

TIN MOUNTAIN CONSERVATION CENTER

ANNUAL REPORT



10/01/10 - 09/30/11

Photo : Donna Funtseff, Dolan

Annual Report

10/01/2010-09/30/2011

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear members and friends of Tin Mountain,

It's hard for me to believe, but my two three-year terms on the Board of Trustees will be up in May. As Chair of the Board during four of those years, I have watched Tin Mountain Conservation Center move to its permanent home on Bald Hill and evolve into a full-spectrum conservation center. The school programs, summer camps, and the Community Nature Program Series remain central to the mission, but each has been expanded greatly. In addition to these core programs, Tin Mountain now offers Adult Nature Courses, monthly EcoForums, a Naturalist Certification Program, Young Mountaineers Club, Nature Nuts, the Volunteer Coffee Break, and a very successful College Intern/Research Program.

Your organization has made great advances that have been carefully planned and executed to support its mission to promote an appreciation for the natural environment in children, families, and adults. During the past two years, the Tin Mountain research/intern program has conducted research on brook trout and enhanced habitat on over three miles of local streams. Tin Mountain conducts model forestry practices on its 1,200-acre timberlands; the research/intern program actively monitors the influence of timber harvesting on wildlife habitat therein. Long-term monitoring of bird population at the 140-acre Rockwell Sanctuary has enabled researchers to log six years of data on bird activity. Equally important has been the hands-on, practical experience interns have obtained working on these projects.

Although quality children's programs are often considered our signature, there is much happening at Tin Mountain that includes offerings for all ages with an interest in nature. A trip to your local Valley conservation center on Bald Hill Road in Albany can provide information on the upcoming programs. While you are there, take a hike on some of the best trails in the area!

Your continued support of Tin Mountain and our programs is critical and very much appreciated. I thank you for your interest, your participation, your time, and your financial contributions. We are always working to improve and expand the scope of our programs and funding solutions as we continue to educate students and adults in the greater Mt. Washington Valley.

Sincerely,



David Sturdevant
Chair, Tin Mountain Board of Trustees

DIRECTOR'S REPORT



Dr. Michael Cline

Perseverance truly does pay off. It has been five years since the Tin Mountain Nature Learning Center was constructed in Albany, and the organization has accomplished so much since that time; however, two particular efforts have required patience and persistence. Often something that appears to be a

natural turns out to require more time and nurturing than anyone could have predicted.

Surrounded by forests and fields, attracting birds to the Center should not have required much more than installing a few feeders. During the first year, seed in the feeders remained untouched to the point of molding. Clearly, a lack of cover near the feeders dissuaded avian friends from visiting. Since then, a concerted landscaping effort has paid progressively better dividends as feeder use has increased proportionally with the spread and height of plantings.

Similarly, the Center with its beautiful meeting space, resource library, free wi-fi, trail network, and always fresh coffee should have been a magnet as an informal public gathering space. During the first 2-3 years, the Center was woefully underutilized for this purpose, but now, it seems to be a hub of activity on most days as volunteers work on projects, visitors venture out on the trails, and others simply drop by to checkout the newest nature art show or take in one of the new family or children's programs. The difference has been determined on-site outreach efforts like the *Volunteer Morning Coffee Break*, *Naturalist Certification*, *Young Mountaineers Club*, and others that actively encourage the public to use their Center.

The solution to both problems was providing not only an inviting place to visit, but a place in which visitors felt comfortable. A bit of vegetation near the feeders was enough for the birds; however, providing a sense of purpose and ownership has resulted in much greater informal use of the Center by visitors. It's been especially rewarding to see new friendships develop that extend beyond activities at the Center. Drop by for a program or just a cup of coffee . . . both are always fresh!

School Programs

During the past year, Tin Mountain school programs reached five local school districts and are an integral part of 16 schools serving nearly 5,000 students in the greater Mt. Washington Valley, the Berlin/Gorham area, and western Maine. Multiple classroom visits and field trips throughout the year greatly magnify the actual contact hours between naturalists and students. Tin Mountain's multi-session, comprehensive approach sets its programming apart from other school-based environmental education efforts. Teacher/naturalists devote classroom lessons and field trips to exploring the many rivers, ponds, forests, mountains, and special natural areas in the region. School programs at every grade level emphasize "hands-on" learning during all seasons of the year. Students have sustained contact with Tin Mountain naturalists throughout their entire school careers. All environmental learning programs are tailored to the individual curricula of participating schools.

