

New Hampshire Chapter Report 2010

Membership in the New Hampshire Chapter of the FFLA remained at 20 paid members. We continue to provide complimentary subscriptions to the Lookout Network to NH Forest Protection and to the White Mountain National Forest.

The Chapter hosted the 2010 Eastern Summer Conference during June. Many thanks are due to Pitcher Mountain Lookout Karyn Cote and to Iris Baird for their invaluable help. In view of the decrease in attendance at this our third conference since first one we hosted in the early 1990's it is likely we will choose a different month next time.

FFLA State Directors and Area Representatives and any others who may be involved in hosting events should be sure to inquire if liability insurance will be required by hosting entities before making any commitments. It was only after I had made reservations that I found out that liability insurance was required. The price for the insurance for the Conference was \$300. I was able to get a slightly lower quote elsewhere. Later I was told I could sign a waiver and avoid paying for the insurance. In the end I neither signed a waiver nor did I obtain insurance. This was a great lesson learned which I pass along to help fellow members.

New Hampshire experienced normal summer weather compared to 2009. There were numerous fires in the central and southern parts of the State. Infrequent soaking rains prevented a more serious fire season. 356 fires burned 145 acres during 2010. These were all human caused except for 3 lightning fires which burned 4 acres. Vermont had more favorable numbers for the year with 78 fires which burned only 85 acres. The White Mountain National Forest only had two fires which together burned less than 1/10 of an acre; both were escaped/improperly extinguished camp fires. There was a bit more rainfall on the Forest but there were several dry periods which caused concern.

The State of New Hampshire and the Forest Service each sent a crew of fire fighters to Quebec Province to help suppress fires which started in May. At one point smoke from those fires blanketed New Hampshire which stirred up trouble until the source of the smoke was (quickly) determined.

Fire lookouts worked many more days this past season than in 2009 due to the drier weather. Red Hill watchman Ed Maheux was able, with the help of an assistant, to replace the shingles on the roof of the Red Hill tower cab. The State of New Hampshire hired a patrolman for the southern and central part of the state to patrol for fires and to do maintenance and regularly visit the towers when they were not in use. The watchman's cabin at Magalloway Mountain was rented out a number of times to folks who wanted to spend a night on the mountain. Reports on the success of this rental program were mixed possibly due to the website/company administering the reservations.

It is likely that State lookout personnel will continue to only be employed on high fire danger days due to the tight State budget.

Of concern to folks who participate in out of state fire details are the fewer number of crews and single resources being sent and the resulting loss of qualifications which must be renewed on a regular basis.

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