

MINUTES OF A MEETING
of the
TRAILS COUNCIL
of the
NEW YORK-NEW JERSEY TRAIL CONFERENCE

October 2, 2008

Actions.

a. Tapawingo Trail, Connecting trail from Manaticut Point, and Stonetown Circular reroute approved.

Decisions.

a. Ward Pound Ridge 37 miles of trails adopted.

b. Agreed to continue existing policy of not maintaining trails in areas where an entrance fee is charged.

1. Trails Council Chair Jane Daniels called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. at the Trail Conference office in Mahwah, N.J. Present were: Jane Daniels - Chair, Christie Ferguson - East Hudson Regional Representative, Larry Wheelock - West Hudson Regional Representative, Brenda Holzinger - New Jersey Regional Representative, J. Cal Rizzuto, Estelle Anderson, Jill Arbuckle, Bob Boysen, Jim Canfield, Daniel D. Chazin, Jane Daniels, Walt Daniels, Monica Day, Jack Driller, Jakob Franke, Andy Garrison, Jim Gebhard, Josie Gray, Gary Haugland, Peter Heckler, Gordon Hoekstra, Bob Jonas, Ron Luna, John Mack, Ken Malkin, Bob Marshall, John Moran, Glenn Oleksak, Sandy Parr, Trudy Schneider, Jack Shuart, Ike Siskind, Linda Sullivan, Denise Vitale. She asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Jane Daniels thanked Larry Wheelock, Christie Ferguson, Brenda Holzinger, Cal Rizzuto and Ken Malkin for all of the work that they do for the Trails Council.

2. Minutes. The minutes of the Trails Council meeting of August 7, 2008 were approved, with one minor correction.

3 Announcements. The following announcements were made:

a. 40th Anniversary of National Trails System Act. Jane Daniels announced that today is the 40th anniversary of the enactment of the National Trails System Act, which helped bring trails to the foreground of national attention.

b. Regular and Wilderness First Aid Certification. Jane Daniels announced that, at its September 2nd meeting, the Board approved the Trails Council's recommendation that the Conference reimburse chainsawyers for the cost of these courses, since chainsawyers are required to have basic first aid and basic CPR training to obtain certification.

c. Spring Trail Report Statistics. Larry Wheelock stated that many of these reports have still not been handed in (this matter was discussed further below, see item 6(a)).

d. Roundtables for Trail Crew and Trails Chairs. Jane Daniels announced that the Trail Chairs Roundtable will be held on December 14th, and that the Trail Crew Roundtable will be held sometime in January.

e. Fall Workshops. It was announced that the following trail workshops will be held this fall:

i. West Hudson. Larry Wheelock announced that a Maintenance 101 workshop will be held at the Ellenville Public Library on Saturday, October 11, and he stated that we will be doing outreach in connection with this workshop. He also announced that the "A Level" chainsaw safety certification course being held on the weekend of November 15-16 is already full, but there is still some room in the two chainsaw recertification courses being held the same weekend.

ii. East Hudson. Christie Ferguson announced that a trail workshop will be held at Wonder Lake State Forest in Putnam County on Saturday, October 11th, and that another workshop will be held at Ward Pound Ridge Reservation in Putnam County on Saturday, October 25th.

iii. New Jersey. Brenda Holzinger announced that a Maintenance 101 workshop will be held at Jenny Jump State Forest in western New Jersey on Saturday, October 25th. She pointed out that participants in this workshop would have the opportunity to visit the observatory at Jenny Jump. She also announced that a Trail Construction and Restoration workshop will be held at the Weis Ecology Center on Saturday, November 1st, and that a follow-up day would probably be held on the following weekend.

f. Trails Chairs for Central Jersey. Jane Daniels announced that Bob Jonas and Estelle Anderson have been appointed as co-Trails Chairs for Central Jersey.

g. Volunteer Recognition. Jane Daniels announced that the Volunteer Committee is planning on recognizing volunteers with five or 25 years of service to the Trail Conference, and she asked those present to identify deserving volunteers who meet these criteria. She noted that people who do non-trail work or who put in time in the past and no longer are involved are also eligible for these awards.

4. Reports. The following reports were presented:

a. Report of Publications Committee. Daniel Chazin reported that a new edition of the Sterling Forest Trails map should be printed in a few weeks. He noted that a draft of the new digital edition of the Kittatinny Trails map set is now available for review, and he stated that this new Kittatinny map set, as well as a revised edition of the Harriman map set, should be printed in the next few months. In addition, he stated that we hope to publish a new digital edition of our Catskill Trails map set and revised editions of our Hudson Palisades and North Jersey map sets in about six months, and he asked all those who know of changes to these maps to contact him, so that the changes can be incorporated into the new editions of these maps.

