



TRAIL WALKER

NEW YORK-NEW JERSEY TRAIL CONFERENCE • CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH NATURE SINCE 1920

Mapping Out the Next 100 Years

Imagine a group of passionate people who believe in the power of connecting with nature standing in front of a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. They see potential in the natural areas outside of New York City—untamed woodlands and mountains that can offer clean air, exercise, and respite for the growing population in the rapidly developing metropolis. Many of these natural areas themselves are being eyed for development. Time is of the essence to protect the land.

Through private donations and public participation, they succeed in preserving many important parcels. With ownership of these lands transferred to the states of New York and New Jersey, they begin partnering with these agencies to scout, design, and construct trail systems that will provide safe, enjoyable access for the public. They enlist more people to build, maintain, and protect these new trails and the precious ecosystems they allow visitors to experience. All this work they do as a volunteer-powered nonprofit: the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference.

That scene is as much a retelling of the Trail Conference's origins in the early 1900s as it is a look at the work that the organization is accomplishing today. As we close our Centennial year this October, the symbolic end of an era presents Trail Conference leader-



ADOBE STOCK

The work the Trail Conference does now impacts how future generations will experience the outdoors.

ship with the opportunity to ask many of the same questions our founders pondered: How do we harness the growing interest in nature? How do we empower more people to explore the outdoors safely? How do we instill a sense of pride and responsibility in protecting its integrity?

Of course, there are new

questions we must face as well: How do we address barriers between people of color and equitable access to the outdoors? How can our work better address climate change and other threats to the health of the environment? As we turn 101, It feels like a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to make a real difference in how the pub-

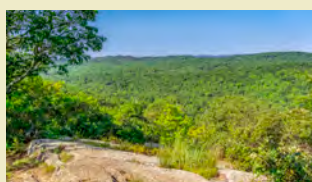
lic engages with nature.

In this Trail Walker, you'll read about some of the steps we are taking to answer these questions—from a largescale trails plan that emphasizes community connectivity (page 5), to leading the response to the emerging invasive spotted lanternfly (page 4). We've also embarked on a strategic plan-

ning process to define our priorities and efforts in the coming years.

As an outdoor lover and Trail Conference supporter, we invite you to be a part of this journey. Sign up for our digital newsletter at nynjtc.org to receive invitations to provide feedback, stay up-to-date on our progress, and more.

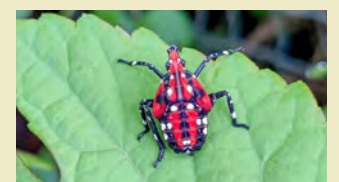
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You're Invited to Our Centennial Gala

We invite you to join us at our Centennial Gala on Saturday, Oct. 16, at the Bear Mountain Inn to celebrate our legacy of service—100 years of empowering people to connect with nature and protect the land they love.

In 1920, the Trail Conference was founded by outdoor-lovers who believed the weariness of fast-paced, modern life could be cured by a walk in the woods. Today, the demand for outdoor recreation is at an all-time high as people turn to nature to relax and recharge after an extremely challenging year.

Since our founding, the Trail Conference has been a literal and figurative trailblazer in the conservation movement. Every time our volunteers step on a trail, they are embodying



CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH NATURE SINCE 1920



Bear Mountain Inn

ZETI/CREATIVE COMMONS

the values of an organization that strives to provide safe, enjoyable opportunities outdoors and inspire a deeper appreciation for the care that natural areas require.

We hope you will join us at our Centennial Gala on Saturday, Oct. 16, at 6 p.m. at the Bear Mountain Inn. To mark this milestone, we will be honoring Dr. Lucy Rockefeller Waletzky—philanthropist, environmentalist, and longtime Trail Conference champion. Our program will include live entertainment, cocktail hour, three-course meal, open bar, and cider tastings.

The Trail Conference respectfully requires that Gala guests be fully vaccinated and produce proof of vaccination. Alternatively, guests may provide proof of a negative COVID test (an antigen test taken the day of the event or a PCR test taken within 72 hours of the day of the event).

Guests are encouraged to wear a mask indoors during

the event while not eating or drinking. Bear Mountain Inn's ventilation system uses M 8 Series filters, which have passed the New York State Health Inspection. We have reduced the number of tickets available, with seating capped at 75% capacity. All guests must follow the most updated guidance from the CDC and Rockland County on the date of the Gala.

We understand that the new COVID variant has caused concerns about safely attending indoor events this fall. A virtual experience will be provided to ticketholders unable to attend. The virtual experience includes a video of the event and a gift box to enjoy at your leisure.

Learn more and RSVP at bit.ly/tc-gala-21.

TRAIL CONFERENCE SUPPORTERS

The Trail Conference's mission is made possible through generous support from hundreds of individuals, companies, and foundations—outdoor-lovers like you who care for the environment.

In an effort to reduce our paper impacts, our full supporter list will begin appearing in the annual edition of the Winter Trail Walker. Donations of \$50-plus made in honor or in memory of friends and family will continue to appear in each quarterly Trail Walker.

Thank you for your generosity and passion for trails and natural areas—thanks for your support of the Trail Conference!

TRIBUTES

May 1 - August 31, 2021

In honor of Kenneth Andersen
Kirsten Shaw

In honor of Roger Dubin
David Lerer

In honor of Charlie Gadol and his Long Path journey and fundraiser

Edward B. Whitney
Kimberly Cuppett
John Magerlein
Kenneth Posner
Beth Ravit
Mary Ann Villari

In honor of Carol Masters
Kimberly Spence

In honor of Riley Zoller
Mary Kate Cahiwat
Laura Spinosa

In honor of my 1974 summer as assistant waterfront director at Boy Scout Camp Mohican, now AMC Mohican Outdoor Center
Ellen Stern

In honor of Don Weise
Marilyn Van Houten

In memory of Sandy Beck
Cornelia Wondergem

In memory of Patricia Blau
Ruth Huggler

In memory of John B. Blenninger
The Alvin DeMaria Fund

In memory of James Cooper
Raymond Albano

In memory of Vira Goloubenko
Sergei Goloubenko

In memory of Mr. Lou Macario
Steve Aaron

In memory of Robert Muir
Kat Thompson

In memory of Frank Peloso
Kathleen Finley

Walter Stanek

In memory of Tom Robinson
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Tamar Schragar

Rabindra Singh
Sean Sullivan

Bill Taggart
Don Walter

In memory of Sandra Sherman
Charles Gadol

In memory of John Togut
David Togut

In memory of Glenn Walker
Albert Spagnuolo



ADOBE STOCK

Will You Take on the Trail-A-Thon Challenge?

Our Second Annual Trail-A-Thon, running Sept. 13 through Oct. 31, is a chance to support sustainable trails and healthy parks. As we close out our Centennial year and look to our 101st birthday this

October, we're inviting everyone to take on the challenge of walking, hiking, running, or riding 101 miles to help celebrate.

The official challenge is 101 miles, but that doesn't mean you can't do more—or less! The Trail-A-Thon is about getting outdoors, connecting with nature, and celebrating the Trail Conference's work.

