The Power of Passion for Trails

In the nonprofit world, validation comes in many forms. Some organizations seek the affirmation of their good deeds from donors and the public through complicated financial ranking systems. Others are satisfied by surviving the ebb and flow of organizational life cycles and keeping their doors open for one more day.

For the Trail Conference, building its reputation over the course of a century and serving as the go-to source for a great trail experience in the New York metropolitan region is not how I validate the effectiveness and impact of our organization. From my perspective, validation comes from within. People’s willingness to give their time and energy to an organization is a far more powerful measurement of its worthiness. In 2016, validation for the Trail Conference came from more than 2,400 volunteers who helped connect people with nature. These volunteers worked indoors and outside. Some got dirty, while others never needed a boot brush. Many were new and most were familiar faces. Altogether, our volunteers reported 104,000 hours of service. Including unreported hours, their donation of time is even larger.

But that is not the whole story. In addition to the energies of our volunteers, Trail Conference staff advanced the story. In addition to the energy of our volunteers, Trail Conference staff advanced the organization by contributing more than 48,000 hours of effort supporting volunteers, working with land managers, and helping the public access more than 2,100 miles of trails.

In 2016, the Trail Conference put over 152,000 hours of service into building, maintaining, and protecting trails—a new record.

And that is not the whole story. For the past 15 years (that’s 31,200 hours of employment at the Trail Conference), my efforts have been validated by the pride exuded from the smiles of a family on a trail we maintain or the pride exuded from our trail crews when they describe a work trip they just completed. We’d love to share your reasons for volunteering. Email your story to volunteers@nynjtc.org.

Love of Trails

Share Your Love of Trails

On Saturday, June 3, nature lovers and outdoor adventurers came together to celebrate all things trails at the Trail Conference’s National Trails Day Open House, sponsored by REI. The event, held at Trail Conference Headquarters, included guided hikes and stewardship opportunities through Ramapo Valley County Reservation. Around 300 people attended the celebration, board member of both the Trail Conference and American Hiking Society, which founded National Trails Day—gave opening remarks. Hikers then took to the trails, while our REI stewardship volunteers helped remove 38 bags of garlic mustard, six bags of litter, and even a kitchen sink from the Reservation. Around 300 people attended the celebration, which also included tours of our headquarters at Darlington Schoolhouse; raffle prizes; food trucks; and partner organization encouraging year-round engagement with nature.

At the Trail Conference, every day is trails day,” said Executive Director Ed Goodell. “It’s very gratifying to see so many people enjoying trails and celebrating with us.”

National Trails Day Open House
The glory of wildflowers is celebrated in the summer exhibition at Trail Conference Headquarters, on view through Sept. 28. The juried show features nearly 40 paintings, drawings, and photographs depicting or inspired by flowers, which were carefully selected from a wide array of submitted works. Most of the works can be purchased. The artists will donate a portion of the purchase price to benefit the work and programs of the Trail Conference.

In a gallery first, we have secured a corporate sponsor for this exhibition. A generous donation from Dick Blick Art Materials will allow prizes to be distributed to outstanding participants. The Art Selection Committee is grateful to our prize jurors, Joseph Gennarini, President of the Ridgewood Camera Club, and Lou Spina, President of Pascack Art Association, who volunteered their time and expertise in selecting the winning artists. (Winners were not available at press time; see nynjtc.org/news-center for the full list.)

If You Go

> What: Wildflowers Exhibition

> Where: Trail Conference Headquarters, 600 Ramapo Valley Rd., Mahwah, N.J.

> When: Open through Sept. 28, during regular Trail Conference hours, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday

> Details: Find out more at nynjtc.org.

Trail Conference Staff Update

Welcome New Staffers

Heather Darley, Communications Assistant, of Montvale, N.J., joined the Trail Conference in 2016. Heather started as the assistant invasive species program coordinator, and became the communications assistant this May. She is also a volunteer Catskills summit steward. Heather graduated from Ramapo College of New Jersey in 2015 with a bachelor’s degree in environmental studies. With a background in invasive species, volunteer coordination, and environmental advocacy, she is excited to collaborate with Trail Conference staff and volunteers and promote the wonderful work they do.

Tori Welch, Field Manager, is from Hamburg, N.Y. Tori joined the Trail Conference in 2016 as a Conservation Corps member serving in Sterling Forest. She became full-time field manager this spring. In her new role, she looks forward to teaching sustainable trail building with the Trail Conference Conservation Corps. Tori graduated from the State University of New York at Fredonia in 2015 with a bachelor’s degree in environmental science. In her free time, Tori enjoys making music on her djembe and being outdoors camping, hiking, biking, and playing softball and tennis.

Farewell to Trail Builders

Anna Koenigshof and Kevin Simpson have left the Trail Conference to pursue other trail-building opportunities locally and abroad.

Anna Koenigshof, Trail Builder/Educator, started with the Trail Conference in 2012 after leading trail maintenance and construction crews all over the country. She was instrumental in the development and success of both our Trail University and Conservation Corps programs. She served as manager of the Bear Mountain Trails Project, which includes the rehabilitation and reroute of the Appalachian Trail on Bear Mountain.

Kevin Simpson, Bear Mountain Field Manager, joined the Trail Conference as a Conservation Corps member on Bear Mountain in 2013. He returned to share his experience working with young people and knowledge of trails as field manager on the project.

We thank Anna and Kevin for all of their contributions to the Trail Conference and wish them the best of luck.

Glenda Haas

Sunflowers, Aix-en-Provence, France. Oil on canvas.

Board of Directors

Heather Darley, Chair

Vice Chair

Counsel

Directors

Chris Connolly

Walt Simpson

Mary Doorman

Andy Garriini

Susan Gorton

Gaylord Holmes

Richard Keatine

Staff

Edward Goodell, Executive Director

Joshua Howard, Deputy Executive Director

Don Weise, Development Director

Mary Perro, Operations & Finance Manager

Linda Rohleder, Land Stewardship Director

For a full list of staff, visit nynjtc.org/aboutus.

