A green wooden shelter with a gabled roof and a covered front porch. The shelter is built on concrete blocks. A sign on the side of the shelter reads "Little Creek Shelter" and "GEORGE WASHINGTON National Forest". A backpack and other gear are on the ground in front of the shelter. The background is a forest of tall, thin trees.

To Build or not to Build?

Trail partnership on the Lee District
Katie Donahue, District Ranger, US Forest Service

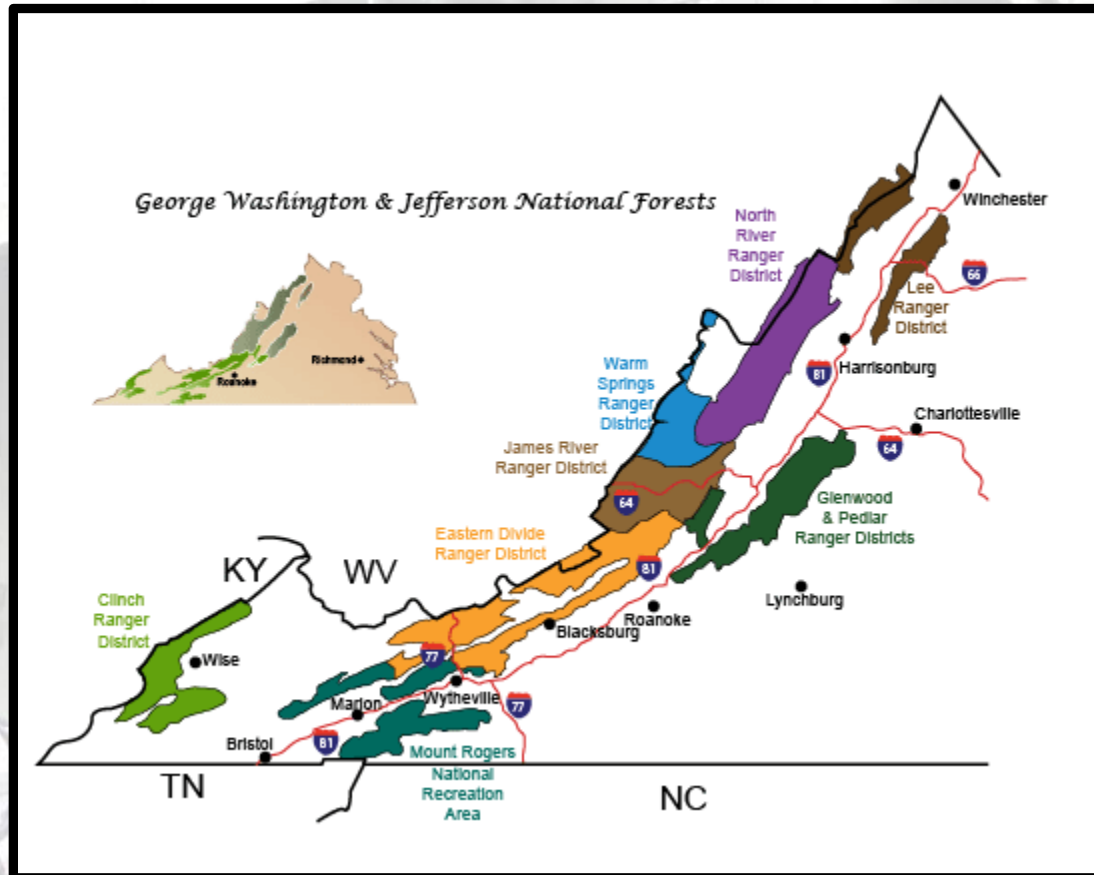
Trail Partnerships on the Lee District

Today's presentation will

- Introduce the District and its trail partners
- Cover history of partnership with PATC
- Discuss current issues in that partnership
- Seek input from you all on moving forward!



