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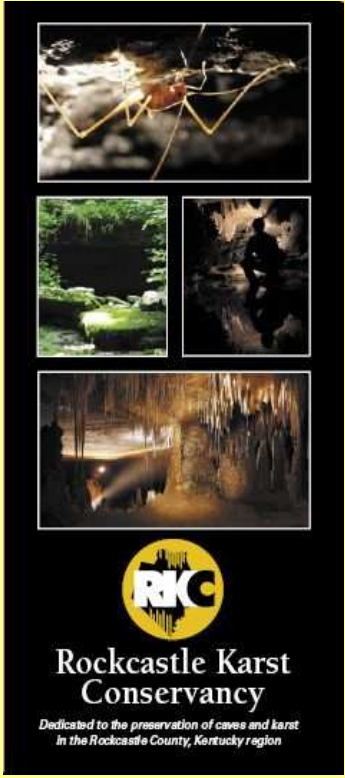
ATTENTION!!

2008-2009 dues are now due!!

The Rockcastle Karst Conservancy is a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation and preservation of caves and karst in Rockcastle County, Kentucky.

Inside this issue:

<i>Officers, Directors and Committee Chairs</i>	2
<i>Index</i>	3
<i>Local philanthropist Ellie Schiller dies at 65</i>	4
<i>RKC Purchases Misty Cave</i>	6
<i>Preliminary Management Plan for the Misty Cave Property</i>	7
<i>Change/Addition to the GSP Management Plan</i>	8
<i>More Information on White-Nose Syndrome</i>	9
<i>2009 GSP Open House</i>	13
<i>Misty Cave Description and Map</i>	14
<i>Join the RKC!</i>	15



Tell people about the RKC!
Give them a brochure!
 GET YOUR BROCHURES AT:
www.rkci.org/brochure.htm

Front Cover: Ellie Schiller, Executive Director of the Felburn Foundation.

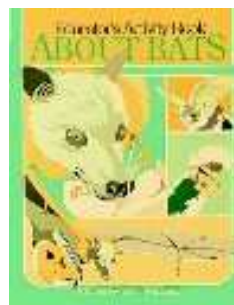
Volume V, Issue II

April 2009

For more information about the Rockcastle Karst Conservancy, please visit our website at www.rkci.org. Membership is open to anyone interested in protecting the caves and karst of Rockcastle County, Kentucky. See page 15 of this issue for a membership application and the different membership levels and dues.

The *RKC News* is published quarterly for members and other interested parties. The purpose of this publication is to keep members aware of RKC activities. Articles published in the *RKC News* do not necessarily represent the opinions or policies of the Rockcastle Karst Conservancy or its represented members.

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RKC has educational material for lending. See the website:

<http://rkci.org/library/index.htm>

or contact Tammy Otten: tammyotten@yahoo.com

Local philanthropist Ellie Schiller dies at 65

From: www.chronicleonline.com

Future generations of residents in Citrus, Alachua, Marion and Levy counties and around the world will share the legacy of a woman who enjoyed the Florida sunshine but shunned the limelight.

Elmyra Felburn Schiller of Yankeetown gave generously and often to local libraries, wildlife parks and museums in need of funds. She also purchased property needed for recreation and conservation purposes, not only locally, but nationally and internationally.

Schiller, 65, died Tuesday at her home in Pine Ridge.

"Ellie Schiller and The Felburn Foundation have made it possible for us to place two Boundless Playgrounds — one on the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway near Ocala, and the other on the St. Marks Trail, south of Tallahassee," said Mickey Thomason, area manager of the Ocala Office for the Florida Greenways and Trails. "A Boundless Playground accommodates children of all capabilities and talents. This has been a dream come true, and we could not have done it without the generosity of Ellie Schiller."

Those who knew Ellie described Schiller as a hard working, no-nonsense, straight-to-the-point woman who had a heart of gold.

"Ellie Schiller was instrumental in convincing her father to fund The Felburn Foundation because of the great need to fund local institutions in the Nature Coast," said her good friend and adviser, Sam Mutch. "Ellie was proud of her humble beginning."

She grew up in Dayton, Ohio, where her father, Phil Felburn, founded Aetna Freight Lines Inc. Felburn was able to build the firm into one of the country's preeminent trucking companies. Phil Felburn enjoyed the outdoors, and had a number of homes. One home was in Palm Beach where Ellie boasted that some of the preeminent Florida politicians and her father worked out the restoration of

the Everglades program to present to the legislature and Congress.

Schiller graduated from Erie College, Pa. She and her former husband took a world tour after graduation and stayed longer than expected in a Tibetan Monastery on the slopes of the Himalayan Mountains, north of Darjeeling, India. There she helped teach Tibetan refugee children mathematics. She also took her turn milking the yakows, the local cross between yaks and cattle.