The New York-New Jersey Trail Conference is a volunteer, non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization. It is a federation of more than 150 outdoor groups and 50,000 individuals.

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We thank Anna and Kevin for all of their contributions to the Trail Conference and wish them the best of luck.
For many hikers in our region, Norvin Green State Forest and Long Pond Ironworks Trails in Norvin Green State Forest are less popular trails, you won’t just enjoy a “private” hike, you’ll also help to reduce wear and tear in a way that doesn’t contribute to erosion and trail damage. Though this initial reblazing project is complete, we still live a need for maintainers to help keep these and other trails in the area in top condition. If you’re looking for a trail to adopt as your own, email pdolan@nynjtc.org.

The Empire State Trail is expected to traverse 27 counties, 136 municipalities, and 35 state parks. Over 50 bridges, culverts, and tunnels will need to be built or replaced over the next three to four years to complete the project. As the trail gaps are connected, one can view the Empire State Trail functioning like a backbone of a statewide trail network.

I envision the Empire Trail to be very popular, especially among bikers searching for off-road rules and the increasing number of users who prefer casual, easy-to-moderate hikes. Although $200 million is a large sum, studies of the existing but unfinished Erie Canal Trail, intercon-
nect various rail trails between NYC and the southern Adirondacks, and improve Bicycle Route 9 north to Canada. As hikers, many of us seek solitude in nature and feel an obligation to tread lightly on the land. We encourage you to take advantage of these trail improvements to both escape the packed lists of other better-known spots and ensure that you’re not contributing to the overuse issue. By hiking less popular trails, you won’t just enjoy a “private” hike, you’ll also help to reduce wear and tear in a way that doesn’t contribute to erosion and trail damage. Though this initial reblazing project is complete, we still live a need for maintainers to help keep these and other trails in the area in top condition. If you’re looking for a trail to adopt as your own, email pdolan@nynjtc.org.

News in Brief

Nominations for Board, At-Large Voting Members

The Trail Conference Nominating Committee invites nominations for membership on the Board of Directors and At-Large Voting Members. The qualifications for Board of Directors are current membership in the Trail Conference and service participation in trail activities or on a Trail Conference committee. The qualification for At-Large Voting Members is current membership in the Trail Conference.

Please email your recommendations to

 nominations@nynjtc.org. The deadline for receipt of nominations is August 4.

Save the Date: Volunteer Award Nominations

The Trail Conference call for Volunteer Award nominations has been moved to October this year. With more than 2,400 people donating their time to the organization, we know award-worthy volunteers are in our parks. Help us recognize them by nominating individuals who have given above and beyond. These awards, presented by the Trail Conference Board, will be handed out at a ceremony in February or March 2018. Find previous winners at nynjtc.org/content/awards.

Why Try a New Trail

As hikers, many of us seek solitude in nature and feel an obligation to tread lightly on the land. We encourage you to take advantage of these trail improvements to both escape the packed lists of other better-known spots and ensure that you’re not contributing to the overuse issue. By hiking less popular trails, you won’t just enjoy a “private” hike, you’ll also help to reduce wear and tear in a way that doesn’t contribute to erosion and trail damage. Though this initial reblazing project is complete, we still live a need for maintainers to help keep these and other trails in the area in top condition. If you’re looking for a trail to adopt as your own, email pdolan@nynjtc.org.

Putting trails at the top of the budget rather than the bottom is an overdue acknowledgement that trails and open space are both essential, serving as quality-of-life amenities as well as cost-effective economic engines.

Goodell

Goodell

Edward Goodell
Executive Director
goodell@nynjtc.org

Voting Members

The qualification for At-Large Voting Members is current membership in the Trail Conference. Self-nominations for At-Large Voting Members and Board of Directors are appropriate and welcome. Please email your recommendations to

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Imagine looking out over a breathtaking expanse of rich colors and textures, a complement of all the colors and shapes of the trees and rocks, as your eyes are naturally guided to the light piercing through the clouds at the breathtaking expanse of rich colors and textures that meet the eye.

When I first approached about participating in the Rock the Ridge race, I was immediately interested, but unsure I’d be able to cut it. What finally convinced me to sign up was the powerful visual of sharing the experience with teammates, testing myself while exploring the beautiful Gunks and influencing the protection of a greatly admired landscape. The experience with team-mates, making me feel grateful that there are such passionate advocates for preserving our natural world.

If I could describe Rock the Ridge in one word, I’d have to say: rewarding. My 13.8-mile section of the 50-mile meandered through areas of Mohonk Preserve and Minnewaska State Park Preserve that were new to me. It was exciting and challenging at times, but once I got into a rhythm, the motivation to reach the end came quickly. A fantastic thing about Rock Ridge is the inspiring, electric, and powerful visual of sharing race day with other runners and walkers — total strangers — passed positive vibes during the entire day, keeping spirits high. It was a unique and inclusive thing to experience. Seeing people at events like this makes me feel grateful that there are such passionate advocates for preserving our natural world.

By participating in Rock the Ridge 2017, the TRAIL Conference team raised approximately $20,000 for the organization’s land conservation efforts.

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**TRIBUTES**

From a group of close friends, in loving memory of our friends and teammates.


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**CORPORATE, FOUNDATION & OTHER DONORS**


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**RUN AND WALK SETS**

A 5-year-old boy and 93-year-old woman were among the record 330 runners and walkers to cross the finish line at this year’s MRCC/Trail Conference 5K Run and 5K Walk on May 24 at the Masonic Center. The TRAIL Conference’s historic headquarters at Darlington Schoolhouse, winding through the woodlands and waterways of Ramapo Reservation along the way, was Hosted by the Mahwah Regional Chamber of Commerce (MRCC) and the TRAIL Conference, the event featured food, music, camaraderie, and a variety of exhibits. Near-perfect conditions led to several course records being broken this year.

The annual event helps attract new people to the TRAIL Conference and draw attention to our efforts to restore the popular trails of Ramapo Reservation.