While ticking off your miles, you'll also have the opportunity to raise money for the Trail Conference and

protect the land you love in the process. This year's Trail-A-Thon will help raise awareness and financial support for our mission into our second century.

All participants will receive a certificate of participation and a Centennial sticker at the end of the challenge. To sweeten the pot, we've added fundraising prizes at various levels.

Learn more, sign up, or support a participant at bit.ly/tc-trailathon21.

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STEPHANIE HINDERER DESIGNER

MISSION STATEMENT

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 York-New Jersey Trail Conference is a volunteer, non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization.

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Great Partnerships Lead to Great Trail Experiences

If a time machine could take us back to the early years of the Trail Conference, what would we change? Hindsight is 20/20, of course, and organizations, like people, learn and grow from the past. But has the heart of the Trail Conference mission changed? Our organization has remained a constant presence over the last century, providing the public access to some of the most amazing natural areas outside of any major city. We still accomplish our mission the same way we started: by engaging the support of enthusiastic and dedicated people who share a similar desire to enjoy nature.

The Trail Conference was founded as a conference of likeminded organizations—the convener of those who were willing and able to do the work needed to empower individuals to protect the land we



all love. That spirit continues to drive our work today. In fact, without the goodwill of our

land manager partners, whose agreements invite us to do things like build and maintain trails and remove invasive species, the Trail Conference would not exist. With more and more people looking to connect with nature, the need for new partnerships—the need for better collaboration—is greater than ever.

Our latest opportunity to play a key role in a major, multi-partner initiative has come in New Jersey, where the Lake Hopatcong Regional Trails Plan will connect communities to businesses and nature via trails (read more on

page 5). In the Spring 2021 issue of Trail Walker, our work with the Open Space Institute and Orange County Land Trust on the Highlands West Connectivity Plan, which envisions a vital green corridor conserving open space and providing accessible recreation through Orange County, N.Y., was featured. (Revisit the article at bit.ly/tc-twsp21.) And, of course, there are the incredible coordination efforts that make our long-distance trails possible.

Everybody knows about the Appalachian Trail—the 174 miles of A.T. maintained by the Trail Conference in New Jersey and New York are well-hiked. As we prepare to celebrate the A.T.'s centennial, we celebrate our legacy as the organization whose volunteers built its first section, through Harriman-Bear Mountain state parks, in 1923.

The Highlands Trail, in comparison, is something of a secret. Another long-distance trail cared for by the Trail Conference, it extends 180 miles



Our organization has remained a constant presence over the last century, providing the public access to some of the most amazing natural areas outside of any major city.

Howard



from the Delaware River at the New Jersey/Pennsylvania border to the Hudson River in New York. Plans are underway to fully extend the Highlands Trail east to the Connecticut border.

And then there's the Long Path. Since 1960, the Trail Conference has spearheaded the effort to maintain, protect, and complete this trail, dubbed New York's Greatest Trail. The aqua-blazed Long Path extends 358 miles from 175th Street Subway Station in Manhattan to John Boyd Thacher State Park near Alba-

ny, 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 Forest Preserve trail system.

As we enter our second century, we are working hard to ensure that, on our 200th birthday, a time machine is not needed to address opportunities that might have been missed. We will continue to work with our partners, both public and private, to create a better experience outdoors. As our organization evolves, we are improving the impact that we have by not just focusing on the physical trail, but on the total trail experience. Whether in 2021 or 2121, whenever somebody needs the solace of the wilderness or the respite of a trail, it will be there for them, thanks to the efforts of those united by the Trail Conference.

Joshua Howard
Executive Director
executivedirector@nynjtc.org

BEN SUGAR



In Harriman State Park, the recently rebuilt Ramapo-Dunderberg Trail, left, withstood Hurricane Henri much better than the Kakiat Trail, right.

High Rainfalls Highlight Value of Sustainable Trails



BEN SUGAR
SENIOR TRAIL BUILDER

Some say that the job of designing, building, and maintaining sustainable trails involves managing two things—people and water—and that the two are usually related. For instance, minimum impact recreation principles tell us to avoid using wet trails to prevent displacing saturated soils and hastening erosion.

On the other side of the coin from user behavior, trail planners and designers strive to keep trails out of wet areas whenever they can. They aim to keep grades moderate and on side slopes that can drain more easily. Builders and maintainers try to divert runoff from trail surfaces as quickly and frequently as possible to prevent it from building up erosive volume and speed.

These efforts are challenging enough during our region's wet winters and high rainfall years. But major storm events like August's twin hurricanes Henri and Ida illustrate the

need for sustainable design and maintenance. Most people (other than long-distance hikers) wouldn't be on a primitive trail in the aftermath of such a storm—not with downed trees, trickling creeks, and dormant springs suddenly gushing back to flood levels and significant water on trail sections that had been bone dry to contend with. But for builders and maintainers, these conditions can be some of the most illuminating. They help identify what areas are draining well and which ones require attention, sometimes with unexpected results.

A properly functioning trail segment should not have large amounts of water flowing down trail more than 10 or 15 feet before draining off downhill, even under deluge conditions. As dramatic and video-worthy as the trail becoming a temporary stream might appear, it should make trail professionals cringe. That fast-moving water is carrying off all the soil loosened up by our feet, hooves, and/or wheels, and then some. Over the years, that means more

sediment in our waterways and degraded trails left behind for future generations, which then require more costly fixes to prevent them from becoming unsightly permanent scars on the natural landscape. The upside though, is that these storm events help make it plain where the drainage is being most overwhelmed by water flows, which can then help us decide where to focus our efforts to make trail fixes.

This summer's storms kept our trail crews busy assessing trail conditions and damage and planning remediation projects for the remainder of this year and into 2022. If you'd like to learn more about what it takes to build a trail that can withstand significant water and/or traffic, we invite you to attend a workshop led by one of our skilled trail builders. Topics such as Trail Drainage Structures or Layout and Design are offered seasonally. Or, spend a morning learning the tricks of the trade with one of our crews! Head to nynjtc.org/events to find upcoming dates and learn more.

Staff Update

Welcome, Cory!

Cory Tiger, New Jersey Program Coordinator, grew up in Warwick, N.Y., on the border of New Jersey. There she explored local sections of the Appalachian Trail and other nearby trails from an early age. After completing a dual degree in environmental humanities and anthropology, Cory's love for trail conservation flourished. Beginning in 2015, she worked several seasons with the Adirondack Mountain Club, spending a summer as a High Peaks Summit Steward and two seasons on the professional trail crew. Embracing a seasonal lifestyle, Cory enjoyed multiple winters working in outdoor education in California's Santa Monica mountains. In 2019, while completing



her master's in environmental policy from Bard College, Cory moved to

Australia. There she conducted her thesis research on the impacts of citizen science in World Heritage Areas. Continuing her focus on the importance of voluntary data collection for decision-making processes, Cory coordinated a volunteer-based tidal wetland monitoring project and urban waterway education programs with a local environmental organization in Cairns, Queensland. Since moving back to the Hudson Valley in June, you can find Cory frequenting the Adirondack High Peaks region, kayaking around Monksville Reservoir and Wawayanda Lake, or enjoying her horses in Warwick.