Daniel Chazin also reported that a new edition of the *Hiking Long Island* book is at the printer and should be available in a few weeks, and that work is progressing on the *Walkable Westchester* book.

b. Report of West Hudson Regional Representative. Larry Wheelock reported that the Board has passed the Plan and Budget for 2009. He noted that he had distributed a handout that outlines various West Hudson projects to be worked on during this fiscal year, including: passage of Long Path study legislation, New York A.T. MOU and Local Management Plan revisions, completion of Minnewaska and Sterling Forest trails plans, working on a Harriman-Ringwood connector trail, agreement on an MOU with Rockland County, reroute of Highlands Trail on Bellvale Mountain in Orange County, establishment of a bypass for the A.T. around the Bear Mountain Zoo, construction of a privy at the Wildcat Shelter on the A.T., and completion of an Adopt-a-Natural Resource agreement for the Catskills. He also noted that we are applying for a grant from the New York Recreational Trails Program for the construction of the new A.T. route on the east face of Bear Mountain, that we are assisting PIPC in their application for a handicapped-accessible trail at the top of Bear Mountain, that we are assisting the Town of Haverstraw in their application for a grant for the construction of connector trails from the Town of Haverstraw to the Long Path on High Tor, and that we are applying for a grant from New York Parks and Trails to cover the cost of first-aid training for all chain sawyers.

c. Report of East Hudson Regional Representative. Christie Ferguson noted that she had distributed a handout that outlined various East Hudson projects to be worked on during this fiscal year, including: trail construction at Angle Fly Preserve and Wonder Lake State Park, approving route of Highlands Trail through Putnam County, developing Westchester trail supervisors, revising the MOU and local management plan for the A.T. in Dutchess-Putnam Counties, developing plans for connector trails in Taconic parks, filling supervisor and maintainer positions for Metro Trails, preparing Community Trails Program brochures and presentations, and organizing the Wappingers Falls volunteer crew.

d. Report of New Jersey Regional Representative. Brenda Holzinger reported on the following matters:

i. Funding for New Jersey Parks. She reported that she learned yesterday that the \$9 million that was appropriated for improvements to New Jersey parks during the coming year may be stretched over two years. She also stated that it is being recommended that most New Jersey state parks close on two days each week during the winter months, and that the suggested days for closing are Saturday and Sunday. She also commented that the state is going to the counties and asking them to take over certain parks, and that such a takeover actually happened this spring in western New Jersey. She

indicated that securing adequate funding for New Jersey parks will probably be an ongoing battle.

ii. ATV Legislation. She reported that the passage of ATV legislation in New Jersey has been stalled by our nation's fiscal problems, but she stated that we are making much better progress than we have in the past, and that she is very optimistic that ATV legislation will pass this year.

iii. Power Line Route B. She pointed out that much opposition has arisen to the selection of "Route B" for the proposed new power line across New Jersey, and she stated that the process has been stalled, as local towns are demanding meetings with PSE&G and its parent company. Walt Daniels explained that the trail people from Pennsylvania are pleased with the choice of Route B, because it follows an existing corridor for the A.T. crossing, but he stated that it would have a significant impact on trails in central New Jersey, since although it follows an existing route even in New Jersey, it will require taller towers and a wider buffer strip.

iv. Green Acres Application. She stated that the Trail Conference will be applying for Green Acres project approval for a parcel in Oxford that is critical to the Warren Trail.

v. New Trails. She commented that the priority for this year in New Jersey is new trails. She noted that work has begun on the new Iron Belt Trail, and she stated that we hope to complete at least 25% of this trail during the coming year.

e. Report on A.T. Regional Stewardship Council Meeting. Walt Daniels reported that, at its recent meeting, the A.T. Regional Stewardship Council unanimously recommended that the entire proposal relating to blazing of side trails to the A.T. should be rescinded, since the issue is covered by the local management plans. He noted that the ultimate fate of this proposal will be decided by the entire Stewardship Council, which meets at the end of the month.

f. Trail Building Business. Jane Daniels submitted the following report on behalf of Ed Goodell. She reported that the Trail Conference is currently working on projects at Wappingers Falls and Van Cortlandt Park, and that we are also working with the Town of Haverstraw to obtain a grant that would fund connecting trails between the town and the Long Path on High Tor. She also reported that, at the Closter Nature Center, Phase I (assessment) has been completed, and we are looking to do Phase II next year. Finally, she stated that it is uncertain whether we will be doing a project at Teatown. Christie Ferguson stated that we are working on a project in Taconic State Park.

