**Using Our Mightiest Tool to Protect Trails and Open Space**

By Sona Mason, West Hudson Program Coordinator

Sometimes, the most powerful tool in the Trail Conference arsenal isn’t rock bars or loppers, but our unified voice.

The voices of trail lovers near and far rang loud and clear when the Trail Conference raised the alarm that the Long Path and Highlands Trail are at risk of being severed in Orange County, N.Y. This summer, we succeeded in making the protection of these long-distance trails part of the conversation in the closely watched proposal to create the new Town of Palm Tree, which would include the Village of Kiryas Joel.

The Trail Conference has raised concerns in regards to the various proposals to expand development where the Long Path and Highlands Trail co-align. Currently, vacant parcels along Seven Springs Road provide a woodland character for these trails, but the new proposals would likely lead to intense development. The rocky lands with moss-covered cliffs between Gonzaga Park and the Heritage Trail in Monroe are rich in wildlife habitat, and are the last refuge in the area for these multi-state trails. This critical pinch point forms a vital greenway connecting two state parks: Schunnemunk Mountain and Goosepond Mountain. If the land around Seven Springs Road is developed, the experience on these trails will be severely impacted and the parks will be isolated.

Before two public hearings on the issue in August, the Trail Conference called for the creation of a green corridor between Gonzaga Park and the Heritage Trail to protect the Long Path and Highlands Trail. Members rallied by sending emails, making phone calls, and appearing at meetings to ensure Orange County legislators are aware of the significant threat that major residential development poses to these much-needed green corridors. Building on this momentum, the Trail Conference has been meeting with state, county, and municipal officials to come up with viable options for protecting these long-distance trails.

The Trail Conference has played a role in nearly every major conservation movement in the region for almost 100 years. We will continue to represent trail users in this and all battles to ensure public trails and parks remain open and safe for the next century—and beyond.

**Did You Know?**

> The 358-mile Long Path connects New York City at the George Washington Bridge with John Boyd Thacher Park in Albany County. The 182-mile Highlands Trail connects the Delaware River in New Jersey to the Hudson River at Storm King Mountain.

**Championing the Long Path**

Since 1960, the Trail Conference has spearheaded the effort to maintain, protect, and complete the Long Path. From unwavering advocacy efforts to key land acquisitions to an end-to-end race series, the Long Path—“New York’s Greatest Trail”—has an ever-evolving story to tell. Turn to pages 6-7 to read more.

**Working to Keep Blue Hole Beautiful**

By Heather Darley

C. Stephens, Ian Dunn, Nikki Wowaka, and Sabina Cardenas greeted and educated visitors at the Blue Hole.

Due to overuse and misuse, Peekamoose Blue Hole in the Catskills was identified as a 2017 Leave No Trace Hot Spot. In other words, the Blue Hole has now been nationally recognized as a place in danger of being loved to death.

As part of the Leave No Trace Hot Spot Week at the Blue Hole in August, the Trail Conference-managed Catskill Conservation Corps, along with our friends at Leave No Trace, the Adirondack Mountain Club, and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, came together for a litter clean-up. On Aug. 18, over 40 volunteers removed more than 18 bags of trash from this swimming hole and the surrounding area.

The following weekend, DEC staff and Sabina Cardenas, the Trail Conference’s Head Summit Steward in the Catskills, set up an information table at the Blue Hole trailhead to greet visitors and educate them on regulations and Leave No Trace principles.

“We wanted everyone to feel welcome, but also instill a sense of responsibility,” says Sabina, who happily offers greetings and tips to Catskill guests in two languages. “Large groups gladly took bags for their garbage and tossed it at the nearby dumpster. That’s the kind of help we’re looking for from our visitors.”

Sabina continued to welcome visitors at Blue Hole on weekends through mid-September. The Catskill Conservation Corps organized two additional clean-ups, all in an effort to continue the message delivered during the events of Hot Spot Week.

“People are starting to realize they need to do their part,” Sabina says. “Blue Hole is a gorgeous place, and hopefully these efforts continue so that everyone can see its beauty for years to come.”

**WHAT'S INSIDE:**

- **People for Trails:** Building, Maintaining, and Protecting Trails pages 8-9
- **Updating Our Mission and Vision for a Second Century of Service** page 3
- **Better Signage Creates a Better Trail Experience** page 3

**Sign up for our e-newsletter at bit.ly/tcwews for updates on this and other issues affecting trails.**

MAINTAINING 2,154 MILES OF TRAILS IN NY AND NJ

NYNJTC.ORG FALL 2017

NEW YORK-NEW JERSEY TRAIL CONFERENCE • CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH NATURE SINCE 1920
2017 Trail Conference Gala: Keep It Wild

The allure of unpluging from technology and reconnecting with nature is drawing more people into the trails, helping the Trail Conference’s efforts more than ever. Join us in celebrating the people who protect our connection with nature and Keep It Wild at the 33rd Annual Trail Conference Gala on Thursday, Oct. 19.