In Memoriam

Thomas Robinson

Tom Robinson, a lover of the outdoors and active member of the Trail Conference's West Jersey Trail Crew, passed away on June 18 at his home in Harriman, N.Y. He was 57.

Thomas was a driver for Nippon Express USA Inc. in Closter, N.J. He was a member of Sacred Heart Church in Monroe, N.Y., Harmony Farm, Catskill Mountain Club, Catskill 3500 Club, and the Trail Conference.

Tom and his son, TJ, started working with the West Jersey Crew in 2018 on the Pochuck Boardwalk



re-decking project. He and TJ—and on occasion his nephew, Billy

Cerezo, and his other son, Justin—worked with the crew on numerous projects, including the Terrace Pond floating walkway, the Appalachian Trail punchoon replacement at Rt 94, the A.T. punchoon repairs at the Wallkill Wildlife Refuge, and bridge and step-stone projects in Stokes State Forest. Tom, along with TJ and Billy, last worked with the crew this spring in Stokes on the Deep Root and Criss trails stream crossings. He will be missed.

Spotted Lanternfly: How You Can Help Fight this Invasive Threat

ARDEN BLUMENTHAL, BRENT BOSCARINO AND LINDA ROHLEDER
TRAIL CONFERENCE ECOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP TEAM

When there is an urgent threat of invasive species in our region, the Trail Conference's Ecological Stewardship team springs into action. Our latest target: spotted lanternfly (SLF).

Spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) is a colorful insect in the planthopper family that congregates in large numbers to feed on the sap of trees. This incredibly destructive pest can feast on over 70 different species of plants, including some of our most iconic native trees and economically important crops such as hops, grapes, and apple trees. Our team has been very busy developing and implementing an SLF early detection and rapid response program in partnership with New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, the lead agency in stopping SLF in New York. We've been targeting SLF infestations in the Lower Hudson Valley region, including Orangeburg, Sloatsburg, Port Jervis, and Newburgh, N.Y., and calling on our network to respond.

As the leader of the Lower Hudson Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM), a partnership of more than 50 organizations, the Trail Conference understands that protecting our region's natural areas from threats like invasive species requires building a robust network of volunteers, seasonal crews, staff, community organizations, and institutional partnerships that value communication, collaboration, and participation. Building this infrastructure allows us to respond rapidly to new threats—threats that have the potential to destroy the integrity of the ecosystems so vital to our physical and mental wellbeing. This type of cooperative approach to invasive species management has been on full display over the past few months in our battle against spotted lanternfly, an emerging threat to our region's economy and native habitats.

And what a collaborative effort it has been! Here's a snapshot of our efforts so far this year.

Spring: Early Detection

This spring, the Ecological Stewardship team recruited volunteers to survey for SLF egg masses, part of a statewide



Spotted lanternfly traps have proven effective at capturing the pest at known infestation sites.

monitoring effort involving the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, the NY iMapInvasives database, and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Our program engaged 110 volunteers who dedicated close to 600 hours of surveying for spotted lanternfly egg masses across 197 locations in the Lower Hudson Valley and northern New Jersey. A small group of dedicated volunteers and staff members also teamed with Ag and Markets to remove over 600 SLF egg masses before they could hatch. Each mass contains up to 50 individual eggs, so this urgent effort in the spring helped suppress infestations in advance of full-fledged response efforts this summer.

In tandem with these efforts, our Conservation Dogs team has been invaluable in finding SLF hidden among vegetation. Once a spotted lanternfly report is filed and confirmed by Ag and Markets, we deploy our Conservation Dogs team to assist agency inspectors in further defining the scope of the infestation. These early

detection surveys are critical to successfully managing this species before it takes hold in other areas.

Summer: Response

Our response plan involves multiple control measures: erecting insect traps on species of trees the SLF is attracted to; clearing vines and other vege-



STEPHEN AUSMUS

tation too small to hold traps; and treating SLF's host tree, tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) with insecticide so the insects are killed when they feed. Meanwhile, we encourage swatting, squashing, and stomping as many SLF as possible!

In late July, we brought in our Invasives Strike Force crew to help clear vegetation in preparation for treatments and installation of insect traps. They were joined by staff, other Trail Conference Conservation Corps members, Invasives Strike Force volunteers, PRISM partners, and community partners. This group also helped to remove and dispose of nearly 1,000 individual spotted lanternflies they came across during their brush-clearing work. In addition, they helped facilitate treatments by locating and flagging target host trees. Our Conservation Dogs team was involved in defining the border of currently known infestations so that our treatment plan could move forward with greater accuracy.

In early August, we organized a group of Trail Conference staff, interns, volunteers, and PRISM partners to install nearly 70 insect traps on various host trees and locations, with more traps planned for installation as needs emerge. These traps were purchased and supplied to us by Ag and Markets, who facilitated quick procurement and delivery. Within one week of installation, these traps had already caught over 3,000 SLF, which were promptly removed.

In addition, PRISM partner Trillium Invasive Species Management performed strategically targeted insecticide treatment of 289 host trees to further curtail the population and prevent spread.

Looking Ahead

This flurry of activity highlights small steps toward our long-term SLF monitoring and management goals, which depend upon public engagement through awareness messaging, detection, and reporting. Another team is ramping up efforts to plan a communication campaign.

With community awareness in mind, the installed traps nearest to public access points feature "Have you see this insect?" signs with species ID and reporting and contact information to help spread public awareness, mitigate tampering, and promote public participation in survey efforts. With the help of citizen science volunteers and PRISM staff and partner coordinators, these traps will be checked every two weeks through the fall.

This September, the SLF survey program will kick into overdrive as volunteers will help detect SLF adults outside of the known infestation sites.

The synergistic connections between our various programs and sense of shared responsibility for environmental protection, as exemplified in this spotted lanternfly early detection and rapid response model, will continue to drive our Stewardship Program through 2021 and beyond.

If you are interested in contributing to this effort, there are many ways to help—from donating funds to volunteering time. Volunteers are currently needed to continue vegetation clearing, help with monitoring SLF circle traps and removing caught SLF at these sites, or in surveying for SLF close to your home. Contact Invasive Species Citizen Science Coordinator Brent Boscarino at brent@nynjtc.org for more info.

Special thanks to the following participants:

► **Catskill Regional Invasive Species Program (CRISP)**, who cleared vegetation at an infestation site in Huguenot.

► **PRISM partners:**
• **Trillium Invasive Species Management INC**, who donated their time to perform the treatments.
• **Suzanne Barclay and**

Kristen Ossmann, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Rockland County, who provided interns to assist with vegetation management and education and outreach to community members.

• **Andrew Morgan, Pound Ridge Land Conservancy**, who brought interns and power tools to help with vegetation clearing in Orangeburg.

• **Don Gabel, New York Botanical Garden**, who advised on treatments, helped transport traps to us, and facilitated communication with

township employees.
• **Glenn Sungela**, who helped with vegetation management.

