Leaving the Catskills a Better Place

NJ ATV Legislation Continues Forward Momentum

The Morris Canal Trail

The state of New Jersey is rich with abandoned former transportation corridors, many of which have been converted to greenways, such as the many rail trails and the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park. Yet others of these rights of way are being lost to development.

One of the most significant of these is the former Morris Canal. Opened in 1831, the Morris Canal traversed 102 miles by 1836, from Phillipsburg to Jersey City. In addition to the more conventional system of locks, the Morris Canal also used inclined plane technology, in which flatbed canal boats were raised or lowered by means of cradles attached to a cable. The Morris Canal was the greatest climber of all the world’s canals, charting an elevation loop on Sugarloaf, and—his trophy project—10 miles of new Long Path trailway moved off of roads and into the woods between Mount Trumpet and the Devil’s Path on Plateau Mountain. It took Mc a little over five years to get the approval for the last piece of the 150-mile project.

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Pete Senterman’s love of the woods inspired his work as a TC volunteer.

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Clearly, Pete did not do well. More than a decade ago, the state appointed him to its Forest Preserve Advisory Committee, where he has represented TCs, its actual knowledge of the forest environment, trails, and trail work makes his work most inspiring.”

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The group fighting for the ATV enforcement legislation remains optimistic about its prospects for success. According to Brenda Holzinger, the TC’s NJ Regional Representative, “Member support via the electronic action alerts in November was tremendous help to us when we talked to individual legislators because they were hearing from their constituents that the ATV enforcement legislation is important. That had an immediate impact on how the legislators viewed the proposed bill. However,” Holzinger continued, “in order to achieve success by the end of the session in June we will need even more member support for our action alerts as we push the enforcement legislation through the Senate committees and the full Assembly and Senate.”

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The Morris Canal Trail

By Mike Helbing

Mike Helbing is a Trail Conference member and volunteer on the Highlands Trail, and works for the Hunterdon County parks department. In his spare time, Mike is spearheading a new project—a trail that will run the route of the historic Morris Canal from the Delaware River to Philadelphia in the Hudson River in Jersey City.

“He has the route all sketched out, has divided it up into segments, and is securing trail support and volunteers to maintain the trail. It’s a tough job to get things done.”

Except for the segment through the city of Trenton, which he is stepping down from, “Pete’s been around for our most effective leaders,” says Larry Wheelock, West Hudson Regional Representative for the Trail Conference, who is heading the search for Pete’s replacement.

Despite the scope of the job, Pete recommends it to the right person, that being someone who, as he does, “appreciates the Forest Preserve and has the qualities of persistence and patience.”

There is prestige, he says, in working in the Forest Preserve. “It’s unique in the world,” where he has personally protected wilderness in the Catskills and Adirondacks. He was very proud that he could work in it and work with the state people and around the restrictions to get things done.”

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Letters to the Editor

Ticks Are Not So Easy to See

For background before I launch into corrections to Ms. Vuong (“Ticks: No One’s Hiking Friend,” Nov./Dec. ’08), I have had a house in Dutchess County for 40 years—statistically the worst area in the country for Lyme disease. I have had Lyme disease five or six times since 2000, mostly because I cut my own grass, trim shrubs, etc. on a two-acre property. I am a long-term member of the New York Academy of Sciences, with a background in microbiology, biochemistry and other relevant science, as well as a member of the Trail Council.

It is much more difficult to detect a tick if you are alone than you may imagine. After a horrendous illness caused by an undetected tick bite in the summer of 2008, I sat in the hospital, taken there in a coma by a 911 crew, diagnosed (mistakenly) as having a stroke; it later turned out to be an extended post-traumatic case of Ehrlichiosis. Babesiosis is a disease caused by a one-celled animal. It took almost two months for me to recover. The tick had apparently landed on my hair, partly under a hat, from a shrub, and crawled onto my scalp. I never saw it.

Ms. Vuong never mentioned ehrlichiosis. Plus, she seems to believe it takes a tick a while to get into your skin. Wrong. The first time I had Lyme disease in 2000, I had arrived upstate on a Friday before Memorial Day at about 5 p.m. I was in the house till about 7. I took out the lawn mower and cut grass for two hours, finishing in a sweat at close to 9 p.m. Did not take off my clothes till midnight, and found a swollen tick on my forenoon—the size almost of a bedbug (remember them)?

I have ordered an MD and he always carried isopropyl alcohol to use on ticks (a different kind) on Long Island. After trying to pull off my tick, which was immovable, I dripped rubbing alcohol on it for many minutes before its hind legs curled under, and I was able to yank it off. It left a small pit. I never put alcohol on my skin for more than five hours (“90 minutes”)? I went to see my doctor on the following Thursday, about five days after the tick bite. The results came back—positive for Lyme disease. And I was put on doxycycline. Could not walk in the sun for weeks. No ticks can hide easily and not be detected. If you are alone, you will not find them on you. A friend of mine in Connecticut went for a prostate exam not long ago—he had a MD friend and a tick near his belly button.

I spray myself with OFF, use DEET, and beware of infections masquerading as sluggishness—with no fever, no bullseye, no nothing.

—Jane Daniels, Board of Directors, Chair, Trail Council

From the Board of Directors

Hikers and Bikers in Common Cause?

Hikers and mountain bikers. The notion that these are two groups with nothing in common seems widespread, in spite of the fact that many people enjoy both sports. There are many differences in these two communities—some hikers look at trail bikers as enemies and vice versa. And yet, as our own Trails Council discussed at a recent meeting, we may have more in common than we realize.