Last year, MRCC donated $10,000 to the TRAIL Confer- ence, and a similar donation is expected this year. The TRAIL Conference thanks MRCC, their event volun-teers, and all participants for making 2017 the best year yet! *Don White*

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**REGISTRATION OPENS FOR SRT RUN/HIKE**

Celebrate one of the storied long-distance trails created by the TRAIL Conference by participating in a footrace along the Shawangunk Ridge Trail. Sept. 15-16. Expected 10,000 runners and ultra-runners can choose from 30 miles, 50 miles, or the entire 70-mile length of the SRT. There’s also a half-marathon option. Find more info and register at www.srt rundownhike.com.

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**DONORS TO THE ANNUAL FUND**

For February 16 – May 15, 2017

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<tr>
<th>Donor Name</th>
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<td>Paul Doney</td>
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<td>Diana DiSpiarra</td>
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While trails can take you to some breathtakingly beautiful places, it’s no secret that they have their fair share of challenges, too. Many of us have out at one point or another had to stare across an illegal dumping site, trailhead vandalism, or a pack of off-road vehicle users tearing up the trail on ATVs and dirt bikes. The Trail Conference receives reports like these from the public on a near-daily basis, and one question comes up consistently: What can I do to help?

Luckily, if you’re hiking on state park land in New Jersey, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) has a hotline for exactly these issues. Stop reading, take out your phone, and save the following number: 877-WARN-NJ (877-927-6337). Calling this number is the best way to let state park personnel know about illegal use on their land. For those who carry a smartphone, the new WARN DEP mobile app serves the same function. (Find more info about the app at www.nj.gov/dep/warnhot.htm.) If you find evidence of illegal use, call the WARN DEP phone number or make a report via the app as soon as possible to ensure the park can follow up.

Thank you to Our Sponsors
Bear Mountain Tourism
The Catskills
Catskill 3500 Club
Catskill Mountain Club
Catskill 3500 Club
Catskill Mountain Club
Hunter Foundation
Bear Mountain
Appalachian Trail Conservancy

For the second year, REI has donated $30,000 to the Trail and Summit Steward Program. Additional support for the Steward Program has been provided by:

Breakneck Ridge
Mountain Tops
Catskills
Seamus Carroll
Michelle Smith
Bear Mountain
Appalachian Trail Conservancy

Alongside our partners in the New Jersey Keep It Green Coalition, the Trail Conference never stops working to protect and promote open space in the Garden State.

Join the Trail Conference, Get Great Deals

Check out some of the latest Trail Conference retail partners and their great, members-only discounts. Visit nynjtc.org/retail-partners for all details on all partner discounts.

Liberty Family of Vehicles
Get dealer’s invoice pricing on Subaru, Hyundai, Kia, and Genesis vehicles.
Liberty Subaru
35 Route 17 North Mahwah, NJ 07430
201.529.2400
libertycarsanj.com

Dottie Audrey’s Bakery Kitchen
10% off your bill. 549 Route 17 South Duck Cedar Plaza Tuxedo Park, NY 10987
845.915.3088
www.dottieaudreys.com

Seven Lakes Station Taproom and Market
10% off your tab, bar only. Market and happy hour excluded.
201.445.5000
www.sevenlakesstation.com

Ramsey Outdoor
10% discount on non-sale items, retail store only. 305 Route 17 North Ramsey, NJ 07060
201.378.5000
www.ramseyoutdoor.com

Open Space Funding
Land conservation and stewardship efforts in New Jersey saw an infusion of green this spring, when $55.9 million in Green Acres funding was finally appropriated by Governor Chris Christie in the beginning of May. This marked closure to a process that had been in progress since November 2014, when New Jersey residents overwhelmingly voted to establish a long-term, sustainable source for open space funding. The Trail Conference worked with the New Jersey Keep It Green Coalition to ensure these funds would go toward new land acquisition, capital improvement projects in state-owned lands, and Blue Acres funding.

Inaugural Open Space Month
June has been designated New Jersey’s inaugural Open Space Month. The Trail Conference worked with Keep It Green in promoting this campaign to celebrate New Jersey’s rich history of land protection, to aid in the future for acquisition and stewardship and, simply, to celebrate the natural resources of the state and the recreational opportunities our lands provide. The June 3 National Trails Day Open House held at Trail Conference Headquarters and the June 17 Day of Stewardship at the Delaware Water Gap were terrific opportunities to celebrate Open Space Month.

Keeping an Eye on Trenton
This is a critical year in New Jersey politics. The governor’s seat and all 120 seats in the Assembly and Senate up for re-election in New Jersey this year, but a great deal of focus remains on the incumbent administration and their maneuverings. The Keep It Green Coalition has monitored Christie’s repeated attempts to move money intended for communities recovering from environmental damages caused by corporate polluters to the General Fund. Natural Resource Damages (NRD) funds are critical for both rural and urban communities throughout the state at attempting to rebuild from the disasters of corporations. The Trail Conference and its coalition partners at Keep It Green were successful in getting a question on this November’s ballot to ensure important communities get the money rightfully theirs to recover from pollution.

Adam Page Taylor
New York-New Jersey Trail Conference volunteers built the very first section of the Appalachian Trail, through Bear Mountain-Harriman state parks, in 1923. The passion that the A.T. brings out in people and the community that surrounds this incredible trail is nothing short of inspiring. We’re proud to play an important role in its continuing legacy.

FOR THE LOVE OF THE TRAIL

Meet the 2017 New Jersey Ridgerunners

Ridgerunners are seasonal employees who hike and camp along the Appalachian Trail to help hikers and other visitors understand Leave No Trace principles and avoid unnecessary resource damage. The Trail Conference partners with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) and New Jersey State Parks to train and deploy ridgerunners along the Trail in N.J. Say hello to ridgerunners Ellen Mathias, George Rue, and Matthew Derrickson when you’re out on the A.T. this summer!

Two Projects Receive Grants from ATC, L.L. Bean

Two in-the-works Trail Conference projects on the Appalachian Trail have been made possible by grants from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy through funding from L.L. Bean. Volunteers will be rebuilding rotting steps at the intersection of Taconic Parkway and Miller Hill Road in Dutchess County, N.Y., and repairing the footbridge at the Little Dam Inlet in Orange County, N.Y. The grants total $3,755. Thanks to ATC and L.L. Bean for their support!