► **Town of Orangetown, Town of Deer Park, and various business owners**, who were very responsive in quickly getting us permission to proceed with treatments and vegetation management.

► **Thank you to all the private donors** who pitched in to fund the purchase of insecticides for the treatments.



Lost Lake from the Beaver Brook Trail

NICK MCKENNA

Lake Hopatcong Regional Trails Plan Helps Communities Connect Healthy Living and Local Businesses

A new, multi-use trail system that supports healthy communities and ecotourism in the greater Lake Hopatcong region is becoming reality, thanks to private-public partnerships and a belief in the power of connecting people with nature.

The Lake Hopatcong Regional Trails Plan envisions a recreational trails system covering Jefferson Township and Mount Arlington Borough in Morris County, N.J., that will provide an attraction for visitors to the lake and an amenity for those who call Lake Hopatcong home. The trails will accommodate walkers, joggers, hikers, and bikers and provide both an alternate route for travel around the lake and a resource for recreation and enjoyment of the outdoors. The trail system will tie neighborhoods together and provide access to the area's municipal parkland, county parks, state parks, and the state wildlife management areas. When complete, the system will stretch from the Mount Arlington NJ Transit Rail Station in the south to the Mount Paul section of Kittatinny Valley State Park in the north.

The vision was spearheaded by a local resident who is an avid bicyclist, jogger, and hiker—a private donor passionate about getting outside and enjoying nature. It was during the height of the pandemic that he saw the potential in addressing the area's lack of trails to bring the local community together through the natural beauty of Lake Hopatcong. When considering how to connect nature with business and health, he began a partnership with consulting firm Greener by Design to find solutions.

Greener by Design completed the comprehensive Lake Hopatcong Regional Trails Plan in January 2021. The plan takes an inventory of the existing trails in the region, lays out the routes for new sections, identifies key properties for acquisition, and estimates the



The Highlands Trail runs through Mahlon Dickerson Reservation, the largest Morris County park.



Headley Overlook in Mahlon Dickerson

MARY PERRO

costs involved in construction of a complete system of trails. As trusted partners in trail systems design, care, and management, the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference was enlisted to provide expertise and support for the Lake Hopatcong Regional Trails Plan in July.

"The Lake Hopatcong Regional Trails Plan aligns beautifully with the Trail Conference's mission, values, and vision for the future," said Trail Conference Executive Director Joshua Howard. "As more people seek nature, providing improved access is essential. The kind of connectivity this plan provides shows real forethought in caring for both the natural areas of the Lake Hopatcong region and the people who live, work, and recreate there. We are proud to be a part of this exciting endeavor."

The plan proposes 16 new trail segments in Mt. Arlington Borough/Jefferson Township that total just over 24.5 miles. Most of the land within the trails plan is already publicly owned, managed by various municipalities, Morris County, or the state. That means little

land acquisition needs to take place—a big hurdle already cleared in completing the proposed trails system. So far, the newly formed Trail Committee in Jefferson Township has worked on improvements on one segment, with plans to perform further trail work to the Prospect Point Preserve Trail System.

The key segment in the plan is transforming Compton Gobel Road, an existing logging road, into a multiuse trail suitable for bikes, strollers, and foot traffic from Route 15 to Paderewski Road. Frank Pinto, who worked on the plan through Greener by Design, says its direct access to Route 15 allows for a trailhead with ample parking off a major state highway, which is important in attracting visitors. Jefferson Township has additional plans for ecotourism-friendly improvements in this area, including a parking lot and pump track for bikes. Pinto hopes to receive bids for construction on this segment's first 1.5 miles soon.

"It's wonderful to work with the Trail Conference and Jefferson Township that see a common vision of enhancing the Lake region's attraction as an ecotourism destination through this ambitious trail network," Pinto said. "Future plans being considered would link the trail system through Wharton Borough to Dover, a regional transportation hub."

The Lake Hopatcong Regional Trails Plan is made possible through the cooperative support of the following: The Morris County Park Commission, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection: Green Acres Program, NJDEP Division of Parks & Forestry, NJDEP Division of Fish, Game & Wildlife, NJDEP Recreational Trails Program, New Jersey Department of Transportation, New Jersey Highlands Council, Jefferson Township, Greener by Design, and the Trail Conference.

PEOPLE FOR TRAILS TRAILS FOR PEOPLE

A quarterly look at some of what we have been doing to improve public access to nature.



JOHN MAGERLEIN



JOHN AND KAREN MAGERLEIN
TRAIL SUPERVISORS FOR FAHNESTOCK WEST

Clarence Fahnestock Memorial State Park in New York's Putnam County has long been a favorite destination with over 60 miles of blazed trails, many of them quiet and uncrowded. The park, like many others, has seen an enormous increase in trail usage during the pandemic. Fortunately, several projects have been underway to improve trails and park infrastructure and give more opportunities for trail users.

In August, a Trail Conference volunteer crew completed the new Oscawana Ridge Trail in the southern part of the park near Oscawana Lake. The 2-mile trail, which permits only foot traffic, may be reached by parking at the north end

of Bell Hollow Road where it enters the park. Follow the red-blazed Candlewood Hill Trail for about 0.3 miles until it turns left off a steep uphill woods road. The yellow-blazed Oscawana Ridge Trail continues on the road and gradually climbs the ridge, emerging onto rocks with a broad view to the east over the lake, soon followed by views to the west over Bell Hollow. The trail continues along the ridge before descending and turning right on a wide woods road, which leads to the southern end of the trail on Lakeview Drive in Putnam Valley. Limited street parking is available, though not in winter.

We thank fellow crew members Bob Flavin, Andrew Fritsch, Bruce Lucas, and Ken Zadeck for their work to design and build the Oscawana Ridge Trail. We are now working with park



staff to lay out a future loop trail down to the shore of Lake Oscawana. If you'd like to help build this trail when it's approved, you can volunteer at the Trail Conference website: nynjtc.org.

Other changes in the park are part of the Open Space Institute (OSI) multi-year Fahnestock Improvement Plan. Most obvious is the new Big Woods Drive going north from Rt. 301 to the Big Woods parking area and trailhead. The new trailhead is at the intersection

of the Cabot and Perkins trails, two Trail Conference-maintained trails that permit only foot traffic. As part of the project, the Perkins Trail going west has been greatly improved to be more sustainable and attractive. This trail crosses the active farm fields of the Glynwood Center for Regional Food and Farming before entering the woods and eventually ending at School Mountain Road.

Another new parking area for 15 cars has been constructed on the south side of Rt. 301 where the Appalachian Trail crosses. This replaces some of the previous roadside parking for improved safety.

For mountain bikers and equestrians as well as hikers, OSI and the park are developing the Hubbard Perkins Loop, a 9-mile lollipop trail beginning near the Hubbard Lodge off of Rt. 9 just north

of its intersection with Rt. 301. Completion is expected late this year. The trail will follow sections of several existing trails including School Mountain Road, Hubbard Loop, Wicopee Trail, Clove Creek Trail, Fahnestock Trail, and Perkins Trail. Significant portions of some trails have been rerouted and improved to correct longstanding erosion and water problems. Signs at trail junctions will show the route of the multi-use loop and indicate that other trails are for foot traffic only.

