but that isn’t final. More information will be forthcoming.

There is some puncheon between Landslide and Cascade that needs replacing or repairing, that is a minor project we should do. There are several new road marker posts to install in the Jordan Valley, perhaps that’s another workday.

Other major reroutes (Dobleski to Giem, Conway to Kipp, Skyline to Cedar Valley) are still up in the air.

Happy New Year, Duane

NCT Miles of Trail by State as of 2021

State	Off Road	On-Road	Total
ND	277	188	465
MN	694	161	855
WI	140	74	214
MI	863	300	1,163
OH	504	556	1,060
PA	236	50	286
NY	431	248	679
VT	42	26	68
ALL	3,188	1,603	4,791

The JV45° Chapter is on
facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/North-Country-Trail-Association-Jordan-Valley-45-636045479799699/>

JV45 Annual Meeting

January 8, 2022; Start time Noon;
Held on Zoom

Members present: Mary Campbell, Annie Matz, Cliff Denay, Jane Denay, Bob Haack, Sheridan Haack, Josh Berlo, Kevin Whitley, Nick Jensen, Bob Courtois, Dan Dueweke, Ed Strzelinski, Susan Miller, Sue Bouwense, Jim Howell, John Day, Dove Day, John Young

1. Introductions and Agenda Review

2. 2021 in Review by Mary Campbell: It was a busy year! Biggest project completed was Bear River Bridge, which was a joint project between NCMC, the city of Petoskey, and the JV45 chapter of NCTA. Yearend stats: 170 active members and current balance \$5611.

Work Projects review by Duane Lawton:
6/5 National Trails Day "Post planting"
6/7 Bear River bridge set
6/19 Bear Bridge connector and boardwalk
8/5 Bear Bridge dedication
9/24-26 O'Brien Pond boardwalk and reroute
10/24 O'Brien Pond clean-up
11/11 Installed interpretative panel at River Rd Sports Complex. Fixed damage to boardwalk.

Chapter Hikes reviewed by Bob Courtois: Monthly hikes were conducted on the 3rd Saturday of each month throughout the JV45 area. A thru-hike of the entire JV45 section was held in October and the participants want to make this an annual event. Jim Howell has volunteered to plan the hike this year. Bob's goal for 2022 is to increase the attendance of the hikes.

Promotional Events summary by Sue Bouwense: June 2021 National Trails Day was celebrated by "Where the Wild Things Are" held at the Skyline Shelter, this was very well received by the 15-20 families that attended.

3. Elections & Openings

Candidates for re-election
- Bob Courtois for Hike Coordinator:
Unanimously re-elected
- Duane Lawton for Project Coordinator:
Unanimously re-elected

- Bob Haack, our Communication Coordinator, is trying to step down from the position. We have no candidate at this time to fill the position. Bob Haack agreed to continue the work for now.

- Mary Campbell is stepping down as President, and at the time of the meeting, we had no candidate seeking the position. Jim Howell received a write-in vote for President but declined. Current Officers agreed to meet and decide how to divide the duties. Mary will continue as the NCTA liaison. Duane has agreed to take over the direct communication with Kenny Wawczek. Jim will take over organizing the leadership meetings. Developing a leadership team was discussed with positive response. (Later Kevin Whitley stepped forward to serve as Chapter President.)

4. Awards. The 2022 NCTA Honors Award was awarded to Bob and (Sheridan) Haack. Congratulations!! And the 2022 Big Foot Award was awarded to Dan Dueweke! Congratulations Dan!

5. 2022 Planned Projects presented by Duane Lawton
Reroute parallel to Kipp Rd.
Remove old boardwalk at O'Brien Pond
Need for better blazes across PYSA property
Need for marker posts at Jordan River Rd
Dobleski-Giem Reroute
Big Thanks to all 2021 volunteers!!!

6. Hike 100 continues in 2022.
This month's hike is Jan 15 and is planned for the Cinder Hill area

7. 2022 Trail Promotions by Sue Bouwense
Hopefully most promotions will be held in person this year.
March 1-Quiet Adventures Symposium (virtual only)
Memorial weekend-Top'O Michigan marathon
6/3 Petoskey Open House
6/4 National Trails Day
9/24 North Country Trails Day

8. Trail work and Adopter Update by Dan Dueweke
Currently we have 40 adopters and 2 bike clubs maintaining our trail.
Please update Dan with any trail maintenance

needs and send him an email when any work has been done.

