



**U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Transit Administration**

**Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in Parks Program (Transit in the Parks Program)  
Implementation Project - Proposal for Fiscal Year 2011 Funds**

BASIC PROJECT INFORMATION		
Project Name (Please provide a 1-2 sentence description of the project): <b>AMC HIKER SHUTTLE VEHICLE</b> Expansion of the Appalachian Mountain Club Hiker Shuttle service by adding a third vehicle to AMC's fleet, thereby providing a higher level of service to a proven alternative transportation system model, consistent with a 2008 Transit in the Parks planning study.		
Proposed Funding Recipient: White Mountain National Forest		
Public land unit(s) involved: White Mountain National Forest (including two New Hampshire State Parks located within the Forest boundary)	<u>Location of Project</u> City: multiple County: Coos, Grafton and Carroll State: New Hampshire Congressional District: 1 and 2	
Federal Land Management Agency managing the above unit(s): <input type="checkbox"/> Bureau of Land Management <input type="checkbox"/> Bureau of Reclamation <input type="checkbox"/> Fish and Wildlife Service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forest Service <input type="checkbox"/> National Park Service <input type="checkbox"/> Other (e.g. Federal Trust) Describe:	Type of Implementation Project: (Planning projects, please use the alternate form) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bus <input type="checkbox"/> Vehicle replacement <input type="checkbox"/> Tram/Trolley <input type="checkbox"/> Boat/Ferry/Dock <input type="checkbox"/> Rail <input type="checkbox"/> Non-motorized (e.g., bicycling/pedestrian trail) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (e.g., Intermodal facility, ITS) Describe:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Proposal is for a new alternative transportation system where none currently exists. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Proposal is for an expansion or enhancement of an existing alternative transportation system. <input type="checkbox"/> Proposal is for rehabilitation of or replacement of vehicles or facilities for an existing alternative transportation system.		
Transit in Parks Program Funding Requested during FY 2011 \$62,627	<b>Total</b> Capital Cost of Project at Completion (All sources) \$62,627	
Were you awarded Transit in Parks Program funds for this project in the past? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No If answer "Yes," please provide amount awarded: \$		
Do you plan to request additional Transit in Parks Program funds in future years? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <b>(Note: If you wish to compete for future Transit in Parks Program fiscal year funds you must reapply).</b>		
If answer "Yes," please specify Transit in Parks Program proposed funding levels for out years below:		
FY 2012 \$	FY 2013 \$	FY 2014 \$
<b>FY 2011</b> Funding from sources other than Transit in Parks Program funds? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If answer "Yes," please specify funding levels per source below:		

State \$	Local \$	Federal (other than Transit in Parks Program) \$	Private sources: Appalachian Mountain Club \$21,680 in first year \$118,520 over 5 years
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### CONTACT PERSON

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Position: Forest Engineer	E-mail: wdauer@fs.fed.us
Address: 71 White Mountain Drive, Campton, NH 03223	

### OTHER PROJECT SPONSORS (in addition to funding recipient)

Appalachian Mountain Club, 361 Route 16 Pinkham Notch, Gorham, NH 03581
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### REQUIREMENTS

- If a State, Tribal, or local government entity is proposing the project, the applicant has contacted the manager of the Federal land unit(s) and has the consent of the Federal land management agency or agencies affected.
- The project is consistent with the metropolitan and statewide planning process.
- The project is consistent with agency plans.
- If this is an implementation project, all reasonable alternatives, including a non-construction option, were analyzed before proposing this project.

### BASIC PROJECT DATA

Number of Visitors (Annual): 6-7 million	Daily Number of Visitors (Peak season): Varies widely
Average Number of Vehicles per Day at Peak Visitation: Between 1999 and 2008, NH DoT traffic counters recorded over 5,000 ADT in Bartlett NH (US Rt 302), and over 12,000 ADT in Lincoln NH (I-93)	
Current Road Level of Service at Peak Visitation: unknown (see attached photo "Parking Overflow") (Please consult guidance where available on determining this variable. You may use observational accounts or pictures to provide an assessment of this datum for FY 2011 proposals).	
What time of the year does your land unit experience Peak Visitation? <input type="checkbox"/> Spring <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Summer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fall <input type="checkbox"/> Winter	
Current Carrying Capacity of Existing Roads: Varies widely; Interstate 93 through Franconia Notch is highest capacity road; other arterials include US Rt 302 through Crawford Notch, NH Rt 16 through Pinkham Notch, US Rt 2 through Randolph-Gorham, and US Rt 3 through Carroll/Twin Mountain.	
What percent of that capacity is the site operating at during peak periods? During summer vacation weekends and peak foliage season, highways traversing the WMNF can see backups of ½ to 1+ hours.	

Current parking shortages during peak visitation: During popular summer weekends, many popular parking lots experience overflow that spills onto road ROW and abutting forest lands.

Current Number of Persons who use the alternative transportation system (if one already exists) at peak visitation: 70 (average number of visitors/daily at peak)

Estimated Annual Number of Persons who will use the alternative transportation system at project completion (anticipated number of riders or users/annually): increase of 1500-2000

Is there an anticipated reduction in auto collisions with large animals with this project?  
 Yes  No If "Yes," please provide anticipated reduction: 1 moose collision/year

### BASIC PROJECT DATA (CONTINUED)

Is there an anticipated increase in porous surface with this project?  Yes  No

If "Yes," please provide anticipated area of increase: \_\_\_\_\_ square feet

Is there an anticipated increase in wildlife habitat connectivity?  Yes  No

If "Yes," how many acres would be connected by the project?