Brooklyn-based artist and adventurer Gregory Frux is the keynote speaker. He is an advocate for the environment, leading workshops for the Appalachian Mountain Club and devoting time and art to support conservation of a protected wilderness in Utah. At the gala, Frux will draw on lessons learned during his adventures when he discusses the importance of wilderness, whether in our own backyards or the far reaches of the planet.

During the festivities, we will be acknowledging the exceptional work of our outstanding corporate and public partners: REI and Bergen County Department of Parks. Long-time artist-in-residence programs in various national parks, including Weir Farm National Historic Site, Joshua Tree, Glacier, and Death Valley. In addition to painting and drawing, he gave educational talks and led hikes in each of these locations. His work is now part of the National Park Service’s permanent collection.

Frux was also artist-in-residence aboard the cruise ship Orlova to Antarctica, where he painted from the ship deck, capturing the hours-long twilight and pen- guin colonies close up. He has traveled extensively in Arctic Norway and South America, and in all of these places, he has kept elaborate sketch journals and done oil paintings capturing the natural beauty and local history. This summer, Frux will be the first ever artist-in-residence at Mount Washington Observatory.

The gala is exclusive to Trail Conference members. For tickets, visit bit.ly/gala17.

2018 Board, Voting Member Nominations

The Nominating Committee of the Trail Conference presents the following candidates for the Board of Directors for three-year terms and At-Large Voting Members for one-year terms. These nominations will be voted on at the Annual Meeting to be held on Saturday, Nov. 4, at Trail Conference Headquarters (600 Ramapo Valley Rd, Mahwah, N.J.). Meeting details are still being developed, but save the date.

WALTER DANIELS

Walt, of Mahwah Lake, N.Y., is a Trail Conference Life Member and currently serves as a member of the Board. Walt is active on the Policy Council as well as the Governance, Publications, Sawyers, Strategy, and Technology committees. Walt’s term on the Board is renewed through 2020.

ANDREW GARRISON

Andy, of Wurtsboro, N.Y., is a current Board member and chair of both the Conservation Committee and the Long Path North Committee. Andy’s term on the Board is renewed through 2020.

RICHARD LEVINE

Rick, of Upper Saddle River, N.J., is a Trail Conference Life Member and currently serves as Board treasurer; he is also a member of the Audit Committee. Rick’s term on the Board is renewed through 2020.

BETH RAVIT

Beth, of Closter, N.J., is a current Board member and an active member of the Audit, Finance, and Strategy committees. Beth’s term on the Board is renewed through 2020.

EDWARD SAIFF

Eddie, of Mahwah, N.J., is current chair of the Board and of the Nominating Committee, he is also active on the Governance and Management committees. Eddie’s term on the Board is renewed through 2020.

For full Board bios, visit nynjtc.org/about-us.

If You Go

What: “Wild Landscapes, Near and Far” featuring the work of Gregory Frux

When: Oct. 2 through January 5, 2018, during regular Trail Conference hours, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

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

Details: Find out more at nynjtc.org.

Frux has summitted 97 peaks over 10,000 feet. Recently, he has focused on technical rock climbing. A great opportunity to integrate his love for the arts and the outdoors came through the...
When the Trail Conference was founded in 1920, its purpose was to develop a system of marked trails and shelters so that parklands could be better enjoyed by the public. As the planned trails were completed over the next decade, it became evident that ongoing trail maintenance was needed, too. Over the years, other activities in support of public parks and trails were added to the mission of the organization, including the publication of trail guides and maps, trail advocacy, land acquisition, and habitat protection. Nearly a century later, our mission is essentially the same as it was when the Trail Conference was founded. However, the environment in which we pursue that mission continues to change. Today, as our world is more numerous and diverse, the internet makes trails profusely accessible but doesn’t promote trail knowledge or etiquette, park budgets are stretched thin, habitat protection has become increasingly important, and global warming is altering everything.

Yet despite—or perhaps, more accurately—because of—these influences, creating and protecting high-quality trail experiences remains our primary purpose. Volunteering will continue to be the primary means by which we are able to accomplish the most with the least. Increasing awareness of the scope and scale of the Trail Conference’s work is perhaps our greatest challenge, and it is accomplished through the efforts of sufficient volunteers and donors to accomplish it all. That’s why, as the Trail Conference approaches its 100th year, we’ve updated our mission statement. The Trail Conference has not changed since the mission was last revised 20 years ago, but the words we use today better address the contemporary challenges and opportunities we face.

The New York-New Jersey Trail Conference is a volunteer-powered organization that builds, maintains, and protects public trails. Together with our partners, we strive to ensure that the trails and natural areas we share are sustainable and accessible for all to enjoy for generations to come.

