We Open a Great New Trail that Links the Village of Phoenicia to Catskill High Peaks

After decades of planning, three years of field work, and close to 10,000 hours of trail building by more than 100 volunteers, the new 9-mile stretch of Long Path in the Slide Mountain Wilderness Area of the Catskill Mountains opened on National Trails Day, June 7.

More than 70 people, including representatives of the Trail Conference, NYS Dept of Environmental Conservation, and Catskill partner organizations attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Lane Street trailhead in Phoenicia. The new trail section replaces 5 miles of road walk and 2.8 miles of Bumough Range Trail with a beautiful, rugged route over Cross Mountain, Mount Pleasant, and Romer Mountain, offering viewpoints along the way. Access is either from Lane Street in Phoenicia or the Woodland Valley State Campground parking area.

Long Path Co-chairs Jakob Franke and Andy Garrison not only organized this ambitious project, but spent weeks in the mountains building trail and leading teams of volunteers. Special thanks go to them and to the Long Distance Trails Crew and the Jolly Rovers, which contributed their technical expertise to building sections of the trail over several work outings.

Martin Brand, the NYSDEC Region 3 Director, thanked everyone for their hard work and looks forward to more projects. He also formally announced the commencement of the DEC/Trail Conference Catskill Conservation Corps partnership (see page 10).

Jeff Senterman, Senior Program Coordinator for the Trail Conference, says, “This project is a stunning example of what is possible when Trail Conference volunteers and staff collaborate with the DEC. Thanks to our volunteers we have built a trail that sets a new standard for quality and sustainability in the Catskills. We look forward to continuing our partnership with the DEC to improve existing trails and expand the trail network when necessary.”

This project was also the first time that the Trail Conference fielded week-long service trips to help complete the project, most of which was a long, hard climb to access.

With this project complete, Andy and Jakob are turning their sights to their next big thing: a new off-road route for the LP north of Minnewaska State Park Preserve, in the Veronoy Kill State Forest. Stay tuned.

The Trail
From Woodland Valley, follow the red-blazed Wittenberg-Cornell-Slide trail (and former LP route) up Wittenberg Mountain to the new junction with the new Long Path section (below the Wittenberg summit). The new trail section will be blazed with blue DEC footpath markers and is considered an extension of the Phoenixia-East Branch Trail. LP blazes will appear only at junctions. Turn left to hike the new trail north toward Phoenixia. The trail appears as a dotted line (under construction) on the 2013 edition of the Catskill Trails map set. A map of the new trail can be downloaded from our website.

What New Federal Accessibility Guidelines Mean for Our Trails
Trail volunteers and trail users alike have been asking questions and expressing concern about the impact new federal accessibility guidelines for outdoor recreation areas may have on our trails. Ama Koenigshof, our Trail Builder/Educator, here writes about the rationale behind the guidelines and how they do, or don’t, impact our trail work. A version of the article that includes discussion of technical trail requirements can be found on our website: nynjtc.org, Community tab, then Resources for Volunteers.

By Ama Koenigshof
There are 57 million people in the United States with disabilities. As our population ages, this number increases. When you consider the family and friends of people with disabilities who want to do recreational activities together, the percentage of the population affected is very large.

But it’s not just people with disabilities who appreciate accessible trails. As I have seen over and over while building trails on Bear Mountain, people are looking for opportunities to get outdoors with the whole family on paths they can walk together, regardless of their age or fitness level. Though the federal Outdoor Developed Area Accessibility Guidelines were produced with wheel chairs in mind, they increase the accessibility of a trail for every type of user.

For all these reasons, a group of accessibility experts, trail builders, and 

Friends of Van Cortlandt Park
Put Young People to Trail Work

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What's New at Darlington HQ?

The Walls Are Up!
By mid-May, anyone passing the Darlington Schoolhouse could see the expanded building taking shape.

• Other progress since we last reported in these pages:
  • Crawl space in both the existing building and addition has been completed.
  • Structural steel frame has been installed to reinforce the chimney on both the first and second floors.
  • Installation of both the electrical cables and installation of the sprinkler system has begun.
  • Select trees were downed to make way for the addition and designed landscape.
  • Footings, concrete foundation, and framing have been finished for the new addition.
  • The water main and sleeves for geothermal piping have been stubbed through the foundation.
  • Native fieldstone removed from the boiler room and garage were stockpiled to build a dry stone, free-standing wall on site later.
  • Footings, concrete foundation, and framing have been finished for the new addition.
  • The water main and sleeves for geothermal piping have been stubbed through the foundation.

If you are planning to hike at Breakneck Ridge this summer, stop and say HF to Trail Stewards from the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference.

The success of the program inspired financial and in-kind support from several donors for an expanded program this year. Based on counts made by stewards last year, the Trail Conference estimates that in the pleasant-weather months more than 2,000 people scramble up Breakneck Ridge each week. Many of them arrive by train at Metro-North’s Breakneck Ridge weekend whistle stop. The railroad makes three stops in each direction on weekends, and hundreds of hikers may get off on peak days.

We Launch Expanded Trail Steward Program at Breakneck Ridge

Starting on the Memorial Day holiday weekend in May, teams of trail stewards began greeting hikers at the foot of the “most popular trail in North America,” or hiking along trails on the ridge, sharing information to help visitors enjoy this spectacular Hudson Valley destination: how to hike safely, good trail routes, hiking etiquette, and how to support hiking trails in our region.

Five trail stewards will be assisting hikers during the weekends through the Columbus Day Weekend. The program was tested for one month last summer, during which two stewards helped equip more than 5,000 visitors with maps and information, answered hundreds of questions about local flora, fauna, and history, steered dozens of visitors back onto trails they had missed, and assisted multiple injured hikers. Neither NYS Parks nor local emergency responders received a single call from Breakneck hikers while the stewards were on duty.

The program is pleased to report a successful execution financial and in-kind support from several donors for an expanded program this year. Based on counts made by stewards last year, the Trail Conference estimates that in the pleasant-weather months more than
From the Executive Director

Spring was a whirlwind and the forecast is for more of the same.