The Lee District



Trails on the Lee District

- 2-hour drive from about DC/Baltimore
- One of 3
- Highest density of trails on Forest
- 300+ miles of multiple use trail
- Small staff (1.5 FTEs in Trails)
- Multiple club partnerships: hikers, runners, equestrians, mountain bikers, motorized, etc.
- History of strong partnerships and cooperation

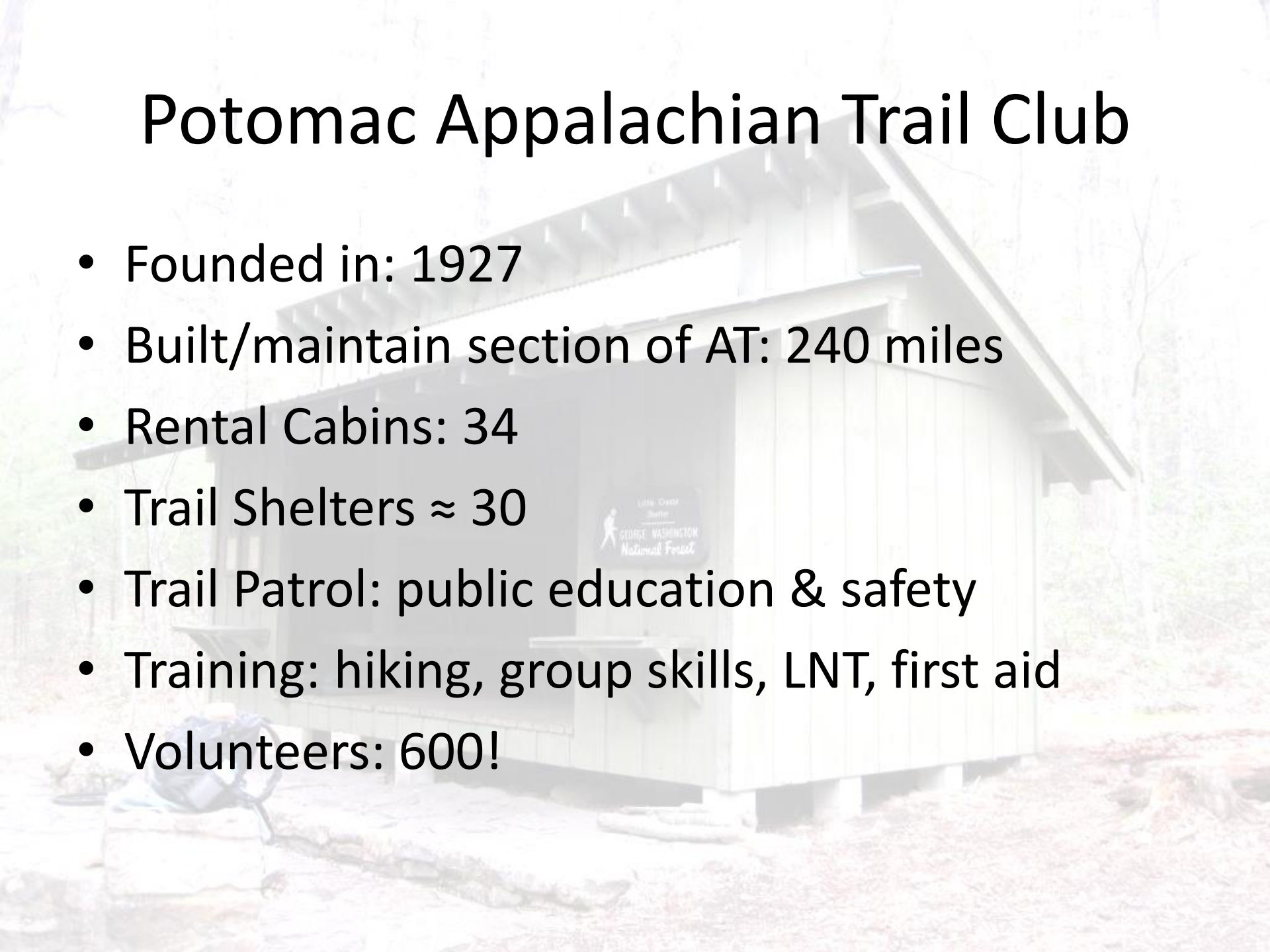
Trail Partnership Best Practices

- Annual Meeting
- Yahoo group for communication
- Joint trail work/ face time in the field
- Coordination with multiple user groups
- Regular training (e.g. chainsaw)