In the face of motorized recreational vehicles, and with the need to preserve trails for human-powered recreation to park managers, it seems hikers and bikers should find similarities and not focus on their differences.

Based on the concept we both share—that volunteers are the responsibility for developing and maintaining trails—I set out to do some trail work with bikers on Saturday, October 18. The occasion was the field work portion of an International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA/ITRBA) trail building workshop at Ringwood State Park.

My purpose was simple: to hike with the IMBA and hiking community and learn what mountain bikers think about the Trail Conference.

Fifteen people took part in the work trip; many had gathered earlier in the day for classroom instruction and then headed out. I have done trail work with bikers and taken a look into trail building techniques, so this workshop seemed well worth my while. It was easy for me to engage with my fellow workers. I got conversation going by asking a question or two about why they were there, and if they were enjoying the work.

In time, the folks I was working with discovered I did not mountain bike. They were interested in learning my views about mountain bikers. Some hikers dislike meeting a mountain biker on the trail, feeling that it ruins their hike. I find I enjoy talking with them. We may have more in common than we realize.

I also had ample opportunity to talk about the Trail Conference. More important was to hear their views about the Trail Conference. Bikers seemed to think that, universally, Trail Conference members hate mountain bikers, and they were pleased to talk with one who did not. They also did not know that the Trail Conference wanted to reach out to bikers, to explore how together we can work for trails.

At the end of the day, I confirmed that mountain bikers are similar to hikers—we love being in the outdoors and exercising in a way that is fun. Add to that mix, we both like to do it with similarly minded folks.

In my opinion, the Trail Conference should be open to bikers and we should work together for trails. Combining their desire to serve those who enjoy hiking and their desire to be an essential part of the local community, they opened their doors and now provide all Trail Conference members with access to off-season deals on all regular-priced items at the store.

Catering to backpackers and hikers, Mountain Tops Outdoors also carries clothing, equipment, books, and local photography. Mountain Tops Outdoors also offers a selection of gear and clothing for anyone who love to hit the trail. The Trail Conference is pleased to partner with Mountain Tops and offer our members access to even more great hiking gear and destinations.

For more information on this store visit www.mountaintoponline.com or call either group likes ATV’s destroying our hard work. I hope that for the 10 or so people I talked with, I was able to foster some common cause between hikers and bikers. I will seek other opportunities to engage mountain bikers. We need them to help fight to protect open space and against ATV’s.

—Jane Daniels, Board of Directors, Chair, Trail Council

FEATURED RETAIL PARTNER: Mountain Tops Outdoors

After growing up in Beacon, the owners of Mountain Tops Outdoors were inspired to open an outdoor retail store. Combining their desire to serve those who enjoy hiking and their desire to be an essential part of the local community, they opened their doors and now provide all Trail Conference members with access to off-season deals on all regular-priced items at the store.

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Part Time
Kathy Goldman Office Assistant

The New York-New Jersey Trail Conference is a federation of member clubs and individuals dedicated to providing recreational hiking opportunities in the region, and representing the interests and concerns of the hiking community. The Conference is a volunteer-directed public service organization committed to:

• Developing, building, and maintaining hiking trails.
• Promoting hiking trails through support and advocacy.
• Educating the public in the responsible use of trails and the natural environment.

Mission Statement

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Part Time
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Visit Us Today!}

Visit Us Today! www.nynjtc.org

Send Us a Letter
Email it to tw@nynjtc.org; in the subject line, put “letter to FW editor”; or send it to Trail Walker Letters, NJ-NJ Trail Conference, 156 Ramapo Valley Rd., Mahwah, NJ 07430.

—Jane Daniels, Board of Directors, Chair, Trail Council

Send Us a Letter
**AWARDS ’08**

Each year the Trail Conference honors designated volunteers and partners for exceptional commitment to trails and the Trail Conference. Awards are made in up to nine categories and are presented either at the Annual Meeting or at a time and place of the award recipient’s convenience.

**WILLIAM HOFERLIN AWARD**

Recognizes Trail Conference volunteers who have demonstrated exemplary service to trail maintenance, management, and/or trail land protection.

Estelle Anderson

Co-Supervisor for Norvin Green State Park

Estelle Anderson is co-supervisor, with Bob Jonas, for the southern part of Norvin Green State Park. Two years ago she called every maintainer in their region to verify their volunteer start date so as to ensure they are getting the recognition and maintainer patches they deserve. She is calling them again this year. In addition, Estelle has represented the Trail Conference at numerous outreach events in New York, and shares her passion openly with almost every one she meets on the trail or even hanging around a trailhead. She has taught or coordinated several Trail Maintenance 101 classes, as well as a course in Trail Construction. She volunteers inside as well, keeping the TC’s web calendar up to date. Estelle’s breadth and length of service benefits trails and the Trail Conference significantly.

**NEXT GENERATION AWARD**

Given to those under age 18 who are making significant contributions of time and energy to trail building or protection.