50 Trail U workshops during March, April, and May, with 394 participants.
Sixteen AmeriCorps members who were accepted into Year 2 of our Conservation Corps program were given extensive training in trail building, volunteer development, and conflict resolution. They are now in the field improving our trails and welcoming new volunteers to work alongside them. Four are assigned to the Delaware Water Gap Trail, and will continue to build and improve trails at the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.

Our executive director Linda Rohleder and the Invasive Species coordinating team continued to promote awareness of our invasive species. They are now working with local businesses to determine where invasive species are prevalent and inform the public of ways to prevent further spread.

The Trail Conference is working closely with Land Stewards to improve the palisades trail. To better serve both trail users and residents, we are partnering with local government agencies and organizations to improve trail access and connectivity. We are working to improve trail signage, create new parking areas, and enhance the overall trail experience for all users.
The April 26 work trip was the first in what is expected to be a multi-year project to clear a new 6-mile extension of the 6-Mile South Taconic Trail. The first day’s crew included East Hudson Trails Chair Andrew Seirup, Michael Schenker, Sue Rangetty, Joanna Seirup, and Charles Drak.

The first day’s crew included E ast Hudson Trails Chair Andrew  Seirup, M ichael Schenker, S ue Rangeley, Joanna Seirup, and C harles D rak.

"Why aren't we just following that deer path, Andrew?" the first day’s crew of six slowly picked their way along the wooded, shrubby hills, tossing downed branches, uprooting, sawing, or clipping shrubs, taking a defined path—and painstakingly following a short section of the 6-mile route that a dedicated team of volunteers laid out over the course of three years of zooming, bushwhacking, and working with state park officials.

The Trail Conference route planning team included Andrew, East Hudson Trails Chair; Claudia Faith, South Taconic Region Trails Supervisor; and Christopher Leonard, a maintainer on the South Taconic Trails Supervisor. The April 26 work trip was the first in what is expected to be a multi-year project to clear a new 6-mile extension of the 6-Mile South Taconic Trail Extension.

These clubs and organizations support trails by being members of the Trail Conference. Visit their websites to see their activities. To add your organization to the list, contact Joanne Reinhardt, jreinhardt@nynjtc.org.

The first day’s crew included East Hudson Trails Chair Andrew Seirup, Michael Schenker, Sue Rangetty, Joanna Seirup, and Charles Drak.
Welcome, AmeriCorps!

“Aaaahh, a tick!”

Learning how to deal with our local eight-legged wildlife threat was one of the first lessons for this year’s class of AmeriCorps trail members. Learning to live without an Internet connection has been another—the Corps members are based at our Welch Trails Education Center (ie, Camp) at Harriman State Park.

For weeks in spring, the lessons added up: how to build a crib wall, how to recruit volunteers, how to lead a trail crew. Finally, in mid-May, the 16 Corps members and 35 students who comprise this year’s Conservation Corps were deployed to four Trail Conferences in New York and New Jersey. Now they are in the field four to five long days a week, building new trails, rehabilitating old ones, teaching trail construction techniques to other volunteers, and, in the case of the Invasives Strike Force, helping to monitor and remove invasive plants along trails in both states.

The Trail Conference’s Conservation Corps members make a full-time commitment to do trail work for a season that generally extends from mid-May to October. In return, they receive training, work experience, housing, and a scholarship.

Working along or the heavily eroded trail was re-aligned over the course of the three workshops. At this time, students have logged almost 100 hours to this project from start to finish. Some, looking for more work, have crossed the border to join New York State.

The end result of our first semester with Ramapo College has been a perfect model of collaboration, and we’re looking forward to what the future brings. We have some exciting projects lined up in the Ramapo Valley Reservation this summer, so keep an eye on our Trail U page online to get involved, whether you’re a student or not!

When someone handles a sledgehammer, you can see almost immediately if it’s their first time. If they’re a kid, wins seem to flex at angles they shouldn’t, and nobody knows what in the world to do with their feet. Helping volunteers get their bodies in order while handling unfamiliar tools is one of the goals of our Tool Use and Safety course.

At a spring workshop in Long Pond Ironworks State Park, many of the volunteers exhibiting these symptoms weren’t just students of Trail University—they were also students at Ramapo College. And, by the time you read this, several of these students will be on their way to becoming teachers on the trails as they look to assist new volunteers.

Quickly, she organized an Intro to Volunteers.” The next thing she suggested that the Trail Conference might be helpful in developing the trails they want to be on, and in developing volunteers.” The next thing she knew, she was Trails Supervisor. Quickly, she organized an Intro to Trails workshop for potential volunteers—21 attended. In May, she followed up with the first outing of the new Harlem Valley Trail Maintenance Crew. The crew will help as needed at Dover Stone Church, on the nearby A.T., and other trails in eastern Dutchess County.

 Appealing projects lined up in the Ramapo Valley Reservation this summer, so keep an eye on our Trail U page online to get involved, whether you’re a student or not!

If you want to learn more about how to get involved on New Jersey trails, email Peter Delos at pdelan@nynjtc.org. If you’re a member of the Ramapo College community, find other trail-lovers on campus at facebook.com/groups/RamapoTrailCrew.

Trail U Welcomes Ramapo College

Several non-college organizations that operate on campus, such as MEVO (Mahwah Environmental Volunteers Organization) and the Volunteer Center of Bergen County, helped connect us to college administrators and faculty members. Ramapo College professors, especially in the environmental studies department, were receptive to our request to give a presentation about the Trail Conference in their classes. Interested students signed up to receive emails about volunteer opportunities, training sessions, and work trips.

Sally Decker
Poughkeepsie, NY

About: Salley is known not only for her long-term commitment—a Trail Conference member since 1978, a Life Member, and a trail maintainer on the Appalachian Trail in Dutchess County since the early 1980s—but for also getting things done, even when, maybe, she didn’t intend to be the person who would do so.

We’re building the next generation of trail talent and our own crews.

Invasives Strike Force: Corps members assigned to the Invasives Strike Force are trained to recognize and monitor targeted species and to lead volunteer crews in removing them at select locations. They work with Linda Stinchcomb, New York State Stewardship Director, on managing and analyzing the data collected. This crew is in the field and welcomes volunteers Thursdays through Sundays.