In addition to these recent projects, other trail development continues, particularly in parts of the park east of the Taconic State Parkway. Additional land adjacent to the park is also being acquired by land conservancies and the state, giving more opportunities for trails in the future.



PHOTOS: JOHN MAGERLEIN



Trail Conference, JORBA Collaboration Improves Bridge in Wildcat Ridge WMA

Jersey Off Road Bicycle Association (JORBA) and the Trail Conference collaborated on an important bridge project in the Wildcat Ridge Wildlife Management Area in Morris County, N.J., with great results. Planning for this project began pre-COVID, and its completion this summer is another step on the road to normalcy in the eyes of our trail builders. JORBA's Norm Albrecht

worked with then-LTC chair Estelle Anderson to plan the project. JORBA provided the skilled leadership and workers, with volunteer Dan Scerra credited as the master carpenter. The Trail Conference helped with material expenses and land manager discussions. Our thanks go to JORBA for being strong partners in improving trails. We look forward to more collaboration!



NORM ALBRECHT

Clipping Brigade Builds Camaraderie While Tackling Overgrowth

Volunteer leaders Bob Jonas and Estelle Anderson care just as passionately about their fellow volunteers as they do trails. In Morristown National Historical Park in Morris County, N.J., the duo has created a roving trail crew dubbed the Clipping Brigade. The crew tackles the park's trails most in need of care at any given time.

Estelle shares the secret to their success:

"A good portion of the trails in the park tend to be overgrown due to aggressive invasive plants/shrubs. Most of

them have thorns. A solo volunteer working on his/her trail section tends to get overwhelmed with the manual clipping and lopping of this overgrowth.

Last year, we started gathering a few volunteers to address the overgrowth. We soon learned the group enjoyed working together, and probably worked harder since there was encouragement and camaraderie.

This roving trail team has already gone out on nine work trips this season. The least number

of participants was five; the most was nine. This is our weekday crew. We also have a weekend crew comprised of those folks who are working. They confer as to which section needs to be cleared and tackle it, usually with four to six people. Regardless of weekday or weekend trail workers, there's always communication, as well as tips as to what and where work is needed.

This amazing group is committed to the trail work and committed to being part of a group effort—they are there



From left: Gary Lindemann, Bruce Duty, Skip Wilson, Sean Pidgeon, Estelle Anderson, and Nicolas Jove

BOB JONAS

even in heat, humidity, and bugs. All of us are sweaty, scratched, covered with clipping debris, and still the guys smile. It's all about having fun!

Plus, I bake dozens of brownies—their reward for hard hours of work.

The nice thing is, while munching (gobbling) the brownies, it becomes a social half hour or so where they all get to talk with each other.

Our goal has been to create a 'trail family' and that's what we have done."

When Nature Calls: Rebuilding the Catskills' Baldwin Shelter Privy

Meet Eric Friedman, a long-time Trail Conference shelter caretaker for the Baldwin Memorial Shelter on Mt. Tremper in the Catskill Forest Preserve.

The shelter's accompanying privy had fallen into disrepair over the past few years. So Eric, in coordination with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, stepped into action. He used his years of carpentry experience to bring the privy back to working condition. With support from Trail Confer-



ence staff, Eric rallied the help of volunteers and DEC staff and interns to carry in approximately 280 pounds of

materials, tools, and supplies for a four-day work trip. Although Eric camped out in the lean-to for the full trip, new volunteers hiked up to the site every day to help get the job done.

Thank you to volunteers Eric Friedman, Frank Kazimir, Charley McIntosh, Ivan McIntosh, Joyce Gallagher, Jayme Mika, Ana Zelenin, Rebecca Stoltzfus, and Patrick Linsey, as well as support from the DEC Forester and staff.

Melissa Cascini, New York Program Coordinator

Board Member Completes Long Path

Congratulations to Trail Conference Board Member Charlie Gadol for completing his Long Path section hike! Charlie's journey began on July 3. Not only did he crush it on the trail, he also doubled his fundraising goal and raised over \$3,000 for the Trail Conference's mission!

Want to learn more about the Long Path and join the incredible



community that surrounds this trail? Check out our Friends of the Long Path Facebook group at bit.ly/tc-ffolp.

From Morris County to the Catskills, TCCC Crews Are Making a Difference

The Trail Conference Conservation Corps (TCCC) creates leaders in environmental conservation while empowering people to play a deeper role in the care of their local parks and trails. By training these AmeriCorps service members to teach the public, we amplify our impact in fostering a commitment to protecting nature.

This season, eight crews are working to improve the trail experience throughout our region. They've been documenting their progress in monthly blog posts (bit.ly/tc-tccblog21) and on Instagram (@tccconservationcorps); we're sharing highlights below.

Trail Crews

Throughout June, the Harriman Trail Crew completed the set of stairs at the entrance of the Ramapo-Dunderberg Trail. This set of stairs was especially difficult because we were starting on the edge of a service road that we couldn't block access to. The top of the staircase ended at a section of bedrock, so we had to squeeze eight steps with 9 inches of rise each into about 100 inches of run. To accomplish the squeeze, our last step was pieced together with two rocks that we had to shape to fit the bedrock. After completing the staircase, we focused our efforts on re-naturalizing the area. - Ed Zubrowski, Harriman Crew Leader

The month of July has been a busy one for the Taconic Crew. We have had multiple successful volunteer work days and workshops on drainages and stone structures at the Wilkinson Trail worksite. The volunteers that have shown up have been highly motivated and interested in what we do as trail crew members. We got them involved in rock moving and staircase building, having very successful results in moving very large rocks for us to use as gargoyles in our staircase! With their help, we have plentiful amounts of rock to use as gargoyles and junk rock for closure that has helped us to finish our staircase. In total, we installed three new steps and repaired four stairs along the Wilkinson Trail. We also end-



Members of the Taconic Crew set gargoyles on the newly improved staircase on the Wilkinson Trail.

ed up closing part of a social path that was confusing many hikers along the Wilkinson Trail, closing 212 feet of social path. - Snowden Jones, Taconic Crew Leader

You can read more about the Harriman and Taconic trail crews, as well as the work of the Palisades and Morris County crews, at www.nynjtc.org/content/2021-trail-crew-blog.