Tom Magelein

Trail worker par excellence

For eight years, Tom Magelein (age 12) has been helping his parents, John and Karen Magelein (supervisors for trails in Fulton Chain State Park and registrants for Ramapo 2007). His parents have always taken Tom on inspection trips. At age five, he thought helping move logs which his father had chain sawed was a really fun activity. As he has grown, his help with swapping (assistant to a chain-sawyer) and supervisory trail work has increased. At maintenance workshops held in East Hudson, Tom helps with the outdoor training. His knowledge of trail maintenance is outstanding. On a work trip on Bear Mountain this spring, Tom was accepted as an adult. He helped his parents with registration for Ramapo 2007, including assembling packers. Tom personifies what the Trail Conference would like to have as our next generation of trail workers.

**PAUL LEIKIN EXTRA MILE AWARD**

Awarded to those volunteers who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to a 3-5 year project such as a book, map, or advocacy project.

Andy Garrison

Single-handedly made LaFarge cleanup a success

To put it simply, Andy Garrison, a long-time member of the Shawangunk Ridge Trail crew, single-handedly made the cleanup of the TC-owned property on the Shawangunk Ridge, known as LaFarge, a success. Andy spent about 375 work hours (not including travel time) on the project between early November 2007 and the end of June 2008. He took a week of vacation from his paid job to spend 14+ hour days at LaFarge and dedicated more hours by himself during the tough winter months. Thanks to his hard work, determination, and good connections, Andy helped bring the cleanup costs in well under expected expense. Throughout this challenging project, Andy always remained good natured, keeping his sense of humor intact, no matter what went wrong on a given day.

**KEN LLOYD AWARD**

Honors an individual affiliated with a Trail Conference Member Club who has given exemplary service to his/her club.

Suzanne Wilder

Leg work on trail approvals for the Highlands Trail in Hunterdon County

As president of the Musconetcong Mountain Conservancy, Suzanne Wilder did all of the legwork on trail approvals for the Highlands Trail in Hunterdon County. She has also led many work trips on the trail, building new trail and maintaining existing pathways. Thanks to Suzanne’s hard work and commitment, the Highlands Trail is on the verge of completing one of its final links, through Hunterdon County and coming close to the Delaware River.
Conservation & Advocacy News Notes

Make sure you get Action Alerts from the Trail Conference so that you can help support our region's trails, parks, and open spaces. Set your email program to accept mail from the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference.

NEW YORK

TC Contacts:
West of Hudson Regional Representative
Lois Whelock, Wheelock@nynjtc.org, 201-512-9348, ext. 16
East of Hudson Regional Representative
Chris Ferguson, Ferguson@nynjtc.org, 201-739-4434

Another Big Threat to the Shawangunk Ridge

A 650-acre parcel on the spine of the Shawangunk Ridge in Mamakating is the targeted site for a gated community of large luxury homes, a hotel, conference center, spa, and restaurants called Seven Peaks at Wawarsing. This 3,080-acre tract is directly adjacent to the Bashakill Wildlife Management Area and the Shawangunk Ridge Trail. The parcel is located between the Delaware and Hudson (DE&H) Canal Trail on the western flank of the ridge, and includes headwater streams that feed the nearby Shawangunk Kill on the ridge’s eastern flank. The project would be highly visible from both the Wawarsing Valley to the east and the Neversink Highlands and the Bashakill to the west. At full build-out, Seven Peaks would be one of the largest developments ever proposed along the ridge.

From the Conservation Director:
William P. O’Hearn

Why Not an Outdoor Jobs Program? Or, Bring Back the CCC and WPA

As our economy slides deeper into recessions, a number of policy writers and commentators have called for President-Elect Obama to develop a public jobs program. The reasoning is that such a program would provide a temporary economic stimulus, while creating a legacy of useful public works. Recent reports and legislation in New York and New Jersey have documented that our park structures and roads are falling apart from neglect and underfunded budgets. The Senate legislation, S802, was voted out of the Environment Committee 5-1 and overwhelmingly approved by the full Senate (32-6-2) in October. If it is included as an amendment in the larger economic stimulus package, it can move to the full Assembly for a vote. The Trail Conference joined with the American Humane Society, the Sierra Club, and a number of other groups to fight this legislation. Hundreds of TC members responded to action alerts and let the Assembly know that hikers want Sundays to remain deer-hunting-free so they can continue to enjoy New York’s public lands at least one day a week during the fall and early winter.

Stay tuned for more action alerts and an update in the March/April ‘09 newsletter.

Conservation & Advocacy

View of Shawangunk Ridge from New Paltz

From the Conservation Director: William P. O’Hearn

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Conservation & Advocacy

PowerLine Fight

PSE &G’s proposed 45-mile long Susquehanna-Roseland electric transmission line would cut through one of the state’s most precious natural areas—the 860,000-acre Highlands Region. New transmission towers would be built next to the current 80-foot towers, but the new towers would rise to heights of almost 200 feet.

PSE&G originally intended to work individually with each of the 15 municipalities that will host the transmission line. However, after much resistance from the municipalities and the region’s Van Cleef and Tenafly groups, PSE&G changed its strategy and is now going directly to the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities and bypassing the municipalities altogether. This move has further outraged both the municipalities and the environmental groups that are vehemently against the new electric transmission line. Because the PSE&G project traverses New Jersey’s Highlands Region, the NJ DEP will need to determine whether or not to grant a special exemption for the transmission line. PSE&G has already decided that the higher towers are designed to minimize electric and magnetic fields, and the proposed route minimizes the amount of vegetation that would have to be cut down and the smallest amount of forests and wetlands.

