

I see three major challenges for CMC. The first is to protect the land we hike on. Most of it belongs to the Federal government. The Forest Service and National Park Service have had to deal with budget cuts, which have led to trails or the access to trails being closed. We'll probably face more closures in the coming years. Even without budget cuts, we need to be vigilant in protecting hiking opportunities. The Forest Service is developing a management plan for Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests which will guide resource allocation decisions for 15 years or longer. National Forests have many users, and their objectives are rarely the same. We need to work with other hiking organizations to ensure that our interests are given full consideration by Forest Service planners. CMC's Conservation Committee, chaired by Tish Desjardins, is taking the lead in presenting CMC's position to other stakeholders and the USFS. The committee can use all the help it can get.

Our second challenge is to make sure we don't lose any of the expertise we've gained over the past few years. We need to document our software systems and the procedures we use to carry out the Club's functions. If not, each new officer and committee chair will have to waste time and energy reinventing the wheel. Over the next two years I hope to create a CMC operating manual that will tell the next group of Council members how we have done things in the past. They can change the way things are done, but at least they'll know what they are changing.

Our third challenge is the perennial one, finding volunteers to maintain trails, lead hikes, and run the Club. It takes many thousands of hours of work each year to keep CMC operating at the level it does - 200 hikes per year, 400 miles of trail maintained, spring picnics, and annual meetings, a useful and interesting website, Let's Go and eNews. "They" have done it in the past. It's up to each of us to contribute to doing it now and in the future.

*CMC members, in Lenny's capable hands, it appears the Club can look forward to two years of progressive and productive leadership. Thank you, Lenny, and good luck!*