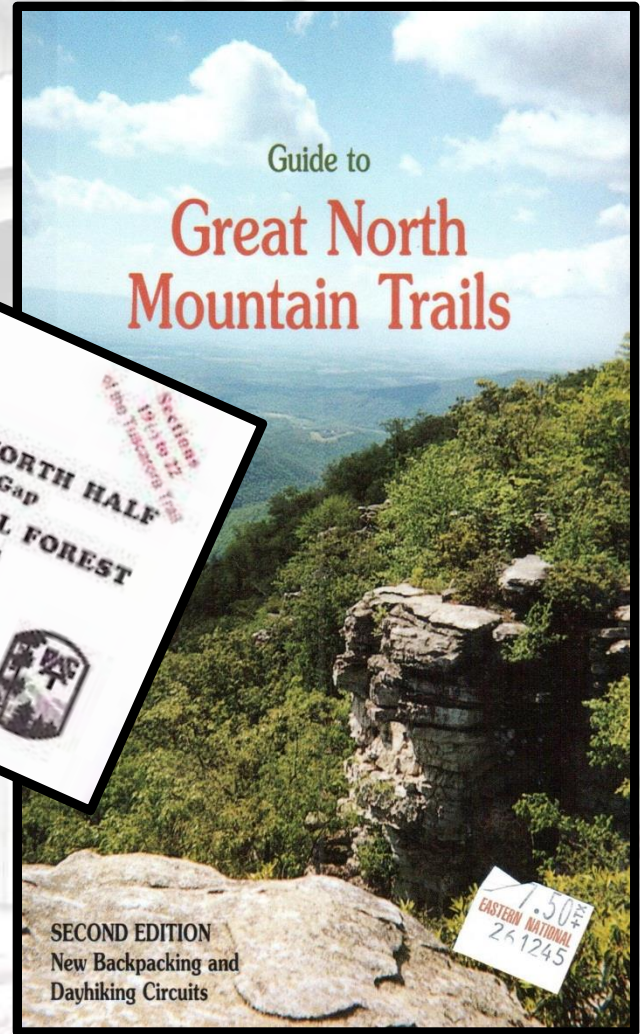
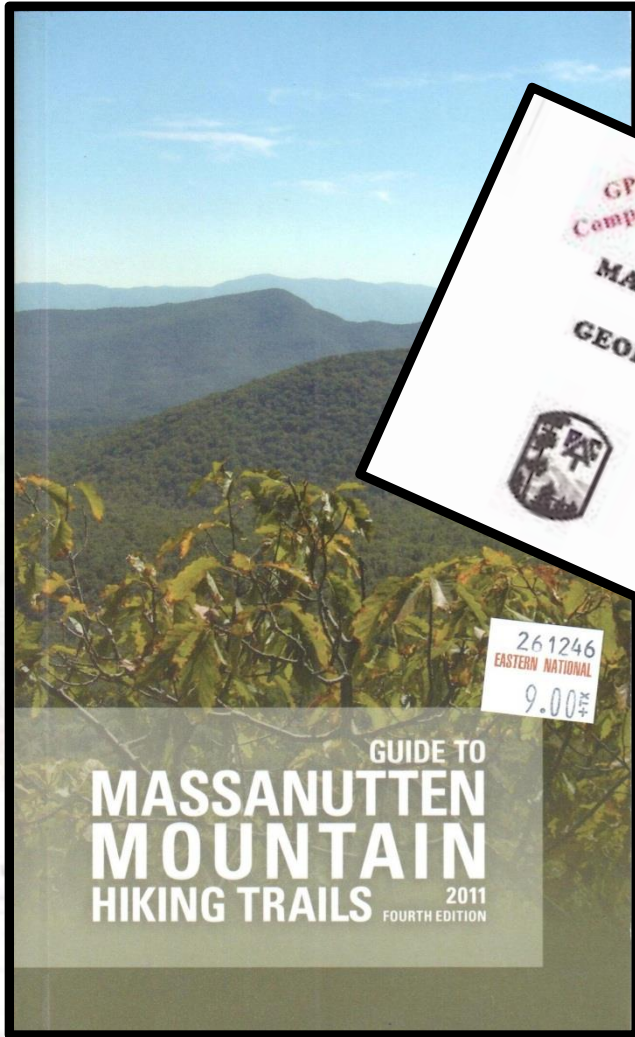


Potomac Appalachian Trail Club

- Founded in: 1927
- Built/maintain section of AT: 240 miles
- Rental Cabins: 34
- Trail Shelters \approx 30
- Trail Patrol: public education & safety
- Training: hiking, group skills, LNT, first aid
- Volunteers: 600!



