

New York-New Jersey Trail Conference Web Policy

Approved by Board: February 25, 2003



Purpose: Control the management, content and design of the NY-NJ Trail Conference web site, www.nynjtc.org.

Web Committee Responsibilities

The Web Committee will consist of the webmaster, assistant webmasters, a staff member assigned by the Executive Director and others as appropriate. The webmaster is Chair of the Web Committee which is a subcommittee of Technology. One of the assistant webmasters will have responsibility for the store portion of the web. One member of the Web Committee will be a liaison to the Publications Committee. That person will insure that someone, on either committee, makes sure that online book stores have the correct information about our publications.

The committee will:

1. control the contents of this document, with the approval of the Board.
2. be the prime volunteers that help manage and update the web site.
3. recruit additional volunteers as necessary to manage and update the web site.
4. recommend changes to the webmaster.
5. recommend software purchases or contract with programmers to produce appropriate software.
6. help volunteer web content updaters with technical questions
7. select the ISP, server manager, design consultants (in consultation with the executive director)
8. set a budget.

Webmaster Responsibilities

The webmaster will:

1. notify the executive director of any changes to the web site which deviate significantly from the currently approved content criteria.
2. make any changes requested by the executive director expeditiously.
3. approve all changes to the web site by helpers.
4. verify on a regular basis that the web site is found and highly ranked by the major search engines.
5. verify on a regular basis that there are no dead links on the pages.
6. actively participate in link exchanges with appropriate other web sites
7. get our web site linked from the various major portal providers.
8. promptly answer questions addressed to the webmaster or pass them on to appropriate people.
9. monitor the discussion forum for violations and take appropriate actions. If this starts to have a high volume of usage, enlist other volunteer monitors.
10. oversee the online store operation.
11. ensure that SSL certificates and domain name charges are kept current.
12. document Javascript and CGI programs used on the web site.

Some of these responsibilities may be delegated to other volunteers.

Volunteer Opportunities

1. Ad manager - will solicit and update advertising pages; interact with staff on billing for advertising.
2. Discussion manager - will monitor forum for violations and take appropriate action; will either answer questions that don't get answered rapidly by other forum participants or forward the question to someone qualified to answer the question.
3. Calendar manager - will keep the calendar of upcoming events current; will monitor various web and print sources for appropriate calendar entries.
4. Member organization page manager - will update the those pages that we host as needed.
5. Technical consultant
6. Alternate webmaster when the webmaster is on vacation

Web Site Management

There are two components to manage, the content and the servers. The server portion is managed by professionals selected by the Web Committee. Currently a TC member, Ed Clarke, manages the physical equipment, server software and security aspects of the server. It is currently hosted at no cost by the cilia.org ISP. [We should given them a yearly letter of appreciation and letter acknowledging their role for IRS purposes.]

The Executive Director will have ultimate control of the content and appearance of the Web Site. Due to the premium on timeliness, such control will be exercised on a **review** rather than **preview** basis, fully warranted by the legacy of trust and confidence between staff and volunteers. The Webmaster, and any helpers, will control the day-to-day updating of the content in accordance with guidelines in this document.

Web Site Content

The web site contents serve multiple purposes:

- Hiking related information for the general public
- Press releases
- Information directed at individual members
- Information directed at member organizations
- Partnership related information
- Information appealing to foundations considering us for grants
- Conservation and advocacy related information
- Public relations information to raise the visibility of the Trail Conference
- Revenue raising pages
 - Selling books and maps
 - Soliciting Membership
 - Soliciting Contributions
 - Affiliations with commercial sites
- Selected content of the *Trail Walker* prior to its publication and the entire contents after publication.
- Provide password protected web pages for internal use., e.g. committees, office.
- Provide committees a place to have a public presence
- Provide member organizations with web space for their home pages.
- Education, outreach and science based initiatives

The web site will obey the following principles:

- Compliance with Internet Content Rating Association (www.icra.org) ratings.
- Maintain a privacy policy that is acceptable to Platform for Privacy Preferences (P3P www.w3c.org/P3P) Project

- Compliance with Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 (COPPA)
- Use SSL for secure transactions. (Currently none)
- Copyright the web site contents except material used with permission from others.
- All pages will show the date last changed.

The web site will not contain or permit links to pornography, hate material, or illegal activities. It may contain copyrighted material used under fair use practices (mostly news articles) and will not contain copyrighted material without written permission.

Work with the Publications Committee to define acceptable bounds on resolution of maps and length of pieces of books that can be put on the web with acceptable limits on the impact to our sales of books and maps.

Web Site Advertising

The web pages may contain advertising for commercial enterprises. This advertising will be classified into the following types:

- Free for merchants who give discounts to members
- Free small banner (e.g. 45x80 or 12x47 pixels) or link to web sites that exchange links with us
- Affiliate programs, e.g. Barnes and Noble
- Add-on charge to *Trail Walker* advertisers
- Charges equivalent to *Trail Walker* ads based on size and duration for web only ads
- Corporate sponsorships at significant charges, individually approved by the Board.

The placement of ads will obey the following principles:

- Pages will be divided into two categories, normal and advertising.
- No advertising will appear on the normal TC related pages, except a prominent link on the home page to the advertising pages and links to the advertising area on other pages where appropriate.
- Isolated links to commercial web sites may appear on normal pages when it is appropriate, e.g. a news or event article that mentions some commercial enterprise because they are sponsoring an event.
- Corporate sponsorships may get special placement advantages with Board approval, e.g. LL Bean sponsored the AMC pages for a while and had a very small, but prominent, link on their home page and some interior pages.