The new statement is a combination of mission and vision. In two sentences, it provides a high-level description of who we are, what we do, and what we expect to achieve. It is meant to inform, challenge, and inspire.

Paired with an updated set of values statements, we aim to achieve such a higher quality of experience than ever before. The new statement has always been a values-led organization; these core values are meant to guide our attitudes, actions, and decision-making on a daily basis.

The joys of nature belong to everyone. All people—regardless of age, ability, or location—should be able to experience the rewards of connecting with nature.

Volunteers are our superstars. Our replacement of the culvert located just north of Trail Headquarters at the Darlington Schoolhouse in Mahwah, N.J. The closure is expected to be in effect through October. Find detour information at bit.ly/tc-202rc.

### Trail Conference to Host A.T. Vista 2020
The Trait Conference is proud to be selected as host of A.T. Vista 2020, the biennial conference celebrating the Appalachian Trail. Tentative dates are Aug. 7-10, 2020, at Ramapo College of New Jersey in Mahwah, right next to our headquarters. For more info and updates, visit aTVista2020.org.

### Celebrate the Catskills During the 2017 Lark in the Park
The 2017 Catskills Lark in the Park will be held Saturday, Sept. 9. We invite all love possible. We celebrate our volunteers—with their passion, dedication, and inviting them to join us in the cause.

### News in Brief
Kiosk Builders Needed
Along with our partner, we’ve identified a few locations in need of trail kiosks—and we’re looking for volunteers to help build them. Building kiosks is a great service project—it’s a popular one among Eagle Scout candidates—so if you know anyone interested in this kind of work, please contact Peter Dolan at pdolan@nynjtc.org.

**Creating Better Signage for a Better Trail Experience**

**From the Executive Director**

Revisiting Our Mission

Peter Dolan, Program Coordinator

We’ve all seen them before—trailhead kiosks filled with waterlogged pages of info, sun-faded trail maps, incorrect content, or no content at all. So it’s with great pleasure that the Trail Conference can announce that, in partnership with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, our staff and volunteers have developed a new set of signage for installation in most of the New Jersey state parks and forests where we maintain trails. These include popular destinations such as Mount Tammany in Worthington State Forest and Stairway to Heaven in Wawayanda State Park, as well as less-traveled areas that lacked trailhead signage entirely, such as parts of Norvin Green State Forest.

The final design is a set of panels that fit together like dominos. These signs allow each park to show a large, full-color trail map, interactive map download link, description of the park’s history and features, information on preparing for a hike, bear protocol, and info on how to become a trail volunteer. The signs are printed on PVC plastic in weatherproof, full-color ink—the same material used for lawn signs—which makes replacing damaged or outdated signs easy and cost-effective. This project was made possible through funding from a New Jersey Recreational Trails Program grant. These signs represent a huge success for the Trail Conference. For nearly 100 years, we’ve maintained trails on public land with relatively little publicity. Hikers could spend years in the woods only to find that they’d bumbled into one of our trail maintainers, might never know how much volunteer work goes into keeping these areas safe and open. By putting this signage at trailheads, we hope to make sure that hikers have access to legible maps and info when they need it. It also broadly spread the word that we’re seeking volunteers to keep up the good work. As trails are increased in use (and increased erosion that comes with it), these new kiosk displays will help us reach more potential volunteers.

When you find our new kiosks on your New Jersey adventures, snap a photo and tag us with #nynjtc on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter for a chance to be featured on our feed.

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To help understand the best practices we are en- countering, meet some volunteers who are taking steps to ensure they are safe and following the new Outdoor Activity Safety Guidelines.

To help reduce the risk of injury while out on the trails.

Adopted in New York- New Jersey Trail Conference.

TRAIL MAINTAINERS

Matthew Turner is a trail maintainer on Slide Mountain. Matthew always carries a first aid kit, so he is prepared to aid any hikers who may have an emergency. He carries emergency aid kits for daily use, first aid for injuries, the TRAIL Conference has formalized several best practices in a set of Outdoor Activity Safety Guidelines. The Guidelines will be recommended as best practices initially, with the intention of phasing them in as requirements over the next 24 months. During that time, training and support will be provided.

How will these new guidelines affect you? For many volunteers, there will be no change in how you approach your responsibilities. Others will need to take additional steps to reduce the risk of injury while out on the trails.

The complete Outdoor Activity Safety Guidelines are available for review at bit.ly/tc-oasg.