On her return from her world tour she settled in Washington State and became a fisheries biologist for the state. She continued in that job until her mother died in 1988. She then joined her father.

She and her father moved to Yankeetown from Marion, Ohio, in 1989.

Ellie and her father noticed how small the library was in Yankeetown.

"They approached me," the former librarian said. "They said they wanted to build a wing on the Yankeetown library. All they asked in return was that there be information available about the local flora or fauna."

The nonprofit, natural resource, educational foundation Phil Felburn established in 1978 provided institutions within the area, Florida, the nation, and the world with millions of dollars of needed funds.

Ellie was instrumental in building new libraries in Bronson, remodeling the Dunnellon library and Cedar Key, put an addition on the Belleview library. Ellie Schiller, through the Felburn Foundation, helped build the branch library in the Ocala National Forest and the Silver River Museum library, as well as the new addition to its museum.

"Ellie Schiller and her father had a lot to do in shaping the direction of the museum," said Guy Marwick, Silver River Museum director. "Even after Phil's death, good things still happened be-

cause Phil's daughter, Ellie, took an interest ensuring that the Felburn Foundation helped this area."

The Felburn Foundation paid for the construction of a wing in the Silver River Museum to display historical artifacts. In Alachua County it helped pay for the construction of the Kanapaha Botanical Gardens, including its Environmental Education Center and Summer's House. Under Ellie's direction, the Foundation bought lands for conservation purposes in Levy, Citrus, and Alachua counties. She was instrumental in preserving Three Sisters Springs in Crystal River to protect manatees.

Schiller also ensured that worthy conservation and educational needs were met worldwide. Some of the charities and educational establishments she endowed included the Trumpeter Swan Society; Silver River Museum & Environmental Education Center; Shepherd Spinal Center Foundation; Marion County Public Library; Friends of Homosassa Springs; International Crane Foundation; Horry-Georgetown Technical College; Friends of Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park; Madison Wisconsin Audubon Society; Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches; International Snow Leopard Trust; Rourk Library — Brunswick County, N.C.; Florida Greenways & Trails Foundation Inc.; Columbia Land Trust; Campbell University; International Snow Leopard Trust: Contribution to Support Research, Educational Projects and The Conservation and Preservation of Snow Leopards by the Snow Leopard Trust; Florida segment of the Whooping Crane Recovery Project; Anderson University; Avian Research & Conservation Institute; Campbell University. The western trailhead park of the Cross Florida Greenway was made available to the State of Florida, which has developed it into a wonderful recreational area, which includes Phil's Lake, named for her father.

The Saturday before her death, Ellie's friends honored her by dedicating the Ellie Schiller Educational Facility at Withlacoochee Gulf Preserve in Yankeetown. Ellie had made plans to attend but was too weak on Saturday and could not attend; but she was present in spirit.

Ellie Schiller is survived by many friends throughout the world because of her wonderful and unassuming personality. A memorial service will be

2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 21, at Phil's Lake at the railroad Park. All of Ellie's friends are invited.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to "Friends of Withlacoochee Gulf Preserve" in memory of Ellie Schiller for the Ellie Schiller Educational Center, P.O. Box 482, Yankeetown, FL 34498.

I will miss Ellie Schiller.

She was a strong, independent, unassuming woman. She knew that things take time, and different projects move at their own pace. Organizations like ours take time to develop the skills and people to take on more responsibilities in caring for the land. She knew this and allowed us to grow.

She was a wildlife biologist by education, and for many years worked within the fishing industry in Washington State to balance the needs of the fishermen to make a living with the needs of the fish to maintain a stable population – which would enable the fishermen to make a living next year and the year after.

When her mother died, she moved to Ohio to help her father "get things in order". This grew into helping him move to Florida. During this time, she became involved in the Foundation that her parents started with the fortune he made in the trucking industry. She kept trying to return to Washington, but he just wouldn't let her go. I suspect she saw the opportunity she had to really make a difference through grants to non-profit organizations that work for habitat restoration and conservation, and this became her life.

Werner and I had the opportunity to visit her at her home in Yankeetown, Florida in 2005. She took us to Crystal River to go snorkeling with the manatees, bike riding on a newly created bike path that the Felburn Foundation helped fund, and walking her dogs at the Withlacoochee Gulf Preserve that had recently opened to the public. She talked about her support of organizations that work with cranes in Florida, in northern Canada, and in Tibet – all of these were places to which she had traveled. While we were talking one evening, she asked me if I knew about Aldo Leopold – America's first environmentalist. I had not, so she gave me a copy of

A Sand County Almanac, a collection of his observations of the ebb and flow of life as nature reclaimed an old farm in Wisconsin. Leopold and his family would go there to escape city life in the same way that we go to Great SaltPetre Preserve.