Is there an anticipated increase in air clarity measures (e.g., visitors' visual experience) for the land unit as a result of this project?  Yes  No

If "Yes," please explain: Reduction of auto emissions and ozone by 500 fewer car trips (25,000 miles)

Is there an anticipated reduction of visual impact of parking and roads on visitor experience?  
 Yes  No

If "Yes," please explain: Reduction of private vehicles on roads, in parking lots, and overflow parking

Is there an anticipated reduction of visual or noise impacts of transportation facilities on visitor experience?  
 Yes  No One shuttle bus loading and unloading will have less impact than multiple passenger vehicles.

## Executive Summary

**Please provide an executive summary that is no more than one page in length. This should introduce the public land unit and/or applicant, summarize the need for the proposed alternative transportation project, highlight the findings of previous planning studies, provide a description of the proposed project, and include any other information essential to the application.**

The White Mountain National Forest (WMNF) attracts six to seven million visitors annually, making it one of the most popular National Forests in the country. The Forest is within a day's drive of 70 million people. Growth in visitation has led to increased automobile traffic throughout the WMNF region that has impacted the visitor experience, available parking, the Forest's natural resources, and air quality.

A preliminary investigation of the current transportation infrastructure and operations on the White Mountain National Forest was conducted June 27-29, 2007 by the Interagency Transportation Assistance Group (TAG) on behalf of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). Their report, titled Transportation Observations, Considerations, and Recommendations for White Mountain National Forest, concluded that the WMNF is experiencing transportation impacts, and that opportunities exist to improve the visitor experience, prevent resource degradation, and partner with surrounding businesses and communities to mitigate these impacts. The team recommended further planning studies in several areas including the need to better define the problem, strengthen transportation planning coordination regionally, and improve the visitor experience.

In 2008, a coalition was organized to conduct a formal planning study. The WMNF in partnership with the Appalachian Mountain Club, Plymouth State University Center for Rural Partnerships, and the John A. Volpe National Transportation Center received an award from the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration for an Alternative Transportation in the Parks and Public Lands planning project. The goals of the Alternative Transportation Study (ATS) were to: study current visitor use and transportation dynamics throughout the WMNF region; engage stakeholders and explore partnership opportunities; improve the delivery of car-free travel information; and identify options for additional planning and implementation projects.

The White Mountain ATS Report (final report expected May 2011) identifies 36 options for addressing the transportation issues in the region, grouped into four categories: traveler information, wayfinding, and signage; bicycle and pedestrian; transit; and policy and planning. This implementation grant application is a direct result of that study and seeks to address the specific ATS recommendation to extend existing shuttle services to provide more options and flexibility for visitors to reduce private vehicle use on the White Mountain national Forest.

The Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) has operated a Hiker Shuttle Service for over 20 years. AMC currently operates two shuttle vehicles on a fixed-route system spanning the WMNF from the I-93 corridor in the west to the Route 16 corridor in the east. In recent years, the Shuttle has served a ridership of over 3900 people at over a dozen trailheads and recreational sites in the White Mountain region. By riding the Shuttle, a hiker, for example, can enjoy a point-to-point hiking itinerary without having to drive and park a second private vehicle to await them at their destination (car spot). It is very popular for hikers to want to hike from one side of a mountain range or Wilderness Area to another, or to enjoy a "Hut to Hut" experience, staying overnight at AMC's mountain huts on a multi-day hike. These itineraries often require a point-to-point route that would not otherwise be possible without transportation support.

Surveys conducted in the summer of 2010 asked WMNF visitors: "Which of the following would most influence you to choose a publically available transportation service?" Over 67% of respondents identified "frequent and dependable pick-up and drop-off service from designated parking lots" as the highest of four criteria. When asked to rank the most important factors when planning travel logistics for a recreational itinerary", Convenience" (total travel time and transitions) was cited by 44% of respondents (more than twice the second-place factor of Cost at 19%) as the primary factor.

The AMC has demonstrated that it can operate a Hiker Shuttle service efficiently and effectively. Funds from this implementation grant, combined with AMC's funding of operations and maintenance, would be used to expand the successful and vitally important services of the AMC shuttle system by adding a third shuttle vehicle which would allow for more frequent service at targeted recreational sites, thereby further reducing visitor impacts to the WMNF in accordance with the Forest Management Plan. AMC's Hiker Shuttle is currently operated to primarily serve hikers visiting AMC's backcountry Huts in the WMNF. Expansion of service is designed to broaden shuttle service to hikers and bicyclists not necessarily visiting AMC's Huts in the WMNF.

## Project Description

**Please provide a detailed description of the proposed activities that would be funded with a Transit in Parks grant in no more than two pages. You may attach additional maps or illustrations that do not count towards the page limit.**

The WMNF seeks funding from the Transit in the Parks program, in collaboration with the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC), to procure an additional shuttle bus and three bicycle racks to expand AMC's existing Hiker Shuttle service on the WMNF. The AMC has operated the only fixed-route shuttle service serving the WMNF for over 20 years, filling an extremely important need for public transportation that directly supports Forest Management Plan objectives for reducing visitor impacts and enhancing the visitors' experience.

Funding from the Transit in the Parks program would be used for the capital purchase of a third shuttle vehicle to expand its current two-vehicle fleet. The administrative costs, ownership, and operation of a third bus will be the responsibility of the AMC, including scheduling, marketing, reservations, hiring, training, accounting, maintenance, and operations consistent with its licensing from the State of NH as a Common Carrier. AMC's unique experience and proven record backed by knowledgeable staff will translate into a quality service from the first day, affording additional visitors an orientation to the Forest, outdoor safety information, and a warm welcome.

Traditionally, AMC has operated its Shuttle service with the primary goal of serving the needs of guests at the eight AMC high mountain Huts and two AMC Lodges. In 2010, the AMC Hiker Shuttle served 3900 passengers in 113 days of operation between June 3 and October 17. By transporting their hut guests to dispersed trailheads, AMC has provided visitors with the opportunity to hike point-to-point across the mountain ranges to enjoy both hut stays as well as further-ranging day hikes without the need to drive long distances from home and park a second private vehicle to await them at their destination. As many visitors are from the greater Boston MA area, some 120 miles away, this represents a considerable reduction of highway miles driven to the WMNF.