SAWYERS & SWAMPERS

Charlise and Stephanie are preparing to clear blow downs on the Four Birds Trail. Charlise has a valid B level sawyer’s certification and has completed the mandatory USFS chainsaw safety course, and both have current first aid certifications. Charlise and Stephanie regularly work together as a sawyer and swumper team, but prior to leaving the trailhead, they review their equipment and plans for the day. They make sure each team has hard hats, ear protection, gloves and eye protection, and a first aid kit. Lara explains that every crew member has wilderness first aid and basic first aid certifications, and that the nearest hospital is located. She tells the crew that she will be carrying the first aid kit. Lara explains the work plan is to build a small turnaround along an eroded section of trail, they will be using hammers to crush rock, so eye and ear protection, dust masks, hard hats, and gloves will be required. During that task, she asks Unprepared Eugene to change out of his shorts and shoes into hiking boots and long pants and boots. Lara also privately checks with Allergan, Alan, making sure he packed his Epis-Pen since he is highly sensitive to bee stings.

TRAIL CONFERENCE SUPPORTERS

May 16 – August 15, 2017

TRIBUTES

In memory of David Lea
Peter M. Balma

In memory of Shawn, beloved hiking companion of
Daniela Wiesgo
Linda Frank

In memory of Eric Redliner
The Freedman Family Fund

In memory of Sean Patrick Winser
Christine King

In memory of John B. Blessinger
Mauree Maurer

In memory of Jakob Frank
John & Patricia Wuffenschim

In honor of New Jersey Steward & Rescue, Professional Volunteers Serving NUNY/PA
K. W. Hansen

In recognition of the wildflowers art exhibition
Sara Novak

DONORS TO THE ANNUAL FUND


CORPORATE, FOUNDATION & OTHER DONORS

For the last five years, the Trail Conference has been doing our part to protect the rich biodiversity of the region as leaders of the Lower Hudson Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (LHPRISM). During this time, LHPRISM partners have removed over 220,000 invasive plants over 1,600 acres and involved 7,000 volunteers in protecting our natural areas. So we’re thrilled to announce that the Trail Conference has been awarded a new, 5-year contract from New York State Department of Environmental Protection to continue the Lower Hudson region’s invasive species management efforts from 2018-2022.

This new contract allows us to build on the successes of our current program. We plan to:

Work with partners to develop and implement a regional strategy for invasive species management.

Develop management plans for high-priority species in the region.

Offer training programs for volunteers and members of the public.

Assist with developing site management plans.

Continue our volunteer programs, such as the Blockbluster Survey and Southern Pine Beetle monitoring.

Enhance our capacity to detect new invaders in the region.

Newark’s Branch Brook Park, preserved a 1993, is the first county park in the United States and the beginning of Green Acres, local and county governments, and nonprofits, a third of the state has been acquired. Through the work of the Conservation Conference, local and county governments, and nonprofits, a third of the state has been acquired. Through the work of the Conservation Conference, Green Acres has been made to help N.J. municipalities grow the impact of our work to reach full build-out—providing a new funding for high-priority species in the region.

The Conservation Blueprint is a tool to help preserve open space in N.J. The Conservation Blueprint is a tool to help preserve open space in N.J.

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Creating a Blueprint to Protect New Jersey’s Last Undeveloped Lands

As New Jersey moves toward becoming the first state to reach full build-out—project to occur within the next 50 years—fostering a collaborative approach to preserve the state’s vast and valuable lands has become more important than ever. The Blueprint brought together a steering committee of over 20 non-profit organizations and state and federal agencies to identify the most critical lands that remain vulnerable to development.

Led by the New Jersey Conservation Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, and the GeoLab at Rowan University, the committee decided which values would inform the prioritization models used to identify conservation opportunities as they relate to water quality, ecology, agriculture, and community needs.

The results of this process can be found at njmap2.com/blueprint. Here you can see at the location you can scan the maps user-friendly, allowing anyone to view data at both a statewide and parcel level, with multiple base maps available. Members of environmental commissions and open space planning boards have already reported the use of this tool.

The Conservation Blueprint is indeed a planning tool, and one of its primary goals is to be used in building connected networks of protected lands and trails. The current trails data set is incomplete, but the Trail Conference sits on a task force that is working on creating a comprehensive, statewide trail layer to make the Blueprint even stronger. The hope is that with the aid of the Conservation Blueprint, more land is preserved and more trails are built to connect people with protected open space.

Adam Page Taylor

TRAIL WALKER • NEW YORK-NEW JERSEY TRAIL CONFERENCE
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By the Numbers

| Miles in length, from Manhattan to John Boyd Thacher State Park | 358 |
| Approximate mileage, once the trail is constructed to the northern terminus in Northville, Fulton County | 430 |
| Counties the Long Path traverses | 12 |
| People who are documented as completing the trail from NYC to Thacher Park | 148 |
| Days to complete the Long Path by record-holder Ken Posner | 9 |

The Trail Conference, with a generous grant from the Open Space Institute (OSI) and tireless support from the local Long Path North Hiking Club, has purchased approximately 170 acres of undeveloped land in Berne in Albany County, N.Y., for permanent protection. The acquisition allows the Trail Conference to take the Long Path off of a 2.35-mile road walk and reroute it through woodlands.