This book was inspiring to me, and Ellie was the catalyst. She lived her life gently, in small, unassuming houses, with an average car. She was a regular person with a special impact on the world.

Ellie Schiller saw the potential in the people who cared for GSP and challenged Rockcastle Karst Conservancy to grow into an organization that could be good stewards of more lands and inspire others to do likewise. If you want to do something to honor or remember Ellie, consider what you can do to ease your impact on the planet, or to educate others about the natural systems that support our life and the rest of the living things with which we share the planet. Or take part in the preservation work of RKC.

Neena Jud
RKC member #7
NSS # 60145
Visitor to GSP since 1980

NEW RKC MEMBERS

As of this Publication
(RKC Membership Number in Parenthesis)

Amy Hill (195) , Amelia, OH
James Smeltzer (196) LaPorte, IN
Bill Carr (197), Mt Vernon, KY
Rockcastle Region Grotto

The RKC now has
135 Individual Members
And 10 Organization Members
Welcome!



RKC PURCHASES MISTY CAVE

March 20, 2008

On March 19, 2008, The Rockcastle Karst Conservancy completed the purchase of Misty Cave.

I would like to thank:

Bill Simpson for notifying us that the cave was for sale, Jim Perkins for providing good advice, Jon Lewis for giving me a good idea, Howard Kalnitz for being a very strong advocate of the purchase, the Richard Blenz Nature Conservancy for helping us finance the purchase, and all the members of the RKC. Your dues and donations comprised the down payment.

Way to go!

Mike Rzesutock
Misty Cave Case Manager

Mike

Excellent job - thanks for your tireless work on this!

RKC members:

The stewardship committee has a preliminary management plan for Misty cave - we expect all RKC members to enjoy this cave! This plan will be shared at the meeting this weekend. However it has been considered a hibernaculum for the past 5-10 years - please don't make any plans to visit until at least mid to late April. And we will be discussing RKC response to WNS and watching what other conservancies around us do.

So - congratulate Mike on his hard worked success, and then celebrate with RKC on adding a great cave and then HELP US PAY IT OFF!!!

Howard Kalnitz
RKC Chairman

Read more about Misty Cave on pages 7 and 14.

Preliminary Management Plan for the Misty Cave Property

Revision 2 - 2/10/09

Preliminary draft of the Management Plan of Misty Cave Property. The Stewardship committee will act as temporary management committee until a permanent management committee is seated, hopefully within 3-6 months of acquisition.

The Stewardship committee will nominate the Management committee chair and forward for voting to the RKC BOD, at which time the new manager takes over. The management plan is a living document and is subject (and expected) to change. Changes will be approved by the RKC BOD.

1. Due to the unique and sensitive nature of the cave and property, at least one member of any group entering the cave must be a member of RKC, the National Speleological Society or a Grotto of the NSS. Visitors must notify the property manager before visiting the preserve. While membership is not required for each person visiting the preserve, the RKC strongly recommends that visitors be members of the RKC. Membership in the National Speleological Society is also encouraged, as well as a Grotto of the NSS.

2. Visitation is on a first-come, first-served basis. The Management Committee should be contacted as soon as is possible for access arrangements in order to avoid scheduling conflicts.

3. The cave is closed to all access from November 1 through May 1, while the Indiana Bats are in hibernation. There will be "NO" entry allowed during the closed period without written permission from the Misty Cave Property Management Committee.

4. Please keep noise to a minimum and be discreet while changing clothes. Fireworks, explosives, loud music, and other noisemaking activities are prohibited. All visitors to the preserve are expected to be considerate of our neighbors, and refrain from disturbing them, especially at night. The preserve is a natural area, and should be treated with peaceful and quiet appreciation.

5. To minimize the impact to the cave, the RKC requests that groups entering the cave be limited to twelve (12) people or fewer, with a minimum group size of 3 people. Arrangements for caving groups larger than 12 people must be made in advance by contacting the Misty Cave Property Management Committee at least two weeks before the desired date. The RKC and the Misty Cave Managers reserve the right to refuse access to Misty Cave Property to anyone.

6. All plants and animals on Misty Cave Property are to be respected and observed from a distance, and are never to be removed. Avoid disturbing wild life and plant life. Cave flora, fauna, and cultural resources are to be left undisturbed. In addition, do not touch, break, or remove formations from the cave. Do not cut trees or brush for firewood or any other purpose. *Anyone found defacing the cave or formations, or causing harm to the plants and wildlife of the preserve will be subject to prosecution under both state and federal laws.* For any questions or concerns or to report vandalism or other abusive activities at the preserve, please contact the Misty Cave Property Management Committee (if not yet established, the Chair of the RKC stewardship committee).