Check our online Trail Crew Outings schedule at nynjtc.org/view/trail-crew outings and get out with a crew.

Our North Jersey Trails Chair identified a trail at Long Pond Ironw orks State Park in need of some drastic work. We planned a series of Trail U courses to teach the basics needed to build a new trail from the ground-up: Trail Layout and Design, Tool Use and Safety, and Introduction to Trail Maintenance. These were all open to the public through our website, but most of the participants were Ramapo students.

With the park superintendent’s approval, the heavily eroded trail was re-aligned over the course of the three workshops. At this time, students have logged almost 100 hours to this project from start to finish. Some, looking for more work, have crossed the border to join New York State.

The end result of our first semester with Ramapo College has been a perfect model of collaboration, and we’re looking forward to what the future brings. We have some exciting projects lined up in the Ramapo Valley Reservation this summer, so keep an eye on our Trail U page online to get involved, whether you’re a student or not!

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PEOPLE FOR TRAILS

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Take for example trails at the Trail Conference’s Valley Trail Maintenance Crew. The crew will help as needed at Dover Stone Church, on the nearby A.T., and other trails in eastern Dutchess County.

Making connections: A long-time hiker, active member of the Adirondack Mountain Club, active with Hyde Park Trails partnership and our Dutchess-Putnam A.T. Committee, Salley often wears multiple hats. As in Dover, she habitually creates and supports partnerships to advance the trails and hiking she loves.

Why do I volunteer? Salley asks herself, “It gets me outdoors, and gets me to meet people with similar interests. I enjoyed being part of growing system of trails in Dutchess County.”

The thick red line represents 6 miles of new trail being built in the Taconics.

South Taconic Trail in northeastern Dutchess County. The extension will create a connection from the start of the new trail to the Taconic Ridge, where hikers can bag three states—New York, Massachusetts, and Connecticut—with a single hike.

A sledgehammer is one of the tools that volunteers are learning to use.

With Ramapo College soon to be an across-the-street neighbor of the Trail Conference at Dater-Attington, and with our goal to attract more young people to volunteer ranks, it seems natural to target the college for volunteer development. Our first semester working with the campus community has been very promising.

The link will make a camp- ground to the ridgetop.

The thick red line represents 6 miles of new trail being built in the Taconics.

The thick red line represents 6 miles of new trail being built in the Taconics.
People for Trails. Trails for People.
A quarterly look at some of what our volunteers have been doing to assure public access to nature.

Walkers in Brookdale Park in Montclair, NJ, may unexpectedly learn that they are, and have been, trail walking.

On Tuesday, May 13, Trail Conference volunteers and staff worked with employees of the Essex County Parks Department to install 12 trail bollards along a one-mile stretch of the Lenape Trail in the park. The bollards not only mark the Lenape Trail and draw attention to it in a busy urban park, but function as mini kiosks, describing the trail’s entire 34-mile route and providing instruction on how to read the yellow paint blazes that indicate the trail’s path.

Several other parks on the Lenape Trail’s route will get the bollards in the future, but most direction for the trail is provided by traditional yellow blazes painted on trees.

The Lenape Trail arches through 19 county and municipal parks in Essex County, NJ, from Newark’s Branch Brook Park to the county border at the Passaic River in West Essex Park. Currently blazed and maintained by Trail Conference volunteers along 34 miles of rail trails, park paths, rights-of-way, and roadways, with an extension tracing over six miles in South Mountain Reservation, the Lenape forms a spine connecting Essex County’s many natural, cultural, and historical resources. Learn more about the Lenape Trail at www.nynjtc.org/park/lenape-trail. To learn about volunteering on this or other trails, contact the Trail Conference at volunteers@nynjtc.org.

Pulling Invasives, Finding Natives at FDR State Park
At FDR State Park in Westchester, NY, our Invasives Strike Force teamed with the Friends of FDR State Park and Parks & Trails New York on 1 Love My Park Day (May 3)—to pull invasive plants and protect native ones. More than two dozen volunteers removed oriental bittersweet vines, multiflora rose bushes, and some barberry and burning bush to uncover young native black cherry trees, a serviceberry in bloom, some silky dogwoods, and a white oak tree. When they mature, all of the native specimens that were rescued will provide important food for wildlife. Learn more about our Invasives Strike Force and opportunities for you to get involved in protecting our native species at www.nynjtc.org/invasives.

Loving Minnewaska
At Minnewaska State Park Preserve in Ulster County, NY, 16 cheerful people worked on the popular Mossey Glen Trail as part of 1 Love My Park Day activities May 3. They began restoring a wet area and building a new bog bridge. Dave Webber, our volunteer Supervisor for Minnewaska and crew leader of the West Hudson North crew, led the work day; with the support of park staff who supplied the lumber for the bog bridge and transported it close to the site. The volunteers carried lumber in to the work site, stacked pile stone and crush, and started construction of a bog bridge.

Work will continue this season to complete bog bridges as well as stone turnspikes across several wet areas along the trail, in between the Blueberry Run and Mossey Glen footbridges. If you are interested in working with this crew on this or future projects at Minnewaska, please contact Sara Mason at smason@nynjtc.org. Find schedules for all of our trail crews on our website and get involved with the one that best suits you.

Crew Builds Foot Bridge on Gunks Greenway D&H Canal
Volunteers with our Long Distance Trails Crew (LDTC) were up in Wawarsing in the Shawangunk region in April, building a new footbridge on the D&H Canal. The canal’s towpath is a popular walk for residents and visitors, and provides a route for a section of our Long Path along the Gunks Greenway. A grant from Avon Products of Suffern, NY, helped pay for supplies for the project. The crew is our扪, and welcomes new participants. You can find details and contact info for their outings on the crew schedule on our website: nynjtc.org/view/trail-crew-outings. Look for ‘Long Distance Trails Crew’ or leader Chris Bayling.