Web Site Design

The design emphasizes fast loading, easy navigation, and good graphics design. Extremely limited use of blinking or moving objects except under unusual circumstances. The latest version of the page templates supports user control over font sizes to facilitate use by an older population. The design will not use leading edge features unless they default to something reasonable on older browsers. We support the mission of the Web Standards Project in their campaign encouraging users to upgrade their browsers. Compatibility with Internet Explorer and Netscape browsers and PCs and Mac computers is important.

Web Site Discussion Policy

There is a discussion forum hosted by an outside vendor. Appropriate uses are: trip reports of interesting places to hike, individual sale of camping/hiking equipment, trail conditions, looking for hiking partners, Trail Conference policies, environmental concerns (trail or land preservation

related). It will be monitored for compliance with the rules adapted from the rules on the AARP web site in the Appendix. Use of the discussion forum assumes agreement to abide by the rules.

Future Directions

This policy does not preclude other topics to be included on the web nor other ways to use the web.

Appendix - Forum Rules

Conduct

The discussion forums shall be used for lawful purposes only. No material shall be posted on or transmitted through the discussion forums which violates or infringes the rights of others, which is unlawful, threatening, abusive, defamatory, invasive of privacy or publicity rights, vulgar, obscene, or otherwise objectionable, which encourages conduct that would constitute a criminal offense, gives rise to civil liability or otherwise violates any law. No conduct shall be undertaken that, in our judgment, restricts or inhibits any other user from using or enjoying the discussion forums. Advertising or commercial solicitation are forbidden.

No material protected by copyright, trademark or other proprietary right shall be uploaded, posted or otherwise made available on the discussion forums without the express permission of the owner of the copyright, trademark or other proprietary right. You shall be solely liable for any damages resulting from any infringement of copyrights, proprietary rights, or any other harm resulting from any uploading, posting or submission.

You hereby grant to us the royalty-free, perpetual, irrevocable, non-exclusive right and license to use, reproduce, modify, adapt, publish, translate, create derivative works from, distribute, perform and display any message posted in the discussion forums (in whole or in part) worldwide and/or to incorporate it in other works in any form, media or technology now known or later developed.

You shall not (i) select or use a name or e-mail address of another person with the intent to impersonate that person; (ii) use a user name or e-mail address subject to the rights of any person without authorization; (iii) use a name in violation of the intellectual property rights of any person; or (iv) use a name that we, in our sole discretion, deem offensive.

The foregoing provisions of this section are for our benefit and the benefit of our affiliates, and each shall have the right to assert and enforce such provisions directly on its own behalf.

Disclaimer of Warranty; Limitation of Liability

Each user expressly agrees that use of the discussion forums is at his or her sole risk. We do not warrant that the discussion forum will be uninterrupted or error free; nor do we make any warranty as to the results that may be obtained from use of the discussion forum or as to the accuracy, reliability or content of any information provided through the discussion forums.

The disclaimer of liability contained in this section applies to any damages or injury caused by any failure of performance, error, omission, interruption, deletion, defect, delay in operation or transmission, computer virus, communication line failure, theft or destruction or unauthorized access to, alteration of, or use of record, whether for breach of contract, tortious behavior, negligence, or under any other cause of action. Each user specifically acknowledges that we are not liable for the defamatory, offensive or illegal conduct of other third parties, subscribers, members or other users of the discussion forums and that the risk of injury from the foregoing rests entirely with each user.

In no event will we or any person or entity involved in creating, producing or distributing the online services be liable for any direct, indirect, incidental, special or consequential damages arising out of the use of or inability to use the discussion forums or out of the breach of any warranty. Each user hereby acknowledges that the provisions of this section shall apply to all content on the discussion forums.

We neither endorse nor are responsible for the accuracy or reliability of any opinion, advice or statement on the discussion forums, nor for any offensive, defamatory or obscene posting made on the discussion forums by anyone other than our employee spokespersons while acting in their official capacities. Under no circumstances will we be liable for any loss or damage caused by reliance on information obtained through postings on the discussion forums.

We do not endorse, warrant or guarantee any product or service offered by a third party through the discussion forums and will not be a party to or in any way monitor any transaction between users and third party providers of products or services. As with the purchase of a product or service through any medium or in any environment, each user should use his or her best judgment and exercise caution where appropriate.

Each user specifically acknowledges that in no event will we, our affiliates, nor any of their respective employees or agents be liable for any direct, indirect, incidental, special or consequential damages arising out of (i) the use by such user of any browser owned or operated by any party and/or (ii) the downloading of any software owned or operated by any third party.

Monitoring

We shall have the right, but not the obligation, to monitor the content of the discussion forums to determine compliance with this Agreement and any other operating rules established by us. We shall have the right in our sole discretion to edit, refuse to post or remove any material submitted to or posted on the discussion forums. Without limiting the foregoing, we shall have the right to remove any material that we, in our sole discretion, find to be in violation of the provisions hereof, otherwise objectionable or stale. Notwithstanding this right, users shall remain solely responsible for the content of their messages. Each user acknowledges and agrees that neither we nor any third party content provider shall assume or have any liability for any action or inaction by us or any third party content provider with respect to any conduct, communication or posting on the discussion forums.