

Designing a Trail



The New York-New Jersey Trail Conference members seen above are practicing using clinometers to measure the slope of the ground to determine the best placement of a trail.

THE INTERSECTION OF SCIENCE AND ART

Good trails aren’t simply paths of convenience. They are carefully planned routes that consider the terrain and their users. Trail design is both a science and an art. The trail designer considers science – cross slope, running slope, water management, and soil types – while keeping in mind the creation of a fun, friendly, and safe experience for the hiker. Trail design starts with the big picture – where do people want to go? The trail must fit into the landscape, accounting for potential hazards, sensitive habitat, and property boundaries, all while following the contours of the land.

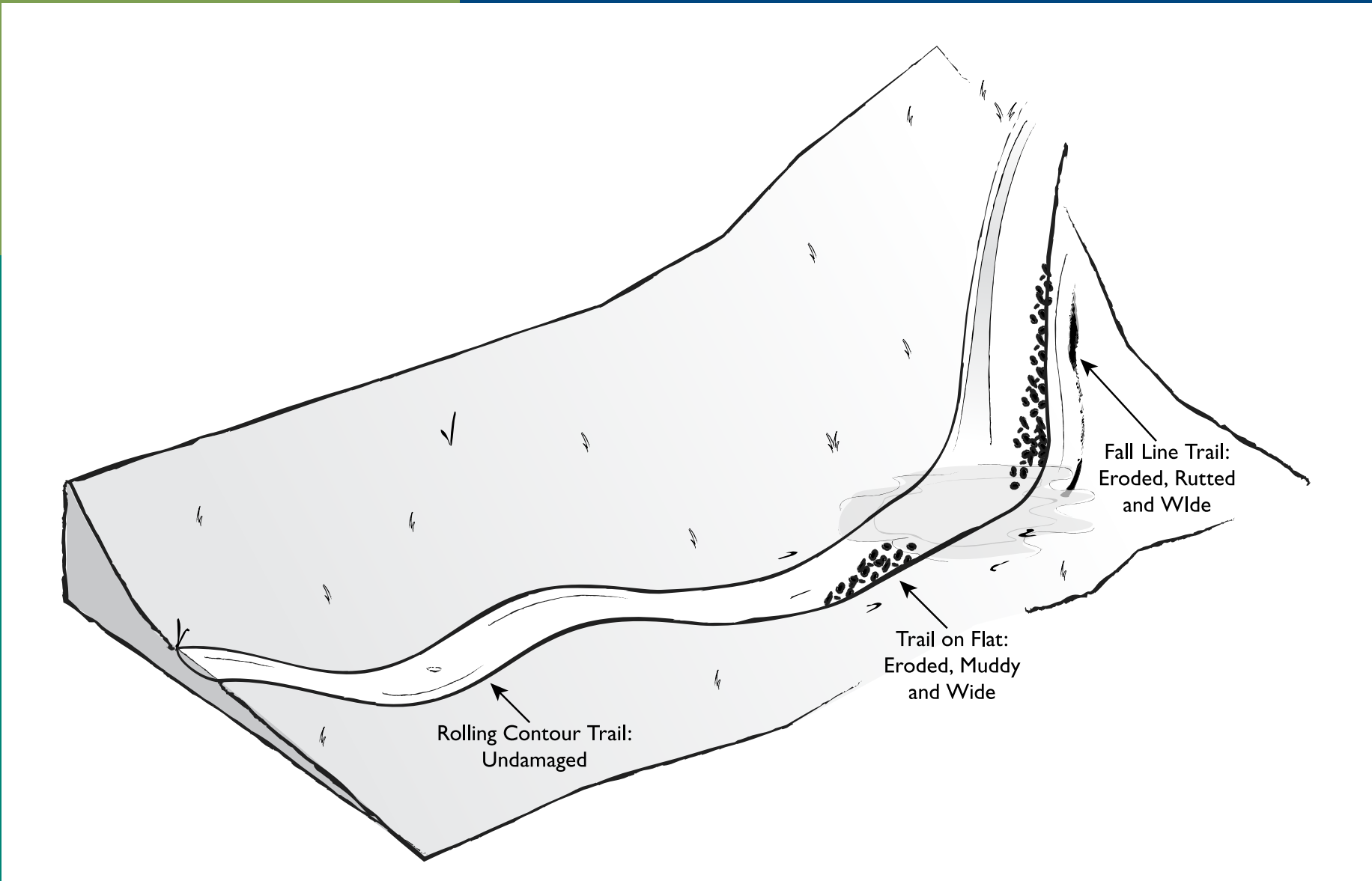


New York-New Jersey Trail Conference

The science of trail design and construction includes measuring slopes with clinometers (left) and levels (below) to determine the best route.