Harlem Valley Appalachian Trail Community Honored

The Harlem Valley Appalachian Trail Community (HVATC) was honored with the Outdoors Award of Distinction at a breakfast on May 9 recognizing the winners of the 2017 Dutchess Tourism Awards of Distinction. The towns of Dover and Pawling were officially recognized as the HV ATC on March 2, 2013. Working with the Trail Conference, more than 75 volunteers spent two-and-a-half years constructing the 1,600-foot boardwalk, which includes a 34-foot bridge across the Great Swamp in Pawling. This effort has increased local stewardship and expanded sustainable tourism efforts.

Reroute on Bear Mountain Nears Completion

The Megalithic Trail Crew is working on the historic relocation and restoration effort of the Appalachian Trail in Bear Mountain State Park. This season, the crew aims to complete the final 0.25-mile reroute of the Appalachian Trail on the Upper East Face of Bear Mountain. Seven Conservation Corps members, two field managers, and hundreds of volunteers are building approximately 250 stone stairs and a large section of crib wall to create a trail that will withstand the 100,000-plus annual visitors to this segment of the A.T.—and they need your help! If you enjoy working outdoors and learning new skills, the Megalithic Trail Crew is eager to meet you out on the trail. Over the last 10 years, people of all ages and walks of life have worked together on this crew learning how to build sustainable trails. The crew is at work five days a week and will teach you everything you need to know to help make an impact on the legacy of the Appalachian Trail. Find out how to get involved at bit.ly/tc-mtc.
There and Back Again: From Thru-Hiker to Volunteer Leader

On Sept. 21, 2016, I reached the northern terminus of the Appalachian Trail at 1 p.m. I totaled the 2,190 miles and the hike was over. For 168 days I was heading to Maine and I reached the summit. After the hike, I hiked down the mountain. On the way down I was in a daze, a mix of emotions and thoughts. I knew I needed to stay connected to the Trail, and I knew I needed to give back to the community. I joined the Trail Conference and became a volunteer chair of the Appalachian Trail Chair committee.

I needed to stay connected to the Trail, that I knew. As a volunteer, I was able to give back to the community. I knew I needed to have a piece of the Trail to oversee and stay connected to that community. I soon took on the role of A.T. Chair for Orange County with the Trail Conference. I have the most awesome job of overseeing the Appalachian Trail in the Catskill Park. My goal is to interact with current thru-hikers and day hikers to tell the Trail Conference story and share a little trail magic. Our maintainers through Orange and Rockland counties for New York.

I needed to play in the history of the Appalachian Trail as builders, maintainers, and protectors. What better way to tell that story than to attend A.T. Days?

This year, on May 17, I started driving south with Carole Dello, Trail Conference volunteer Doug Senterman to set up a Trail Conference table in Damascus, Maryland for the first time. We arrived Thursday morning at 7 a.m. and set up our camp. It was so exciting to see hikers from the Class of 2017 run over to our table and say, “I’m from New York/New Jersey and I live right here!” pointing to the big map of the A.T. through the two states. To hear those hikers say, “Oh, you are the organization I can join to give back to the A.T. community when I finish my hike,” was incredibly rewarding. I could see the future generations of the Trail Conference standing before me.

On Sunday as we were packing up camp, this year’s class was doing the same in tent city, preparing to continue their journey. As they walked past us to head back onto the Trail, they waved and said, “See you in New York!” Mission accomplished: The 2017 hikers now not only know the Trail Conference exists, they are excited about the organization and our work.

Trail Conference Makes Its Appalachian Trail Days Debut

During my thru-hike last year, I attended Appalachian Trail Days in Damascus, Va.—the largest A.T. event in the world. Past thru-hikers have a reunion, current hikers are inducted into their “class,” and every gear rep and who’s who of the A.T. community attends this festival. Last year I thought to myself, the Trail Conference needs to be here.

The Trail Conference needs to share the important role it has played, and continues to play, in the history of the Appalachian Trail— as builders, maintainers, and protectors. What better way to tell that story than to attend A.T. Days?

This year, May 17, I started driving south with Carole Dello, Trail Conference volunteer Doug Senterman to set up a Trail Conference table in Damascus, Maryland for the first time. We arrived Thursday morning at 7 a.m. and set up our camp. It was so exciting to see hikers from the Class of 2017 run over to our table and say, “I’m from New York/New Jersey and I live right here!” pointing to the big map of the A.T. through the two states. To hear those hikers say, “Oh, you are the organization I can join to give back to the A.T. community when I finish my hike,” was incredibly rewarding. I could see the future generations of the Trail Conference standing before me.

On Sunday as we were packing up camp, this year’s class was doing the same in tent city, preparing to continue their journey. As they walked past us to head back onto the Trail, they waved and said, “See you in New York!” Mission accomplished: The 2017 hikers now not only know the Trail Conference exists, they are excited about the organization and our work.

Greater Blairstown Becomes the First Appalachian Trail Community in New Jersey

The Trail Conference welcomes Greater Blairstown as the first Appalachian Trail Community in New Jersey. A.T. Trail Communities promote and protect the Appalachian Trail and act as good friends and neighbors to the Trail, welcoming thru-hikers as well as day hikers and other casual users of the A.T. Greater Blairstown was approved as an A.T. Community last October, and on April 22, an inaugural ceremony was held beside Blair Falls to officially bestow the designation upon the area. Greater Blairstown joins 40 other towns and cities along the A.T. corridor from Georgia to Maine that support and promote the Trail. Hundreds of folks turned out for the celebration, including local elected officials and legislators, generating important support for the work of the Trail Conference and its hundreds of volunteers.

Karen Lutz, Director of the Mid-Atlantic Region for the Appalachian Trail Conference, encewed the event, and Peter Dolan, the New Jersey Program Coordinator for the Trail Conference, led a hike on a section of the Trail from Blairstown Road to the fire tower. Trail Conference supervisors and maintainers Katie Kingsbury and John Pappas made sure the Trail was in prime condition for the special day.