School field trips are opportunities to teach natural science and become familiar with the environment in students' own backyards, and teacher/naturalists adapt lessons to incorporate trips to local natural areas and discuss historic land uses. Because the Board of Trustees is committed to providing quality environmental education programs at an affordable price, Tin Mountain school programs are offered at half the actual cost to present; the Board and staff fundraises to cover the remaining costs. Last spring, Tin Mountain also presented a teacher workshop for these schools focusing on integrating natural history into a variety of subjects.

Tin Mountain programs don't stop at the end of the school day. Many communities served have well-established after-school programs in which Tin Mountain participates. It's a perfect time of day to explore the natural world. Many of the schools have terrific school yards replete with forests, fields, and trails, with views of Mt. Washington and other inspiring peaks, and even an occasional pond to explore. After school-programs were presented to students at the Community Learning Center in Gorham, *Project Succeed* at Pine Tree, Conway, and John Fuller Elementary, the *Mustang Academy* in Madison, *School's Out* in Ossipee, and *Pequawket Kids* at Denmark, Snow, and New Suncook Elementary School.

Nature Learning Center Programs

Tin Mountain Nature Learning Center boasts a full schedule of public programs for the general public and is a hub of activity. The *Community Nature Program Series* presented over 70 programs attracting enthusiastic participants of all ages. L.L. Bean and the Evenor Armington Fund once again provided critical support in sponsoring the popular series that reached over 1,200 people this past year and offered numerous opportunities for hands-on learning about the natural world of northern New England. For the first time, Tin Mountain presented a successful three-day trip outside of New England to Hawk Mountain, PA to observe the fall migration.

Tin Mountain *Adult Nature Courses* present an in-depth examination of various natural and cultural history topics including mammals of the northeast, fern ecology and identification, winter bird ecology, natural history of the Brownfield Bog, and nature watercolors to name a few. The *Eco-Forum Lunchtime Lecture Series* provides provocative monthly presentations by noted experts on a wide variety of issues from the Northern Pass Project to Northeastern Old Growth Forests that guarantee to stir debate. *Nature Nuts* is a wildly popular weekly morning program for pre-school children and their parents/grandparents that nurtures a curiosity and appreciation for nature at an early age.

Nature Authors Series that offers discussions with prominent nature writers from New England and beyond this year included Donald and Lillian Stokes, Anders Halverson, Jane Brox, and others. The *Featured Nature Artists* program is a revolving monthly exhibit of local nature artists in the lobby of the Nature Learning Center. The venue has attracted the best talent in the area, and evening art show openings are highly anticipated events.

The Tin Mountain Naturalist Certification Program (NCP) has attracted nearly 30 naturalists who are working towards certification. Certification provides recognition for achieving proficiency in several key natural science categories through coursework and independent study. Several participants are nearing completion of the program course work and will be completing their independent projects within the next year. It is ideal for residents of the Mt. Washington Valley given the area's emphasis on recreational activities and opportunities to disseminate its natural history with visitors. To complete the program, naturalists attend over 50 hours of



programming and culminate with an independent project that exhibits an understanding of natural history and the ability to share that knowledge with others.

Nearly 2,500 hours were logged by volunteers at programs as diverse as the Fryeburg Fair, the First Season Auction, Mt. Washington Century ride, and Mt. Washington Auto Road Bicycle Hillclimb. Many additional volunteer hours were generously donated to library support, trail construction/maintenance, recycling, the annual yard sale, plant sale, stonewall construction, murals, and much more. Tin Mountain could not manage without members like these.

Other Community Programs

Tin Mountain continues to present summer programs throughout the Mt. Washington Valley. It was the tenth year that Tin Mountain has presented summer programs at the *Wildcat Mountain Ski Area*. These programs continue to draw strong attendance and interest from guests to the greater Mt. Washington Valley.

Tin Mountain's 13th Annual Meeting Festival was held at the Nature Learning Center in Albany and featured fantastic field trips, an excellent presentation on *Landscaping for Wildlife Using Native Plants* by Henry Homeyer, great food, and much more. The first Native Plant Sale was held by Tin Mountain volunteers in conjunction with the Annual Meeting and was a huge success for both homeowners and local nurseries. The organization's *Distinguished Service Award* was presented to Doug Burnell, *Volunteer of the Year* to Anthony Andreano, and *Outstanding Environmental Educator* to Ann Elise Record of the Berlin Junior High School. The *Business Partner Award* recognized White Birch Books. *Business Volunteer of the Year* was Josh Sargent of North Country Whittier. The *Trustees' Exemplary Service Award* was presented to Lee Pollock.