Dan is adding a recruiting memo to the register boxes so hikers can contact him if they are interested in becoming more involved.

The chainsaw class held last fall was very successful. Several sawyers got certified. Dan would like to organize an adopter workshop.

Reminder: Blown down trees can be walked over or around but large patches of briars or woody vegetation can make hiking very difficult. Please use the trimmers to maintain these areas during the growing season.

We should consider investing in some battery-operated trimmers.

9. Special Presentations: The Grand Canyon by Land or River "A Perspective" Susan Miller and Annie Matz did a presentation on their two Rim-to-Rim hikes in the Grand Canyon in October 2021. Duane Lawton presented a summary of his 16-day rafting trip down the Colorado River at bottom of the Grand Canyon.

Meeting adjourned at 2:05p.m.

Minutes submitted by
Annie Matz, JV45 Secretary/Treasurer

Where I Hiked

Tongariro Alpine Crossing *Hiking in the Shadow of Mt. Doom*

Dan Dueweke

dandueweke@gmail.com

New Zealand has many great trails but one stands out as a world class day hike -- the Tongariro Alpine Crossing. The hike traverses the Tongariro National Park and is a 13 mile up and over with an elevational gain of about 3500 feet.

I began my hike (or tramp as the locals would call it) on a crisp March morning that frosted the windshield at daybreak. The brilliant blue sky though promised good weather and I was down to one layer a short distance from the trailhead. The first few miles were an easy walk on a well-maintained gravel and sand trail through low brush, but with Mt. Ngauruhoe looming over my shoulder, I knew I'd be putting my legs into low gear soon enough. If the big mountain looks familiar, it was the inspiration for Mt. Doom in the *Lord of the Rings*, and portions of the movie were filmed nearby. I kept my eyes peeled for orcs, elves, and hobbits but saw none.

Walking in the sharp gravel and over rough rocks made my choice of hiking boots over trainers a good one. Once on top, the main trail splintered off to numerous craters that walked like volcanic sand dunes. Unlike Sleeping Bear though, it wasn't a fresh lake mist rising up from the slopes, but the sulfurous deep-earth fumes of Mordor. The smell was common to much of New Zealand though and wasn't



Mt. Ngauruhoe

unexpected in the side craters of a semi-active volcano. Did I think I was going to need hiking poles? Naah, but I was glad I brought them.

From the trail's highest point (6200') on a clear day, you can see all the way to Mt. Egmont, another perfect cinder cone shouldered in snow 85 miles to the west on the Tasman Sea. The trail though, didn't go the top of Mt. Ngauruhoe which is considered sacred by the local Maori and off trail hiking to its summit is discouraged. While contemplating that higher summit, a damp fog blew in and pulled the temperature down with it. Happy to have a rain jacket along. Hikers are warned about the unpredictable weather at each trailhead.

Small ponds of melt water mixed with dissolved volcanic minerals sit below the main crater and were colorful, both green and blue. The high acidity also makes them unfit for drinking. They are

also considered locally sacred and touching/wading in the ponds is discouraged.

Continuing over the mountain and down the switch-backed trail, the first evidence of civilization was the Ketatahi hut which struck me as pretty first world given its size, construction, and front wide porch. A crowd of international trampers were hanging out on the deck as evidenced by the many languages spoken. Prior to my hike the hut had been damaged by volcanic bombs from a small eruption that closed the Park. Rock showers were not in the forecast on my day in the Park and my arrival at the opposite trailhead was uneventful.

The Tongariro hike can be crowded in "peak" season (December-February) and as a World Heritage site, the Park draws a million visitors a year, though not all will do the Crossing. Hat, layers, sunscreen, plenty of water, and a good lunch for your day pack will cover most of what you need, and don't forget those hiking poles.



Almost there!



Walking on top with sulfurous fumes rising

Where I Hiked

Jordan Valley 45° Chapter!

Duane Lawton

delawton@torchlake.com

We thru-hiked our entire chapter section on October 13-17 last year—80 miles in five days. Actually we “slack-packed”—our packs were repositioned for us daily. Here is our story.

Wednesday, October 13th, 16.8 miles



Evelyn Howell dropped Jim Howell, Nick Jensen and me off at the Starvation Lake Road trailhead, and joined us briefly heading north.