The 72 miles of the Appalachian Trail through New Jersey are maintained by 40 volunteers and so many others who selflessly and collectively devote hundreds of hours to enhancing the experience of all who hike on the Trail. We look forward to working with our new friends in the Greater Blairstown Trail Community on educating the public about this wonderful natural resource in New Jersey.

Steve Weissman, New Jersey Appalachian Trail Chair

Long Distance Trails Crew Rehabilitating A.T. on West Mountain

The Long Distance Trails Crew (LDTC) is working on a long-term project to rehabilitate a section of the Appalachian Trail on West Mountain. The crew will quarry a large amount of big rocks and move them to a staging area closer to the worksite. Once there, they will begin building steps.

This week, LDTC members worked hard on the project, moving rocks and preparing the area for the construction of new steps. The crew is doing great work and the project is looking great.

JOSH STEWART
Rehabilitating the Trails of the Ramapo Mountains

The Trail Conference has a long history of building, maintaining, and protecting hundreds of miles of trails throughout the Ramapo Mountains. These mountains—a forested chain of the Appalachians in northeastern New Jersey and southeastern New York—serve the millions of outdoor enthusiasts throughout the greater New York metropolitan region. Local residents and visitors alike come to experience the distinctive features and vistas that the Ramapo trail systems make accessible. But after years of wear from an increasing volume of users, many of the trails need repairs—and in some cases, sustainable redesign and construction.

In places like Ramapo Valley County Reservation in Bergen County, N.J., and the many parks that adjoin it, trails are actually being loved a little too much. Trail erosion and widening from trampling feet, unofficial “shortcut” trails, and even hazardous overflow parking are taking a toll on the user experience and nature. Thanks to generous support from the William Froelich Foundation, the Trail Conference, in partnership with Bergen County Department of Parks, has developed a long-term plan to improve the heavily used trail systems of the Ramapo Mountains. And if we can raise $150,000 in private donations from the community, our two major supporters will match every donation. That means every dollar you and I donate to the newly created Ramapo Trails Fund will be tripled—and that $450,000 will allow us to complete this ambitious project.

Creating a more sustainable trail system in the Ramapo Mountains will take time, money, and plenty of hard work to finish. But all contributions—gifts of time and money—will allow the Trail Conference to significantly increase the public value of these hiking destinations. Together, we can enhance the overall outdoor experience they provide. Find out how to do your part in contributing to the restoration of the trails in the Ramapo Mountains at bit.ly/tc-rtf.

Meet the 2017 Invasives Strike Force Crew

The 2017 Invasives Strike Force (ISF) Conservation Corps Crew is declaring war on invasive plants in northern New Jersey and the Lower Hudson Valley. These “problem” plants don’t stand a chance with this crew protecting our natural areas.

Under the guidance of the Trail Conference’s Director of Land Stewardship Linda Rohleder, ISF Crew Leader Spencer Barrett is joined by Matt Simonelli, Ryan Goolic, and Daniel Pollard this season. The ISF Crew clears invasive plants along hiking trails to protect native habitats. They are hard at work removing emerging invasive species—those that are just starting to invade areas of our region. A few of their target species for this season are sticky sage, giant hogweed, silver vine, and jetbead.

A new addition to the ISF Crew is Allison McKenna, who is our Invasive Species Early Detection Summer Intern. She is attending the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY ESF). Allison will be monitoring emerging invasive plants in our area. Her work will help the ISF Crew in understanding how effective previous treatment efforts were and how these emerging invasive species are spreading throughout the region. Also aiding in our invasive species efforts is GIS Associate Robert Celestin. Robert’s mapmaking, GIS, and database skills help our ISF Crew to plan and prepare for the season ahead.

Whether you’re interested in protecting our parks, preserving our native plants and wildlife, or learning how to tame that vicious vine in your home garden, there’s a place for you on the Invasives Strike Force! For more information, contact us at invasives@nynjtc.org. To sign up for one of our volunteer work days, visit nynjtc.org/events and search “invasives.” We hope to see you on the trails!
Big Trail Improvements for an Up-and-Coming Trail Town Corridor

For even the casual visitor to Harriman and Sterling Forest state parks, the changing face of the trail towns along Route 17 through Rockland and Orange counties is obvious. The Tuxedo Hudson Company has fantastically been renovating properties in Sloatsburg and Tuxedo, with plans to open a bed-and-breakfast, coffee house, bicycle shop, and more along this corridor. Less conspicuous are the changes taking place a little farther out of town, in the area’s real attraction—the nearly 70,000 acres of open space that Harriman and Sterling Forest encompass. Just as these trail towns are receiving a facelift, the trails themselves are garnering attention. This season, the Trail Conference is proud to enlist two Conservation Corps trail crews—Floworks and Palisades—in eastern Sterling Forest encompass. Harriman and Sterling Forest are eager to teach new and experienced volunteers alike how to build multi-use trails.

To restructure some of western Harriman’s most historic trails. Find out more or donate at bit.ly/tc-tip.

Complementary to the 2017 work of the Floworks Crew is the service of the Palisades Trail Crew, funded by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation for a fifth season. In a Transcontinental Railroad-like build, the Palisades Crew is constructing trial southward while Floworks builds northward. Once finished, the new Munsee Eagle Trail will combine with the Hutchins and Red Back trails to create a 7-mile loop for hikers and mountain bikers to mutually enjoy. Both crews are eager to teach new and experienced volunteers alike how to build multi-use trails. Find out how to get involved at nynjtc.org/corps.

Whether through a donation to the Tuxedo Trails Improvement Fund or by coming out with our crews for a day of stewardship, you can play an important role in creating the trail adventures of your future in Sterling Forest.

Thank You, Volunteers!

1 On May 27, Boy Scout Troop 258 of Mahwah, N.J., installed a 32-foot bridge on the Schuber Trail in Ramapo Valley County Reservation. The project was organized by Eagle Scout candidate Manav Goel.