From viewer’s left to right: Paul Paisano, Sean Hanonangie, and Michael Nugent from Essex County Parks; from the Trail Conference, volunteer Sam Huber (Trail Chair), volunteer Federico Nealon (Lenape Supervisor), staf member Peter Dolan, and volunteer Marc Elfenbein (Lenape Supervisor). Also helping that day but not pictured was parks staffer Ken Eder. Thanks go to Tara Caseia, Environmental Coordinator in the Essex County Office of Environmental Affairs, and Carmine Raimo, Superintendent of Essex County Parks, for their help in arranging the work crew.

A Good Start to Spring
Some remarkable FDR State Park volunteers and employees of Essex County Parks began blading at the start of May, and this month the Essex County Parks Department to install 12 trail bollards along a one-mile stretch of the Lenape Trail in the park.

From view-er’s left to right: Paul Paisano, Sean Hanonangie, and Michael Nugent from Essex County Parks; from the Trail Conference, volunteer Sam Huber (Trail Chair), volunteer Federico Nealon (Lenape Supervisor), staff member Peter Dolan, and volunteer Marc Elfenbein (Lenape Supervisor). Also helping that day but not pictured was parks staffer Ken Eder. Thanks go to Tara Caseia, Environmental Coordinator in the Essex County Office of Environmental Affairs, and Carmine Raimo, Superintendent of Essex County Parks, for their help in arranging the work crew.

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New Trail Initiatives in Westchester County

With declining budgets and shrinking payrolls, many municipalities and nonprofits turn to the Trail Conference for help with their trails. This spring the Westchester Trail Committee has taken on maintenance at Housatonic Sanctuary, Cranberry Lake Preserve, and Westmoreland Sanctuary. Negotiations are underway to add three North Salem Open Land Foundation properties adjacent to Mountain Lakes Park and Taster Ridge Park Preserve in the Town of Greenburgh.

Discussions in April and May revealed all the above parks need some help, how the Trail Conference will help their partners varies. Discussions at Westmoreland Sanctuary revealed that their well loved trails need more than just a passive guard, but a trail guard seeing onto the trails has created muddied areas or erosion. Another trail needs work to improve its roadway before erosion occurs. With work trips and workshops, we will begin to form a fledging group of people who love their trails. Eventually individual maintainers will be assigned to the trails at Westmoreland.

The trails at Cranberry Lake Preserve also need some TLC. In June, more than 60 employees of the Xylem Corporation turned out to give it some. Their work included spraying paint our graffiti, removing trash, installing punchen, and closing a trail. Cooperation of service help helps keep workers out of the work place. Their day volunteering helps do much work at a park.

Bedford Audubon’s Housatonic Sanctuary needs people willing to maintain a trail. It is a beautiful place with a variety of habitats: ponds, wetlands, meadows, upland forest.

One of those parks might be near you or where you like to take a walk. You could have bragging rights to a place you love to visit. The Trail Conference offers new maintainers a workshop to give you the skills you need. Introduction to Trail Maintenance is a hands-on course offered a many locations. See http://www.nynjtc.org/view/workshops.

To let us know if you would like to maintain a trail, help on a trail crew, take a workshop, or have your company help on a day of service, please contact East Hudson Program Coordinator Hank Oshborn at hosborn@nynjtc.org.

Jane Daniels, Westchester Trail Chair Rose Bencomo, Assistant Chair

TRAIL NEWS, CONSERVATION continued from page 3

Seven Peaks on the Shawangunk Ridge Trail

As of the deadline for this issue, development of the proposed Seven Peaks housing project in Mamakating, NY were still working on their Final Environmental Impact Statement. The Trail Conference and other groups, including the Environmental Conservation, posed numerous challenges and questions to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the project in 2010. A recent workshop session between developers, planners, and representatives of the Trail Conference and the Bashakill Area Association left the latter two groups dissatisfied with developers’ responses and concerned about the future of the ridge and its environment.

The Trail Conference would like to preserve the entire parcel as open space but, short of that, our position is that the Mamakating Planning Board should not approve the project unless, at a minimum, provision is made for an adequate wilderness corridor along the western edge of the property.

JOIN PEOPLE FOR TRAILS ON ONE OF MANY EXCITING PROJECTS THIS SEASON

Check the crew trip calendar at nynjtc.org/view/trail-crew-outings

CREW U1! – The Rocky Evolution of a Maintenance Crew

By Mary Dodds

I am the supervisor of the Westchester Trail Tramps (WTTT), a crew which meets every Wednesday morning to maintain and improve trails in northwestern Westchester County. My crew (photo 3) is an offshoot of the Ward Pound Ridge Crew, which maintains trails at WPR and other county, municipal, and local sites in northeastern Westchester.

The WTTT started out as maintainers during a period when successive “storms of the century” wrought havoc on trails maintained by the Trail Conference. Individual maintainers were overwhelmed by the damage. The WTTT and WPR crews were able to clear large limbs and small blow-downs and to move washed-out punchen and bridges back to their original, or more appropriate locations.

During the relatively peaceful year and a half since super storm Sandy, my crew has turned to more technical problems, mainly involving trail tread. Many of the crew members have taken trail tread courses offered by the Trail Conference. Additional invaluable instruction from Leigh Draper, a former Trail Conference East Hudson Program Coordinator (now the Trail Steward and Volunteer Coordinator for Teatown Lake Reservation) and from the Trail Conference’s Westchester Chair and volunteer extraordinaire Jane Daniels was provided in actual work settings.

I also had the incredibly good fortune of working and learning with Chris Reyling’s Long Distance Trails Crew on a Trail U Day. I operated a grip hoist, wielded a sledge hammer, and dug, transported and distributed mixed material for the New Appalachian Trail reroute on West Mountain.

My crew and I have had ample opportunity to use and hone our rock skills this spring at Teatown. We moved large rocks to create above-the-floodline trails on a very wet section of trail. We became proficient at using rock bars, learning to wedge the bar as far as possible underneath the rock, and then leveraging it high enough for the other person to turn it over (photos 1 and 2). This continued until the rock was nudged/flipped/rolled to its final resting place. We learned that communication is vital – when a mover set her bar, she loudly said “SET” so the other mover knew to then set her bar.

Meanwhile, a hole was dug by other crew members tasked with fitting and stabilizing the rock, making it safe to walk on. Crew also worked to identify seepage origins and create a drainage system.

