

Eastern Pennsylvania Region Meeting Minutes November 16, 2025



Call To Order

Region Director Kurt Adam called to order the regular meeting of the National Ski Patrol Eastern Pennsylvania Region at 9:18AM on November 16, 2025 at Roundtop Mountain Resort.

Kurt thanked Roundtop Mountain Resort for hosting the meeting.

Moment Of Silence

Kurt Adam called for a motion of silence in memory of the following patrollers:

- John Stinsmen (Blue Mtn, Hahn Mtn)
- Larry Hutchinson (Blue Mtn)
- Cindy Bensel (Roundtop)
- Ron Tezzan (Montage, Elk Mtn)
- Ray Baker (Jack Frost)
- Dave Hatch (Liberty)
- Ferin Sullivan (Liberty)

Discussion of ways to honor the memory of fallen patrollers, including flying NSP flags at top duty throughout the season and presenting one to the families of fallen patrollers.

Reading of Minutes

A quorum of voting officers was not present at this meeting. Minutes from the April 13, 2025 meeting were sent to all officers on November 12, 2025. A vote will be held on approving the minutes at the next meeting that has a quorum.

Introductions/Staff Changes

Kurt Adam introduced the following new faces to the meeting:

- Sid Hamburger: Assistant Region Director (Camelback)
- Chrissy Ludka: Eastern Division Women's Supervisor (Elk)
- Erika Toren: Eastern Division Safety and Wellness Team (Whitetail)
- Peter Kaufman: Eastern Division Safety and Wellness Team (Liberty)
- Rich Sacks: Now part of the legal team. (Elk)

Kurt thanked Paul Spear for his tenure as Assistant Region Director.

Region Updates

The following topics were discussed:

- Region election – Kurt thanked the membership for re-electing him as Region Director.
- Jerry Washo will be retiring as Northern Section Chief after the spring meeting as he's relocating to New Hampshire
- Dina Mannoway is up for reelection as Pocono Section Chief this spring.
- Discussion of who votes for Section Chiefs – there is one vote per patrol; it can be either the patrol director or the patrol rep.

Section Chief Reports

Pocono - Dina Manoway

- Jack Frost & Big Boulder – 5 new candidates, but had trouble completing ICS-100 due to the government shut down. A new mountain manager is coming this season. Vail Resorts budgets have made onboarding candidates difficult.
- Saw Creek – Operated by a management company; three lift evacuation drills are planned for this season, including one once there is snow. Discussion about the online OEC refresher and the minute-long introduction for each section. Patroller count remains the same as last season.
- Shawnee – Applauds NSP policy change to allow candidates to join before July without paying twice. Discussion of the new online OEC course, the material was strong. Praised this season's EPA OEC refreshers. 2025-2026 is the mountain's 50th season; they have joined Indy Pass.
- Camelback – Five candidates are currently tracking OEC. Around the mountain, a new general manager with roots at the mountain and in the industry has started. Focus to be on making it a skier's mountain again with the aim to be the final ski area to close in the Poconos in the spring. Stevenson lift was rebuilt over the summer. Discussion about sequence of OEC vs OET first and the subsequent attrition during the off season; this year, prospects can join the patrol for the season as a trained bystander; taking OEC first in the fall, then OET the following winter.

Central - Leigh Linder

- Bear Creek – Good summer with countless events supported by the patrol. Fifteen new snow guns and new piping this season. A snack shack is planned to be added this season. The patrol has 6 OEC candidates; 1 of which is a returning patroller.
- Spring – 10 weeks of summer camp. The Big and Little "Rita" snow machines are on to help create stockpiles that can be moved around later in the season. Solar panels were installed over the parking lot, partially paid for by a grant from the state of Pennsylvania. There 6 OEC candidates; 3 of whom have already passed to become OEC Technicians. There are also 3 YAPs.

- Eagle Rock – Plans to fully open this year after a successful snowmaking pond restoration project.
- Valley Forge – Had an active biking season.
- Blue Mountain – The mountain has installed new snowmaking equipment. The patrol currently has 6 candidates. Strong participation in the YAP program.