7. Park only in the designated area, and drive only on existing roads. Do not block access to roads or gates.

8. Camping is not permitted on the property.

9. Please remove any trash that you bring to the preserve. Also, please help keep the cave and preserve clean by removing any trash left by others.

10. Spray-painting, carbide marking, and all other types of graffiti are never permitted. Vandalism and abuse of the cave or the surface areas of the property will be prosecuted.

(Continued on page 12)

CHANGE/ADDITION TO THE GREAT SALTPETRE PRESERVE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Attached is the newest change/addition to the GSP management Plan. This is necessary because RKC now owns the preserve and the grottos involved no longer have any means to remove or ban a person from GSP for doing something detrimental to our mission and the preserve.

Thanks for supporting GSP.

Bob Dobbs
GSPC

XIV Banishment from Great Saltpetre Preserve

- A. Cavers or visitors may be banned from visiting GSP for any of the following reasons:
- a. Willful misuse of GSP property or facilities.
 - b. Willful disregard of the safety of themselves and/or others while visiting GSP property.
 - c. Conduct detrimental to the GCG, BGG, DUG, NSS, caves, and/or landowner relations and public relations.
- B. Disciplinary action shall be initiated only upon presentation to the GSP Committee of a written petition for disciplinary action by a member of GCG, BGG, or DUG.
Upon receiving such a petition, the GSP Committee shall take such actions as are deemed necessary to notify the accused person, in writing, of the petition, and of the place, date, and time at which the petition will be considered by the GSP Committee. The accused person shall have the right to speak on their behalf. Such consideration shall take place no sooner than twenty-one days or no later than seventy days after the petition is received by the GSP Committee.
- C. Disciplinary action under this provision shall be taken only upon three-fourths vote of the GSP committee by a secret ballot in Executive session.
- D. For serious violations observed on site, the offending visitor or caver may be asked to leave immediately by the GSP caretaker or any board member of GCG, BGG, DUG, or any GSP committee member. Refusal to comply may result in local authorities being called and trespassing charges being filed. For these serious on site violations, the disciplinary process can skip step (B) and go directly to step (C).
- E. Banishment from GSP will be for a period of five years or as determined by the GSP Committee. The banished party will be eligible for early reinstatement upon request after a period of one year. A written request for reinstatement must be submitted to the committee for consideration of early reinstatement. If the request is denied then the banished party must wait a period of one year to request reinstatement again. Only one request will be considered annually. If no request for early reinstatement is approved, the banished party shall be banned for the full term of the banishment. The committee must approve early reinstatement by a three-fourths majority by secret ballot. A caver banned from GSP is not necessarily banned from their grotto, but their grotto will be notified of the nature of the violation and the action taken by the GSP Committee.

MORE INFORMATION ON WHITE-NOSE SYNDROME

Original from: "Bill Walden"
<wdwalden@windstream.net>

Cave activity discouraged to help protect bats from deadly white-nose syndrome

White-nose syndrome, a wildlife crisis of unprecedented proportions, has killed hundreds of thousands of bats from Vermont to West Virginia and continues unchecked. Now, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is asking those who use caves where bats hibernate – called hibernacula – to take extra precautions and to curtail activities to help prevent the spread of WNS.

There is no known human health risk associated with white-nose syndrome in bats. While the actual cause of WNS is unknown, scientists are reasonably certain that WNS is transmitted from bat-to-bat. However, WNS has been found in caves a significant distance from WNS-affected hibernacula, leading scientists to believe that something else is moving WNS.

“We suspect that white-nose syndrome may be transmitted by humans inadvertently carrying WNS from cave to cave where bats hibernate,” said Northeast Regional Director Marvin Moriarty of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

In addition, federal and state scientists will evaluate all scientific activities in hibernacula for their potential to spread WNS, weighing potential benefits of the research against the risk to bats.

“We are working closely with state natural resource agencies, the caving community, conservation organizations and other federal agencies on this issue,” Moriarty said. “We understand that following these recommendations will inconvenience recreational cavers, but we believe this is the most responsible course of action as we face this unknown threat to bats, which play an important role in our world.”

The Service’s cave advisory will be posted at 2 p.m. at:
http://www.fws.gov/northeast/white_nose.html.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and a trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information about our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov.

Questions and Answers

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Cave Advisory March 26, 2009

What is the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recommending in its cave advisory?

The Service’s cave advisory has four recommendations to limit the possible spread of white-nose syndrome by human activity:

A voluntary moratorium on caving in states with confirmed WNS and all adjoining states; Nationally, in states not WNS-affected or adjoining states, use clothing and gear that has never been in caves in WNS-affected or adjoining states; State and federal conservation agencies should evaluate scientific activities for their potential to spread WNS; and Nationally, researchers should use clothing and gear that has never been in caves in a WNS-affected or adjoining state. This also applies to mines used by cavers.

