

MINUTES
February 7, 2008 MEETING
TRAILS COUNCIL
NEW YORK-NEW JERSEY TRAIL CONFERENCE

1. Meeting was called to order at 6:36 PM by Trails Council Chair Jane Daniels at Trail Conference office in Mahwah, NJ. Attending were: Estelle Anderson, Jill Arbuckle, Chris Connolly, Jane Daniels, Walt Daniels, Monica Day, Jack Driller, Jakob Franke, Joe Gindoff, David Hogenauer, Brenda Holzinger, Bob Jonas, Ron Luna, John Moran, Glenn Oleksak, Sandy Parr, Larry Pohl, Cal Rizzuto, Ike Siskind, Bruce Thomson, Larry Wheelock,

2. Announcements

a. Chainsaw Protectors - Bob Jonas distributed some fire-hose segments to use as chainsaw bar protectors and demonstrated some other saw blade protectors.

b. Blazing - Complaints continue to be received that dark blue blazes are difficult to see, especially at dusk. Supervisors are requested to ask their maintainers to use the suggested blue colors below:

Benjamin Moore 789

Pittsburgh Paint 150-4 Xavier Blue

Mural 67B3D Georgetown (customized color made with Deep Base 397)

Home Depot - color to be suggested when it's obtained

3. Minutes. The minutes from the December 6, 2007 meeting were approved.

4. Committee Reports

- a. Conservation & Advocacy - Brenda Holzinger reported that NJ ATV legislation is going to the Transportation and Public Works Committee in Trenton for review on February 28. She stressed the need for trail volunteers to attend a press conference that is being arranged for the hiking community to provide their perspective on the necessity for legislation. Prospective participants should contact Brenda at: Holzinger@nynjtc.org
- b. Publications. John Mack reported on the following map set developments:
 - i. East Hudson 8th edition is being updated fairly quickly and drafts will be sent to those familiar with area for review prior to final publication, which is expected by April.
 - ii. Kittatinny digital edition work has begun in reviewing layout to incorporate important area missing from current map. Project manager is still needed.
 - iii. Sterling Forest Map will be updated this summer with assistance from PIPC personnel located there, although it appears likely that certain land acquisitions and proposed trails will not be finalized by then for inclusion on the map. Volunteers will be solicited for GPS data collection.
 - iv. Catskill digital edition preliminary work has begun in determining how to incorporate new areas, including NYC DEP watershed lands. Publication is not anticipated until end of year at earliest.
 - v. North Jersey third map (to include Passaic/northern Morris County lands not on current 2-map set) has Craig Nunn as project manager. GPS data collection will occur over spring and summer, with publication not anticipated until next year.

5. Trail Approval. Metro Trail Co-Chair Joe Gindoff requested Council support for adoption of the John Muir Trail, a heavily used urban pathway that would be the Trail Conference's first trail in The Bronx's Van Cortland Park. After extensive discussion, the Council unanimously recommended to the Board of Directors that it approve the adoption of the trail in new park system.

6. Working with Groups. Larry Wheelock reported that Trail Conference is getting frequent requests from groups (including youth groups) for one-time trail work opportunities. He suggested that, in order to help accommodate such requests, Trails Chairs and Supervisors consider setting aside one or more trail segments in each region as vacant so that groups could do trail work there. Jane Daniels stressed the need for preparation prior to a group trip to set expectations and make the work satisfying for volunteers. John Moran suggested that group leaders attend 101 workshops to understand what is expected. Chris Connolly advised that Volunteer Committee is currently reviewing the establishment of a youth protection policy which would be applicable to Trail Conference supervision of groups that include minors. Bob Jonas noted, with respect to adult-led youth groups such as Boy Scouts, Trail Conference assists but does not supervise field trips.