Sunday hiking at risk in New Jersey

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TRAIL U
Teaching Practical Skills to Trails Volunteers at Locations Throughout the NY-NJ Area

Save the Dates

To register for a class, go to our website: www.nynjtc.org/workshops/trailu/

Trail U Training 101 Workshop
Saturday, April 4
Location: Trouble Lake Reservation
Stay tuned for our spring schedule of courses, now being developed. Classes will be announced in the March/April Trail Walker and online at www.nynjtc.org.

TRAIL CREW Schedules
January – February 2009

For the latest schedules and additional details, go to nynjtc.org and click on “Trail crews/Work trips.”

TLB = To Be Determined

 Volunteers helped Palisades State Park staff haul lumber to a work site in the fall.

TC helps PIP

The main project was to construct a bridge in Palisades State Park in Alpine NJ. The bridge is located at the junction of the Long Path and the Forest View Trail. The need for it came about as a long term effect of Hurricane Floyd in 1999, which enlarged a small stream to a large gully that needed crossing.

The PIPC-NJ staff invited the Trail Conference through TC Supervisor Chris Connolly to participate in the project by assisting in carrying the materials from the top of the Palisades cliff down the trail to the worksite, which we did: these 6 x 12 x 24-foot pressure-treated strands down the rock steps to the new bridge site, then back for the 24 deck planks, 16 posts, some cross braces, nails, bolts, spikes, generator, power tools, fuel, etc.

In addition, the TC workers helped assemble the framework of the bridge. PIP staff finished up the construction. Trail Conference volunteers who helped PIP workers were Chris Connolly, Vin Dryer, Cliff Konnerth, and John Moran.

— John Moran

HIGHLANDS TRAIL CREW
Leader: Glenn Oleksik, hikenpvisit@verizon.net
We meet on the first or second Sunday of each month with additional trips sometimes scheduled. We tackle a variety of Highlands Trail projects from trail maintenance to bridge building. For details on trips, go to www.nynjtc.org and click on “Trail crews/Work trips” at left. Please contact leader if you are coming on a trip so that you can be notified of cancellations.

METRO TRAILS CREW
Leaders: Joe Gindin, 718-614-2209, ogindin@optonline.net; Linda Sullivan 347-721-6123, marmindla@yahoo.com
No experience is required. We provide the training, tools, gloves and the fun! Please bring a lunch and plenty of water.

January 31 (Saturday)
Staten Island Greenbelt
Leader: Linda Sullivan
Erosion control on Blue Trail
Meet at High Rock parking lot, end of Nevada Ave., 9am.

February 28 (Saturday)
Staten Island Greenbelt
Leader: Linda Sullivan
Erosion control on Blue Trail
Meet at High Rock parking lot, end of Nevada Ave., 9am.

EAST HIGHLANDS CREW
January 31 (Saturday)
Word Pound Ridge
Contact: Brenda Bates, Park Manager, 914-864-7317
Meet at the Trailside Nature Museum in West Pound Ridge, 9:30am
Join the dedicated trail volunteers of the nearby 40 miles of trails at Word Pound for a brief update meeting followed by clearing, trail building maintenance, and/or erosion control.

WEST HIGHLANDS TRAILS PROJECT
Leader: Chris Ezzo (Crew Chief), 516-431-1148
music@yorkbiz/516@yahoo.com
Brenda Bates, Park Manager, 914-864-7317
Joe Gindoff, 718-614-2209,
Hibernating for the winter.

WEST HUDSON SOUTH CREW
Leader: Chris Ezzo (Crew Chief), 516-431-1148
music@yorkbiz/516@yahoo.com
Bran Bushchuk, 718-219-7950, branbgtrailcreation@gmail.com
Claudia Farrell, 212-652-1234, cjfarrell@earthlink.net
Bob Marshall, 914-727-4792, roam1234@verizon.net
Sandy Parr, 732-469-5109, sandyparr@comcast.net
Debbie Brown, 732-937-9018, westhudsoncrewwtbo@verizon.net
Contact: westhudsoncrew@verifikalibuild.com

Hibernating for the winter.

NEW YORK-NEW JERSEY TRAIL CONFERENCE
January 31—February 28, 2009
Save the Dates

MARCH/APRIL TRAIL WALKER
For the latest schedules and additional details, go to nynjtc.org and click on “Trailcrews/Warrroutes” at left.

Second Sunday of Each Month
Work begins at 9:30am and is finished before 4pm.
Covering the entire NJ section of the AT, blue-blazed side trails, and shelters. Supplies work by our individual maintainers as requested and for special work projects. Workers bring gloves, lunches, and water; all equipment and training provided.
Email leader to be placed on email notification list.

BEAR MOUNTAIN TRAILS PROJECT
Contact: volunteers@nynjtc.org
Tool and equipment maintenance.

Saving the Catskill Cutoff Trail

West Jersey Trail Season Recap

It was an interesting year for the West Jersey Crew. The rains were thin—due to the high cost of gasoline and the distance to our remote work sites. Several of the work trips included only one participant—but, with the two leaders, that still made a Crew! And then there was the rainy autumn: almost half of the scheduled trips had to be canceled due to rain. Nonetheless, trail work was accomplished in 2008. Thank you to everyone who persevered.

The steep first quarter-mile of the Douglas Trail in Warren County State Forest now has a dozen water bars combusting erosion. The trickiest parts of the Terrace Pond North Trail relocation have been improved with rock steps, retaining walls, and side-hilling. The Warren Trail now is open from the Jenney Jumps State Park office to Hissim Road, after the construction of more than a half-mile of side-hilled trail. An eroded section of the Blue Trail in Wantage Warren Township has been rehauled. And two prives were constructed and installed, replacing decrepit and barely usable structures.