We passed Sand Lake and noted the trail had been moved quite a ways uphill as the lake level has risen in the last several years. We met Bob Courtois who day-hiked down from Cinder Hill Road to hike back with us. Bob left us at Five Lake after collecting some trash.



After enjoying the Landside Lookout, we met Mary Campbell at Cascade Road, where she had been dropped off.

We passed the 45th parallel, and then finished the day at Pinney Bridge SFCG, where we set up camp.

Thursday, October 14th, 15.8 miles

After breaking camp, we left our packs at the Pinney Bridge parking area, and Evelyn moved them later.



Today we enjoyed the rest of the Jordan Valley. We cheated at the beaver ponds by crossing the dam to reach the vistas faster.



Then we crossed the new Horizontal Elevated Puncheon at O'Brien Pond, and made it to Dobleski Road—where our packs had been left—and dispersed camped.



Evelyn was in the area, and she gave us a ride to Subway.

Friday, October 15th, 14.6 miles

Up at 06:25, met by Bob Courtois who wanted to hike partway with us today. Bob brought coffee and MacDonalds. (Note: we apparently are not roughing it!)

Today we hiked the proposed reroute from Dobleski Road to Giem Road.

Once we get a landowner agreement, an MDOT Safety rail crossing permit and a DEGLE and DNR permit, we can build 2 miles of trail, 200' of boardwalk, and a 40' bridge over the South Branch Boyne River.



This is where the bridge will go.

After a four-mile road walk, at Slash-ing Road it's back into the woods, we find a place to filter water.



Here is Mary at the water source.

continued on p. 10

We got to Chandler Hill Road and our packs just as it started raining.

Saturday, October 16th, 15.2 miles

It rained a lot overnight, our tents are wet, but we don't care. We packed up and left our stuff to pick up that night. Then we climbed Chandler Hill, where there have been lots of blowdowns.



We met the October Group Hikers at 11:00 at Springvale Road and hiked with them to Krause Road.

The weather is deteriorating, from the 50's/60's we had enjoyed, to high 40's, drizzle and windy.



We were going to camp at our Skyline Shelter, but it was occupied by a Scout Troop, so we went to the Day's, who provided welcome hospitality.

Regrettably, Nick announced his feet were toast and he had to leave. The rest of us slept indoors.

Sunday, October 17th, 17.3 miles

Left Krause Road trailhead at 9:00, then close to Brubaker Road we turned left and headed downhill on a potential reroute—though the landowner still needs convincing.



Then we hiked our new trail from Click Road to the Petoskey River Road Sports Complex, enjoying the trail we built three years ago. Here is our new boardwalk, with some dangling blow-downs—but that's another story!



Then on to the new Bear River Iron Belle Trail Bridge into the NCMC Natural Area. We had lunch at Beards Brewery in Petoskey.



Then we hiked along Little Traverse Bay on the Wheelway to Conway.

We next entered the Little Traverse Conservancy's Preserve Trails, a desired reroute that requires some landowner contact and convincing.

Next, we crossed to Hathaway Road along a powerline which was a swamp, so we got wet to the knees and determined this is not the right reroute!

We successfully arrived at Kipp Road trailhead—we made it!!



All in all, it was inspiring to see our whole territory laid out before us.

It is truly a beautiful section of the North Country Trail!

Even in October nature was vibrant.



There's talk of doing this annually, perhaps with greater support. I'm all for it!

Jordan Valley 45° Chapter Meeting 24 February 2022 (Zoom)

A few of the important issues discussed at the meeting are listed below. However, some points were dropped, especially if they were already covered in the Annual Meeting minutes on page 7.

1. Present. Kevin Whitley, Bob Courtois, Jim Howell, Dan Dueweke and Mary Campbell.

2. NCTA Items: New NCTA Events Map - The NCTA Events web page now includes a North Dakota to Vermont map with pins showing the location of future hikes and other events throughout the NCT. See p. 5.

3. 2022 Work Projects:

- A. O'Brien Pond Follow Up – Pull old board walk and add new puncheon. Need to schedule workday in June (June 4 national trails day?).
- B. Re-routes (pending permissions and permits):
 - Move off Dobleski Rd., US 131 and Geim Rd.
 - Cedar Valley
 - Notestine property
 - North Conway Rd. to Kipp Rd.
- C. Signs and interpretive panels - New and replacements – Along Bear River, at Mancelona Rd. & two on Jordan River Rd.