The Trail Conference’s work on the Long Path over the last 30 years has focused on fully protecting the existing trail corridor and eliminating road walks with strategic land purchases and trail relocations and construction efforts.

“We very much appreciate our good working relationships with the Long Path North Hiking Club and OSI, which will allow the popular Long Path to be enjoyed by the public for generations to come,” said Trail Conference Executive Director Ed Goodell.

The acquired property has been recognized as a priority opportunity to protect and enhance the Long Path. Approximately 11.5 trail miles east of Middleburgh, N.Y., the Long Path reaches the western side of the property. Currently, the trail then makes a long road detour around the north and east sides of the property before entering the state-protected lands of the Partidge Run Wildlife Management Area. Together with recently attained trail agreements over neighboring lands, the reroute will run southeast through the property to the northeastern corner of the Wildlife Management Area. From there, it will continue east along its present route. The purchase includes a small house and outbuildings. The developed lot has been subdivided from the undeveloped land for separate sale. The Trail Conference will hold the land until it is sold for permanent protection by the state.

From the photographer, Steve Aaron:

What the Long Path Means to Me

“To me, the Long Path is distinctly New York in its diversity of terrain and scenery. Starting in the city, the trail wanders through parklands surrounded by suburbs. It continues through some of the state’s greatest parks, highest mountains, charming rural towns and ends just outside the state capital.

The diversity of landscapes on the Long Path is truly moving. The Hudson River, New York’s historical lifeline, is visible from the Long Path in many spots. The trail covers the Palisades, Harriman, Schunnemunk, Walkill Valley, Shawangunks, Catskills, and the hills and escarpments of Albany County in a journey of physical and beautiful diversity. From the lowest point at sea level along the Hudson to the trail’s summit atop Slide Mountain, the Long Path takes in a sampling of all that is beautiful and interesting in the Hudson Valley region.”

Steve Aaron specializes in conservation, recreation, and tourism photography. Find him at www.steveaaronphoto.com, or on Facebook @SteveAaronPhotography.

Morning on the Long Path in the Shawangunks.

Conceived in 1931 as New York’s answer to the Long Trail in Vermont, the Long Path was originally meant to be an unmarked route connecting scenic or historic points of interest from New York City to Lake Placid. Since 1960, the Trail Conference has spearheaded the effort to maintain, protect, and complete this long-distance trail. Today, the aqua-blazed Long Path extends 358 miles from 175th Street Subway Station in Manhattan to John Boyd Thacher State Park near Albany, connecting the most cosmopolitan area in the country with the region’s most wild places. The goal is to extend the trail across the Mohawk River and Saratoga County to link with the Adirondack State Park trail system.

170 Acres of Open Space Protected to Enhance Long Path Experience

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Protecting Trails and Creating Parks

The Trail Conference’s Conservation Committee works to preserve open space with a vision to create green corridors, eventually linking lands that have already been preserved. Our work in purchasing key parcels of land for transfer to state ownership not only improves the trail experience by allowing us to move trails off of road walks, it also aids in the creation and expansion of public parks. The Trail Conference has played an important role in conserving lands that led to the preservation of several state forests, including Huckleberry Ridge, Graham Mountain, Gobler’s Knob, and Roosa Gap.
"It takes a lot to manage a trail that’s 430 miles long," Andy Garrison says matter-of-factly. As volunteer chair of the Long Path North and chair of the Trail Conference Conservation Committee, it’s quite possible that Andy knows more about and devotes more time to preserving and improving the Long Path than anyone else.

Beyond the formidable tasks of ensuring that a distance trail is properly maintained, the elements of advocacy and conservation are an ever-present challenge. Andy explains: "In a state park, for example, the trails are protected, and you work with the park officials. But the Long Path crosses the land of many different government agencies, corporations, and private landowners, and each of these has its own set of rules and management practices. So in addition to trail maintenance, Andy says, "we are constantly working to move segments of the trail that are on roads into the woods." This is done by getting approvals to construct new sections on already protected land—not always an easy task, Andy says, as it sometimes takes more than a decade or two to get these approvals from the land managers. In areas that lack preserved land, the Trail Conference relies on local landowners to allow the trail to cross their property, and Andy and several fellow Conservation Committee members also work to purchase strategic parcels of land with a vision to eventually link already preserved land, creating green corridors for trails like the Long Path to traverse.