In 2011, in response to the Alternative Transportation in the Parks and Public Lands planning study, AMC has endeavored to stretch their two-shuttle operation to include three additional service stops, including two transfer points with the inter-state carrier Concord Coach Lines. AMC is willing to undertake this expansion as a pilot program to demonstrate its commitment to the benefits of alternative transportation. The ability to provide adequate service to a greater geographic area and a larger user base is, however, limited by the miles that can be driven in a day and the number of routes that can be covered by two shuttle vehicles. By obtaining a third vehicle, AMC will have additional capacity to provide more frequent and dependable service to a greater user base and equipping all three of its shuttle vehicles with bike carrier racks will add an incentive for additional use of bicycles on the WMNF.

More frequent and Express service The addition of a third bus will provide the backbone for covering long haul sections between the most frequented trailheads and destinations on the Forest. The 2010 Hiker Shuttle Survey confirmed national trends identifying dependable, convenient, and affordable service as top requirements for travelers to choose alternative transportation. The AMC plans to emulate commuter rail systems, utilizing a third vehicle to provide "express" service to the perimeter of the Forest, while the other two buses provide "local" service to the interior of the Forest.

Greater geographic coverage With greater capacity, the heavily used Pemigewasset district of the Forest will receive direct service and transfer connections to Pinkham, Crawford, and Franconia Notches.

Reductions in private vehicle use Expanding AMC's shuttle fleet to three vehicles will allow AMC to target an additional 2000 riders in 2012, obviating the use of 500 car trips around the Forest as well as trips of origin from hometowns when combined with inter-modal transit service. This reduction in private vehicle use occurs during the peak use times on the Forest when traffic congestion and user demand are at their highest levels. Bus stops are evaluated each year by counting both boarding and disembarking passengers to most efficiently meet visitor needs.

Inter-modal transfers Given the 800,000-acre size of the WMNF, the long distances involved with transporting visitors to current public transportation hubs are time consuming. The AMC has a strong longstanding working relationship with Concord Coach Lines, the lone inter-state carrier serving one principle population center along the Route 93 corridor and two stops along the Route 16 corridor. Improved

levels of service by the AMC Hiker Shuttle for both inbound and outbound travelers at transportation hubs will allow visitors direct access to the Forest from areas currently served by inter-state transportation.

Bicycle support The addition of bicycle racks to all shuttle buses will provide a dependable transportation alternative for spotting bikes for either point-to-point hikes or bicycle rides. The AMC has been a leader in supporting bicycle adventures and bicycle commuting in both print and in practice. Furthering this opportunity on the Forest perfectly matches the AMC's Green Promise program to actively change energy consumptive habits and help reduce our environmental impact on the Forest. Increasing the accessibility of Forest trailheads to bicycle use will not only reduce trailhead parking congestion, but will also positively influence the public perception of this Forest being less of a car dependant destination.

One of the recommendations of the 2007 TAG Report was to expand AMC's shuttle service: "AMC already operates a shuttle service and may be a partner in any expanded transit service." AMC is willing to apply its initiative to expand and enhance shuttle operations as a pilot program for inter-modal transit solutions in the WMNF region. As their operation is break-even for operating two buses, the opportunity to expand service is constrained by the need for capital funds to add to the fleet. With funding from the Transit in the Parks program, AMC will schedule more comprehensive services for 2012, and continue to work in direct partnership with the USFS to reduce traffic impacts on the Forest and provide user benefits that will add positively to the visitor experience.

## Transit in Parks Implementation Evaluation Criteria

This form is for implementation (capital) projects only. If you are requesting planning funds, please use the planning project proposal template. For additional space, please delete this table and the detailed instructions from your response.

Criteria	Points	Weight
1. Demonstration of Need		25%
a. Visitor mobility & experience	(1-5)	
b. Environmental condition as result of existing transportation system	(1-5)	
2. Methodology for Assessing: Visitor Mobility & Experience Benefits of Project		25%
a. Reduced traffic congestion	(1-5)	
b. Enhanced visitor mobility, accessibility, and safety	(1-5)	
c. Improved visitor education, recreation, and health benefits	(1-5)	
3. Methodology for Assessing: Environmental Benefits of Project		25%
a. Protection of sensitive natural, cultural, and historical resources	(1-5)	
b. Reduced pollution	(1-5)	
4. Methodology for Assessing: Operational Efficiency and Financial Sustainability of Alternatives		25%
a. Effectiveness in meeting management goals	(1-5)	
b. Financial plan and cost effectiveness	(1-5)	
c. Cost effectiveness	(1-5)	
d. Partnerships and funding from other sources	(1-5)	

### Project Justification

**Your responses to these questions must total no more than eight pages.**

#### Implementation Evaluation Factors:

##### 1. Demonstration of Need

- a. Visitor mobility and experience:** Describe the site's current and/or anticipated transportation problem or opportunity for improvement. You should include information on issues such as traffic congestion, traffic delays, parking shortages, difficulty in accessing destinations, safety issues, lack of access for persons with disabilities, lack of access for individuals with lower incomes or without cars, and visitor frustration. Please cite reports, plans, studies, and other documentation to support your description.

The WMNF is one of the most popular National Forests in the country with two large State Parks embedded within its boundaries, and dozens of resort towns and attractions surrounding its periphery that are heavily marketed as tourist destinations. State highways and commuter routes slice through the Forest, creating permeable forest boundaries with hundreds of recreational sites dispersed over the Forest's 800,000 acre geographic area.