Thank you to everyone who was part of the West Jersey Crew in 2008: Jack Basculini, Brad Barden, Pam Barden, Ian Blundell, Gordon Campbell, Joan Campbell, Gene Cappelletti, Joan Jones, Ken Malkin, Gay Mayers, Keith McDermott, Lori Mott, Brian Mullaney, Rich Pace, Steve Reiss, Chuck Rood, Christy Steinbach, Bill Taggart, Linda Taggart, Hsin-Chien Tai, Brad Thomsen, and Bob Warren.

And thank you also to our NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection partners at the state parks, who let us borrow their tools, use their facilities, store our stuff in their yards, and pack in their restricted parking areas.

Note: The West Jersey Crew takes the winter off, and will start work again in mid-April 2009. We are ceaselessly recruiting. If you are interested, just contact one of us (see list of leaders below) to meet other trail enthusiasts in your area who, if you just transformed together is something that appeals to you, please contact us—or just come join us in the spring (You’ll never look at a hiking trail the same way again!)

David & Monica Day, Leaders, West Jersey Crew

Old Cedar Trail at Campgaw Gets Makeover by Scouts

Doug Fernandez of River Edge, NJ, completed an Eagle Scout trail project on October 26, 2008 at Campgaw Mountain County Reservation in Ridgewood, NJ. The project, which took place on the Old Cedar Trail, involved repair and re-decking of a footbridge over a stream, plus lay-down of crushed rock for a hundred yards to harden the trailway, and lining that path with stone. Doug’s fellow Scouts of Troop 96 in Chestnut also constructed and positioned eight new bog-bridges on the Dogwood Lane Trail.
Volunteer Classifieds: Get Involved!

Contact volunteers@nynjtc.org or 201-512-9348, ext. 14, to indicate your interest or get more information about these or other volunteer opportunities. Information is also available at www.nynjtc.org; click on Volunteer.

Trail Crew Chief Assistant
(work from home)

Are you not inclined to do the heavy work of trail building but would like to support our trail crews? Here is an opportunity to become an important part of building and repairing our hiking trails by becoming a Trail Crew Chief Assistant. The work will involve contacting prospective recruits for the crew, keeping records of the work done and the people who volunteered, as well as other duties as requested by the Trail Chief. If you’re comfortable working with people, have some organizational skills and time during the spring, summer and fall, then this kind of work could be just right for you.

Web Intern

College student internship available to design, update and manage The Darlington Schoolhouse website. DSH, an historic building located at 1-202 near Ramapo College, will be renovated by the NY-NJ Trail Conference as headquarters/offices and community space. An updated, online website will be an important tool by which to inform Trail Conference members, educate the public, enlist volunteers, and facilitate fundraising for the DSH Project. A student intern with strong computer skills is needed for 5-10 hours/week (including availability on Wednesdays, afternoons).

Writers: Adopt a Trail Region on the Web

New Parks and Regions online database resources will complement and expand the Trail Conference’s bi-monthly newsletter filled with timely articles and columns that will enhance your hiking experiences.

Money-Saving Discounts at participating retailers and businesses.

Workshops and Seminars on trail maintenance and construction, leadership training, wilderness first aid, chainsaw operation, environmental monitoring and GPS operation.

Volunteer Opportunities to “learn by doing” in areas as varied as trail maintenance, construction, publications, environmental monitoring, and cartography.

Access to the Hoeferlin Library at the Trail Conference office that includes more than 1,000 books on hiking round the world, along with maps, guides and a historical archive.

New Parks and Regions online database

Winning the job as a Trail Overseer might be just right. Hike the entire trail in your assigned area (about 20 miles) at least once a year to evaluate its condition, report problems, recommend trail relocations, and provide trail information. Supervise trail maintainers on your section.

Appalachian Trail Overseer or Supervisor

For the volunteer who likes to organize as much as hike, the job as an AT Trail Overseer might be just right. Hike the entire trail in your assigned area (about 20 miles) at least once a year to evaluate its condition, report problems, recommend trail relocations, and provide trail information. Supervise trail maintainers on your section.

Appalachian Trail Corridor Manager

This is an exciting job for someone who has AT corridor boundary monitoring and maintenance experience. Supervise boundary monitors, coordinate semi-annual reporting, work with the monitors to maintain neighbor and government contacts and with the local management committee to stop illegal boundary activities, and assess environmental and development impacts.
Support your local friendly hunter!?! By Joan Ehrenfeld

Deer had been nearly extirpated from New Jersey at the end of the 1800s. In 1901, a total of 7000 deer were harvested by hunters, and deer hunting was completely prohibited. By 1913, deer had been imported from the state to re-stock private reserves and parks, and populations started to recover. Consider today’s harvest: during the 2005-2006 hunting season, 59,667 deer were harvested in New Jersey (and somewhat fewer during the past two seasons), out of a population of about 40,000 deer. In addition, thousands of deer are killed by cars; New York State’s Dept. of Transportation estimates that there are 60,000 deer-vehicle accidents annually. North Jersey Deer Crash Coalition says 7,000 deer-car crashes are reported each year and that 50% of these are unreported.