The Long Path has personal al significance to Andy, who hiked the entire trail with his son in a series of backpacking trips in 2006, two years after the pair had completed the Vermont Long Trail (the original inspiration for the Long Path itself). "I realized after the Vermont trip that the Long Path needed a lot of things before it was ready to be a pleasurable trail to thru hike," he recalls. Already active in maintaining and protecting trails along the Shawangunk Ridge, Andy moved his focus to the Long Path, and has been making considerable contributions to the trail for the last 13 years. In that time, thousands of acres of undeveloped land have been preserved and about 40 miles of the Long Path have been moved off of roads.

"Beyond the current terminus at Boyd Thacher State Park, work has already begun to extend Vermont’s Long Trail (the original inspiration for the Long Path itself). "I realize that the trail, Andy is optimistic that the completion of the Long Path really exists as a reality. "Beyond the current terminus at Boyd Thacher State Park, work has already begun to extend Vermont’s Long Trail," he says. Then he adds: "We can always use more help."
Connecting the Best of Essex County Outdoors via the Lenape Trail

The Lenape Trail is need of volunteers to care for this unique path and ensure the good work continues long after our field managers wrap up their season. If you’re interested in helping to improve the Lenape Trail, contact pdolan@nynjtc.org.

The efforts of volunteers who worked on the South Mountain Connector Trail will be celebrated Oct. 1.

Help Improve Trails in NJ this Autumn

Looking to volunteer for trails this fall? There’s a wide variety of locations and projects to choose from with the West Jersey Trail Crew: installing stepping stones along the Cedar Swamp Trail in Wawayanda State Park; building brand-new trail in Worthington State Forest; or tackling a variety of tasks in dramatic Tillman’s Ravine in Stokes State Forest. Find out how to get involved at bit.ly/tc-wjct. You can also join the Appalachian Trail Conservancy’s Mid-Atlantic Crew in repairing the Pochuck Boardwalk, arguably the most famous stretch of the Appalachian Trail in New Jersey. The work is being coordinated by NJDEP and will take place in late September through early October. Potential volunteers can reach out to Kevin Murphy at Wawayanda State Park, 973.853.1102. Trails in our region need more repair and improvement than we can provide, and every person’s help matters. Don’t let a lack of trail-building experience hold you back; everyone is welcome to join in, and we’ll teach you all the skills you need to give back to the trails you love.

Call for Volunteer Award Nominations

With more than 2,400 people donating their time and energy to the Trail Conference mission, there are many award-worthy volunteers in our ranks. We need your help nominating individuals for our annual awards, presented in late winter 2018 (date TBD) by the Trail Conference Board. The nomination process is easy: Check nynjtc.org/awards to see the awards categories and qualifications, then fill out the nomination form online or e-mail it to awards@nynjtc.org. For nomination examples, see bit.ly/tc-vans.

Work on the Munsee Eagle Trail Continues

In Sterling Forest State Park, the Palisades and Floworks trail crews have been working on the construction of the Munsee Eagle Trail. Once finished, this new, multi-use trail will combine with the Hutchinson and Red Back trails to create a 7-mile loop for hikers and mountain bikers to enjoy. We’ll have a crew working on this project through November, and they’re eager to teach new and experienced volunteers alike how to build multi-use trails. Email volunteers@nynjtc.org for info on how to get involved.

PEOPLE FOR TRAILS

TRAILS FOR PEOPLE

A quarterly look at some of what we have been doing to improve public access to nature.
Building, Maintaining, and Promoting Trails

1. Sweet Water Trail Crew leader Connor Moriarty wrote about his season working to reroute the waterfall section of the Vista Loop Trail in Ramapo Valley County Reservation on our website. Check it out at bit.ly/2tswc-17.

2. Our Taconic Trail Crew is working hard to improve trails in Hudson Highlands State Park. This season was spent constructing stone stairs on the Highlands Trail and on the Undercliff Trail.

3. The Rockalaka Trail Crew split their season restoring trails at Sloan Gorge Preserve, seen here, and building a scenic loop trail at Plate Clove Preserve in the Catskills.

4. Our loyal supporters are invited to attend monthly hikes and work project tours as a thank you for helping protect the trails we all love. August’s Member Hike explored the A.T. in Sterling Forest State Park, featured Cat Rocks, pictured, and ended at the Bellvale Farms Creamery in Warwick, N.Y.

5. Thanks to the Suffern Boy Scout Troop 21, commitment to the southern trailhead of the longest trail in Harriman State Park is now graced with this beautiful new sign. The Suffern-Bear Mountain Trail is more visible for hikers to find and enjoy.

6. Central North Jersey Trails Co-chair Estelle Anderson tackled a drainage problem on the Grand Loop Trail in the Jockey Hollow section of the Morristown National Historical Park, making this popular pedestrian/equestrian trail much easier to walk.

7. At the Clearwater Festival at Croton Point Park in Westchester County, N.Y., on June 17 and 18, several volunteers, including Rose Bonanno, pictured, spread the word about all the ways the Trail Conference helps people get outside.