Nature Camps

Tin Mountain camp programs reach nearly 250 local children and families each year. Nature summer camps attracts children ages 4 to 16 to camps in Fryeburg, ME, Jackson, Albany, and South Tamworth, NH where they learn first-hand about the local natural environment through hands-on outdoor exploration. Younger children attend day camp while a variety of weeklong adventures to wild areas in northern New England are offered to the older age groups. The weeklong Winter Camp provided an opportunity for children to spend their school break outside learning and having fun in the snow.

True to its commitment to providing high-quality environmental education at an affordable price, Tin Mountain provides financial aid to many local families that would otherwise have great difficulty sending their children to summer nature camps. Nearly one-quarter of all campers received scholarships in 2010/11 amounting to \$8,400.



Special Events

The 39th *Mt. Washington Auto Road Bicycle Hillclimb*, the toughest in the world, provided nearly one-third of the financial support for the organization this past year. Most years, the changeable weather on the summit varies from clear skies to wind, rain, and sleet over the course of the race, but for the second year in a row, the weather was sunny, warm, dry, and calm. Riders who expected the typical natural challenges on the “Rockpile” were relieved more than disappointed.

The 10th annual *Mt. Washington Century Ride* was successful and raised significant support for Tin Mountain programs. The ride starts and ends at the Tin Mountain Nature Learning Center in Albany. A 100-mile course around Mt. Washington, over three notches and through some of the most beautiful land on earth, the *Century* attracted over 250 registrants last summer.

The 25th *Annual First Season Festival Benefit Dinner/Auction* was held at the Fryeburg Academy Fieldhouse, and it involved over 400 local businesses and individuals who generously donated articles to be auctioned. In addition, *Business Sponsors* provided critical support for the event. The majority of *Business Sponsors* have been supporting Tin Mountain programs for many years. Over 360 people attend the festival enjoying fantastic food and fine quality auction items.

Fryeburg Academy always finds ways to give back to the community, and this year they provided tremendous support to Tin Mountain Conservation Center. Through hosting Tin Mountain fundraisers such as the First Season Dinner & Auction, the Hanneke Cassel Benefit Concert, and Fly-fishing Film Festival, Fryeburg Academy has been outstanding. The Fryeburg Fair display of *Weeds & Seeds* featured old fields with a stonewall, forest, and dozens of wildlife species.

Tin Mountain Timberlands

The second timber harvest of about 60 acres on Tin Mountain Conservation Center 1,200-acre timberlands in East Conway occurred in winter 2011. This harvest was conducted with a cut-to-length processor and a forwarder. The harvest provided funds for programming and an opportunity to lead by example. Tin Mountain manages these lands in a responsible manner adhering to sustainable forest practices. The goals for owning the lands are twofold: 1) to demonstrate sustainable forestry methods that provide both high-quality wood products and essential forest habitats and 2) to provide an additional revenue stream to help fund environmental education programs.

Membership

The best barometer of successful Tin Mountain programming is membership and the Annual Fund Drive. Over the past year, Tin Mountain membership has continued to grow, and the Trustees and staff have redoubled their efforts to attract new members to the organization by providing tangible reasons for members to sustain their membership. The new membership webpage provides easy ways to become members and to donate to the different programs at Tin Mountain.

Yearly gifts, whether membership or annual fund donations, continue to provide essential support for environmental programs in schools, at summer camps and within the community. Long-term strategies can help sustain Tin Mountain programs into the future through Estate Planning, Charitable Remainder Trusts, or Charitable Lead Trusts.

Nature Learning Center/ Rockwell Sanctuary

During the past four winters in the Nature Learning Center, about 3.0 cords of wood were burned annually as backup to the solar thermal collectors in supplying heat for the entire 8,500 ft² building. The photovoltaic (PV) system supplied all of the electrical demands of the center and then some. The PV array at the Center generates 14,000 kWh and uses 13,000 kWh. Interest in the technology continues to draw much interest and many tours. The Tin Mountain Renewable Energy Initiative (TMREI) was launched this past year to provide hands-on assistance to individuals installing solar thermal systems. Modeled on the initiative in Plymouth, NH (PAREI), the neighbor-helping-neighbor, barn-raising philosophy is employed to install solar applications.