Southwest - Mark Kearns

- Liberty – Roster is at 117 patrollers; of which 75 are volunteer, and 38 are paid. The patrol has 10 candidates and 2 transfers. A new general manager is now shared with Whitetail. This is the mountain's 60th season with anniversary events planned, including custom patrol skis/boards. 18 pre-candidates for next season. 4 patrollers looking at senior, 1 at certified. 3 patrollers have completed the OEC EMT bridge program.
- Whitetail – The patrol has 124 primary members and 12 secondary, and is currently 80% volunteer. 15 patrollers were accepted at the annual ski off, but only 7 proceeded to join. Discussion about the new OEC hybrid course and avoiding redundancy with in-person sessions. Volunteers have a good rapport with mountain management, notably with new mountain provided uniforms and support of the patrol's safety day and fundraising events.
- Roundtop – There are 11 candidates and 1 EMT doing an OEC modified challenge. Renovations to the patrol building debut this season along with new ropes and lift evac gear, and new 5 edge toboggans. Discussion about the Epic for Everyone program that targets underserved children and Epic Promise which is a non-profit funded by Vail employees; giving the opportunity for an all inclusive winter experience. The roster is currently at 85 patrollers, of which 46 are paid, and 39 are volunteers. The volunteer patrol has launched a recognition program for members.

Northern – Kurt Adam for Jerry Washo

- Elk – A change of ownership is reported to be in the works, but not yet complete. A new haul line has been installed on lift 3. The YAP program at the mountain is growing by the year. There is a focus on senior program, with Patrollers School January 24-25 and the Women's Program on January 23. Kurt thanked Jerry for his time in the region as he prepares to move to New Hampshire.
- Montage – The mountain had a busy off season; some 30 patrollers supported the Scranton Half Marathon and other summer events. There are 10 candidates with practical exam scheduled for January. Focusing on instructor development; several members training for Certified. Improvements include additional snowmaking, grooming, new rope tow for terrain park. Kurt thanked the Montage patrol for hosting countless EPA senior events.
- No update from Saw Creek, Hideout, or Big Bear.

A quorum of voting officers was not present at this meeting to approve Section Chief updates. A vote will be held at the next meeting that has a quorum.

Program/Advisor Updates

Avalanche – Kurt Adam

- The program advisor has stepped down.
- Discussion about the requirement to be certified and the cost to attain the certification. There is the possibility of running an introductory course at the region level, seeking an instructor and the requirements to be the IT for the course.
- Kurt encouraged the membership to speak with patrollers with appropriate credentials to potentially lead the course.

Awards – David Marks

- 13 awards have been processed since April, including 1 Purple Merit Star, 6 Yellow Merit Stars (and one additional in progress), 1 Patroller's Cross, 4 Distinguished Service Awards, and 1 Meritorious Service Award..
- Discussion about outstanding awards and the signatory on the certificate. Awards have been re-issued, signed by the chair of the board.
- Question from the membership about who won the Outstanding Large Patrol award at the National level; David advised that such information is not public.

Certified – Kurt Adam for Mike Ksenich

- Killington will be hosting a pre-test on February 5th. The main event is scheduled for March 12-15 at Sugarloaf.
- One patroller from Big Boulder is in 2nd year in the program. Two patrollers from Roundtop are starting the program.

Elections – Kurt Adam for John Levkolic

- Elections will be held this winter for the Pocono Section Chief and Central Section Chief positions.

Inter-Agency Liaison (EMS) – Kurt Adam for Eric Snyder

- This year's EMT Bridge Course was successfully completed. The next course is planned for April 2027 with plans to run every other year moving forward.
- Patroller workshops are open to everyone, focusing on outdoor elements.
- Looking for patrollers to present at future workshops; they last about 2 hours
- Discussion of renewals for National Registry and the required CE credits. Can OEC online count for credit? Are there other opportunities to get CEs?
- Discussion about reciprocal credit between Pennsylvania and New Jersey; if classes are registered in advance (eg. 30-60 days ahead), they typically can count if approved.