In addition to rock transport, rock alteration was required. Small, crushed rocks were needed to provide fill on the trail. A sledge hammer was used to make rocks smaller. A trail-crew sledgehammer to make rock crush from the smaller rocks. First, suitable rocks (helpful hint – rock with the right weight) were identified. Next a protected pit was dug and rocks dumped in. Our rock-breaking efforts were rewarded when our crew laid the sledge overhead with her dominant hand gripping just below the hammerhead and her other hand at the end of the handle (photo 4).

Smaller rock crush was needed and our youngest crew member (under Mom’s supervision) was up to the challenge. (photo 5).

Some crew members opted for safer work. We “paved” a wet section of trail that must be kept accessible to Teatown tractors and trucks. Unfortunately, the presence of such vehicles exacerbate wet conditions while precluding use of large rocks on the trails. Paving is the answer and one of our spring projects is to drain what can be drained and pave the rest.
Lyme Disease 2014 Update
By Howard E. Friedman DPM

Early anecdotal reports indicate ticks are plentiful this season. Below is a brief overview of some of the main points to remember during this season. This update reinforces as well as supplements the article that appeared in Trail Walker in 2012 about Lyme disease, which can be found on our website: www.nyntjc.org/news/health-news.

The following information is based on the latest Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Infectious Disease Society of America (IDSA), the largest society of physicians, scientists and organizations who specialize in infectious diseases. The IDSA Lyme disease guidelines, developed in 2006, were reviewed and re-endorsed in 2010, and again in part in 2012; they are endorsed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). 

If the above criteria are met, the IDSA recommends one dose of doxycycline 200 milligrams in adults and the appropriate dose in children 8 years old and older. This is all before developing a rash, fever, or other typical Lyme symptoms. That is, just being bitten, even with an engorged tick, is not the same as having Lyme disease. People who have removed a tick from their skin, even if they have received a dose of antibiotic, should be retested after 30 days for signs of skin rash and/or fever or viral type symptoms which suggest infection. Someone who develops symptoms should be evaluated not only for Lyme but also for babesiosis and human granulocytic anaplasmosis (HGA) or just anaplasmosis, both of which may also be transmitted by the black-legged deer tick. The Society makes the same recommendation even for people who have had a prior case of Lyme or who have received the Lyme vaccine (the vaccine was removed from the market in 2002).

The Society recommends blood testing for Lyme be done only in labs that follow the CDC guidelines for interpretation of results and should be a two-staged test. If Lyme symptoms appear: Early Lyme disease is still treated with one of the following oral antibiotics: doxycycline, amoxicillin or cefuroxime axetil for 14-21 days. The length of treatment or doses may be increased for people who have had a prior infection or whose symptoms begin more than 21 days after tick bite. Antibiotics can be stopped if your skin clears and you do not have symptoms. If symptoms do not improve or continue to worsen after treatment, you should contact your doctor. Treatment for Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF) may also be started if you have a history of being bitten by a deer tick.

If you find a tick attached to your skin: The Society does not recommend routine antibiotic treatment for anyone bitten by a tick UNLESS the tick is positively identified as one of the species that transmits the bacteria that causes Lyme. AND the tick is thought to have been attached for at least 36 hours AND treatment can begin within 72 hours from the time the tick was removed. A fourth criterion, that more than 20% of local ticks are known to be infected, will be assumed to be the case throughout our region.

The guidelines do not apply if meeting some criteria. The physician can consider direct treatment with antibiotics OR specialist treatment with specialist input. Lyme disease is still treated with one of the following: amoxicillin, doxycycline, or cefuroxim axetil.

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Invasive Species: What’s in Your Neighborhood?

By Jen Stengle and Linda Rohleder

You might have noticed them crawling in your backyard or buzzing around your chandelier—alarming numbers of brown marmorated stink bugs settled down for winter this year in Putnam County. These alien invaders are just one of many invasive species that have taken hold in the metropolitan area. Perhaps you have noticed Japanese stilgrass (Microstegium vimineum) on your favorite hiking trail or have seen your viburnums eaten to shreds by Viburnum leaf beetle (Pershita viburni). These invasive plants and insects are just the ones we see. There are many more that we don’t notice, creeping to the bottom of our hiking boots and kayaks, hiding beneath the bark of our ash trees, nested in firewood picked up on the road.

While some of these invaders seem like they are no more than a nuisance, they impact our quality of life, the cost of our foods, and the health of the ecosystems that we enjoy as part of our natural heritage. Take the example of the Brown marmorat ed stink bug (Halyomorpha halys) buzzing around your house. While these insects are an indoor nuisance, once outside they and their young begin to feed on emerging fruits. Our regional apple orchards are prime victims, with the cost to fruit growers millions of dollars in extra labor and control measures.

Brown marmorated stink bugs don’t stop at apples; they are happy to eat all the same fruits that we do, in our orchards, farms, gardens, vineyards, and woodlands. Many of the fruits they feed on are the same foods that the birds and wildlife rely on.

To put some numbers to the impacts of these alien invaders, more than 100 non-indigenous species are now established in the United States. The current annual environmental, economic, and health-related costs of invasive species exceed those of all other natural disasters combined. The most widely referenced estimate (Pimentel et al. 2005) reports that invasive species cost the United States more than $120 billion in damages every year. In 2011 alone, the Department of the Interior spent $100 million on invasive species prevention, early detection and rapid response, control and management, research, international cooperation and habitat restoration. This doesn’t include state and local costs. Many municipalities, already stretching their budgets, are unprepared when invasive species devastate their trees or clog their waterways.

But it’s not just the government that has to deal with these impacts. An aquatic invasive plant, Eurasian watermilfoil (Myriophyllum spicatum) invaded Vermont lakefront property values up to 16 percent and Wisconsin lakefront property values by 13 percent. Homeowners managing their backyards endured severe skin reactions, scarring and blindness. While some of these invaders seem like they are no more than a nuisance, they impact our quality of life, the cost of our foods, and the health of the ecosystems that we enjoy as part of our natural heritage.