Outreach and Education Stewards

At Breakneck Ridge, the new Nimham Trail opened at the beginning of July, which has provided us another route to suggest to less experienced hikers or those who have done Breakneck many times and want to try something new! It is named after Daniel Nimham, a sachem of the Wappinger Indians, whose ancestral lands include the Hudson Highlands. Surprisingly, none of the brand new signage mentions this! It is a beautiful and user friendly 0.7-mile connection from the Breakneck scramble to the Wilkinson Trail. The number of users is increasing as we are able to spread the word every day. Over the course of the month, we counted 410 hik-



The ISF and AISF crews worked on removing the invasive Japanese Spirea.

ers using the new trail! - Rosa Bledsoe, Hudson Valley Crew Leader

July was another busy month, filled with more training and special events on days when we weren't out stewarding or performing maintenance on the trails. At the beginning of July, all six Stewards became certified Leave No Trace Trainers. In mid-July, we participated in a special Leave No Trace Hot Spot event at Minnewaska State Park Preserve. This was exciting as it allowed us to meet with park staff, land managers, and other stakeholders who have a hand in improving the conditions of this park. Social trails, trampling of sensitive vegetation, and improper disposal of waste are common problems at Minnewaska—especially on the trail going out to Gertrude's Nose. We collaborated on the most effective ways to tackle these challenges, and it was reassuring to see the research from the Leave No Trace team that showed how effective on-the-ground stewardship is. - Myra Romano, Catskill Trail Stewards

You can read more about

the Hudson Valley and Catskill Trail Steward crews, including stories about the other trailheads and summits where they are stationed, at www.nynjtc.org/content/2021-corps-trail-steward-blog.

Invasives Strike Force

The ISF crew kicked off July removing Scotch broom at Harriman State Park and the Ralph E. Ogden Foundation and had some help from volunteers. The crew also worked on Chinese silvergrass, swallowworts, and small carpetgrass at High Tor State Park and Shrub Oak Memorial Park.

Next, the crew continued managing sticky sage at Dover, N.Y. The crew proudly finished managing all the sticky sage found along the Appalachian Trail in this visit! It is essential to manage sticky sage along the trail to prevent the spread of this relatively new invasive to other regions in the Northeast. Overall, the crew is proud to say that they treated a total of 6,182 sticky sage along the A.T.! The crew will be returning to Dover one last time for the season in August to continue working on sticky sage management on private properties. - Cassidy Robinson, ISF Crew Leader

You can read more about the Invasives Strike Force's efforts this season at www.nynjtc.org/content/2021-corps-invasives-strike-force-blog.

Aquatic Invasives Strike Force

For the Aquatic Invasives Strike Force (AISF) crew, the month of July has been filled to the brim with water chestnut removals! Over the course of July, the AISF crew has removed just over 105,000 plants from 11 sites! In total, these plants weighed over 14,000 pounds.

The AIS Program has also been heavily involved with multiple stakeholders from Lake Sebago in Harriman State Park to devise a strategic plan for managing aquatic invasive species through early detection and prevention. Earlier this month, AISF Crew Leader Maya Thompson and AIS Program Coordinator Lindsay Yoder led an aquatic survey training session for the three group camps on Lake Sebago: Adirondack Mountain Club, Appalachian Mountain Club, and the American Canoe Association (ACA). The Lake Sebago ACA camp also spearheaded a pilot Watercraft Inspection Steward Program for a single Saturday at the public launch, where nearly 100 boats were inspected, providing significant support for the creation of a full-season program. - Maya Thompson, AISF Crew Leader

You can read more about the AISF crew's efforts this season at www.nynjtc.org/content/2021-corps-aquatic-invasives-strike-force-blog.



AISF crew members show off their invasive water chestnut haul at Barger Pond in Putnam County.



Stewards received training in Minnewaska, which was a Leave No Trace Hot Spot this summer.

Running Forward and Giving Back



DON WEISE
DIRECTOR OF DONOR
ADVERTISING

Over the past quarter century of leading hikers and trail runners through the woods, I've come to realize that both user groups share much more in common than I had ever realized. This became apparent when I noticed large numbers of my Saturday trail runners showing up on Sunday hikes, on their active recovery days. And while it's true that not all hikers choose to run trails, I have yet to meet a trail runner who doesn't hike. As "trail pedestrians," hikers and trail runners share a common love for the healing power of nature, solitude, and exercise out among the trees. Pace doesn't matter, but trails do. And once we're enlightened to the close connection between the Trail Conference's work and the future of trails, most of us want to give back—as members, volunteers, or both.

This realization led to the formation of Trail Conference Trail Runs, a group that meets regularly in all weather and seasons, to visit the trails we maintain. With two leaders, our monthly "flex runs" are designed to accommodate different pace and dis-



Join the Trail Conference Trail Runs group on Facebook at bit.ly/tc-fbrg.



tance requirements. Runs take place throughout our service area, highlighting the before, during, and after phases of trail construction and repair.

It's exciting to see the light go on when a young trail runner sees how much time and effort goes into trail building

and wants to help. Or when a seasoned ultra-runner makes a transformative gift that allows a major trail project to move forward. I'm inspired by people like Trail Conference runner and member Jessica Simao, who maintains remote trails in Norvin Green State Forest plus the heavily used Mount Tammany Trail in Worthington State Forest. Equally inspiring are race directors like Kim Levinsky, Charlie Gadol, Ken Posner, and the Mahwah Regional Chamber of Commerce, who have generously donated race proceeds back to the Trail Conference.

Do you run trails? Join us! With more than 600 members, our Trail Conference Trail

Trail Conference Trail Runs

Saturday, October 9, 8:30 a.m.

Harriman Big Bedrock Lakes & Mines Run
Striking bare rock summits, views, large mines, forests, lakes, and wetlands.
Harriman State Park, N.Y.
Flex run, 6.5 – 8.5 miles

Saturday, October 30, 8:30 a.m.

Pocantico Hills Marathon Preview
Hilly, non-technical run. Forests, fields, stone walls, bridges, lakes, and streams.
Rockefeller State Park Preserve, N.Y.
Flex run, 5 – 8 miles

Sunday, November 28, 9:00 a.m.

Jockey Hollow Jaunt
Run past Revolutionary War soldier huts, streams, and a colonial farm.
Jockey Hollow-Morristown National Historical Park, N.J.

Flex run, 6 – 8 miles

Races That Give Back to the Trail Conference

Saturday, September 18, 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.

Sterling Furnace Half Marathon/15K
9.3 or 13.1 miles. Beautiful forest and lakeside run on masterfully built trails.
Sterling Forest State Park, N.Y.

Saturday, November 6, 9:00 a.m.

MRCC - Fall Back 5K
Scenic, 3.1-mile loop in Ramapo Reservation. On smooth trails and roads.
Trail Conference Headquarters, Mahwah, N.J.

Saturday, November 13, 8:00 a.m.

Pocantico Hills Marathon Race 26.2 miles through the picturesque, rolling hills of Rockefeller Park.
Rockefeller State Park Preserve, N.Y.

Runs group on Facebook is a great way to connect with fellow trail runners of all ability levels, and stay up-to-date on

upcoming runs and races. You can also find us by searching the Upcoming Events page on our website.

ZAK KIRCHNER



MEVO made trail improvements in Ramapo Reservation this season.

MEVO Partnership Improves NJ Trails



BEN SUGAR
SENIOR TRAIL BUILDER

This year's trail crew from Mahwah Environmental Volunteer Organization (MEVO) continued their fantastic partnership with the Trail Conference, giving their time and effort this summer to improve trails in northern New Jersey.