MIST - Wolfgang Boernert

- Discussed process change for registering for OEC skill refreshers; rather than using National's system, it's done at the region level. Helped eliminate confusion between a similarly named ski area in other regions.
- Now able to provide patrol reps with timely completion reports from the fall season. Report does not include instructors, that will be sent shortly.
- Discussion of issues with the National Learning Center; 40-50 patrollers completed the online course but were blocked from getting the certificate; the National office was not able to assist with troubleshooting.
- EPA region website received 5-6 candidate prospect emails that were sent to the relevant patrol directors.
- Mark Kearns thanked Wolfgang for his assistance in getting on-boarded and the region for having a zoom account.

MTR – Lou Marchi

- A full class is being held this year at Jack Frost, weekend before thanksgiving.
- Awaiting payment from the Eastern Division from last year's class.
- Discussion about the difficulty of finding programs on the patroller school website and the process of closing out a course since the retirement of course numbers.

OEC - Dennis Zercher

- 1,144 patrollers were refreshed this fall, including 926 patrollers and 218 instructors. 42 patrollers no-showed to the refresher they registered for.
- Success for registration at the local level rather than National; commitment to follow the same process in future seasons
- Feedback about the format of EPA refreshers from visiting patrollers from other regions has been positive.
- Station 4 (assessment) generated a lot of buzz
- Next year's refresher schedule is pending a potential move of Spring to earlier in the cycle and will be posted on the website once finalized.
- For next season, 9 patroller refreshers, 3 instructor refreshers, and 1 IT refresher – plus a planning session in June

License Plate - David Ehrlich

- Transition to new liberty bell design is underway, old plates are no longer available; discussion about the quality of the design.
- Two requests have been put in for new plates, they have not yet been delivered. Several applications were received during refresher season; all will be sent together.
- No update on motorcycle plates
- Discussion about old plates and whether an upgrade will be required to the new design.

- If plates delaminate, a report has to be completed with law enforcement; if a sequential plate, no charge; if you want to keep your old number, you have to buy a custom plate.

Treasurer - David Ehrlich

- Finances since Fall meeting:
 - Total Income of \$2,812.79
 - Total Expenses of \$16,092.40
 - Net Income was \$13,279.61
 - Operating Account Balance \$9,318.49 (down from \$52,651.57)
 - Investment Account #1: \$135,151.14 (up from \$92,490.99)
 - Investment Account #2: \$4,243.36 (new account)
- Discussion about the budget at the EPA level; the focus is on the program level, making sure each is self-sustaining. Numbers gathered for the past 3 years; all self-sustaining programs are in the black except for Senior OEC.
- For not-self-sustaining programs such as awards, division officers, line officers, OEC, OET... in the positive \$3,600 this year (last year was in the negative \$2,000)
- OEC spent \$9,165 in 2023... last year \$12,460, this year \$13,400; all paid from dues.
- YAP is sustained by Alumni dues; money collected at the division level; once it reaches a threshold, it's distributed to the regions.
- Wolfgang reminded patrol reps to encourage patrollers going alumni to sign on with the local patrol as secondary.
- No donations received since the April 2025 meeting
- SOET and OET spent \$675 on new flip books
- 990 reporting season was successful; all patrols submitted on time and we were the first region to submit. David thanked the patrol reps and treasurers for their timeliness.

A quorum of voting officers was not present at this meeting. A vote will be held on approving the Treasurer's report at the next meeting that has a quorum.

Outdoor Risk Management – Kurt Adam for Phil Barker

- An ORM course has been posted on the Patroller School website

Senior OEC – Kurt Adam for Chris Whitpan

- The region is seeking a new program coordinator

Senior OET – Mark Kearns

- Mark thanked Chrissy Ludka for her contributions as program advisor.
- Planning is underway for the upcoming season with a staff of 50 TEs and countless other instructors. SOET evaluation is tentatively scheduled for March 1 at Elk.
- Trainer/Evaluator ConEd STW event will be held January 25 at Liberty

- Patroller School will be held at Elk January 24-25. The Women's Program event is scheduled for January 23.
- Zoom meetings 2nd Tuesday of each month
- Kurt spoke to the need to recruit new TEs to continue the program in the future.
- Mountains that can't host SOET training locally are welcome to reach out to Mark for training at other mountains.