Facility rentals were very successful during the past year. Tin Mountain Conservation Center offers the ideal setting for a green wedding with its energy-efficient Nature Center and beautiful Rockwell Sanctuary. From the Nature Center's low carbon footprint to planting wedding flowers and recycling wedding leftovers, Tin Mountain can be a great sustainable partner in planning any eco-wedding.

Volunteers were busy with numerous projects on the Rockwell Sanctuary. Their hard work, refurbished the old log cabin in the field and installed a donated composting toilet, completed the survey of over 30 nest boxes, helped complete another stonewall, constructed and maintained several miles of trails, and much more. On the Jackson property on Tin Mountain, a generous grant allowed numerous volunteers to clear fields, repair trails, build rock steps, and construct bridges over streams and wet areas.

Suzy Engler Camp Scholarship Fund

The Tin Mountain Conservation Center provided children with scholarships to attend summer camp programs this past year through their Suzy Engler Scholarship Fund. The Fund honors the late Suzy Engler. Suzy was the Administrative Assistant at Tin Mountain for many years and was especially interested in providing children with "hands-on" nature camp experiences.

Planned Giving Opportunities

Bequests: Bequests must satisfy personal and family obligations first; however, donors may also include Tin Mountain in their estate planning. Making Tin Mountain a beneficiary helps ensure that Tin Mountain's work will continue in future years while reducing estate taxes.

Charitable Remainder Trusts: Remainder trusts allow donors to transfer assets like stock to a trust and still retain its income for life. Ultimately, the assets become TMCC's, allowing the donor to keep an asset's income, avoid capital gains tax on its sale, take an income tax deduction, and make a commitment to TMCC's future.

Charitable Lead Trust: Lead trusts allow donors to keep assets while giving Tin Mountain their income for a specified period of time. Donors receive an immediate gift tax deduction for the full present value of the asset. This is a good way to pass assets on to heirs at full value while supporting Tin Mountain.

For more information on the Suzy Fund endowment, or planned giving options, contact Tin Mountain Conservation Center's Executive Director, Michael Cline at (603) 447-6991 or write to him at 1245 Bald Hill Road, Albany, NH 03818. Tin Mountain also happily accepts and liquidates gifts of stocks and bonds.

Endowment Fund

Tin Mountain Conservation Center maintains an endowment as a designated fund with the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation (NHCF) in Concord. The NHCF invests and manages the principal making quarterly distributions to Tin Mountain from the earned interest based upon pre-determined calculations that ensure a certain level of growth in the designated fund. In fiscal year 10/01/09-9/30/10, interest distributions to Tin Mountain's general operations amounted to \$20,864. The NHCF's Combined Investment Fund is recognized as one of the most secure places that a nonprofit can build an endowment.

Financial Statement

October 1, 2010 - September 30, 2011

(With comparative totals for Oct. 1, 2009 through Sept. 30, 2010)

Balance Sheet

	Total All Funds	
	09/30/11	09/30/10
Assets:		
Cash & Equivalents	\$ 159,018	\$ 138,758
Accounts Receivable	\$ 60	\$ 1,605
Capital Campaign Pledges Receivable	\$ -	\$ 21,077
Inventories	\$ 2,825	\$ 4,607
Property & Equipment (net of depreciation)	\$ 2,410,646	\$ 2,471,317
Investment Fund with NHCF	\$ 416,518	\$ 431,507
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 2,989,067	\$ 3,068,871
Liabilities:		
Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	\$ 18,420	\$ 27,307
Construction Loan	\$ 256,687	\$ 272,195
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$ 275,107	\$ 299,502
Net Assets:		
Unrestricted Funds	\$ 2,239,857	\$ 2,272,131
Temporarily Restricted	\$ 57,585	\$ 65,731
Permanently Restricted	\$ 416,518	\$ 431,507
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$ 2,713,960	\$ 2,769,369
TOTAL LIABILITIES/NET ASSETS	\$ 2,989,067	\$ 3,068,871