What is the timeframe for this cave advisory?

We are not placing a time limit on this cave advisory. Scientists are working to determine the cause of WNS. We do not know when we will have answers to how WNS spreads. Whatever is causing WNS may remain in caves where bats hibernate (hibernacula) even when bats are not present, and we are concerned that people may inadvertently carry WNS out of the cave with them. We intend to review the cave advisory frequently – at least quarterly.

What proof do you have that people are contributing to the spread of WNS?

While we do not have conclusive proof, the leap-frogging pattern of WNS spread suggests that humans may be contributing to the spread. In some areas, caves known to be popular destinations for cavers have bats with WNS, while bats in nearby caves not frequented by cavers do not show WNS symptoms. Records of caver movements also show a connection among sites in WNS-affected areas.

Why are recreational cavers being asked to curtail activities, while many scientists and researchers are allowed to continue their cave work?

Most of the scientists and researchers working in caves are investigating WNS. We think it is important to allow research to go forward that could lead to finding the cause and a cure for WNS. State and federal natural resource agencies will evaluate individual research projects and determine whether the risk of potentially spreading WNS is outweighed by increased knowledge about WNS.

Can I go into a cave with hibernating bats in a state unaffected by WNS?

We recommend that cavers stay out of all caves with hibernating bats. Even minor disturbance of hibernating bats expends energy reserves the bats need to survive, and in this potentially precarious situation, we want the remaining live bats to have the best possible chance of survival. In addition, if the cave has early-stage WNS, you may inadvertently carry the causative agent away with you on your gear (i.e., clothing, footwear, ropes, cameras) and potentially spread WNS further. It is impossible to determine if a cave is affected with early-stage WNS without laboratory analysis.

Since bats hibernate in the winter and are gone from caves in the summer, is it OK to enter a cave in the summer, even if it is in a WNS-affected state?

We ask cavers to stay out of all caves in states affected by WNS and caves in states adjacent to affected states, even in the summer.

Whatever is causing WNS may remain in caves during the summer, and we are concerned that people may carry the causative agent (the fungus or some unknown agent) of WNS out of the cave with them and spread it to more locations.

I have never seen evidence of bats in a cave I like to frequent, so can I continue to go in that cave without worrying about WNS?

Bats can hibernate in small, remote rock crevices where humans cannot see them, so do not assume that a cave has no bats simply because you haven't seen them. Please abide by the recommendations to stay out of all caves in WNS-affected states and adjoining states.

How far away from WNS-affected states must I go before I can use gear that I have used in a WNS-affected state? I've disinfected the gear used in a WNS-affected state according to the protocols on your Web site, so is it OK for me to go caving in an unaffected state?

We recommend that you do not use gear used in a WNS-affected or adjoining state anywhere else in the world. We don't know what is causing bat deaths, so we cannot say with certainty that the disinfection protocols – however careful we are – will prevent the spread of WNS.

Does this cave advisory apply to tourist caves that I visit with my family?

This cave advisory does not apply to commercial caves (e.g., Crystal Caverns, Mammoth Cave and others). However, we are discussing this issue with cave owners and managers to identify how to minimize the potential for moving the agent that causes WNS. When you plan to visit any cave, you might want to check with the owner to find out if the cave is open.

Why is the Service issuing a cave advisory rather than closing caves?

The Service does not have the authority to close caves except on land that we manage. Where we have caves on this land, we will determine when to close them in accordance with guidance in this advisory.

We expect other government agencies, organizations or private landowners will close caves to help prevent or slow down the spread of WNS. Service and state biologists can provide advice to private landowners.

Dear Fellow Cavers,

White Nose Syndrome has killed hundreds of thousands of bats throughout the northeastern US. This winter, it has now been confirmed in several new states: Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New Hampshire, West Virginia, and Virginia. Wildlife officials in Illinois have closed all but one of their caves to the public. Further reports are likely before the end of winter. What had been limited to the northeast is quickly becoming a far more national issue.

A year ago, the NSS Board of Governors created a White Nose Syndrome Liaison. As that person, my responsibilities have been to act as the connection between the NSS and the research and management communities. A website that is regularly updated with the latest information about the spread of WNS and the ongoing research can be found by going to the NSS homepage (www.caves.org) and clicking on the white-nosed bat at the bottom of the menu, or by going directly to: <http://www.caves.org/WNS/WNS%20Info.htm>.

Many people have asked about material that they can use to show at grotto meetings or to share with public groups, such as scouts, camps, churches, and other outing groups. The website above has a link to an excellent PowerPoint presentation put together and regularly updated by Al Hicks, endangered species mammologist with the NY Department of Environmental Conservation, one of the leading WNS researchers. It is public domain and is made available to you to copy, turn into a CD, and share to help spread the word.