Between June and August, five volunteer crew members under the guidance of their MEVO crew leader spent two days each week (over 1,000 total hours!) tackling high-priority projects that could not otherwise get done in 2021.

In Norvin Green State Forest, the crew rerouted over 700 feet of trail to improve the hiking experience and sustainability

of the recently orange-blazed Lake Sonoma Loop. Upon hiking the new stretch of trail, Trail Conference volunteer and author Daniel Chazin commented that it was "expertly sidehilled" and "significantly improves the trail."

The MEVO crew also spent several days continuing to improve the popular Reservoir Loop in Ramapo Valley Coun-

ty Reservation. Moving many tons of crushed rock and fill dirt, they elevated a 60-foot section of trail tread above a perennially wet area by creating a variety of technical trail structures—including retaining wall, drainage lenses, and cross drains—keeping hikers' feet dry for years to come.

Many thanks to the 2021 crew for all their hard work!

First Harriman Half Marathon a Huge Success

On July 31, the Trail Conference teamed up with Kim Levinsky, the philanthropic founder of Sassquad Trail Running, as well as Harriman State Park and the Town of Tuxedo, to host a sold out, first annual Harriman Big Bear SquaTCh half marathon and 7-mile trail run. Thanks to generous donations from Kim, members of the trail-running community, and the waiving of fees by our partners, the event netted \$2,000 for the Trail Conference in its first year.

Departing from the village of Tuxedo, runners ascended the western escarpment of Harriman and toured park highlights including Claudius Smith Den, Almost Perpen-



Team Howard (executive director Josh and Henry) captured 2nd and 3rd place in the 7-mile course.

dicular, Lakes Sebago and Skenton, and Parker Cabin and Black Ash Mountains. According to Don Weise, Director of Donor Advising, the routes were designed to



Start of the race

highlight the quiet side of Harriman and raise awareness for the Trail Conference's project to rebuild Harriman's first trail, the century-old Ramapo-Dunderberg Trail.

In recent years, Sassquad Trail Running has played an extraordinary role in attracting young,

enthusiastic new volunteers and supporters to the Trail Conference. Special thanks are also extended to Ken English and the Tuxedo Town Board, Matt Shook and the Palisades Interstate Park Commission, and Harriman State Park for all their help and support.

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Club Spotlight: ADK North Jersey-Ramapo



GEOFF FONSECA
CHAIR, ADK NORTH
JERSEY-RAMAPO

The Adirondack Mountain Club North Jersey-Ramapo Chapter is one of 27 chapters of the ADK. The mission statement of ADK, which will be celebrating its centennial in 2022, states in part: "ADK works to protect . . . wild lands and waters by promoting responsible outdoor recreation and building a . . . constituency of land stewardship advocates."

The North Jersey-Ramapo Chapter (NJR), founded in 1971, numbers about 1,000 members, who primarily reside in Rockland and Orange counties in New York and Bergen, Passaic, Morris, and Essex counties in New Jersey.

About 150 hikes are offered year round by NJR in various parks throughout New York and New Jersey. Hikes, which are led by experienced leaders with knowledge of the trails and trail safety, vary in skill



Hiking is ADK North Jersey-Ramapo's main activity, but they also offer other outings.

level from easy for beginners to strenuous for advanced hikers. The hikes are rated for their pace, distance, and terrain difficulty.

Although hiking is its main activity, NJR also offers some kayaking and biking outings. In addition, there are several social events planned throughout each year, such as guest speakers at membership meetings, Mohonk Mountain House Day, an annual holi-

day dinner party, and tours to points of interest. Also, NJR is very proud to have sponsored the very first blood drive by ADK.

Over the years, the North Jersey-Ramapo Chapter of ADK has forged a close working relationship with the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference. Several members of NJR have served on the Board of the Trail Conference and several have received prestigious



ADK North Jersey-Ramapo welcomes new members of all ages and backgrounds.

awards from the Trail Conference in recognition of outstanding volunteer work. Also, NJR is grateful to the Trail Conference for the use of its beautiful HQ building, where NJR conducts its board meetings and holds its annual holiday dinner party. In addition, NJR volunteers maintain three sections of trails in Harriman State Park under the direction of the Trail Conference.

The North Jersey-Ramapo Chapter of ADK welcomes new members. Consider becoming a member of NJR, whether to assist in the protection of wild lands and waters by promoting responsible outdoor recreation or to hike with others who enjoy being in

the woods. Members represent all age groups and singles and families.

See More

► For more information about the North Jersey-Ramapo Chapter of ADK, visit their website, adknjr.org.

► For photographs and videos of its hikes, see the Facebook page of the North Jersey-Ramapo Chapter of ADK: [facebook.com/North-Jersey-Ramapo-ADK-113791815368324](https://www.facebook.com/North-Jersey-Ramapo-ADK-113791815368324)

Hikers' Directory

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 Advancement Team at 201-512-9348.