PATC



PATC on the Lee District

- Tuscarora Trail
- Massanutten NRT
- (Great Eastern Trail)
- Sugar Knob Cabin
- 3 trail shelters
- Massarock Crew



PATC & Lee RD - Glory Days

- A relationship built on *trail building*
- Trails, shelters, LOTS of construction



2002 dedication of the Massanutten National Recreation Trail

Oh the times, they are a changin'...



George Washington National Forest

- ▶ Strickler Knob
- ▶ Elliot Knob
- ▶ Veatch Gap
- ▶ Ramsey's Draft BP
- ▶ Crabtree Falls
- ▶ Cold Mountain
- ▶ Halfmoon Mountain
- ▶ Stephens Trail
- ▶ White Rocks

Featured Day Hike

- ▶ Kepler Overlook - Great North Mt.
- ▶ Secluded with great camping
- ▶ Beautiful vistas from Little North Mt.

Strickler Knob - Luray, Virginia



- ▶ Printable Topo Trail Map
- ▶ Click for location shots
- ▶ Click for Parking/Start location
- ▶ Hike trail blazed colors
- ▶ Other trail



- New leadership, in Rec staff and District
- Projects lost during transition
- Projects rejected and neglected
- Communication issues
- Proposed Forest Plan:

"no net gain in trail maintenance"

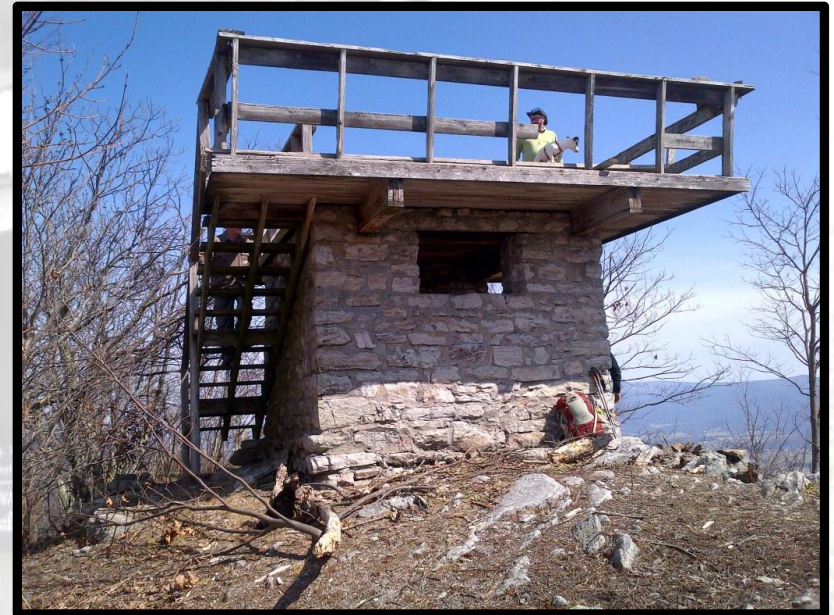
From the Massanutten trailhead on Crimson Hollow Rd/VA211, start east towards Waterfall Mountain on the orange blazed Massanutten Connector trail. The trail is steep and rocky. There is a vista of the Luray Valley. Make several switchbacks, then the trail becomes less steep before reaching the intersection of the white blazed Massanutten Connector trail in 0.6 miles from the ridge.

Turn left on the orange blazed Massanutten Connector trail, passing a **campsite** in 0.1 miles. Cross the run where the trail becomes steeper, then re-cross the run, make one large switchback, then level out and arrive at the intersection of the yellow blazed Scothorn Gap trail 2.0 miles from the last intersection.

Turn right uphill as the orange blazed Massanutten trail continues to climb, then arrives at the ridge and intersection of the pink blazed Strickler Knob trail in another 0.6 miles.