2 The Cub Scouts of Pack 258 of Suffern, N.Y., helped clear corridor on the Munsee Eagle Trail in Sterling Forest State Park on National Trails Day, June 3.

3 Volunteers from the Trail Conference and Friends of DFR State Park improved trails—including work on a bridge—in the Westchester County park on I Love My Park Day, May 6.

4 On May 16, the dismantled Batavia Kill shelter, built by Trail Conference volunteers, was flown into its new site near Windham in the Catskills. Thanks to the NYSDEC Forest Rangers and New York State Police Aviation Unit for making it happen. Now we need your help making the lean-to safe and usable. Email volunteers@nynjtc.org for info on how to help with construction.

5 Volunteer sawyer Peter Meyer made short work of this deadfall that was blocking the Long Path through the Ramapo Ridge Trail by the Bash Kill Wildlife Management Area in Sullivan County, N.Y.

6 Trail Conference volunteer Gene Giordano and staffer Sona Mason shared safe hiking tips with third graders from the Warwick Central School District in Orange County, N.Y., in May.

7 Members of the Chinese Mountain Club of New York collected several bags of garbage on the Shore Trail in Palisades Interstate Park on May 20.

Tool Donation Equips Next Generation of Maintainers

The Larry Wheelock Tool Room at Trail Conference Headquarters now has a full complement of trail maintenance tools, thanks to a generous donation by John Blenninger, volunteer trail maintainer and supervisor at Black Rock Forest for more than 40 years. A quintessential trail maintainer, John has accrued an artisanal collection of clipping and blazing tools, which will be available on loan to clipping crews.

Both the Trail Conference and Black Rock Forest have benefitted enormously from John’s dedication and meticulous attention to detail. In addition to forging strong relationships with park partners and at the Trail Conference, he has proven that no tree has bark too rough for a perfectly painted trail blaze.

Many thanks to John for his years of service and his big-hearted gift to the next generation of trail maintainers. —Sona Mason

Donations for trail-building tools and equipment are eligible for a dollar-for-dollar match through the Zakim Tool Fund. Find out more at bit.ly/tc-ztf.
Thirty years ago, few people worried about tick bites and even fewer had heard of Lyme disease. Now, not knowing about the danger can lead to serious illness. Ticks are tiny arachnids that latch onto mammals or birds, feeding on the blood of their host and passing on the germs they’ve picked up feeding on previous hosts. A tick that bites you after feeding on a deer, for example, can share those germs with you. Lyme disease is the best-known tick-borne illness, but ticks can also transmit Barbour-Sagginson, Babesia, anaplasma, mycoplasma, Ehrlichia, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, and the Powassan virus, a rare but potentially fatal brain infection. And, since ticks frequent-ly carry multiple pathogens, it’s not unusual for those who are bitten to develop more than one of these infections.

Does that mean a tick bite will automatically lead to one of those diseases? No. Not all ticks are infected. But recent studies indicate more ticks are carrying more germs than ever before. And indications are this is the worst tick season we’ve ever seen. Ticks are on the trail, on rocks, and probably even in your backyard. The Centers for Disease Control estimates 300,000 new cases of Lyme are diagnosed in the U.S. every year, but scientific groups like the International Lyme and Associated Diseases Society (ILADS) insist Lyme and other tick-borne illnesses are substantially under-reported and under-treated.

So, what’s a hiker to do? First, prevention is key. Wear clothing that covers most of your body and use tick repellent. Remove and launder your clothes promptly after hiking, and check your body for ticks or unusual marks.

What to Do After a Tick Bite

- If a tick is latched onto your body, remove it carefully at the head with sharp tweezers or a tick removal tool. Squeezing the tick could lead to infection.
- Clean the affected area thoroughly, and apply an antibiotic cream.
- Save the tick in a clear plastic bag to identify the species. This will help determine which infections could be involved.
- Symptoms of tick-borne infections often look and feel like a variety of other illnesses, such as the flu. Lyme disease is often accompanied by a “bulls-eye” rash at the site of the tick bite, but not always. If you’ve been bitten, contact a doctor experienced in treating tick-borne illnesses.