8. Orange and Rockland County Appalachian Trail Chair Storm (a.k.a. 2016 A.T. thru-hiker Moe Lemire) hiked the section of the A.T. he oversees in July and shared a little trail magic along the way.

9. This season on the Appalachian Trail reroute on Bear Mountain, the Megalithic Trail Crew has worked on what Crew Leader Tim Palumbo has lovingly dubbed “The Impossible Staircase.” Read about the totally doable project at bit.ly/tc-mtcis.

10. The Nor’westers Trail Crew improved a stream crossing on the Blueberry Run Trail in Minnewaska State Park Preserve this summer. Pictured are volunteers Jim Gebhard, Ernie Gehrer, Don Cohen, and Karol Wojnar.

Long Distance Trails Crew Rehabs Stone Arch Bridge

The Long Distance Trails Crew is making significant progress on repairing a severely damaged stream crossing over Seely Brook in Goosepond Mountain State Park in Chester, N.Y. This crossing on the Highlands Trail is an old, double-arch stone bridge that has been breached.

There have been many attempts to keep the passage open, like adding rubble and fill in the center section, and using old telephone poles to span the center gap with planking laid across as a roadway. That worked fine for a while, but that wooden roadway had become totally deteriorated and has been removed. We are in the process of encasing the deteriorated stone arches in concrete, filling in the gap, and finishing up with a crushed stone surface. Upon its completion, a celebration to christen the new bridge will be held. (Details will be announced on nynjtc.org and in E-Walker.)

This project will take a lot of time and effort on the part of the LDTC volunteers, so all help is welcome. Our experienced crew and crew leaders are eager to teach volunteers of all abilities the skills needed to build hiking trails. Find out more at bit.ly/tc-ldtc.

Marty Costello, LDTC member
In 2011, longtime Trail Conference member and supporter John and Marianne Gunzler inaugurated the Trail Conference’s Legacy Fund with a very generous gift of $100,000. Trails are a lifelong passion for John and Marianne; in fact, it was on a hike in Harriman State Park that they first met 54 years ago. On their frequent hikes together since, they see firsthand the love through volunteer service and financial gifts to the Trail Conference for decades. John has been an active member of the board of directors, serving from 1999 to 2008, and has continued to be a leading member of various committees.

“If you think, as I do,” says John, “that the Trail Conference is a critical institution for making it possible to enjoy the outdoors in this region, you should be concerned for its long-term future. It’s a small, often hand-to-mouth operation that is vulnerable to changing circumstances. The Legacy Fund is building the financial resources that are lessening that vulnerability.” John notes that even though the work of the Trail Conference is accomplished largely by volunteers, “those volunteers must have staff support and an organization to be effectively and accepted by park partners.” And as he looks at trends in the public financing of parks, “there is going to be more and more work for the Trail Conference to do.” Additional gifts throughout the years have allowed the Legacy Fund to better carry out the Trail Conference’s mission. The principal is invested, and a portion of the annual income is used to support trail building, maintenance, and protection. The Legacy Fund is a great place to make a planned gift to support the Trail Conference’s second century of service. For more information, contact Don Weise, Membership and Development Director, at dweise@nynjtc.org or 201.512.9348, ext. 813.

Can’t find your club? This list represents all Trail Conference member clubs whose dues are up-to-date. If you have questions about your club’s status, please ask your officers to contact the Membership and Development team at 201.512.9348.
Find Your Next Hike with Our Interactive Map

Did you know that more than 400 hike descriptions and 350 park descriptions are available on our website, and that you can find your next adventure using an interactive map? To access this wealth of information on your desktop or mobile phone, visit nynjtc.org/hike-finder-map or simply click the green hiker icon at the top of any page on our website. You can then use an interactive map to select hikes and parks, or view all hikes and parks in sortable lists.

The map allows you to search for a hike or park by name, and/or use a variety of filters to narrow down your options. Want to find a moderate to strenuous loop hike, between 5-9 miles in length, that has views and allows leashed dogs? These filters, and many more, are available for you to adjust. You can also explore options right on the map by zooming in and out of the Google-style interface. Once you have chosen and clicked on a hike, you can access a complete hike description, photos of some key features, written directions to the trailhead and information about public available transportation, links to available print and digital maps, and more. You can even grab a printable version of the description in The Let’s Go section, so that you can be sure to have all the essential information when you are out on the trail.

With a free website account, you can also save hikes to your Favorites and, after you have gone on a hike, come back to rate your experience and provide a trip report. Our volunteers appreciate hearing praise for trails in great condition, concerns about trails needing some help, and any issues with the descriptions or supporting maps, so these trip reports are a simple way to get involved with our trail maintenance and improvement efforts. If you haven’t checked out our improved website, be sure to visit soon and use these great resources to plan your next trip out on the trails!

