ATC Policy on Incidentally-Acquired Structures and Dams

Adopted by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy in 1989

1) Each structure should be removed, and the A.T. corridor restored as near as possible to a natural condition, unless:
   a. The structure must be retained for historic reasons. (Evaluations must be conducted on all structures more than 50 years old.)
   b. The club, working with ATC, identifies a Trail-related need for the structure and is willing to assume responsibility for management and maintenance of the structure.
   c. The structure is a contributing improvement (such as a bridge).

2) If possible, decisions regarding removal of structures should be made before the structure and land upon which it is situated are acquired by the agency.

3) Any structure proposed for retention on NPS-acquired lands will usually require a safety inspection by the NPS resource protection specialist (or his designee) and a qualified inspector from a local or state agency prior to assignment to ATC and reassignment to the club, to determine to what extent the structure meets the fire, life-safety, and electrical codes and to make recommendations for modifications or improvements to comply with the codes.

4) Prior to any decision to retain a structure, a financial analysis should be prepared to evaluate the costs necessary to bring the structure up to code. The analysis should include an estimate of the costs associated with long-term maintenance of the structure.

5) Retained structures that are to be used in any way by the public must:
   a. Have liability insurance in the club and ATC’s name, to protect the club and ATC;
   b. If located on NPS-acquired lands, be periodically inspected by the NPS resource-protection specialist (or his designee); and,
   c. Have all necessary and appropriate local government approvals.

6) Retained structures on NPS-acquired lands that are intended for use only to support the activities of Trail volunteers need an authorization under the NPS VIP program. Named individual volunteers acting as club caretakers should be under a direct VIP agreement with the NPS.

7) Structures on federal lands intended for removal are the ultimate responsibility of the federal agency partner. If agency budget and contracting constraints preclude agency action in a timely manner, clubs and/or ATC may offer to assist with removal to the extent feasible. Federal agency standards for demolition, removal, and restoration should be followed.