This disturbance not only stresses the system seasonally (January 1 to the end of March) in order to protect the Bald Eagle roosting sites, but also year-round. The bulk of the disturbance occurs in the fall, when the deer are in rut and roosting sites are needed. We need to maintain a “brow line”—green vegetation down to about four feet off the ground, and then a sharp straight boundary with a brown landscape beneath this height. This is not natural; in fact it is a dramatic sign of serious ecological problems.

The deer browse line is clearly seen in this photo.

Deer are forced creatures, producing as many as three (but usually fewer) offspring each year. The adults mate in late October or early November, and the newborn fawns are born in the spring (May to June). They eat a wide variety of plants, both leafy herbs and woody twigs, and also fruits and nuts, such as acorns. Woody tissues, including twigs, young seedlings, and bark, are the main foods during the winter. They lack teeth on their upper front jaws, and so cut off twigs unevenly, leaving a jagged edge, unlike other browsers such as rabbits or small mammals, which cut off twigs sharply and cleanly. The deer tend to eat more twigs during the fall when browsing damage to plants was inflicted by deer or by other animals.

It is important to note that there are several vantage points over the Hudson Valley that allow for viewing with out disturbing the Bald Eagles. These locations are utilized by environmental organizations as educational outlets for the community. Teatown Lake Reservation, in collaboration with various conservation groups in the area, visits several of these (including George’s Island Park), during their annual eagle viewing programs. Jeff Main, Senior Curator of the Hudson. Scott Williams, Croton Point Curator, is dedicating every Wednesday in January and February and every Saturday to facilitate this outreach initiative. Jeff Main has asked for other organizations and individual volunteers to join the educational efforts that aim to protect the roosting habitat.

It is not healthy for the deer, and it is catastrophic for the forests. The lack of understory not only eliminates wildflowers, shrubs, and young trees, it removes the habitat required for many of our migrant forest birds that nest in the shrubs and in the forest floor, and it also removes the habitat for salamanders and small mammals that need dense cover and a thick layer of dead leaves on the forest floor. The whole forest community suffers when deer are over-abundant.

The hopeful news is that deer populations have been declining. Slowly. In New Jersey, the population peaked at 204,500 deer in 1995; the estimate for 2006 was 131,782. New programs, like special permits for farmers, programs to assist communities in developing deer manage- nce plans, and especially the hungry program that allows hunters to take additional deer to supply community food pantries, and liberal limits on taking “antlers” deer are helping.

But we are still a long way from having healthy forests in New York and New Jersey, and indeed throughout the eastern deciduous forest. Extensive research on non-lethal means of controlling popula- tions has shown them to be far from effective and exceedingly costly. So, support for your friendly local hunter is probably the best way of helping our forests, and all the other critters that depend on them for a place to live.

Winter bow season extends through January in much of New Jersey.

Joan Ehrenfeld is Professor, Department of Ecology, Evolution, and Natural Resources at Rutgers University.
January

Thursday, January 8

SK. Happy New Year Day Hike in Upper Manhattan, New York
Leader: Oz Adler and Fred. Meet at first of the Brooklyn Bridge to Manhattan... 3:30pm for Port Authority. Terminal bus inform. Explore the Brooklyn Bridge, the old and the new while stopping for a little wintertime sightseeing.

OC. Milburn RR Station to Watchung Station, New Jersey Leader: Naomi Shapiro, 908-464-6246. Meet 7:50am at the Milburn RR station (30 minutes from Morristown).

OC. Great Swamp Greenway Trail to Trailhead, New Jersey Leader: Georgette Weigl, 908-424-5412. Kite the Quakish marsh trail NA 5 miles; since Henry Montford sailed up the river with arrows from the Village of Ramapo to New-Haven along a doorway Trail. Start from the Market Street Industrial park and walk approximately 1 1/2 miles on a wooded trail along the Watchoken Creek to a pond overlooking the Hudson River in New-Haven. Transit the QR RR Rol.

OC. West Morris Reservation, New Jersey Leader: Mike Pope, 706-240-6839 or 609-488-9933. Meet 8am by the gates for location. Walk 3.5 miles in the park.

Saturday, January 10

TLR. Winter Bird Walk, New Jersey Leader: Contact Lake Tazewell Reservation for further information, 973-205-7800 or www.laketazewell.org. Meet 7:30am at the Laketazewell boat launch.

TLR. Rockaway Beach State Park, New Jersey Leader for details call 609-587-6270. Meet for location. Call for early dinner on the beach. Explore the park, call for early dinner on the beach. Explore the park.

OC. Menlo Park Reservation, New Jersey Leader: Na...
(5) Sale of pictures, prints, and souvenirs at the trailhead.

Tuesday, January 20, 2009

Volunteer Orientation schedule!

Learn about the new Trail Conference for Volunteers!

Meet and new volunteers!

Announcing the Trail Conference’s 2009 VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION schedule!

Are you thinking about volunteering for the Trail Conference, but don’t know where to start?

Would you like to have a better understanding of how the Trail Conference operates?

Join us for one of our VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION sessions to:

Learn more about the details of our volunteer program!,

Meet and new volunteers!

Discover the many ways you can contribute to trails and give back to the open space you enjoy so much!

Gain a better understanding of how the Trail Conference connects People with Nature.

Register now for our January Orientation to be held on Tuesday January 20, 2009, 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm at our Mahwah office by:

Visiting our website at www.nynjtc.org/volunteers/vif.htm,

Emailing volunteers@nynjtc.org with “Orientation” in the subject line, or

Calling the office at 201-512-9348.