Below is a link to an excellent, in depth, and up-to-date report on WNS including the latest research findings. It includes photographs from West Virginia, and interviews with several of the leading WNS researchers. Some of what they report was discussed at length in a national WNS webinar on

February 20 in which over 45 university and laboratory researchers, federal and state wildlife officials, and ngos BCI and the NSS participated.

<http://www.earthfiles.com/news.php?ID=1529&category=Environment%3Ehttp://www.earthfiles.com/news.php?ID=1529&category=Environment>

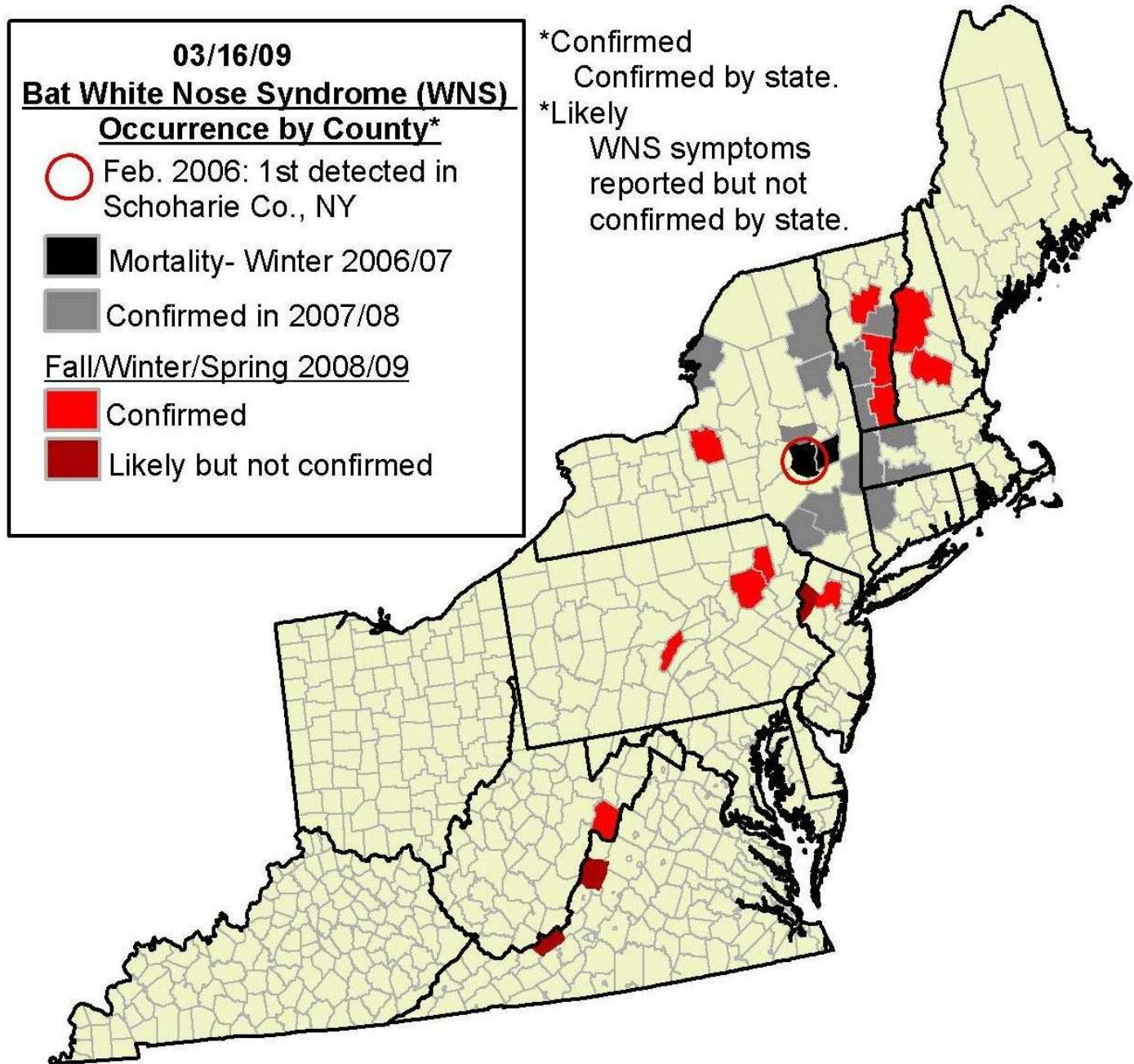
As cavers and cave conservationists across the country are unfortunately becoming more personally affected by the reach of WNS, it is important to re-emphasize the need to clean and decontaminate clothing and gear. The USFWS has protocols on this for cavers and researchers working with bats which can be found at: <http://www.fws.gov/northeast/whitenosemessage.html>.