5. Trail Approvals and Updates. The following reports were presented:

a. Overlook Rock Trail. John Moran noted that he had reported at the August Trails Council meeting that the 2.0-mile Lake Sonoma Trail in the Lake Sonoma area of Norvin Green State Forest had been completed. He now reported that the 1.6-mile Overlook Rock Trail, which connects at both ends with the Hewitt-Butler Trail and at its midpoint with the Lake Sonoma Trail, has since been completed, providing (for the first time) access by marked trails to this beautiful area, and facilitating several loop hikes (utilizing a portion of the Hewitt-Butler Trail). He stated that the North Jersey Trails Committee is planning to construct a connecting trail from Manaticut Point, on the Hewitt-Butler Trail, north to the Lake Sonoma Trail, as well as the new Tapawingo Trail (the former owners of the property had named it the "Tapawingo Trout Preserve") that would circle Lake Sonoma and another unnamed lake, and to eliminate a roadwalk of the Stonetown Circular Trail on Burnt Meadow Road, which is unattractive (especially since the road is regularly used for dumping unwanted items). He noted that he has already requested permission from the State Park Service for the two new trails, and from the Passaic River Coalition for the reroute of the Stonetown Circular Trail onto their lands. After a brief discussion, these two new trails and the reroute were unanimously approved by the Trails Council.

b. Ward Pound Ridge Reservation. Josie Gray reported that, over the last few years, the Trail Conference has established a very positive relationship with Ward Pound Ridge Reservation in Westchester County. She explained that it is now proposed to include all 37 miles of trails in Ward Pound Ridge as part of our trail network.

Jane Daniels explained that, over the last two years, all of the marked trails in Ward Pound Ridge have been reblazed with metal markers. She noted that many day hikes are possible in this park, and that the park is open to everyone (although a parking fee is charged during the summer and on weekends year round). Josie Gray pointed out that several volunteers who started working on the Ward Pound Ridge trails now volunteer for other Conference trails, too.

After discussion, it was moved, seconded and unanimously carried that the Trails Council approve the adoption by the Trail Conference of 37 miles of trails in Ward Pound Ridge Reservation in Westchester County. It was noted that the adoption of these trails by the Conference had already been approved by the Board.

6. Old Business/Updates. The following items were discussed:

a. Trail Hours Reporting and Appointments. Brenda Holzinger stated that, to date, only 8 out of 14 Trails Chair reports and 2 out of 13 Trail Crew reports have been received in the office. It was pointed out that these reports are already two months overdue. Brenda Holzinger noted that, to ensure insurance coverage for all maintainers, it is important to make sure that all maintainer appointments are immediately brought to the attention of the office. It was pointed out that some Trails Chairs might not be aware of the importance of advising the office of new appointments. Brenda Holzinger stated that this situation will be publicized in the next issue of the *Trail Walker*. Josie Gray questioned whether there could be insurance implications if some maintainers are not Conference members.

Brenda Holzinger also commented that it might take up to a year before trail reporting forms can be submitted electronically. Jane Daniels stated that Walt Daniels needs assistance in putting trail information for New York onto our database (most of the data for New Jersey has already been entered into the database).

It was pointed out that since a number of volunteers do not have access to a computer or the Internet, the paper reporting system will be retained for now. However, Jane Daniels commented that the volunteers who are electronically savvy are the ones who are the furthest behind with reporting.

b. Maintaining Trails in Areas with Entrance Fees. Jane Daniels pointed out that our Trails Policy currently provides that the Trail Conference does not maintain trails in areas that charge a per-person entrance fee (as opposed to a parking fee). It was noted that this issue had come up when a proposal was made for the Trail Conference to maintain trails at Boscobel, where an \$8 entrance fee is charged. Josie Gray commented that she had suggested that the entrance fee be waived for Trail Conference members who desire only to walk around the grounds, but she noted that he has not heard back from Boscobel on this proposal. It was agreed that no change would be made to this policy at this time.

7. New Business/Discussion. The following items were discussed:

a. Trails Policy Update - Request for Trail Overlay. Jane Daniels noted that she had circulated to the Trails Council a proposed revised draft of the Trails Policy. Only a few people present at the meeting had reviewed this document, and everyone was urged to do so and get back to Jane with their comments.

b. Interactive Reporting Forms. Ken Malkin reported on the various interactive reporting forms that he has developed. He thanked both Josh Howard and John Moran for their assistance in developing these forms. There was discussion on the issue of providing additional room on these forms for detailed comments. Several Trails Council members volunteered to review these forms during the next few days to see if any changes need to be made, and Ken stated that he welcomed comments from everyone on the forms, which should be sent to regrepassist@nynjtc.org.

c. Grand Walkabout. Gary Haugland announced that he is on a committee, established in connection with the Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial, that is encouraging people to hike a total of 400 miles of trails and visit historic sites from September 2008 to September 2009 in the four counties of Ulster, Orange, Putnam and Dutchess. He pointed out that there is a tally sheet that permits one to track the mileage hiked, and that people can register to participate through their website, www.grandwalkabout.com.

8. The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel D. Chazin