Hikers’ Directory

ADK Mid-Hudson Chapter www.midhudsonadk.org
ADK Mohican Chapter http://www.adkmohican.org
ADK New York Chapter www.adkny.org
ADK North Jersey Ramapo Chapter www.hudsonhikers.org
Adventures for Women http://www.adventuresforwomen.org
Alley Pond Environmental Center http://www.alleypond.com
AMC Mohawk Hudson Chapter http://www.amcmohawkhudson.org/
Appalachian Mountain Club Mid-Atlantic Office
Bellevalie School www.bruderhof.com/en/international-directory/united-states/bellevalie
Boy Scout Troop 121+Hudson Valley Council
Boy Scout Troop B, Brooklyn
Boy Scouts of America, Troop 21
Boy Scouts of America-Northern NJ Council www.njbsa.org
Canal Society of New Jersey http://www.canalsocietynj.org/
Catskill 3500 Club http://www.catskill3500-club.org
Catskill Mountain Club www.catskillmountainclub.org
Chinese Mountain Club of New York www.cmynj.org
Church Communities Foundation - Platte Cove Community www.bruderhof.com/
Closter Nature Center Association www.closternaturecenter.org
Community Search and Rescue http://www.commsar.org
Discover Outdoors www.discoveroutdoors.com
East Coast Greenway Alliance www.greenwaynj.org
East Hampton Treasurion Trail Society www.ehtps.org
Flat Rock Brook Nature Association www.flatrockbrook.org
Friends Of Garret Mountain http://friendsofgarretmountain.blogspot.com/
Friends of Pelham Bay Park http://www.pelhambaypark.org
Friends of the Hackensack River Greenway Inc. www.teaneckgreenway.com
Friends Of The Shawangunks Inc.
Frost Valley YMCA www.frostvalley.org
German-American Hiking Club http://pah.nynjtc.org/
Harmony Hall - Jacob Sloat House www.friendsofharmonehall.org
Hilltop Conservancy, Inc. www.hilltopconservancy.org
Hudson Highlands Gateway Task Force www.toxonfortcortlandt.com
Hudson River Greenway Valley www.hudsonrivergreenway.com
Hunterdon Hiking Club www.hunterdonhikingclub.org
Interstate Hiking Club www.interstatehikingclub.org
Lake Hopatcong Foundation www.lakehopatcongfoundation.org
Little Stony Point Citizens Association www.littlestonypoint.org
Long Island Greenbelt Trail Conference www.lipgreenbelt.org
Long Path North Hiking Club www.schoharie-conservation.org
Mohonk Preserve www.mohonkpreserve.org
Morris County Park Commission http://www.morrisparks.net
Mosaic Outdoor Mountain Club of Greater New York Inc. www.mosaic-gny.org/po/mia/L
Musconetcong Mountain Conservancy http://mmc.nynjtc.org
Nassau Hiking and Outdoor Club www.nassauhiking.org
Nelsonville Greenway Committee VillageOfNelsonville.org
New Jersey Highlands Coalition www.njhighlandscoalition.org
New Jersey Search and Rescue Inc. www.njasar.org
New York Alpine Club http://www.nywildcats.com
New York City Audubon Society, Inc. www.nycudubon.org
New York Ramblers www.nyramblers.org
NYC Outward Bound Center www.nycoutwardbound.org
Protect Our Wetlands, Water & Woods box292.bluehost.com/~pwww.org
Protectors of Pine Oak Woods www.protectors.org
Rip Van Winkle Hikers http://newyorkheritage.com/rvw
RPH Cabin Volunteers rphcabin.com
SAJ - Society for the Advancement of Judaism www.thesaj.org/
Shale Shades Trail Running Club http://www.shalleshadesrun.com
Shelton’s Shooters Sussex 4-H Club www.shooters.org
Shorewalkers Inc. www.shorewalkers.org
Sierra Club Lower Hudson Group sierracclub.org/atlantic/lower-hudson
Sierra Club Mid-Hudson Group newyork.sierrclu.org/midhudson/
Somers Land Trust http://somerslandtrust.org/
South Mountain Conservancy Inc. www.somoco.org
Southampton Trails Preservation Society www.southamptontrails.org
Storm King Adventure Tours www.stormkingadventures.com
SUNY Oneonta Outdoor Adventure Club www.oneonta.edu/outdoors
Tenafly Nature Center www.tenaflynaturecenter.org
The Catskill Center for Conservation & Development www.catskillcenter.org
The Highlands Natural Pool www.highlandsnaturapoool.org
The Nature Place Day Camp http://thenatureplace.com/
The Outdoor Club, Inc. www.outdoorclub.info
The Storm King School http://www.sks.org
Thendara Mountain Club www.thendaramountainclub.org
Town of Lewisboro www.lewisboro.org/parksrec
TriState Ramblers TSR.nynjtc.org/Schedules.html
University Outing Club www.universityoutingclub.com
Urban Trail Conference, Inc. www.urbantrail.org
Valley Stream Hiking Club www.meetup.com/vshclub
Wappingers Greenway Trail Committee www.westchestertrail.org
Westchester Trails Association http://www.westhike.org
WWW http://www.weshike.com/
Yeshiva University High School Outdoors Club

Michele deAntonio, MD

Mike Schneider with Michele deAntonio, MD

Mike Schneider is an Emmy Award winning journalist. He most recently created and hosted the PBS hiking/adventure show On The Trail with Mike Schneider. Michele deAntonio, MD is a board-certified pediatrician. She is a member of ILADS: The International Lyme and Associated Diseases Society. The couple are avid hikers and Trail Conference members.
**MAP TALK**

As the Trail Conference cartographer for nearly 10 years, I have received praises on the quality of our maps, as well as many inquiries about them. The purpose of this column is to share some answers to questions I regularly receive. If you have a question about our maps, email apgar@nynjtc.org and include “Map Talk Question” in the subject line. Your question might appear in the next issue of Trail Walker.

Jersey Apgar
Trail Conference Cartographer

At the Trail Conference, our basic principle is that we intend to show on the maps what is actually on the ground as much as possible. However, the fixed or variable what to show are shaped by several factors, including input from various sources of information, hierarchy of information significance, input from park managers, and issues with unofficial social paths.

Our primary intended users are, broadly, users of maintained trails, so most decision-making starts here. The needs and desires of other users are considered on a map-by-map basis, but can include the needs of park managers, hunters, and other trail users. In terms of a hierarchy of information, our highest priority is ensuring that maintained, official trails are accurately represented. Next, we focus on information that is needed for getting to the trails and learning what can be expected on the trails, including parking locations, roads, and points of interest along the trails. We consider various data layers that can serve as navigational aids for users of the maintained trails—things like unmarked woods roads or paths, utility corridors, and streams and wetlands. Lastly, but still important, are park boundaries and other non-parkland features within the map's coverage area.

How do you decide what trails or features to include on a map?

An important thing to consider is that we don't make these decisions in isolation, but rather make sure to work with park managers to ensure their input is fully considered. One area of concern to many park managers and volunteer trail leaders alike is how to show unofficial social paths, as high use in certain areas has become increasingly problematic. These decisions are typically made on a case-by-case basis. We often try to strike a balance by showing portions of unofficial paths that may be obvious and important for navigational purposes, but not showing a path's entire route so as to minimize detrimental impacts of choosing alternate routes off maintained trails.

Overall, we do our best to carefully consider everything that goes onto our trail maps.

**New North Jersey Map Set Features Updates to More Than 20 Parks**

A completely revised, 12th edition of the North Jersey Trails map set, with over 275 miles of marked trails in northern New Jersey, is now available. This edition contains many revisions to the trails in more than 20 parks, including major changes to trail systems in several parks.