Summer and fall seasons (peak) see overflow parking and traffic congestion at numerous sites, creating negative impacts on the natural resources, air quality, and the visitor experience. Traffic impacts have been recognized and studied for over a decade. Stated in the Field Report (2003),

"The anticipated increase in visitors to the Forest may only compound the current issues facing the Forest. Traffic volumes throughout the Forest have grown substantially, creating conditions which have the potential to impact the visitor experience.... At popular activity centers, such as at the Lincoln Woods Visitor Center, parking outside of designated areas affects the aesthetics of the scenery as well as public safety."

#### Reports and studies:

- Federal Lands Alternative Transportation Systems Study (Field Report), Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, 2003
- White Mountain National Forest Management Plan, 2005
- Transportation Observations, Considerations, and Recommendations for White Mountain National Forest, Interagency Transportation Assistance Group (TAG), 2007
- White Mountain National Forest Alternative Transportation Report, Plymouth State University, 2009
- White Mountain National Forest Alternative Transportation Study, 2011

- b. Environmental condition as a result of the existing transportation system:** Describe the site's current or anticipated problem or opportunity for improvement of the environment or resource protection. You should include information on current or anticipated problems such as air pollution, noise pollution, run-off, water quality, harm to vegetation and wildlife, and other impacts or stressors on natural, scenic, cultural and/or historic resources caused by the existing transportation system. Please cite documentation in agency plans, studies, reports and other documentation that will help to support your description.

From the 2007 TAG report:

"The transportation impacts are primarily roadway congestion, parking facilities at or over capacity, and exceeding the capacity of the resources themselves.

- Heavy **traffic** at these times leads to congestion on surrounding roads, particularly on I-93 and Route 16, as well as negative impacts to the visitor experience and to increased emissions.
- As **parking** facilities reach capacity, visitors are more likely to park in unauthorized areas on the roadway shoulders. This creates a safety hazard, contributes to resource degradation, and can cause friction with local law enforcement.
- **Carrying capacity** of WMNF facilities becomes an issue, both in terms of visitor experience (especially the "wilderness" feeling) and resource impacts."

As part of the WMNF Alternative Transportation Study (2011), the Volpe Center compiled traffic counter data from NH DOT to analyze transportation dynamics in the WMNF region. For those areas where the AMC Hiker Shuttle operates fixed routes, there were three permanent traffic counters (Bartlett, Jefferson, and Lincoln) providing data for an analysis of the period 1999-2008. These three counters reported a total of approximately 23,000 Annual Daily Traffic (ADT) on weekends and over 19,000 ADT on weekdays. Over a dozen high-use trailheads are served by the AMC shuttle along these state highways, and improvements in the level of shuttle service would certainly reduce the number of vehicles used for recreational access and the consequent impacts of private vehicle use.

## **2. Visitor Mobility & Experience Benefits**

- a. Reduced traffic congestion:** Describe *how* this project will mitigate the impact of traffic congestion or enhance current visitor travel conditions. In order to respond to this question, please include (where applicable) a description of how this project will:
- Reduce the average number of daily motorized vehicle trips and parking demand during peak visitation. (This can be estimated based on the anticipated alternative transportation system usage at completion and the typical number of passengers per vehicle); *and*
  - Decrease or mitigate time lost to traffic delays.

The proposed AMC shuttle system expansion targets 1500 additional riders to the Hiker Shuttle system for the 2012 season. Using a rider per car factor of three, currently used in reporting

overflow parking crowd numbers to the USFS Snow Rangers during the Tuckerman Ravine spring ski season, another 500 car trips would be displaced by adding a third shuttle bus. These trips fall during the heaviest use times on the Forest as buses will operate 113 days from June through Columbus Day. Added rider capacity will ease parking conditions at the Lincoln Woods Visitor Center more than any other, as it is the most impacted area not currently serviced by a scheduled shuttle service. Rider demand for service between the northern and southern sides of the Pemigewasset Wilderness has also steadily increased in the past three years, and the lot at the Lincoln Woods regularly overflows capacity on late July and August weekends, as well as peak foliage weekends.

With the opportunity for the AMC Shuttle to carry bicycles for the first time in 2012, the AMC anticipates 25, or 5%, of the estimated 500 riders now parking at the Pinkham Notch, Crawford Notch, Twin Mountain, Lincoln, Lincoln Woods, Intervale and Gorham visitor centers to utilize the service. This number is expected to double after the first season of operation. Given the steep roads in the WMNF, this will be an increasingly popular service, allowing cyclists to use their bicycles as a spotted vehicle for point-to-point rides.

Shuttle bus and bicycle use both allow immediate boarding and disembarking without utilizing any public parking or hindering traffic patterns. Every vehicle trip saved by this proposal will result in less time spent by automobiles waiting at road junctions, idling, and searching for empty parking spaces, as well as fewer pedestrians walking alongside heavily trafficked roads to start hikes from overflow parking areas.

**b. Enhanced visitor mobility, accessibility, and safety:** Describe *how* this project will improve visitor mobility, access and safety. In order to respond to this question, please include (where applicable) a description of:

- Benefits that the project would have in easing visitor travel to destinations and decreasing visitor inconvenience;
- Improved access for persons with disabilities;
- Improved access for individuals with lower incomes or without cars;
- Anticipated impacts on vehicle accident rates or property loss;
- Anticipated impacts on visitor safety in cases of catastrophic events, such as forest fires;  
*and*
- The number of visitors per year that will benefit.

The approval of this proposal will increase by 50% the current capacity of the AMC Hiker Shuttle system. Expanded routing will also provide direct connectivity with visitors and residents of Lincoln and North Conway NH, including inter-modal transfers with the regional carrier Concord Coach Lines. Under this scenario, it is estimated that in the first year, 1500 more riders would have direct access to the WMNF while taking 500 cars off the forest during the busiest months of the year. Direct promotional advertising along with 'word of mouth' and peer support among user groups should increase these numbers in future years.

