



# Balsam Lake Mountain Fire Tower

Maintained trail: Blue, Red, Yellow, Finger Lakes Trail  
 Trail mileage, marker: 1.5  
 Trail mileage is junction-to-junction except where indicated by marker

© 2014 New York-New Jersey Trail Conference, Inc.

Parking (P)  
 Shelter (S)  
 Spring (W)

0 0.5 mi



# Balsam Lake Mountain Fire Tower Trail Map

Trails in the Catskills are built and maintained by the people who love and use them through volunteer service programs organized by the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference.

This map is provided as a courtesy by the Trail Conference and is adapted from *Catskill Trails*, a six-map set that shows all designated trails within the Catskill Park. Trail Conference maps and books are your guides to hundreds of miles of hiking paths in the New York-New Jersey region. Our full-featured maps are printed in color, show elevation contours, and are waterproof and tear-resistant. Look for them at outdoor stores, order online at [www.nynjtc.org](http://www.nynjtc.org), or telephone 201.512.9348.

The New York-New Jersey Trail Conference is a nonprofit organization that partners with parks and mobilizes thousands of hard-working volunteers who create, maintain, and protect 2,000 miles of public trails in the region.

- Support the trails you love by:
- ★ *Becoming a member of the Trail Conference*
  - ★ *Volunteering with the Trail Conference*
  - ★ *Learning skills through Trail University*
  - ★ *Reporting trail problems on our website*

To learn more about the trails, hikes, and opportunities to volunteer, contact the Trail Conference.

Connecting People with Nature since 1920



NY-NJ Trail Conference  
 156 Ramapo Valley Road  
 Mahwah, NJ 07430  
 201.512.9348  
[www.nynjtc.org](http://www.nynjtc.org)

Get trail maps on your smartphone!

## Catskill Fire Towers

---

**BALSAM LAKE  
HUNTER  
OVERLOOK  
RED HILL  
TREMPER**

### *A climb back in time*

---

In another era, observers scanned the mountains from these fire towers, looking for signs of forest fires. Today, New York state uses more modern methods, but the towers now offer unparalleled 360-degree views of the Catskill Mountains and beyond for hikers.

Hardworking volunteer groups, together with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and nonprofit organizations including the Catskill Center, completed restoration of the towers in 2001, making them ready for a new role and new visitors.

### *Visit. Volunteer. Learn.*

---

Each summer, thousands of people from all over the world visit the towers to enjoy the awesome beauty and splendor of their surroundings. Volunteer interpreters welcome them, sharing the history and lore of the towers and mountains.

### *Catskill Fire Tower Passport Program*

---

Earn a Catskill Fire Towers Badge! Hike one (or more) of the Catskill fire towers this summer, then log your hike on a Morgan Outdoors Fire Tower Passport, available at Morgan Outdoors in Livingston Manor at 46 Main Street or online at [www.nynjtc.org/catskillfiretowers](http://www.nynjtc.org/catskillfiretowers). Turn in your completed passport at Morgan Outdoors by October 13, 2014 and collect your badge. You'll also be entered in a drawing to win prizes, including a handy pair of Nikon Travelite Binoculars. The Catskill Fire Tower Passport is a joint program of Morgan Outdoors, the Watershed Post and the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference.

## Volunteers in the Catskills

---

New York-New Jersey Trail Conference volunteers and member organizations maintain hundreds of miles of trails and over two dozen lean-to shelters in the Catskill Forest Preserve and along the Long Path north of the park boundary.

Learn about trail and lean-to maintenance, trail crew work, trainings and workshops, conservation and advocacy efforts, events, and other Catskills-related news by visiting [www.nynjtc.org/catskills](http://www.nynjtc.org/catskills).

### Catskill Fire Tower Information

---

For more information about the Catskill Fire Tower Project, including the history of the towers, directions and photos, and ways that you can volunteer or donate to support the project, visit [www.catskillfiretowers.org](http://www.catskillfiretowers.org).

### Emergency Phone Number

---

In case of emergency, call the Department of Environmental Conservation Dispatch Center at **877.457.5680**.



A one-time donation of \$5.00 will be added to your mobile phone bill or deducted from your prepaid balance. All donations must be authorized by the account holder. All charges are billed by and payable to your mobile service provider. User must be age 18 or older or have parental permission to participate. By texting YES, the user agrees to the terms and conditions. Service is available on most carriers. Message & Data Rates May Apply. Donations are collected for the benefit of the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference by the Mobile Giving Foundation and subject to the terms found at [www.hmgf.org/t](http://www.hmgf.org/t). You can unsubscribe at any time by texting STOP to 20222; text HELP to 20222 for help.

Visit [www.nynjtc.org/catskills](http://www.nynjtc.org/catskills) for information about the full-featured **Catskill Trails** map set and additional resources including suggested hikes, campgrounds and public transportation.



**Balsam Lake Mountain Fire Tower**  
*Town of Hardenburgh – Elevation 3,723 feet*

---

The first fire tower on the top of a mountain in New York State was placed at the summit of Balsam Lake Mountain in 1887 to protect and watch over the lands of the privately owned Balsam Lake Club. The existing 47-foot steel tower was erected in 1919, was closed by the State in 1988, and fell into a state of disrepair until 1999. Thanks to the hard work of State employees and volunteers, the tower officially re-opened on June 3, 2000, and it is staffed on weekends throughout the summer.

### Directions:

Take the blue marked Dry Brook Ridge Trail from the Balsam Lake Trailhead Parking Area to the intersection with the red marked Balsam Lake Mountain Trail, follow this red marked trail to the tower, then back down to the Dry Brook Ridge Trail and back down to the trailhead for a 4.15 mile moderately-difficult round trip hike. Visit [hikes.nynjtc.org](http://hikes.nynjtc.org) for more detailed trail and driving directions.