Any interested volunteers are encouraged to attend one of our monthly ORIENTATION workshops. You must register to attend.

Upcoming Orientation Dates: Tuesday evenings, January 20, February 17, March 17 from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm at our Mahwah office.

Member Club Profile

East Coast Greenway Alliance

Imagine an urban Appalachian Trail, a 2,000-mile, multi-use path that connects the major cities of the East Coast. Imagine walking or bicycling safely, separated from motor traffic, from Boston to DC, New York to Savannah, or all the way from Maine to Florida. That is the projec
tive goal set by the newest member group of the Trail Conference, the East Coast Greenway Alliance, a national nonprofitsponsored membership organization headquartered in Wakefield, Rhode Island, with field staff in each of its four regions and volunteer committees in each of the states along the route.

The East Coast Greenway is steadily becoming a reality as pedestrians, cyclists, and trail advocacy groups work together with planners and transportation officials in communities along this spectacular route. The Greenway passes through 15 states and Washington D.C., linking cities and towns along the route using urban greenways, park paths, abandoned railroad corridors, waterfront and shoreline pathways, and scenic roads. Overall, about 20% of the route is already on traffic-free, firm-surface trail.

ECC’s current route through New York and New Jersey spans 140 miles. New York boasts the highest percentage of completed trail: 35 miles. New Jersey has 10 miles of completed trail, including the D&R Canal Trailway, which is the longest completed trail in the ECC system.

The ultimate goal is to make the entire trail offroad, allowing families and people of all abilities to travel safely from city to city, state to state, or within their own community without the use of motorized transportation. When complete, the ECC promises to be the longest continuous bike-ped path in the U.S.

The Alliance itself does not build the Greenway; it promotes the vision for connecting local trails and provides advocacy services for states, counties and municipalities that do build and manage the trails that comprise the ECC.

In 2008, the Alliance developed cut sheets and Google maps of its route from Calais, Maine to Key West, Florida. These are available online and, for the first time, Greenway travelers have the advantage of finding their way without tools to navigate any or all of the route. In addition to the tools currently available, the ECC promises to offer 100 completed trails in the ECC system that are accessible by trail users of all ages and abilities. However, because 80% of the route is still on-road, traveling the entire 3000-mile route is only recommended for experienced cyclists.

Cut sheets and maps are available for free at www.greenway.org. If you would like to get involved or see what you already own, including the NJ ECC Committee at info@greenwaynj.org or the NY ECC Committee at easterngreenwaynj.org, including regularly for ECC scheduled rides, which are led along the Hudson waterfront and other areas in New York and New Jersey.
Robert Augelto

Robert Augelto, a 12-year member of the Trail Conference and legal counsel on the TC’s corporate and business affairs, died November 25, 2008. Bob represented the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference and Scenic Hudson, as well as the Orange County Land Trust, of which he was a founding member, in numerous land preservation transactions in the Hudson Valley region. He first became interested in land protection during the struggle to preserve Sterling Forest.

John Myers, former land acquisitions director for the Trail Conference, writes, “Over the years, Bob and I did deals together, and got to know him personally and, what a great guy. I always liked the way he could take a hard issue, just make it easy to work with, and I always had a lot of respect for him. I will miss him greatly, but his efforts will live on in all the beautiful tracts of land he helped the Trail Conference to preserve.”

Bob was also the long-time lawyer for the Midlenden Industrial Development Agency. He is survived by his wife Joan and sons Peter and Charles.

Harry Bolt

Harry F. Bolt, a long-time trail maintainer in both Harriman and Minnewaska State Parks, died on October 6, 2008, at Overlook Hospital in Summerville, NJ. He was 90. Mr. Bolt was born in the Bronx, NY, and lived in Westwood, NJ, before moving to New Providence in 1957.

Harry loved the outdoors and was active in canoeing, hiking, and trail maintenance, and was a member and former officer of the Adirondack Mountain Club and the Appalachian Mountain Club. For years he maintained trails in Harriman State Park, and with TC member Dorothy Jessup of New Paltz, co-maintained the Gertrude’s Nose Trail at Minnewaska State Park Preserve.

“Harry was very attentive to details,” Dorothy recalls, “such as putting all the blazes on one side of a trail. And he was very concerned about protecting the natural appearance of the trail—not cutting the blueberries back too far, but not leaving the trail too narrow. Harry was a very dedicated trail maintainer who always kept the interests of hikers in mind while making sure that the trail stayed in good shape.”

He is survived by two sons, a daughter, and four grandchildren.

Another Way to Give

Have you considered trying the Trail Conference’s mission? Making a donation in the form of a charitable gift annuity from the Trail Conference might be the perfect opportunity for you. A charitable gift annuity pays you a steady fixed income for the rest of your life and is a generous donation to the TC.

Charitable gift annuities are very popular gifts because of the high rate of return, which will never change after a gift is made, regardless of interest rate fluctuations. And, a charitable gift annuity is simple to establish. With a charitable gift annuity you would get an immediate income tax deduction for a significant portion of the value of your gift, and favorable taxation of the annuity payments will increase the spending power of your annuity.

For more information, please contact Joshua Howard at josh@nytc.org or 201-512-9348, ext. 13.
change of 1,674 feet from end to end. Though inclined planes were implemented to some extent in Europe and Asia, none of them compared to the engineering marvel that was the Morris Canal.