Overflow parking creates a safety hazard for pedestrians and bicycles traveling next to vehicles parked on roadways, with accidents more likely due to cars loading and pulling out of blind spots onto the travelway. Improved shuttle service will reduce the instances of overflow parking, thereby reducing associated safety hazards.

Those wishing to visit the WMNF without personal vehicles, whether because of disability, low income, full access to public transportation, or personal preference, will be able to reserve or ride on a space-available basis from the I-93 corridor through Franconia Notch to the Route 16 corridor through Pinkham Notch. Visitors new to the area, not familiar with the recreational access sites, or not skilled driving on narrow raised gravel roads in adverse weather conditions will have the option of being driven to their destination.

Although not a formal aspect of its operating plan, the AMC Hiker Shuttles has each year picked up injured or exhausted hikers wishing to abort their itineraries and return home. Every accommodation is made to support those in need, and additional shuttle service provides an extra margin of assistance in unplanned or unforeseen situations.

- c. Visitor education, recreation and health benefits:** Describe *how* the project will enhance visitor experience, such as through improved access to recreational facilities, educational programs, and/or provide public health benefits (such as through active transportation and recreation) and social benefits. How many visitors per year will experience these benefits?

The project supports a transportation alternative that includes informational and educational services as well as a ride. Riders getting on or passing developed AMC destinations have access to full backcountry information services including weather and trail conditions; trip planning services; Leave No Trace and HikeSafe information; programming; food and water; shelter; and emergency response capabilities. On the bus, drivers share information about safety, trip planning, and offer the use of copies of the White Mountain Guide to better introduce and assist riders with their trip on the WMNF. Shuttle rides are used by most hikers as opportunities to reminisce on hits and misses of past trips and plans for trips to come.

The success of this proposal will allow the 2012 Shuttle season to get 5400 visitors out from behind a steering wheel or on to a bicycle to enjoy more time in the Northeast's most spectacular forest. Being driven along breathtaking views to start hiking and bicycling adventures is indeed the best way to leave worries behind. It also provides a new opportunity to develop friendships and a fresh outlook on life along the way. Meeting others with a similar appreciation of the Forest often makes friends of strangers.

### **3. Environmental Benefits**

- a. Protection of natural, cultural, and historic resources:** Describe *how* this project will improve the protection of natural, cultural, historic, and/or scenic resources. Please provide as much information as possible about *anticipated outcomes of the project*, such as:

- Managing visitation in accordance with defined "carrying capacity" goals of the land unit;
- Maintaining ecosystem function, ecosystem restoration, disturbed land restoration, or re-vegetation efforts;
- Improving habitat connectivity;
- Preserving archeological resources, historical resources, viewshed or watershed;
- Reducing auto-large animal collision rates or other protection benefits where applicable.

Impacts from private vehicle use on natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources derive from overflow parking as well as vehicle emissions (see 3b regarding emissions). Overflow parking creates both enforcement and management challenges related to parking in undesignated areas and along highway shoulders, leading to compaction of vegetation and compromised erosion control. Improved shuttle service not only reduces the demand for overflow parking, but also improves the visitor experience by reducing the number of parked vehicles on roadways and unauthorized forests areas.

- b. Reduced pollution:** Describe *how* this project would reduce and/or prevent pollution – including air pollution, water pollution, noise pollution, and visual pollution. Please include relevant scientific data and an explanation of the source of the pollution to support your responses. Please include (where applicable):
- Estimated reduction in *average vehicle miles traveled at peak visitation* (a measure that is an estimate of a reduction in pollutant emissions as a result of the proposed project);

- Estimated number of riders *switching from auto to transit or to non-motorized transportation (including bike, pedestrian, and/or waterborne craft)* as a result of the project (a measure of estimated reduction in fuel consumption for site patrons and improved energy efficiency aspects of transportation, including non-motorized transportation).

Under the Clean Air Act Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) program, the Forest Service has the affirmative responsibility to protect Air Quality Related Values (AQRVs), including visibility, vegetation, and water quality, within Class I areas. Monitoring AQRVs has been identified in the WMNF Management Plan as baseline tracking necessary, in part, to fulfill the management objective of assessing the affects of major new or modified emission sources of air pollution on Class I airsheds. There are two Class I Areas within the WMNF, the Great Gulf Wilderness and Presidential Range Dry River Wilderness Areas.

The WMNF has impacted AQRVs and other air quality exceedances in part due to air pollutants emitted by mobile sources. Mobile sources, such as automobiles, emit primary air pollutants (NOx, VOCs, PM2.5, NH3 and SO2) and contribute to secondary pollution formation such as ozone and sulfuric and nitric acids in aerosols, rain, and clouds. Whereas autos remain a lead contributor to this type of pollution and many of these pollutants have long-term cumulative effects on ecosystems, reducing local auto emissions can reduce the cumulative loading of air pollution to terrestrial and aquatic systems.

By expanding the AMC Hiker Shuttle operation, AMC believes they can serve an additional 1500 riders, obviating more than 500 car trips around the Forest. At an estimated average of 50 miles per trip within the region, this could equate to a reduction of 25,000 miles of private vehicle use. Furthermore, a reduction of 100 cars being driven from home origins averaging 150 miles away (300 miles round trip) could result in approximately 30,000 fewer private vehicle miles.

**4. Operational Efficiency and Financial Sustainability**

- a. Operational Efficiency:** Describe how the proposed project is the most effective solution for achieving identified strategic management goals and objectives for this site. Please cite documentation in agency plans and other reports to support your description.