Learn, Look and Lend a Hand: NY Invasive Species Awareness Week

Invasive species affect all New Yorkers - from hikers to highway personnel, from birders to boaters and farmers to fishermen. The first annual NY Invasive Species Awareness Week (ISAW) will provide opportunities for all citizens of New York to participate in invasive species awareness events around the state. Join with local environmental organizations, hikers, and trail clubs to spread awareness and learn how to help prevent the spread of invasive species.

How do they get here?

Plants and animals have always traveled with us. Travel, international trade, and the Internet have all promoted the movement of exotic species to our region. The more we travel, the more goods we import, the greater the chance that we accidentally transport exotic hitchhikers. Our cars, boats, and hiking boots become pathways for invasive species.

Sometimes it’s accidental; stiltgrass seeds can be trapped in soil on construction equipment or hiking boots. But sometimes it’s more intentional: a beautiful shrub planted in our yards produces seeds that unintentionally start new plants in the local park.

Brown marmorated stink bug and Asian multicolored lady beetles have had to take extra steps or hire contractors to cordon openings, replace screens, and seal softs and cracks in doors and windows. Brown marmorated stink bugs don’t stop at apples; they are happy to eat all the same fruits that we do, in our orchards, farms, gardens, vineyards, and woodlands. Many of the fruits they feed on are the same foods that the birds and wildlife rely on.

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One of New York’s newest invasive species, Feral wine (Stas scisfo), is one such escapee, brought in intentionally to fantasize and hunting preserves and escaped into the wild. Without predators, these destructive and dangerous hogs are becoming established in New York—especially in the Catskills—tearing up crops and destroying farmland.

Another escapee, Giant Hogweed (Heracleum mantegazzianum) was sold as an ornamental garden plant up to a few years ago. Like many invasive plants, it is quite striking, but this beauty is a beast, causing severe skin reactions, scarring and blindness.

What Can You Do?


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to encourage invasive species regulation


citizens, get out on the trails or on

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Gardens, Vineyards, and Woodlands. Many

Invasives and learn more at nynjtc.org/invasives


to the office one or two days a week to help

invasive species data and create maps that are

1. Start new plants in the local park.

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4. Brown marmorated stink bug and Asian multicolored lady beetles have had to take extra steps or hire contractors to cordon openings, replace screens, and seal softs and cracks in doors and windows.

Japanese stilgrass Microstegium vimineum


For scouts, tabled at events, and regularly promotes our organization while hiking. He’s not above using his dog to get someone’s attention. “Baron is cute but he is about 30 pounds and I have a feeling of being on a good team.”

About: “I had decades of enforcement from the trails that someone else made and kept up. Finally, over the past two decades, I’ve begun to ‘pay it forward.’”

“Perhaps surprisingly, my Army experience, even in Vietnam, did not ruin my enjoyment of wild places. In fact, engineer officer training gave me a useful foundation for map and compass method work in more peaceful surroundings.”

Find your place with the Trail Conference. Visit nynjtc.org or contact Volunteer Coordinator John Leigh, jleig@nynjtc.org.

Keep up with our efforts to control invasives and learn more at nynjtc.org/invasives

Invasives Strike Force volunteers are trained to identify 14 different invasive plants and insects and collect data along hiking trails throughout the Hudson Valley. In late 2012, Cliff attended the ISF training and last fall he switched to the Townsend Trail in Sterling Forest.

In 2012 Cliff retired as Director of Transportation for the Monroe School District. In his final presentation on invasive plants by our Invasives Strike Force coordinator Linda Rohleder. He took the ISF training, and last summer surveyed most of the trails on Schunemunk Mountain.

Now, he also goes to the office one or two days a week to help enter ISF data and create maps that are used in the field or for analysis. “I’m learning new things and keeping myself mentally active as well as physically active. And I enjoy my time in the office. It’s very nice for people. I have a feeling of being on a good team.”

Japanese stilgrass Microstegium vimineum

Brown marmorated stink bug and Asian multicolored lady beetles have had to take extra steps or hire contractors to cordon openings, replace screens, and seal softs and cracks in doors and windows. Clean and dry anything that comes in contact with water (boats, trailers, equipment, even your dog). Never release plants, fish, or animals into a body of water unless they came out of that body of water. If you have the “invasive bug, don’t patch it up in the brush or into the water. New York State maintains a list of approved baitfish species. Ask your bait shop what they are carrying. Hikers, Birders, Outdoor Enthusiasts: Chances are, you’re out there to enjoy nature. The last thing you want to do is introduce an invasive species. Clean equipment, boots, and gear between trips, preferably, before leaving an infested area. Make sure to remove all seeds and other plant parts. And since you’re already out there, learn to recognize and report invasive species. If you’d like to improve your ID skills and learn how to report what you’ve found, attend one of the many free invasive plant ID classes offered throughout the region.

Citizens: Chances are your municipality will have to pay for invasive species control or removal. Whether it’s a bad neighbor like running Bamboo (Phyllostachys sp.) or the sudden loss of trees on town property to eagle and other birds, municipalities often feel the burden of having to pay to remove invasive species and collect data along hiking trails throughout the Hudson Valley. In late 2012, he attended the ISF training for volunteers. Is being offered by the Trail Conference.

• July 12 – Westchester Land Trust, Bedford Hills, NY

• July 13 – Cornell Cooperative Extension, Rockland Co., Stony Point, NY

To register, go to http://nynjtc.org/view/workshops
Delegates at Large
Board of Directors,

The Nominations Committee of the Trail Conference presents the following candidates for the Board of Directors for three-year terms and Delegates at large for one-year terms. Please vote on the attached Ballot at the Annual Meeting to be held on October 18 in Ossining, NY.

For Board of Directors

David Sive

Rick is the current Treasurer of the Trail Conference and chair of the Finance Committee. He is the Managing Director of TTP Associates, a commercial real estate developer and manager of transportation facilities, principal of Hess Partners, and is the executive director of the “Love Newark Committee,” a public-private environmental initiative to clean up and promote Newark, a New Jersey native and a key liaison between the Trail Conference and The New School, a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and the Boston Conservatory. Rick has been a Trail Conference volunteer for the last 13 years for the Trail Conference. He has volunteered over 2,000 hours annually hiking trails in Westchester County, publishing a successful book on the history of Westchester’s hiking trails in 2007 and is a dedicated outdoorsman and a key liaison between the Trail Conference and the business community, where he believes development can be incorporated into the environment.