Olive Branches and Low Hanging Fruit

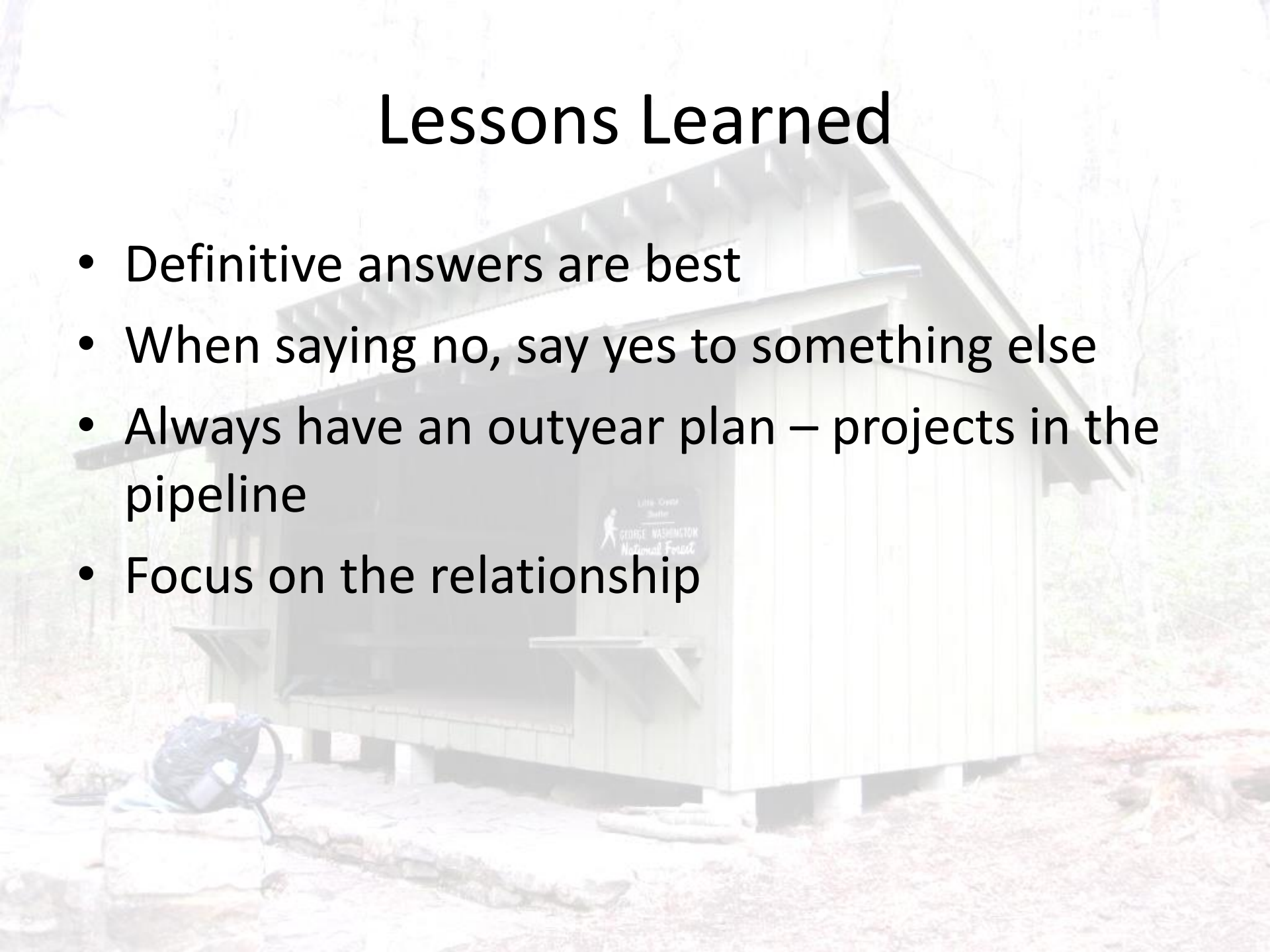
“K” Cabin



Kennedy Peak Tower

Lessons Learned

- Definitive answers are best
- When saying no, say yes to something else
- Always have an outyear plan – projects in the pipeline
- Focus on the relationship



What Next?

What tools can the Lee District use to improve communication and this relationship?