Women's Program – Leigh Linder

- Friday 1/23 will be the Women's Clinic at the Elk Patroller School
- Hoping to organize a region event this year, potentially at Montage.
- Recruiting of female patrollers is a focus; though some female patrollers prefer mixed gender events rather than women-only events.
- Looking for more female instructors across the board so that we can offer more female-focused program
- Jack Frost hosted an all-women candidate class several years ago that was successful, but National declined to endorse similar programs.
- Discussion about availability of training depending on when mountains are busy. Saw creek offered their facility

Instructor Development – Brent Watts for Brian DeFluri

- An Instructor Development class was successfully completed.
- Two instructor trainer candidates are in the pipeline
- An in-person class being considered for the spring, seeking a mountain to host.

Other Programs

- No updates available from the Alumni, Communications, Historical, Legal, Medical, Nordic, Professional, Safety, or YAP programs.

John Wolfe of Liberty spoke about the Bike Program... seeking patrollers who'd like to start or join a bike patrol.

A quorum of voting officers was not present at this meeting. A vote will be held on approving the program advisor updates at the next meeting that has a quorum.

National Updates

- Kurt Adam spoke about the importance of voting in the National board election and the candidates that the Eastern Division is supporting.
- Bob Scarlett from the National Board provided the following updates:
 - EPA region OEC is well known at the national level for its format and quality.
 - The National board authorized a change in the OEC refresher program to focus on core principles and skills for an average accident; de-emphasizing the 3-year

cycle and sections like child birth and wildlife emergencies. The new setup allows patrollers to take a year off without having to makeup a refresher.

- OEC 7th edition textbook is in the works;
- National has changed insurance companies to one that specializes in non-profits, resulting in a significant savings for broader coverage than the previous provider.
- Discussion of the National organization's finances and how the balance sheet is strong, but that expenses are on the rise.
- Discussion of the NSAA's once a decade survey about accidents and their causes... accidents have been on the decline over the past 50 years, possibly attributed to better training to both handle and prevent accidents. More advanced equipment likely helped as well. Results to be published in the Wall Street Journal. The move towards larger chairlifts has created more unload accidents.
- Elections – spoke to the importance of EPA leadership encouraging the membership to vote. EPA is the 6th largest voting unit in the National Ski Patrol but questioned whether the EPA Region and Eastern Division is doing enough to get patrollers to vote this year.
- Bob thanked the region for its support throughout his time as a member of the National board. The region thanked Bob for his service to the organization.
- Discussion the potential for NSP to offer training to ski areas as an option to resorts to potentially reduce insurance premiums; generating additional revenue for the organization
- David Marks raised a discussion with the National awards committee about the prestige of the National Leadership Award as compared to National Appointment and how the senior requirement may be dropped for National Appointment.
- Discussion about the path to become a senior patroller, especially for current Alpine Patrollers who do not wish to take Senior OET.

Other Updates

Kurt Adam provided the following updates:

- Trail Sweep – encourages patrol reps and advisors to submit a short write up for any programs of interest to be featured in the Eastern Division's newsletter.
- EMS donations from last season and how they're being used – there are limitations on what the funds can be used for; it must be OEC-related. A consensus has not yet been reached on how it should be spent.

Award Presentations

Purple Merit Star

- MaryBeth Sukenik (Bear Creek) *in progress*

Yellow Merit Star

- Roeb Gravel (Elk)
- Dina Manoway (Camelback)
- Bob Fidium (Montage)
- Kenneth Kelly (Elk)
- Christine Ludka (Elk)
- Bill Zink (Whitetail) *in progress*

Patrollers Cross

- Theresa Diamond (Spring Mountain)

Distinguished Service Award

- Paul Spear (Elk)
- Doug Van Brunt (Elk)
- Charles Montrie (Ski Liberty)
- Robert Starr (Ski Liberty)

Meritorious Service Award

- Jay Thompson (Whitetail)

Open Discussion

No new topics were raised.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 12:24pm.

Minutes Submitted by Mike Woodruff

Next Meeting: EPA Spring Officers Meeting on April 19, 2026 at Bear Creek Mountain Resort.