Edward Salt

Mahwah, NJ

Edward is a professor of biology at Ramapo College, and clinical professor and neurosciences at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. He has served on and chaired theMahwah Regional Board and the Mahwah Board of Education. He is a dedicated outdoorsman and a key liaison between the Trail Conference and the Cleveland Clinic. Edward serves on the Headquarters Construction Committee of the Trail Conference. He has served on the board of directors since 2009.

Christine DeBeor

New Paltz, NY

Christine is executive director of the Wallkill Valley Land Trust (VLT), since 2009. Prior to that, she was a Trail Conference staff member, serving as a Trail Conference staff member and number, serving as a Trail Conference student for five years in the mid-1990s. Christine is a dedicated outdoorsman and has served on the board of directors since 2009.

For Delegates-at-Large

Theresa Alf

Paul Makau

Steven Marano

Norman Bramen

Alyce Dold

Harvey Fishman

Bob Fuller

Pre Hecker

Ruth Rehman

Alison Luddington-Cantor

Paul Makau

Steven Marano

Norman Bramen

Alyce Dold

Harvey Fishman

Bob Fuller

Pre Hecker

Ruth Rehman

Alison Luddington-Cantor

Robert Ward

For Members of the Trail Conference who could not attend the Annual Meeting, one may vote by mail. Ballots must be postmarked by October 17 and sent to the Office of the Secretary, 362 Route 17 South, Ramsey, NJ 07446.

2014 Nominees for Board of Directors, Delegates at Large

The Nominations Committee of the Trail Conference presents the following candidates for the Board of Directors for three-year terms and Delegates at large for one-year terms. Please vote on the attached Ballot at the Annual Meeting to be held on October 18 in Ossining, NY.

For Board of Directors

Walter E. Daniels

Westport, Conn.

Following his 30-year career at IBM, Walt has volunteered over 2,000 hours annually hiking trails in Westchester County, publishing a successful book on the history of Westchester’s hiking trails in 2007 and is a dedicated outdoorsman and a key liaison between the Trail Conference and the business community, where he believes development can be incorporated into the environment.

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Ruth Rehman

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Robert Ward

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La Sportiva Wildcat Trail Shoes
Reviewed by Howard E. Friedman

I have been wearing/testing these shoes for almost nine months. The shoe is designed as a trail running shoe, but I recommend them for hiking and backpacking as well. Introduced a few years ago by La Sportiva, an Italian company best known for its rock climbing shoes and mountaineering boots, the Wildcat shoes are well constructed for running or hiking on uneven, rocky, root-covered, and even wet terrain. The shoes are not waterproof, a feature I desire as it allows wet or damp socks and shoes to dry when they do get wet (which they will).

La Sportiva uses a proprietary sticky rubber compound on the sole to provide excellent traction via strategically placed low-profile lugs. The upper material surrounding the foot is a type of mesh that overlays a thin non-mesh liner so debris does not penetrate. I have actually felt a breeze on my toes when running as air wicks through.

The tongue of the shoe is widened to further help keep pebbles out. The midsole includes two layers of different types of EVA to provide support and cushioning; yet, the shoes overall are not too heavy. Each shoe weighs about 12-13 ounces and has a 12 millimeter drop from heel to toe.

I have run about 10-12 miles a week in these on trails and grass, running both uphill and down, in dry and wet conditions, and have found them comfortable and reliable, albeit with some wearing down of the outermost heel lug.

Howard E. Friedman, DPM, is an avid hiker; a podiatrist in Suffern, NY, and a frequent contributor to Trail Walker.

Rating: 4.5 boots out of 5

Ratings are 1-5 boots, with a 5-boot ranking signifying “This is very good. I like it.”

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**Hemlock: A Forest Giant on the Edge**

By David R. Foster
Yale University Press, 2014
Reviewed by Jonathan Beard

One of the sunniest, yet saddest, spots in Harriman Park is where the Arden-Suffield Trail meets the Dunning. Thirty years ago, this was a shady glade; now there is nothing but tall hemlocks blocked the sun. The trees are still there; their decaying trunks now line both sides of the woods road.

Most of the hemlocks in the park and throughout the Hudson Valley are dead—victims of a tiny insect, the wooly adelgid. The adelgid has already eradicated hemlocks in the South and is now in New England. In a decade or two, this once dominant tree will not be found south of Maine.

The fate of this species is explained in detail by a team of foresters and ecologists in Hemlock, a beautifully illustrated book centered around the trees in Harvard Forest, a research station near Petersham, Massachusetts. They tell a story, based on research done at the forest, that goes back 10,000 years, to the point when the glaciers retreated, and trees colonized the East Coast.

Hemlocks slowly became one of the dominant species, until suddenly, about 5,500 years ago, they virtually disappeared—probably due to an invasive pest insect. It took the hemlocks about 1,500 years to recover.

What is occurring now, and will happen to our forests, as they die off again? Surprisingly, the ecologists do not tell a tale of doom and gloom. Oaks, lichens, and beech all flourished when hemlocks died out 5,500 years ago, providing a bonanza of nuts for wildlife and humans.

Today, as hemlocks topple, sun-loving pines and hardwoods begin to replace them, and populations of many birds, insects, and mammals surge. But the writers of Hemlock do worry about the future, and do offer advice: increasing development in woodslands is one threat; global warming is another.

One lesson from Harvard Forest is the importance of letting the trees fall where they may: dying hemlocks provide habitat and nutrients for decades, or centuries. This book will make you see those reddish-brown logs in a new light.

Jonathan Beard is a Trail Conference member and frequent book reviewer for Trail Walker.

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**PEOPLE FOR TRAILS**


History: A life-long resident of Long Island with a passion for nature, Lee discovered hiking through the New York Walk Book. He started hiking in Harriman, then the Catskills, earning membership in the 3500 Club.