The Appalachian Mountain Club has had a long-standing presence in the White Mountain National Forest. They operate two full-service Lodges, eight backcountry huts, seasonal trail crews, education and interpretive programs, as well as visitor information services all from their North Country offices located on National Forest land in Pinkham Notch under special use permit of the USFS. Their facilities attract thousands of visitors to the Forest each year.

The AMC is well-established in the region as a cornerstone of the local economy. They know the Forest, and are well versed in visitors’ needs and interests. Having successfully operated a Hiker Shuttle service for over 20 years, they have a proven track record for delivering services that are purposeful for the WMNF visitor. Their business and maintenance facilities on the Forest provide a logistical advantage over other transportation providers that would necessarily be based off-Forest, and contribute significantly to an efficient business model.

- b. Feasibility and Sustainability of Proposed Project Budget and Financial Plan:** Provide the information required in the budget template below *or* attach a project budget that *at a minimum contains the items in the budget template* and extends at least 5 years. Provide a narrative, as discussed below, to elaborate on the financial plan.

	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016
<b>Revenue</b>					

Transit in Parks Program funding (requested)	\$62627				
Funds from public land budget					
Other federal funds					
State funding					
Local funding					
Passenger Fares and/or transportation fees	\$27000	\$30000	\$31500	\$35000	\$36500
All other dedicated sources of funding					
<i>Total Revenue</i>	\$87769	\$30000	\$31500	\$35000	\$36500
<b>Capital Costs</b>					
Purchase of rolling stock (vehicles)	\$58727				
Lease of rolling stock (vehicles)					
Construction (e.g., bus shelters, sidewalks, trails)					
Rehabilitation					
Other: (3) vehicle-mounted bike racks	\$3900				
<i>Total Capital Costs</i>	\$62627				
<b>Operating Costs</b>					
Salaries	\$10400	\$10712	\$11033	\$11364	\$11705
Routine Maintenance	\$375	\$386	\$1298	\$410	\$1322
Insurance and registration	\$2325	\$2395	\$2466	\$2540	\$2616
Fuel	\$7500	\$7875	\$8268	\$8682	\$9116
Contracted services					
Other: Administration (scheduling, hiring, training, etc)	\$1080	\$1112	\$1145	\$1180	\$1215
<i>Total Operating Costs</i>	\$21680	\$22480	\$24210	\$24176	\$25974

**Proposed budget narrative:** In this narrative, include details such as size and number of vehicles, fuel type, terms of lease, description of facilities to be constructed, types of ITS, etc. The narrative should also describe the maintenance plan, include information on how the project will impact total operating and maintenance costs and schedule at the site, as well as information on the project's impact on the unit's ability to maintain other assets. Finally, for vehicle replacement projects, please list the age, mileage, and vehicle type of each vehicle that you are requesting funding to replace.

Shuttle vehicle cost is based on a quotation for a 2011 GMC 14 passenger diesel powered Girardin Micro Bus, the same model as the current AMC shuttle vehicles (which are gas powered).

Operating costs are based on actual records of AMC's shuttle operation. The \$900 increment in 2014 and 2016 maintenance is for replacement of 6 tires after approximately 50,000 miles.

For operating revenue, passenger fares for 2012 are based on 1500 riders paying an \$18 fare. Ridership is projected to grow by 5% per year, with \$1 fare increases in 2013 and 2015.

Operating costs are expected to increase by 3% each year, except for fuel which is projected to increase by 5% each year.

- c. **Cost Effectiveness:** Provide the information requested in items 1-4 below in order to calculate the cost per person using the alternative transportation system. FTA will calculate annualized cost per passenger trip and annual fare box recovery – common transit cost effectiveness

measures – based on the information that you provide. **You must provide all information in order to fulfill these required criteria.**

1. Annual cost for project operations and maintenance (including salaries, fuel, maintenance and upkeep, administrative expenses related to system, and all other operating costs): \$21680 in the first year
  2. Average annual number of users or riders: increase of 1500 in system ridership in the first year
  3. Transportation fee or fares recovered (average): \$27,000 in the first year
  4. Useful life of transportation assets: 5 years
- Annual cost per passenger trip: This will be automatically calculated by FTA.
- Annual fee/fare recovery ratio: This will be automatically calculated by FTA.      %

If necessary, you may also provide a narrative response justifying the cost-effectiveness of the project relative to other alternatives or to no action. Projects will be evaluated based on both initial capital cost and on the ongoing annual cost of operation.

The Appalachian Mountain Club, having successfully operated a shuttle service for over 20 years, has demonstrated that this is a viable transportation model for the local region.

- d. Partnering, funding from other sources:** Describe any partnerships the project has with federal, state, tribal and local government agencies, gateway communities or the private sector. Please cite agreements or documentation (*including letters of dedicated financial support or confirmation of financial or in-kind contribution*) that show a high level of coordination and partnering activities. Identify all sources of additional funding, including the details of the agreements and any time-sensitive situations. If applicable, describe the economic, mobility, or other benefits for the partners or gateway community.

The Appalachian Mountain Club participates in one of the longest-standing partnerships between a non-profit organization and the USFS. Agreements between AMC and the WMNF include: a Memorandum Of Understanding that serves as the over-arching framework for all the educational, scientific research, and hospitality activities and services provided by the AMC; numerous special use permits to operate facilities (Pinkham Notch Visitor Center, seven backcountry huts, Hermit Lake, Camp Dodge; cost-share agreements for trail projects; and an Annual Operating Plan that guides the on-going programs, activities, and operations.

The AMC is also engaged with NH Fish & Game Department for Search & Rescue operations on the Forest which are often based in AMC facilities.

The AMC is a member in good standing of six regional chambers of commerce and three 3 regional Economic Development Councils. It is a representative on the NH Travel Council, White Mountain Attractions Assoc, and a founding member of New Hampshire Grand, a web-based travel and tourism resource to the industry members of northern New Hampshire.