Looking for more tips to get the most out of our interactive map? We’ve added additional instructions to help you take full advantage of all the features the hike finder offers at nynjtc.org/hike-finder-map.

Hikers’ Marketplace

GO PLACES WITH TRAIL MAPS AND BOOKS FROM THE TRAIL CONFERENCE

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 Combas.

TO LEARN MORE AND GET MATERIALS, CONTACT:
Don Weiss, Development Director
dweiss@nynjtc.org | 201.512.9348 x813

Welcome New Catskill PC Alex

Alexander Bradley, Catskill Program Coordinator, comes to the Trail Conference from Maine, where he worked as trail specialist in Baxter State Park. Alex has served as a crew leader and assistant steward at Maine Coast Heritage Trust. He received an associate’s degree in Washington County Community College in adventure recreation and tourism and GIS technology. He graduated from the University of Maine with a bachelor’s degree in environmental recreation management with a concentration in recreation and natural resources. Alex enjoys hiking, kayaking, and biking and looks forward to pursuing these activities in the Catskills and Hudson Valley.

Will Steps Into New Role

After serving as Trail Conference Buildings and Grounds Manager for nearly two years, Will Smith has stepped into the new role of Information Systems Manager. Will brings 40 years of computer engineering and management experience to the position. He has previously held computer design, engineering, and software management positions for several engineering firms. He has a bachelor’s degree from Rutgers College of Engineering and a master’s from New Jersey Institute of Technology. Will’s love of the outdoors began as a boy while spending summers with his grandfather in Phoenicia, N.Y., in the Catskills.

They say the best way to improve your skills is to teach them to others. Will’s skill at teaching has helped him to earn the William Hoeferlin Award in 2015 for exemplary service in 2013. We thank Doug for all of his contributions and wish him the best of luck.

Looking for more tips to get the most out of our interactive map? We’ve added additional instructions to help you take full advantage of all the features the hike finder offers at nynjtc.org/hike-finder-map.
Two Streams and a Dream

FDR State Park is the largest park in the Town of Yorktown in New York’s Westchester County, featuring a popular swimming pool and picnic area as well as a lake for fishing and more secluded woodlands for exploring. Creating greater access and connecting the park to the Yorktown business area via an abandoned rail bed was a dream of Regional Director of New York State Parks Taconic Region Linda Cooper, who previously served as Yorktown town supervisor. Long-time residents and active Trail Conference volunteers Jane and Walt Daniels had an even larger goal: Connect the Yorktown 25-mile trail system surrounding the Taconic State Parkway to FDR and beyond. With the opening of a new trail connection in July, significant progress has been made in achieving these goals.

Two factors helped jump-start the Crom Pond Trail project: The Trail Conference maintains trails in FDR, and Jane is president of Friends of FDR State Park. In 2013, the latter received a federal Recreational Trails Program grant to build two bridges and a boardwalk in the wooded area in the east and southeast sections of FDR. From the beginning, Jane realized that the Friends would need help with such an ambitious project—so she rallied her trail friends.

Over the next four years, almost 90 people became involved in multiple trail-building projects to open inaccessible areas of the park for the public to enjoy. In addition to the ongoing work of the Friends, Jane supervised volunteers from the Westchester Mountain Biking Association and the Pleasantville MTB Team, who built a 70-foot boardwalk. She mentored Boy Scout Eric Fitzgerald, whose Eagle project was building a 20-foot bridge over the inlet stream of Crom Pond. And she directed volunteers from the Trail Conference, including the Westchester Trail Tramps trail crew, as well as Conservation Corps members, in building a 32-foot outlet bridge with a 50-foot boardwalk on the north side and a 25-foot ramp on the south side. On July 29, the completion of the outlet bridge and this inspired trail project was celebrated with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Without so many groups pitching in, this highly anticipated trail connection could not have been made. Thanks are due to everyone who helped. Many hands do make light work, even if it involves moving rocks and lumber.

The Trail Conference member Bob Gurian worked on the bridge.

For a full hike description of the Crom Pond Trail in FDR State Park, visit bit.ly/tc-cpt-fdr.

Selected trails are free. It’s a good idea to bring a map and a snack for a hike.

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

Join/Renew Trail Conference Membership

We maintain more than 2,200 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 logo goods purchased directly from the Trail Conference. Save time and a tree by joining or renewing online at nynjtc.org.

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

For my membership of $60 or more, send me a:
□ Trail Conference Hat  □ Harriman-Bear Mountain Map Set
□Crom Pond Trail in FDR State Park possible attended the opening ceremony.

BENEFITS

Your membership supports the trails you love and gives you these additional benefits:

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

Free Enrollment in our Trail University introductory courses.

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

Join now at nynjtc.org/membership.

Bill Doles, Friend of FDR member, was one of nearly 90 volunteers who helped with this trail project.