During those Catskill years, he collaborated with a friend to produce his first book, Hiking the Catskills, published by the Trail Conference in 1989. By then the thoughts turned towards updating that popular volume. Lee had moved further east on the island with his family; he ruled out commuting to the mountains, but proposed a new book.

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**Hiking Long Island? The question mark came from the Trail Conference, which nevertheless decided to take a chance on Lee’s proposal.

Where’s the Nature? “There is a lot of wildlife and popular space. There are moraine hills that offer ocean views. There are cranberry bogs, dunes, pine barrens, tidal wetlands, four main rivers. There’s a magnificent undeveloped coastline, including a maritime eastern red cedar forest. There are wild turkeys, hermit thrushes, whippoorwills, foxes silver and gray. There’s the fragrance of trailing arbutus...”

One thing he wants to say: “Get your children and grandchildren outside, more than once. Make each hike an adventure. There is no substitute for reality.”

Get Your Copy: http://www.nyntjc.org/product/hiking-long-island

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**NEW YORK – NEW JERSEY TRAIL CONFERENCE**

Our growing ranks of Retail Partners reward you for supporting us by offering discounts to our members. Check out the current list of partners at nyntjc.org/content/retail-partners. Then take your membership card with you when you visit them.
Overview: This short, moderate walk leads to a scenic brook and a dramatic natural cavern—the ‘stone church’—through which water and light fall and flow.

Trail Uses: Hiking, picnicking

Dogs: On leash

Acreage: 120 (approx.)

City/County/State: Dover Plains, Dutchess, NY

Fees: None

Park Description: This is a small town preserve, currently offering a single short hike (about 1.5 miles round-trip), but the scenic brook and dramatic cavern at the end of the trail make the Dover Stone Church a worthwhile destination. Depending on the flow of water, you may or may not be able to keep your feet dry, and you may or may not be able to gain entry into the cavern. Regardless of the water level, rocks along the stream are likely to be slick, so caution is urged at all times.

In addition to the Stone Church Brook, three small ponds dot a small meadow. On a recent visit, a walker spied a pair of mallards relaxing on a rock in the middle of one. A bench nearby invites humans to do the same. The steep slopes of West Mountain rise around the tranquil scene.

Access to the preserve and trail is by foot. While generally easy, the trail does follow the stream; the path often follows rocks or flat stones. It rises gently and you are soon at the gothic-like entrance to the Stone Church. To return, simply retrace your steps.

Directions: Take NY’s Route 22 to Dover Plains. Immediately south of the traffic light at Mill Street (Metro-North Rail Station), look for blue-and-gold historic sign on west side of road for Dover Stone Church. The drive is private, but open for pedestrians; do not take cars up it. Accordin - to a brochure on the town’s website, parking is permitted at the elementary school across the street when school is not in session, The Tabor House at 3128 Route 22, and at Four Brothers Restaurant, all within walking distance.

The small preserve offers a cool summer’s walk.

The gothic entry to the cavern led to its designation as the Dover Stone Church.

Trails overview: At this writing, there is a single trail of less than a mile in length. While generally easy, the trail does follow close alongside the Stone Church Brook and the rocks are often wet and slippery. High water may cover stepping stones during rainy periods. The Friends of Dover Stone Church, working with the Trail Conference, which adopted the trail in February 2014, plans to expand the trail network in the future.

From the trailhead, the path immediately descends on granite steps into a flat, man-made valley. The way here is lined by young maple trees that give a sense of formality to the start of the hike. At the end of this flat walk, another, shorter set of steps takes the path into woods and near the brook. You emerge briefly into an open area, where a way is mowed in both directions. Turn left. You will see another Welcome sign for the preserve. Follow the path across a wooden bridge; then along the stream bed; the path often follows rocks or flat stones. It rises gently and you are soon at the gothic-like entrance to the Stone Church. To return, simply retrace your steps.

The Trail Conference adopted trails in the preserve earlier this year.

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2,000 miles of trails; your membership helps us expand our horizons.

Included with membership, Trail Walker, 10% discount on purchases at many outdoor stores, and 25% discount on all Trail Conference maps and books purchased directly from the Trail Conference. Save time and a tree by joining or renewing online at www.nynjtc.org. Just click on the Join/Renew Now button.

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Select one:  \[ \square \] Join  \[ \square \] Renew  \[ \square \] Joint/Family  \[ \square \] Membership # if available

Include 25% Discount on Trail Conference maps, books, and other products. Visit nynjtc.org/trail-conf-maps and select trail guides from others, on our website, and get your 25% member discount!

Find it on our online store under Combos.

Visit www.nynjtc.org/panel/goshopping!  Or call 201-512-9348

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Workshops and Seminars on trail maintenance and construction, leadership training, wilderness first aid, chainsaw operation, environmental monitoring and GPS operation. Learn more about Trail U at nynjtc.org/trail-u

Access to a wide range of volunteer opportunities on-trail and off-trail. Visit nynjtc.org/volunteer

Make links to all these and more at nynjtc.org.

Support Trails, Parks and Open Space in the New York-New Jersey region by joining the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference.

NY-NJ Trail Conference BENEFITS

The Trail Conference maintains more than 2,000 miles of trails, advocates for parks, protects open space, and provides volunteer service opportunities in the great outdoors.

Your membership supports the trails you love and gives you these additional benefits: Go to nynjtc.org/membership

25% Discount on Trail Conference maps, books, and other products. Visit nynjtc.org/panel/goshopping!

Great Discounts at supporting outdoor retailers and other businesses. See our partners at nynjtc.org/content/retail-partners

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A joint membership is for two adults residing at the same address.

For my membership of $50 or more, send me a:  \[ \square \] Trail Conference Cap  \[ \square \] OR  \[ \square \] Harriman-Bear Mountain Map Set

To purchase a gift membership, call 201-512-9348, extension 26.

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\[ \square \] Check or money order enclosed  \[ \square \] Visa  \[ \square \] Mastercard  \[ \square \] Amex

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Make check or money order payable to the NY-NJ Trail Conference, and mail to: 156 Ramapo Valley Road, Mahwah, NJ 07430.

Taa-deductible. Dues are not refundable.