These affiliations demonstrate that the AMC is a vital and integral part of the WMNF regional economy, as well as the travel, tourism, and recreation industries. Their presence and commitment as an engaged and effective WMNF partner speaks well of their ability to advance the mutual goals of resource protection and visitor service.

## ATTACHMENTS

[WMNF Trans\\_NHME locator.pdf](#)

[WMNF Gateway Communities FH.pdf](#)

[WM Transportation Services.jpg](#)

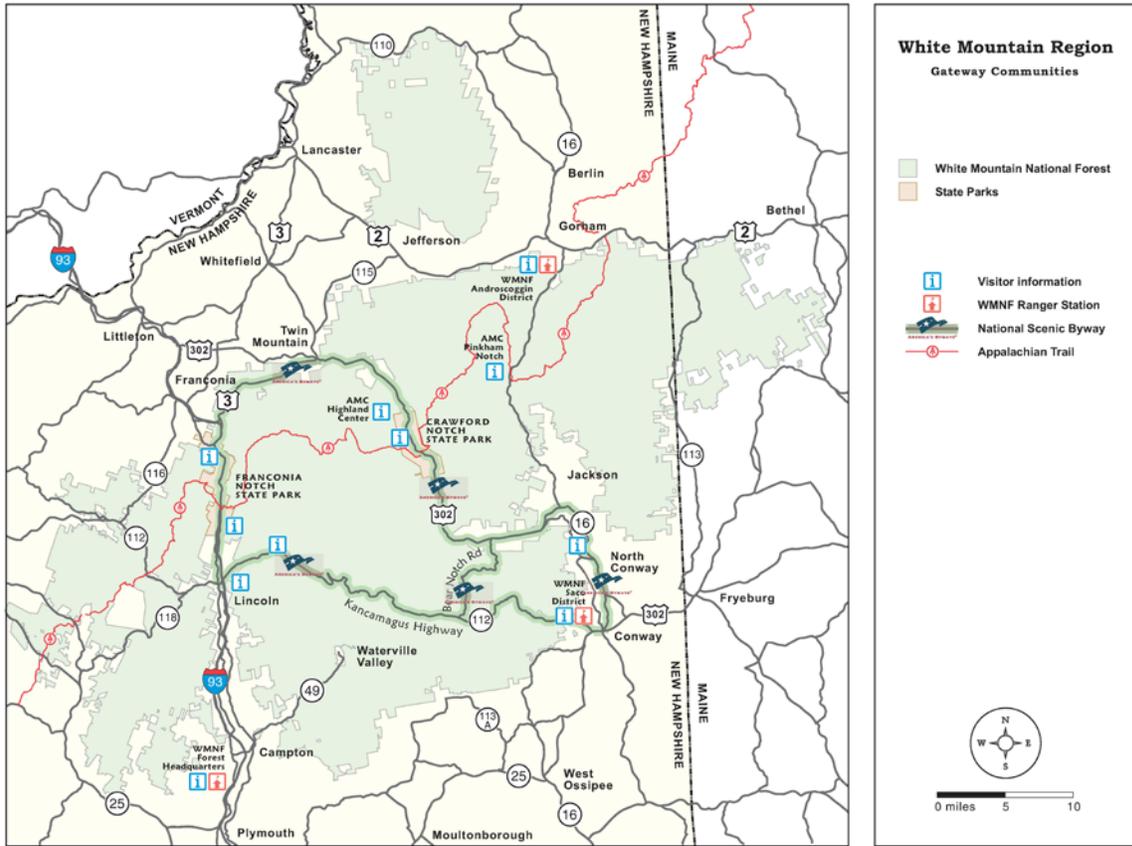
[Hiker Shuttle Sched 2011.pdf](#)

[Hiker Shuttle 2011.pdf \(system map\)](#)

[Parking overflow on Kanc.jpg](#)

[Quotation for 2012 Diesel Girardin bus.doc](#)

[Concord Coach Lines Letter of Support](#)





## 2011 AMC Hiker Shuttle Schedule



Daily from June 2<sup>nd</sup> - September 11<sup>th</sup>. Weekends and Holidays September 17<sup>th</sup> – October 16<sup>th</sup>.

Shuttle Route # I	Leaves	Shuttle Route # II	Leaves
<b>Pinkham Notch Visitor Center</b>	<b>8:10 am</b>		
19 Mile Brook Trailhead	8:15		
Valley Way	8:35	<b>Highland Center</b>	<b>9:00 am</b>
Bretton Woods Irving	9:10	Bretton Woods Irving	9:10
<b>Highland Center</b>	<b>9:30</b>	Ammonoosuc Ravine Trailhead	9:20
Zealand Trailhead	9:50	Valley Way at Appalachia	10:05
Gale River Trailhead	10:20	Gorham Information Booth	10:15
Greenleaf Trailhead at Cannon Tramway	10:35	19 Mile Brook Trailhead	10:25
Lafayette Campground	10:40	<b>Pinkham Notch Visitor Center</b>	<b>10:40</b>
Liberty Spring Trailhead	10:45	19 Mile Brook Trailhead	10:45
• Concord Coach Ar: Munce's	11:15	Gorham Information Booth	10:55
<b>Lincoln Munce's Konvenience</b>	<b>11:30</b>	Gorham Munce's - Jay's	11:10
Lincoln Woods Visitor Center	11:40	Valley Way at Appalachia	11:20
Liberty Spring Trailhead	12:05	Ammonoosuc Ravine Trailhead	12:05
Old Bridle Path	12:10	<b>Highland Center</b>	<b>12:30 pm</b>
Greenleaf Trailhead at Cannon Tramway	12:20	Webster Cliff	12:40
Gale River Trailhead	12:35	Ar: Highland Center	12:50
Zealand Trailhead	1:05		
<b>Highland Center</b>	<b>1:30</b>	<b>Highland Center</b>	<b>1:30</b>
Ammonoosuc Ravine Trailhead	1:50	• Concord Coach Ar: E. Slope Inn	1:35
Valley Way at Appalachia	2:35	<b>N. Conway – Eastern Slope Inn</b>	<b>2:00</b>
Gorham Information Booth	2:45	<b>Highland Center</b>	<b>2:40</b>
19 Mile Brook Trailhead	2:55	Zealand Trailhead	3:00
<b>Pinkham Notch Visitor Center</b>	<b>3:15</b>	Gale River Trailhead	3:30
19 Mile Brook Trailhead	3:20	Greenleaf Trailhead at Cannon Tramway	3:45
Gorham Information Booth	3:30	Lafayette Campground	3:50
Gorham Munce's - Jay's	3:45	Liberty Spring Trailhead	3:55
Valley Way at Appalachia	3:55	Old Bridle Path	4:05
Ammonoosuc Ravine Trailhead	4:40	Greenleaf Trailhead at Cannon Tramway	4:10
Ar: Highland Center	5:00	Gale River Trailhead	4:25
		Zealand Trailhead	4:55
<b>Highland Center</b>	<b>5:15</b>	<b>Highland Center</b>	<b>5:15</b>
Webster Cliff	5:20		
<b>Pinkham Notch Visitor Center</b>	<b>6:00</b>		