4. Tool Trailer/ Tool Box:

- A. Reorganize & improve trailer – started & on-going – Jim Howell & Steve Schnell.
- B. Lock Box for Hand Tools – Place somewhere along the Bear River, probably in the River Road Sports Complex. Box would include basic tools so that we don't need to always retrieve from the tool trailer in the Jordan Valley. Would anchor it down.
- C. Trailer and Tool Use (Orientation sessions) – Date TBD.

5. Administrative Details:

- A. Brochures & Map Reprint, (4,000 copies for \$1,000 or 6,000 copies for \$1,300 plus shipping.) Everything is ready with the printer, just waiting on a decision on funding from Munson.
- B. Trail register signs – Dan has drafted a small laminated sign to place in

register boxes, which notes the trail is maintained by NCT volunteers, tells hikers how to report downed trees and invites those interested in how to become more involved and perhaps even section adopters.

C. "Non-Trail" Structures Inventory.

Jim showed an Excel file listing the inventory assembled during 2021. It includes pictures of the many signs and register boxes.

6. Trail Adopters Coordinators Report (Dan Dueweke):

- A. Dashboard – Dan presented a Power Point show with aerial photos & maps of each adopter section in the J45, including section lengths and the adopter(s) names.
- B. Adopter Workshop – Dan wants to arrange a training day for sawyers and swamper (maybe in conjunction with a spring maintenance April workday).

C. Open Sections – There are some open sections. Contact Dan

- D. Trail Conditions:
 - Jordan River- NCT and JR Pathway – Duane's "Porky Bait" experiment at the east Jordan River Rd. trail crossing appears to work. The stove pipe Duane installed around the sign post prevents the little rascals from climbing up to the porky bait (a tasty piece of plywood).
 - Spring Maintenance Workday – Developing for late April (23rd or the 30th) TBD. Based on adopter trail reports, Dan hopes we can arrange several roving crews to spot clear downed trees and address other needs.
 - All Adopters – Don't forget to periodically report the conditions of your sections, for better or worse, to Dan.
 - Jim and Doug will probably arrange a DR-mowing day in early summer to cover all of the J45.

7. Group Hikes:

- A. Monthly Chapter Hikes (all scheduled hikes will be posted at NCTA Events Page and on Facebook).
- B. Kids hikes/ Junior Rangers – Evelyn is investigating something involving the Jr. Rangers of the National Parks. Sue Bowense is considering other groups to invite and the possibility of repeating the Wild Things Hike that was successful in 2021.

C. Camp/Hike the entire chapter – This was done over five days in October 2021. If there is interest Jim Howell see about scheduling something. Logistics TBD.

8 Other Business:

- A. Budget – Kevin noted that our bylaws require a budget. Kevin will take a shot at drafting one. Currently, the J45 account balance is \$6,586.78.

Needs mentioned during the meeting:

- \$500 - Materials for O'Brien Pond
- \$1,500 – Updated brochure & map
- \$1,000 – Tool box (about 6 feet long)
- \$30 – Tool basket for the DR Mower

B. Communications Coordinator – After many years, Bob Haack is ready to step down as Communications Coordinator. Replacement efforts so far have been unsuccessful. We need to solve this. Bob is graciously willing to continue as the CC while we recruit and is willing to help train his replacement.

C. Award for those who have hiked the entire J45 – Might be nice to have a patch or other token. Other chapters and even counties do this.

9. Chapter Business Meetings –

Typically every 2 months, 4th Thursday. Next meeting April 28th, 5:pm - Jim Howell has volunteered to set up Zoom. All hikers are welcome to attend.

Upcoming 2022 Events:

- A. March 4 – Quiet Waters (virtual)
- B. April 26 – Lederhosen Day
- C. May 28 & 29 – Jay's Sporting Goods (Clare location), Backpackers Day – For years, Jerry and Connie Allen have staffed a NCT table at this event. They are looking for someone to take it over. Unless someone steps forward, the J45 participation will be discontinued.
- D. June 4 – National Trail Day – Will need feedback from Dove Day and Sue Bowense.
- E. September 24 - National Scenic Trails Day – How we participate TBD.
- F. October 5 to 8 – NCT Celebration in Walker, MN.
- G. Monthly Hikes – Usually the 3rd Saturday of each month. Covers most of J45 over the year.