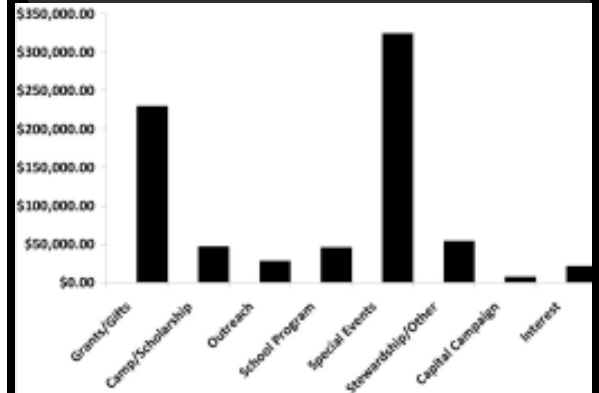
Statement of Activity	Sept. 30, 2011	Sept. 30, 2010
Revenue and Support:		
Grants, Gifts, Donations, Membership	\$ 229,707	\$ 279,213
Camp Revenue & Scholarship	\$ 46,912	\$ 43,982
Community Outreach Programs	\$ 27,998	\$ 24,079
School Program Support	\$ 45,630	\$ 43,540
Special Events	\$ 324,345	\$ 318,883
Stewardship & Other	\$ 53,961	\$ 18,079
Capital Campaign Support	\$ 7,009	\$ 5,875
Interest (including NHCF)	\$ 21,201	\$ 22,190
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 756,763	\$ 755,841

Expenses:		
Administration	\$ 30,579	\$ 93,350
Fundraising & Special Events	\$ 176,470	\$ 172,729
Community Outreach Programs	\$ 106,790	\$ 119,934
School Programs	\$ 93,142	\$ 99,208
Summer Camp Programs	\$ 74,485	\$ 73,410
Stewardship, Grant Projects, Other	\$ 248,779	\$ 151,068
SUBTOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 730,245	\$ 709,699

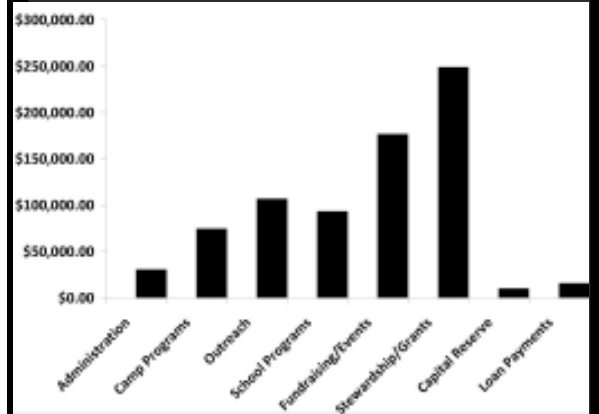
Other Expenses & Carry Forward		
Capital Reserve Transfer	\$ 10,000	\$ 5,000
Loan Principle Payments	\$ 15,508	\$ 17,338
Grant Funds carried forward	\$ (32,261)	\$ (9,001)
SUBTOTAL OTHER EXPENSES	\$ (6,753)	\$ 13,337
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$ 723,492	\$ 723,036

Excess (deficit) revenue/expense	\$ 33,271	\$ 32,805
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REVENUE



EXPENSES



Full Financial Report
available on request



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but our hearts must be very quiet to hear it. ~Minnie Aumonier*



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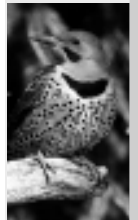
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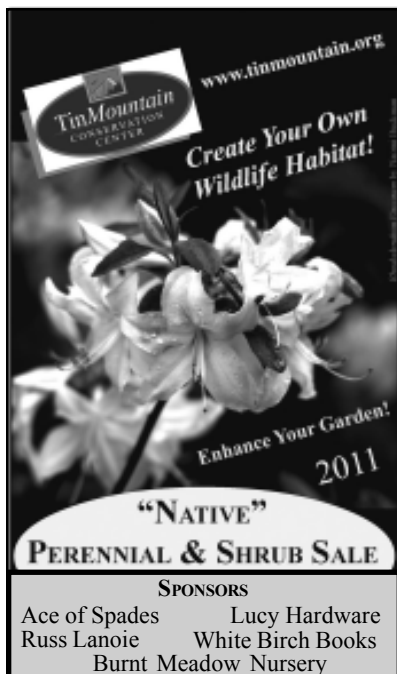
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TIN MOUNTAIN PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

SUMMER CAMP PROGRAMS

Tin Mountain Conservation Center has offered summer camp programs to children ages 4-16 for the past 26 years. *Kindercamp* and *Day Camp* are presented at facilities in four different locations for kids ages 4 to 9 years old. *Nature Theme Camps* integrate nature with art, music, history and water for children 6-12 years. *Peaks and Paddles Intro* allows younger campers (ages 9-10 years) to gain confidence and acquire outdoor skills through day hikes a day of canoeing, and a one-night campout in the White Mountains. *Trekkers* for children 11-12 teaches advanced hiking and camping skills and includes a three-day backpacking trip to the White Mountains. In *Canoe Voyageurs*, campers ages 11-12 learn canoe techniques with two days of canoeing followed by a three day trip to Lake Umbagog! Older children ages 13-16 years hike and camp the Presidential Range of the White Mountains in *Paths and Peaks* and a week canoeing the North Woods of Maine in *Canoe, Camp and Climb*.

OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Young Mountaineers Club: This weekly nature club directed by staff is designed for children in grade 1-4 students with a keen interest in nature and the outdoors. Each Saturday morning, *Tin Mountaineers* meet to explore different facets of the natural environment and make new friends with similar interests.

Naturalist Certification Program: Community members increase their understanding of the natural world while developing new skills to share as Certified Naturalists. Participants attend various Adult Nature Courses, Nature programs, special workshops, and completed an independent project to fulfill their certification by Tin Mountain.

Tin Mountain Renewable Energy Initiative (TMREI): This program was created in the fall of 2010 to address the need for solar energy in the Mount Washington Valley. Based on PAREI's model of neighbor-helping-neighbor community energy raisers in Plymouth, NH, our local organization relies on the power of volunteers to lower installation costs and strengthen community bonds.

College Internship Program: This is a valuable effort that enables Tin Mountain to expand its projects and program offerings while providing focused training and practical experience that is necessary for young professionals to enter the workplace with confidence. In addition, interns develop sustained relationships within the environmental and natural science community that provide the underpinnings of a lifelong network in their chosen field.

Eco-Forum Lunch Series: Diverse environmental issues are presented by outstanding speakers the second Thursday of the month sponsored by NRCS, Flatbread Co of N Conway, Rock House Mountain Bakery, Frontside Grind, The MET Coffee House, Old Village Bakery. The program is free and open to the public. Views expressed in the Eco-Forum are those of the speaker and not necessarily those of TMCC.

Nature Nuts: Children ages three through five and their parents enjoy a morning full of nature songs, crafts, hikes, and games based upon the theme of the day in *Nature Nuts* held at the Nature Learning Center.

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Environmental Year: Developed for elementary schools, a Tin Mountain teacher/naturalist visits the classroom for 34 weeks (51 hours) with a comprehensive set of activities and trips that teach basic principles of ecology and natural sciences. Concepts learned in class are applied to the field through numerous outdoor activities and trips. It is recognized as the backbone of our school programs because it allows our teacher/naturalists to work closely with the same students each week for the entire school year, providing in-depth instruction and curriculum support.

Project KITE (Kids in the Environment): A multi-disciplinary program for grades K-8, Project KITE was developed to support existing curricula by providing a special focus on the natural resources that sustain the economic and social underpinnings of the region. Working closely with teachers, Tin Mountain provides three presentations by a teacher/naturalist and a field trip on each unit, including forests, wildlife, wetlands and mountains.

Forests for the Future: Over an 18-week period, a Tin Mountain teacher/naturalist visits junior high or high school classrooms for one entire day each week to teach basic principles of forest ecology and forest resource management. Using a different forest study site each year, students learn field techniques and collect data on weather, soils, wildlife habitat, watersheds, and conduct a timber cruise and forest inventory, complete with recommendations. Students analyze the data and develop a complete forest management plan that they present to school officials, landowners, and the public at a special school/town meeting. The program also includes an over-night field trip to study forest ecosystems, local wood products industries, and the rich forest history of the region.

Extra Hours Program: Teachers and Tin Mountain staff tailor programs to meet special needs of different schools. Examples include leading field trips, identifying special resources and materials, and conducting special projects such as recycling or river studies.

COMMUNITY NATURE PROGRAM SERIES

TMCC offers a variety of hands-on environmental education programs for adults and families of the Mt. Washington Valley area and western Maine. The Community Nature Program Series supported by L.L. Bean and the Evenor Armington Fund is a major vehicle for drawing families into the natural world, with thanks to lodging sponsor Residence Inn by Marriott, N Conway. Over 70 programs are offered throughout the year.

ADULT NATURE COURSES

Tin Mountain *Adult Nature Courses* provide an in-depth look at various natural and cultural history topics. Individuals with all levels of experience are encouraged to enroll. All programs combine time in the classroom and lab with hands-on field studies and may include lectures, slideshows, group discussions, guest speakers, and selected readings.



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