7. Roundtable Summary. Jane Daniels briefed the Council on the recent separate roundtable discussions with Trail Chairs and Trail Crew Leaders. Among the topics discussed were:

- a. Dealing with Emergencies. Crew leaders generally favored having available with them emergency contact info applicable to their region. Trail Conference will provide template for assembling info and distributing info (including on website), but crew leaders are requested to contact local park office for region-specific info, e.g., hospital location. Crew leaders also want First Aid/CPR training, and Trail Conference will be looking into finding providers and locations for Wilderness First Aid.
- b. Staff Communications. The new staffing system was explained under which chairs/crew leaders need only communicate with one field coordinator with regard to any concerns pertaining to their region - Brenda Holzinger in NJ and Larry Wheelock in NY (which region will be split in two, with Larry over West Hudson and a new hire over East Hudson).
- c. Workshops. More locally focused workshops were requested for regions such as NYC and Hunterdon County.
- d. Recruiting. Crew leaders expressed their concerns about attracting and retaining crew workers, and favored continuing and expanding geographic reach of recruitment brochures. Monica Day reported that trail opportunities brochure she worked on with Katy Dieters had garnered several responses when placed in park offices. Leaders are encouraged to contact their regional field coordinator for assistance in developing materials for their area.
- e. Reports. Trail Conference will be working up template to facilitate goal for annual Trail Chair reports to agency partners.
- f. Communications with Public. When new trails are adopted, Trail Conference signs should be posted and brochures made available at park offices.
- g. Trail Management Guide. Volunteers are needed to revise Guide. [This work is separate from that of Trail Operations Review Committee that is reviewing Trails Policy.]
- h. 8. Chainsaw Safety Certification. Larry Wheelock revived the question whether all Trail Conference chainsawyers [on public lands] should be and remain USFS-certified, as is already the requirement for sawyers on the AT. Considerable discussion of the pros and

cons of making certification a requirement followed, and the eight active sawyers in attendance were polled and all agreed that such a requirement is reasonable. The Council agreed that, Brenda Holzinger having in the interim communicated with other active sawyers concerning their views and the need for some phase-in period being taken into account, a vote on a certification proposal will be taken at the April 3, 2008 Council meeting.

9. Tools Inventory - Brenda Holzinger reported that she is working on a non-power tools inventory so that trail crew leaders will know where work tools are located and who is currently using them. She hopes to recruit volunteer quartermasters for this purpose.

10. Trail Standards. Larry Wheelock raised the issue that park managers are asking for the standards used by the Trail Conference in building and routing trails. Most present were of the view that the Trail Maintenance Manual set forth our standard for maintenance and that the ATC [Trail Construction Manual] provides our guideline for trail construction.

11. Trail Maintenance Reporting Schedule. Council members expressed general dissatisfaction with the outcome of last year's change in the Fall reporting deadline from November 30 to December 31, with more maintainers failing to comply with the new deadline. Several members also voiced concerns with the change in the Spring reporting deadline from May 31 to June 30. After extensive discussion, the Council entertained two motions: The first - to return the Fall reporting period to November 30 (Chris Connolly ■ motion, Glenn Oleksak ■ 2nd) was unanimously approved, while the second - to change the Spring reporting period back to May 31 (Bob Jonas ■ motion, Jakob Franke - 2nd) was defeated on a 6-9 vote. The result is that the two trail maintenance reporting periods will, effective this year, be divided into a 7-month period beginning December 1 and ending June 30 and a 5-month period beginning July 1 and ending November 30. Walt Daniels reported a development that may soon affect reporting in our area - the Georgia AT Committee is requiring continuous on-line reporting of maintenance trips as they occur.

12. Inviting Maintainers to Council Meetings. Bob Jonas and Estelle Anderson encouraged inviting individual maintainers to Council meetings as one way of mentoring new Supervisors and crew leaders. Larry Pohl suggested that maintainers of trail segments being considered by the Council for relocation and/or other approvals should be invited.

13. Blowdowns. Jack Driller requested guidance on two blowdown clearance matters. He first asked whether chainsawyers clearing blowdowns on trails frequented by ATVs should partially cut blowdown to impede ATV passage or remove blowdown completely. Council members strongly recommended complete removal unless no passage exists for ATVs around either side of blowdown; otherwise, partial clearing will not deter ATVs from using trail but will, in fact, only destroy further areas on one or both sides of blowdowns.

Jack next discussed the matter of clearing blowdowns on unblazed woods roads that receive considerable hiker usage. Chris Connolly raised the liability insurance implications of Trail Conference sawyers working on non-Trail Conference paths, especially in areas like Harriman where hiking on unblazed roads is officially prohibited. John Mack stated that park officials are responsible for clearing roads for fire control purposes, and that he would discuss with Harriman park officials whether they sought outside assistance on unblazed roads. Meanwhile, sawyer clearance on unblazed roads is not recommended.

14. The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m

Minutes taken by
Chris Connolly