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### **AMC Highland Center and Joe Dodge Lodge Awarded Environmental Champion Status by NH Sustainable Lodging Program**

**CONCORD, N.H.** -- The New Hampshire Lodging & Restaurant Association's (NHLRA) Sustainable Lodging Program has awarded Environmental Champion status to the Appalachian Mountain Club's Highland Center at Crawford Notch and the Joe Dodge Lodge at the Pinkham Notch Visitor Center. The status is the highest level of membership in the Sustainable Lodging Program and identifies lodging properties in the state that are taking a leadership role in reducing the environmental impact of their operations.

The Highland Center lodge and learning center opened in 2003 on the site of the historic Crawford House in Crawford Notch. It is AMC's newest destination for adventure, learning, and lodging in the White Mountains. The Highland Center was designed to minimize impact on its surroundings and to sit lightly on the land. The building is sited and constructed to maximize the use of day lighting. Recycled steel and timbers were used in the structure, as were low-VOC or no-VOC paints and carpets.

The Highland Center reduces energy usage through the use of compact fluorescent lighting, use of Energy Star appliances and computers, extensive insulation, and triple-glazed, argon-filled, energy efficient windows. The center is heated with a locally available, renewable resource--wood--using a biomass heating system that produces ultra-low emissions.

Landscaping at the Highland Center features native species that can also be used as teaching tools in the center's many educational programs.

The MacMillin Company and Carlone Dick LaFleche were the construction management firm and the architectural firm, respectively, for the Highland Center

The Joe Dodge Lodge and Pinkham Notch Visitor Center continue to retrofit energy efficient design into their buildings. In the lodge, windows have been replaced with energy efficient models and most lighting has been replaced with more energy efficient compact fluorescents. Many appliances and computers are Energy Star models.

Both the Pinkham Notch and Crawford Notch locations conserve water through towel and linen reuse programs, state of the art septic systems, composting toilets, and landscaping with native plantings, eliminating the need for irrigation or pesticides. Both facilities recycle extensively—a process that begins at the purchasing stage. In addition to recycling glass, aluminum, tin, newsprint, office paper, computers, batteries, plastic, computers, and other items, AMC also strives to purchase food and supplies in bulk, thus minimizing the use of packaging.

Education is a major focus of the AMC's environmentally sensitive operations, and throughout the Highland Center, Joe Dodge Lodge, and Pinkham Notch Visitor Center, guests have abundant opportunities to learn about the environment and environmentally responsible practices, such as the "green" technologies in use at the Highland Center, and the Leave No Trace program. AMC is a Leave No Trace Masters Course provider, and the organization also offers educational workshops, hikes, and other programs to help guests make a deeper connection with the natural world.

"We are honored that the New Hampshire Sustainable Lodging Program has recognized our dedication to environmentally sensitive operations at our White Mountains destinations," said AMC Public Affairs Director Rob Burbank. "We commend NHLRA for creating this new program, which is aimed at providing both conservation of natural resources and great service to the public."

The New Hampshire Sustainable Lodging Program encourages lodging properties throughout the state to evaluate their operations for more environmentally sensitive ways to continue to provide superior service to their guests. Member properties commit to evaluating and implementing initiatives in the areas of energy efficiency, water conservation, solid and hazardous waste reduction and education. When a property achieves an average of 75 percent or greater implementation of suggested initiatives, they can be considered for Environmental Champion status.

The Highland Center is slated to host the next seminar offered by the NH Sustainable Lodging Program November 1. The program will bring together experts in energy efficient operations in the lodging industry, safe and effective cleaning alternatives and organic lawn care and landscaping with native plants for presentations and discussions. Attendees will also be treated to a "green" tour of the Highland Center property.

To register for the seminar, contact NHLRA Sustainable Lodging Program Director Michelle Veasey at [mveasey@nhlra.com](mailto:mveasey@nhlra.com) or (603) 362-4679.

Founded in 1876, the Appalachian Mountain Club is the oldest conservation and recreation organization in the United States. With more than 91,000 members in the

Northeast and beyond, the nonprofit AMC promotes the protection, enjoyment, and wise use of the mountains, rivers and trails of the Appalachian region.

The AMC supports natural resource conservation while encouraging responsible recreation, based on the philosophy that successful, long-term conservation depends upon first-hand enjoyment of the natural environment.

For more information on the AMC, visit [www.outdoors.org](http://www.outdoors.org).