Please know that we understand these protocols are challenging and inconvenient. They are being examined for better efficacy, and to balance the biological containment needs with safety, have been updated, and are likely to change again as more is learned about WNS. Please check the site regularly before caving.

A number of states have suspended their regular winter bat surveys in order to prevent further spread of WNS as much as possible, and to permit hibernating bat colonies under stress from being disturbed further. While it may be likely that WNS will continue to spread on its own - bat to bat - we can do our part to help slow it down, possibly buying time for the research to catch up.

Cave clean, cave safely, and cave softly. Thank you.

Peter Youngbaer NSS 16161
NSS WNS Liaison
wnsliaison@caves.org



(Misty Cave Preliminary Management Plan, continued from page 7)

11. Modifications of the cave or property, including placing bolts or artificial anchors, marking or constructing trails, cutting trees or brush, all digging, excavation, or blasting on the property or in the cave is prohibited without written permission from The Misty Cave Property Management Committee. Persons violating this policy may be subject to prosecution under state and federal laws.

12. To avoid parking and over-use problems during caving conventions and special events, access to the property will be limited during those events to trips organized through The Misty Cave Property Management Committee.

13. ATVs are not permitted on the property without written permission from The Misty Cave Property Management Committee. Any permissible ATV use is restricted to established roads and trails.

14. Hunting is not allowed except by direct written permission from The Misty Cave Property Management Committee AND the RKC BOD. Discharging firearms of any type for purposes other than hunting is prohibited.

15. Use of the cave or property for any type of commercial activity, including guided or commercial caving or other recreational activity, is not permitted.

16. No collection of specimens, artifacts, or any type of natural or cultural resources from the preserve or the cave is permitted without written permission from the Misty Cave Property Management Committee Board.

HJK 2/10/09

2009 GREAT SALTPETRE PRESERVE OPEN HOUSE MAY 16-17

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!

The public is welcome and encouraged to attend. Free cave tours are offered. The tours last 30 to 45 minutes. The cave has electric lights. The cave floor is generally flat. Dress for the cave environment - comfortable shoes and a sweat shirt. The cave is 57 degrees. Bring a flashlight if you wish.

Other Activities:

- Free soup beans and corn bread.
- Live music on Saturday. *Bring an instrument and join in!*
- Food concession stand operated by the Livingston Fire Department.
- Souvenir concession stand.
- Miles of hiking trails.



MISTY CAVE DESCRIPTION & MAP

(From the 1992 Karst-O-Rama Guidebook)

Misty cave has long been a favorite of mine and the Greater Cincinnati Grotto. It features many of the different types of terrains and obstacles that cavers of all experience levels love to negotiate. It includes rocky crawls, tube crawls, domes, climbs, water passages, chimneys, breakdown, and tight squeezes. However, we use discretion and never visit this cave during the winter months as it is a bat hibernaculum. For this reason this is A GUIDED TRIP ONLY, and directions will not be published.

This cave was found in 1987 by Jacque Ramey on one of his, now famous, ridgewalks. It was named Misty due to the large amount of cold air issuing from the entrance, in hot weather it can fill the entire entrance area with mist - up to 100 feet away from the cave! It was entered soon after, and several well traveled passages were explored with nothing new to add. Soon after, a breakthrough occurred when a group from Cinn. dug through a boulder choke leading to cyalume crawl. Exploration pushed into the stream passage that was found and also higher levels. Soon the grotto started surveying.

While mopping up small survey leads a day after Christmas, we found a major passage near the entrance that linked into the other new sections, however a long rocky crawl had to be negotiated (Xmas Crawl). This section allowed to cave to be visited as a loop - a rarity in this part of the country.

Most trips start into the main cave section following the obvious passage, taking time out to visit some domes to either side. Bats abound in these domes. The going is straight forward until a what looks like a dead-end

crawl is reached. Contorting to stand up at the end of this crawl will reveal the dome beyond. Past this dome and to the left is the crawl and then the pinch that was dug open. This leads to Cyalume crawl (the cyalume is now long gone) and to the Flat Room. From here visit the stream crawl and make sure to check the stream canyon here.

Back at the Flat Room exit left through breakdown. Soon you will break into a large passage with a stream. Follow this, sometimes crouching, sometimes losing the water. Where a major passage opens to the left drop your packs. Continue down and regain the stream as it rushes through the terminal breakdown to the surface resurgence just on the other side. Alas, there is no way through. Return to your packs.