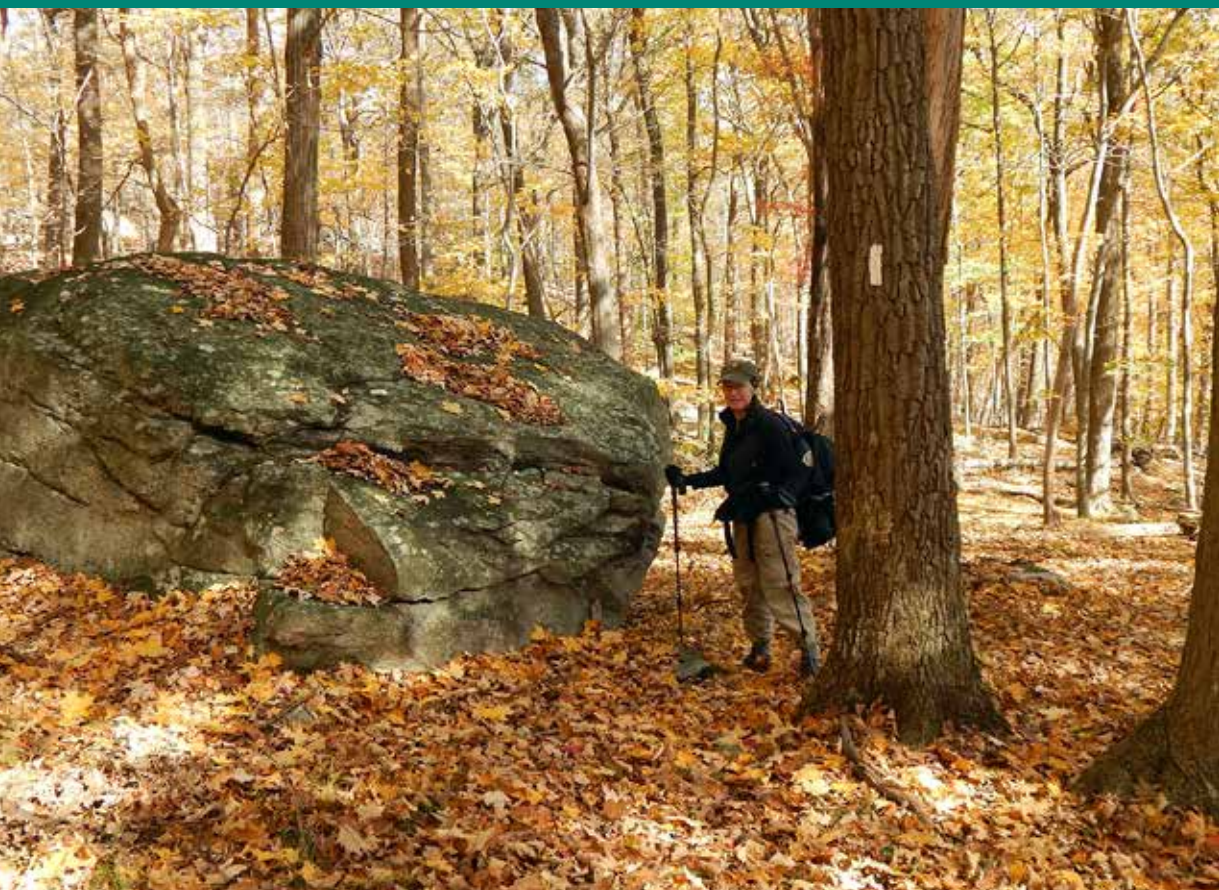
Jerrica Lavooy



Joseph Knight



New York-New Jersey Trail Conference



Georgette Weir

The art of trail design involves creating a path that will take users to beautiful and amazing places and give them one-of-a-kind experiences in nature.



John Hayes/Flickr.com