- Connections with Concord Coach Lines: 1-800-639-3317 or [www.concordcoachlines.com](http://www.concordcoachlines.com)
- Lv: Lincoln at 1:25 Ar. Boston 4:20.      • Lv: North Conway at 2:35 Ar. Boston at 6:20.

### Rates and Policies

- Flat Fare: \$17.00 for AMC members and \$19.00 for non-members for a reserved or walk-on ride of any length ONE WAY.
- 10 Minute Fare: \$10 for walk-ons ONLY between any stops scheduled 10 minutes apart or less: Pinkham-19 Mile, Highland-Webster, Greenleaf-Lafayette/OBP, Lafayette/OBP-Liberty, Liberty-Lincoln, Lincoln-Lincoln Woods.
- Plan on being at designated stops at least 10 minutes BEFORE scheduled departure time.
- Walk-ons are accepted on a space available basis ONLY. • Pets and alcohol are strictly prohibited on the shuttle.
- Drop-offs between scheduled stops may be arranged with the driver.
- RESERVATIONS ARE STRONGLY RECOMMENDED. The standard AMC reservation cancellation policy applies.

Schedule subject to change without notice.

[www.outdoors.org](http://www.outdoors.org)

02/18/11



Parking overflow on Kanc.jpg



May 5, 2011

Appalachian Mountain Club  
PO Box 298  
Gorham, NH 03581

1 ea; 2012 BLUE BIRD/ GIRARDIN MFSAB/ ACTIVITY Bus, G5,  
GMC 200G. 14 passenger, 6.6 DIESEL,  
2012 GMC chassis, 12,300# GVW, Cruise, Tilt, Dash A/C

Options Included:

- 2012, GMC CHASSIS, 12,300# GVW 159"WB, DASH A/C, TILT, CLOTH SEAT WITH ARM REST & COLD WEATHER PACKAGE WITH ENGINE BLOCK HEATER, TRANS. COOLER, 6.6L DIESEL ENGINE W/ 6 SPD TRANS
- **DRIVER'S RUNNING BOARD**
- **REAR TOW HOOKS**
- **HEATED MIRRORS**
- HIGH BACK ACTIVITY SEATS, BLUE VINYL W/ SEAT BELTS,
- TWO PUSHOUT ESCAPE WINDOWS
- **ROOF EMERGENCY ESCAPE HATCH / FRESH AIR VENT**
- AM-FM-CD (DELCO) WITH FOUR CEILING SPEAKERS
- 75" HEADROOM
- ELECTRIC OPERATED ENTRANCE DOOR
- LED MARKER AND TAIL LIGHTS
- 42,000 BTU PASSENGER UNDERSEAT HEATER
- SOLID WHITE PAINT
- TINTED SIDE WINDOWS, SPLIT SASH
- BLACK WINDOW FRAMES
- **WHITE REFLECTIVE MARKING TAPE, SIDES AND REAR**

**SELL PRICE: \$58,727.00**

(INCLUDES \$ 299.00 doc FEE)

Thank you for this opportunity to quote you.  
Sincerely,

Rodney Waugh  
O'Connor Bus Sales



May 6, 2011

To whom it concerns:

Concord Coach Lines fully supports the efforts of the Appalachian Mountain Club to expand its shuttle service and improve access to public transportation for those visiting the White Mountain National Forest in New Hampshire.

As in past years, our company continues to commit resources to connect two important population centers in New Hampshire's White Mountains - at Berlin and Littleton - with Logan International Airport and downtown Boston.

AMC's transportation service offers an important connection with our intercity busline and the North Country, shuttling hundreds of visitors and backcountry hikers to AMC's hiking trailheads, lodges and mountain shelters.

For the thousands of people who visit the White Mountain National Forest every year, the development of green transportation alternatives is consistent with the management and preservation of this important multi-use resource.

We believe AMC's expanded service would offer better service to more people, and by doing so, help to ameliorate the carbon footprint on the forest by continuing to reduce the number of private vehicles used in transporting visitors to and from the region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dana Knapp", is written over a faint, larger version of the signature.

Dana Knapp  
Manager - Maine Division  
Concord Coach Lines, Inc.

7 Langdon Street | Concord, New Hampshire 03301 | Phone: 603-228-3535 | Fax: 603-228-3524 | [concordcoachlines.com](http://concordcoachlines.com)