The new map set shows the changes to the trail systems at Ramapo Valley County Reservation and Campgaw Mountain County Reservation, which have been completely revamped with new trails and blaze colors. To better show the expanded trail network in Ramapo Reservations, a new, enlarged inset map of the Reservation has been included. The updated maps also show the trail blazing changes and relocations in Norvin Green State Forest, as well as trail relocations in Ringwood State Park. Newly created parklands are shown, including Ramapo Mountain Preserve. Fuller Mountain Preserve, Great Oak Park, and additional Appalachian Trail buffer lands in Waywanda State Park. Other parks shown on the map include Long Pond Ironworks State Park, Ramapo Mountain State Forest, Great Oak Preserve, Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, and the Pequannock Watershed. Nearly 15 miles of the Appalachian Trail and 40 miles of the Highlands Trail are shown on the maps. Additional corrections and adjustments to the map make it more accurate and up to date.

Special thanks to all the volunteers and park partners who helped produce this revised edition of the North Jersey Trails map set. This 12th edition of North Jersey Trails even more accurate than before. At more than $10.95 ($8.21 for Trail Conference members), this map is a must-have for exploring these popular parks in northern New Jersey.

The map is available in print format in vibrant color on our popular waterproof, tear-resistant Tyvek at nynjtc.org and Trail Conference Head-quarters. In addition, it is available in digital format on Apple and Android devices through the Avenza Maps app. Learn more about our GPS-enhanced maps at nynjtc.org/pdfmaps.

Jeremy Apgar
Trail Conference Cartographer

**Understanding Split-Interest Gifting with Charitable Remainder Trusts**

Split-interest gifting, covered broadly in the Fall 2015 Trail Walker article “How Split-Interest Charitable Giving Can Benefit You and the Trail Conference,” is a planning technique that allows the donor and the charity to be the beneficiaries when donations are made to certain trusts.

One of these charitable split-interest gifting strategies is the Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT). A CRT is an irrevocable trust that names one or more individuals as income beneficiaries for either a term up to 20 years, or for life. This income stream can depend on time horizon and economic factors. At the end of the donor’s interest, the remaining assets will pass to charity.

The donor, or grantor, receives an income tax charitable deduction equal to the present value of the remainder interest passing to charity at the end of the trust term. It is calculated using the IRS sec. 7520 rate, which, during low interest rate environments, is an excellent estate planning technique.

The allowable charitable deduction in any given year is limited to 50 percent of the donor's adjusted gross income. Any amount exceeding this limit may be carried forward against future income for up to five years.

For more information, contact Jim Cantela, CFP Vice President—Trust Relationship Officer, Trust Services at Valley National Bank at 862.207.7327 or jim.cantela@valleynationalbank.com.
New Double-Loop Hike Offers Twice the Views

Visitors to Norvin Green State Forest have a new option to explore some of the most spectacular features of this beautiful green space in Passaic County, N.J.

Trail Conference volunteers, with the cooperation of State Forest officials, have laid out and blazed a new trail section at the southern end of Norvin Green that, for the first time, enables visitors to incorporate two peaks—Torne Mountain and Osio Rock—into aloop hike. This new construction allows hikers to make a double loop and climb Osio Rock, with its magnificent views, without having to retrace one’s steps. This enhancement of the trail system in the area was made with improving the users’ experience in mind.

Hikes on the new figure-eight double loop begin from the Otter Hole Road parking area and incorporate both the blue-blazed Hewitt-Butler Trail and the red-blazed Torne Trail. The Hewitt-Butler Trail is steeper and climbs to the summits of Torne Mountain and Osio Rock, with many panoramic views of the surrounding area, while the Torne Trail follows a narrow valley, connecting at both ends with the Hewitt-Butler Trail. The detailed hike description available at nynjtc.org takes the Hewitt-Butler Trail from the parking area over Torne Mountain, then down and over Osio Rock, returning on the Torne Trail. Although it is less than three miles long, the hike may seem somewhat longer, as it involves considerable ups and downs on rocky trails.

The new extension of the Torne Trail was laid out and blazed by volunteers Loreen Adams, Jocelyn Coaler, Ted B. Jackson, Paul Makus, and Bob and Estelle Jonas. If you’d like to get involved in great trail projects like this one, email volunteers@nynjtc.org for more info.

Find the full hike description at bit.ly/tc-tm6.

The new loop offers great views, such as this vista from Osio Rock.

Support trails, parks, and open space in the region by joining the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference.

The Trail Conference maintains more than 2,100 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:

- **25% Discount** on Trail Conference books and maps when purchased directly from the Trail Conference. Get a 10% discount on Trail Conference logo goods. Visit nynjtc.org/shop.
- **Great Discounts** at supporting outdoor retailers and other businesses. See our full list of partners at nynjtc.org/sponsor.
- **Free Enrollment** in our Trail University introductory courses.
- **Access** to wide range of volunteer opportunities on- and off-trail. Check out nynjtc.org/volunteer.
- **Workshops and Seminars** on trail maintenance and construction, leadership training, wilderness first aid, environmental monitoring, GPS operation, and more. Find details at nynjtc.org/trails.
- **MEMBERSHIP TYPE**
  - Select one: □ Join □ Renew Membership # if available __________
  - Individual □ $40 □ $50 □ $75 □ $90
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For my membership of $60 or more, send me a:
  - □ Trail Conference Hat
  - □ Harriman-Bear Mountain Map Set
  - □ Other: ____________________________

To purchase a gift membership, call 201-512-9348, ext. 828.

**Join/Renew Trail Conference Membership**

We maintain more than 2,100 miles of trails. Your membership helps us provide access to open space for everyone.

Included with membership: Trail Walker, 10% discount on purchases at many outdoor stores, and 25% discount on Trail Conference maps and books and 10% discount on logo goods purchased directly from the Trail Conference. Save time and a tree by joining or renewing online at nynjtc.org.

**Hikers’ MarketPlace**

Get the complete set of Trail maps at one great, low price!

Our map combo offers all of our high-quality Trail Conference maps at a discount (members get an additional discount). Save big on shipping charges!

Find it on our online store under Combos.

Find all of our publications and select trail guides from others at nynjtc.org, and get your member discount!