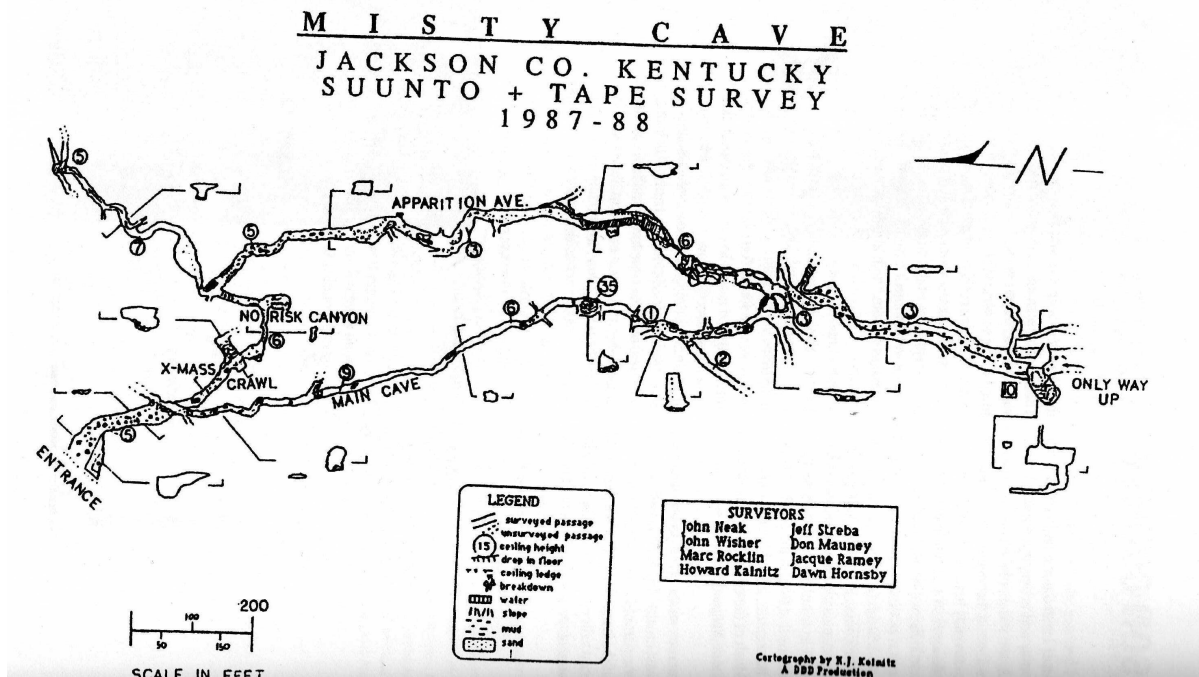
Follow the side passage to a room. From here there are two exits. The first is No-Risk canyon. This is a great exercise in chimneying and called No-Risk because it is 3 feet over 3 feet of water. It then passes through a 50 foot tall dome and into the Xmas Crawl Passage.

The other exit leads to a dome. The wall of this dome can be climbed and then a small tube crawl (the highest crawl off the side of the dome) can be followed. It rejoins the other path right before Xmas Crawl.

Xmas Crawl is only 300 ft long, but it goes forever. It bellies through rock and water and rejoins the rest of the cave near the entrance. Crawl to the entrance and exit. Congratulate yourself, you've done the Misty Cave loop.

To those visiting this cave, please respect the bat population and the pristine areas of the cave that were recently discovered.

Howard Kalnitz NSS20678



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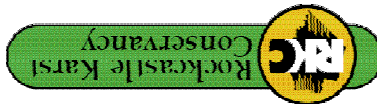
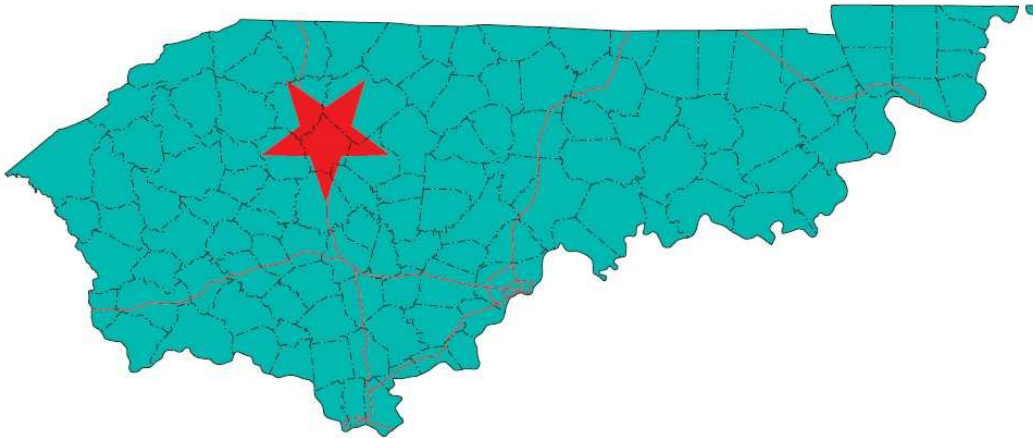
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