Abandoned around 1926 after nearly a century of service, a grassroots effort came about to save the canal as a linear greenway much like the D&R Canal, but the plan never came to fruition. The old canal, for example. But to many people like myself, that isn’t good enough. Many canal advocates envision a trail stretching the entire length of the canal, following nearly parallel roads where necessary to connect preserved sections.

To help promote the canal, I recently began a bike series to cover the entire canal route from Phillipsburg to Jersey City. I am dedicating the last Sunday of every month to leading groups on roughly 15 mile sections of the former canal until I have covered the entire canal’s route. My first hike, Phillipsburg to Washington area, was a great success and attracted a large group. Anyone interested in joining the series should contact me at smeeshome@hotmail.com.

Don’t Be Shy...

The next time you’re out for a hike or a maintenance trip, please take a moment to remind the first hiker you see who it is who maintains and protects the trail you’re on.

• Inform them that it’s through the efforts of about 1,100 volunteers that the trails stay open and accessible.

• Remind them that the Trail Conference is not a federal agency or extension of the state park system.

• Encourage them to join the Trail Conference to support our efforts. As a member, they will receive the same great benefits that you have come to enjoy: 25% discounts on publications and clothing purchased directly from the Trail Conference, 10% discounts at local outdoor stores, like Campmor and Ramsey Outdoor, free subscription to our bi-monthly Trail Blazer, and much more.

A strong membership is the foundation for all that the Trail Conference accomplishes. Please help us strengthen that foundation by promoting our organization and inviting others to join the TC today!

If you would like some membership brochures to hand out when you hike, please contact Hedy Abu at habd@nynjc.org or 201-512-9348 ext. 17.
New Bridge Permits Reopening of Trail on Storm King

By Georgette Weir

No longer do those climbing the Stillman Trail (and co-aligned Highlands Trail) in Storm King State Park from the trailhead on Mountain Road have to peril their way across a rickety bridge, then grasp the roots of a dying hemlock to scramble up a ledge to continue on their way. That dangerous situation actually caused park managers to close the section of trail a few years ago.

This past fall, however, the section reopened when Trail Conference volunteers put the finishing touches on a brand-new bridge. The project spanned two years and was a complex affair involving securing posts into rock. It was designed by Eddie Walsh, TC trail consultant and volunteer, and approved by park managers, and succeeded in reopening when Trail Conference volunteers recruited to help: Denise Vitale, Dave Webber, Eddie Walsh, Jan Gobbiard, Henry Atenbrusy, Gary Casini, Andrew Screver, Joan James, Steve Zubank, Mary Holley, Tom Dukin, Chris Connolly, Tom Spence, John Kerckyte, Gary Wildesberg, Bill Carroll, Jon Paulson, Ed Goodell, Georgette Weir, Jean-Claude Fourie, Matt Townsend, Melissa Sherman, Sharon Raphael, Arie Raphael, Tonda Highley, Eric Friedman, Sue Donnelly, Stehne Unger, Carusso Ferre, Sheldon Edwards, Ollie Simpson, Jack Bausadi, Andrea Vogel, Larry Braum, Larry Wheeler, John Kenney.

The Stillman Trail offers a good, strenuous hike that includes 13 spectacular Hudson River viewpoints.

The bridge restores the integrity of the trail that ascends the north side of Storm King Mountain, often sidestepping its way across steep slopes. The Stillman Trail offers a good, strenuous hike that includes 13 spectacular Hudson River viewpoints that are strung along the 3.3-mile stretch between the Mountain Road trailhead in Cornwall and the underpass that takes the trail west of Route 9W.

Trailhead parking is at 460 feet; the highest viewpoint along the trail is at 1340 feet—so you can get a good workout with lots of places to stop and enjoy splendid scenery up and down the Hudson Valley. Mountain Road intersects with Route 9W in Cornwall. Trailhead parking (limited) is about 0.7 mile northeast of 9W, marked by two stone pillars on the right. The trail (yellow blazes for Stillman Trail and trail blazes of the co-aligned Highlands Trail) heads east into the woods, initially following a rocky woods road. After about half a mile, the trail leaves the woods road toward the north and reaches the first viewpoint; it then loops back toward the woods road, and begins a steady ascent. At a junction with the Bluebird Trail (blue and red) in just under one mile from the start, the Stillman Trail turns left (southeast) cutting across the steep and wooded slope of the mountain.

It is along this segment of trail that you will come to the new bridge. Take a moment to appreciate it and the labor of the volunteers. They not only built the bridge, but hand-carried the heavy slabs of black locust more than a quarter-mile into the worksite. Continue on the trail upward to views and a network of trails at the top of the mountain.

Map: Trail Conference Map 113, West Hudson map set

Volunteers (signed in; others, including passing hikers, were recruited to help: Denise Vitale, Dave Webber, Eddie Walsh, Jan Gobbiard, Henry Atenbrusy, Gary Casini, Andrew Screver, Joan James, Steve Zubank, Mary Holley, Tom Dukin, Chris Connolly, Tom Spence, John Kerckyte, Gary Wildesberg, Bill Carroll, Jon Paulson, Ed Goodell, Georgette Weir, Jean-Claude Fourie, Matt Townsend, Melissa Sherman, Sharon Raphael, Arie Raphael, Tonda Highley, Eric Friedman, Sue Donnelly, Stehne Unger, Carusso Ferre, Sheldon Edwards, Ollie Simpson, Jack Bausadi, Andrea Vogel, Larry Braum, Larry Wheeler, John Kenney.

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