ADK Long Island
www.adkli.org

ADK Mid-Hudson Chapter
www.midhudsonadk.org

ADK Mohican Chapter
www.adkmohican.org

ADK North Jersey Ramapo Chapter
www.hudsonhikers.org

Adventures for Women
www.adventuresforwomen.org

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter
www.amcdv.org

AMC Mohawk Hudson Chapter
www.amcmohawkhudson.org

AMC New York North Jersey Chapter
www.amc-ny.org

Black Rock Forest Inc.
www.blackrockforest.org

Boy Scout Troop 8, Brooklyn

Canal Society of New Jersey
www.canalsocietynj.org

Catskill 3500 Club
www.catskill-3500-club.org

Catskill Mountain Club
www.catskillmountainclub.org

Chinese Mountain Club of New York
www.cmcny.org

Closter Nature Center Association
www.closternaturecenter.org

Dyke Hikes
www.meetup.com/Dyke-Hikes

East Hampton Trails Preservation Society
www.ehtps.org

Finger Lakes Trail Conference
www.fingerlakestrail.org

Friends of Garret Mountain Reservation
www.facebook.com/groups/friendsofgarret

Friends of Pelham Bay Park
www.pelhambaypark.org

Friends of the Hackensack River Greenway in Teaneck
www.teaneckgreenway.org

Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct, Inc.
aqueduct.org

Friends Of The Shawangunks
shawangunks.org

German American Hiking Club of New York and New Jersey
www.meetup.com/GAHCNYNJ

HikingMamas_wood2woods

Hilltop Conservancy, Inc.
www.hilltopconservancy.org

Hunterdon Hiking Club
www.hunterdonhikingclub.org

Interstate Hiking Club
www.interstatehikingclub.org

Jolly Rovers Trail Crew Inc.
jollyrovers.org

Little Stony Point Citizens Association
www.littlestonypoint.org

Long Path North Hiking Club
www.schoharie-conservation.org

Maloufs Mountain Sunset Campgrounds

Manitoga / The Russel Wright Design Center
www.visitmanitoga.org

Monmouth County Park System

Morris County Park Commission
www.morrisparks.net

Musconetcong Mountain Conservancy
mmc.nynjtc.org

Nassau Hiking and Outdoor Club
www.nassauhiking.org

The Nature Place Day Camp
thenatureplace.com

Nelsonville Greenway Committee
VillageofNelsonville.org

New Jersey Forty Plus Hiking Club
meetup.com/NJ-Forty-Plus-Hiking-Club

New Jersey Search and Rescue Inc.
www.njsar.org

New York Alpine Club

New York City Audubon Society, Inc.
www.nycaudubon.org

New York Ramblers
www.nyramblers.org

NJBG/Skylands Association Inc

The Outdoors Club, Inc.
outdoorsclubny.org

Proactive - Adventure, Health & Wellness
www.proactiveahw.com

Protect Our Wetlands, Water & Woods
box292.bluehost.com/~powwworg

Rock Lodge Club
www.rocklodge.com

RPH Cabin Volunteers
rphcabin.org

SAJ - Society for the Advancement of Judaism
www.thesaj.org

Sassquad Trail Running
www.sassquadtrailrunning.com

Somers Land Trust
somerslandtrust.org

Sundance Outdoor Adventure Society
meetup.com/Sundance-Outdoor-Adventure-Society

Teatown Lake Reservation
www.teatown.org

Tenafly Nature Center Association
www.tenaflynaturecenter.org

Thendara Mountain Club
www.thendaramountainclub.org

Town of Lewisboro
www.lewisborogov.com/parksrec

Trail Dames, Inc

TriState Ramblers
www.tristateramblers.org

Valley Stream Hiking Club
www.meetup.com/vshclub

Warren County Board of Recreation Commissioners
www.warrenparks.com

Warren County Parks Foundation

Westchester Mountain Bike Association
www.wmba.org

Westchester Trails Association
www.westthike.org

Reflections Recounts 100 Years of Trail Conference History

Centennials are always worthy of celebration. This fall, the Trail Conference finally gets to celebrate its 100th birthday—even if the party is a little late. (No one could have anticipated a pandemic, after all.) In commemoration of the milestone, a century of the Trail Conference’s volunteer-powered conservation and stewardship legacy is documented in the new book, *Reflections*.

Reflections includes the first four chapters of *Vistas and Vision*, which covered events that led to the Trail Conference’s founding in 1920 up through 1995. It adds four more chapters that recount the Trail Conference’s last 25 years of growth and accomplishments. The book is meant

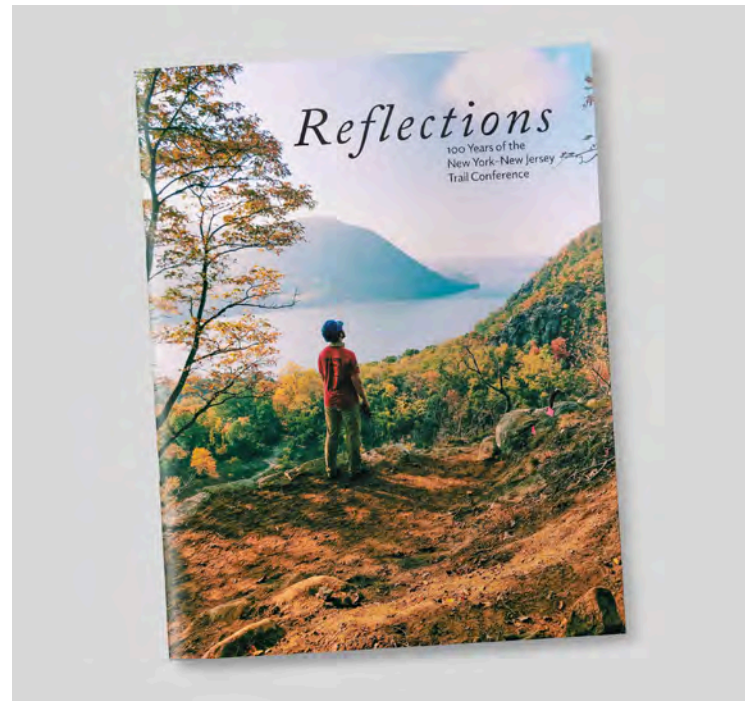
to be a comprehensive read on all things Trail Conference—from the organization’s formation in New York City through the dawn of its second century headquartered at the historic Darlington Schoolhouse in Mahwah, N.J.

Printed in full color, *Reflections* features photographs that make you wish you could meet the historical figures and visit the landscapes that grace the pages. *Reflections* is a must-have book for those who want to learn the story behind the wealth of outdoor recreation opportunities in the greater New York metropolitan area. It documents the Trail Conference’s impactful work both literally and figuratively blazing trails throughout the region.

Just as importantly, it tells stories of the people who made that possible.

A project of this size is like a three-legged stool: It needs accurate history, good photographs, and a design that entices reading. Special thanks go to volunteer author Ron Dupont, whose research and writing make the book an engaging reminiscence through a century of service. Thanks also go to volunteer project manager Jane Daniels, who worked with designer Nora Porter to ensure the book would be a beautiful tribute to all that the Trail Conference has done in the last 100 years.

Reflections will be available for purchase online at nynjtc.org/shop this fall.



A.T. Vista Celebrates Vision and Community

The Trail Conference invited everyone with a love of trails to help celebrate 100 years of Appalachian Trail history during the inaugural A.T. Vista—a hybrid virtual/live event that took place August 7 and 8.

This year is the 100th anniversary of Benton MacKaye’s 1921 article, “An Appalachian Trail: A Project in Regional Planning,” which sparked the movement to build the trail. Trail Conference volunteers built the very first section of the Appalachian Trail, through Harriman-Bear Mountain state parks in New York.

Guided hikes all along the A.T. and on nearby trails were open to all to join in the fun. Participants were also encouraged to “hike their own hike” along the trail of their choice. Virtual components included webinars and the opportunity to share photos and stories on the A.T. Vista social media feeds. Check out pictures from the weekend at bit.ly/tc-atvista21.

The Trail Conference will be hosting next year’s in-

person A.T. Vista event at the State University of New York (SUNY) at New Paltz, slated for August 5-8, 2022. The A.T. Vista events are the reimagining of the A.T. Biennial, last held in Maine in 2017. A.T. Vista aims to be recognized as the forum for engagement of all who cherish the future of the Appalachian Trail’s protection, stewardship, and connection of the human spirit with nature while increasing participation from younger and diverse members.

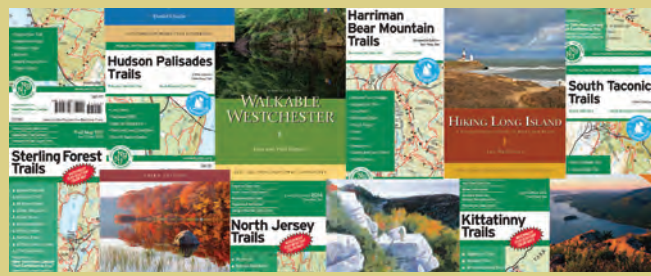
Volunteers are needed to help put on the 2022 event. We’re looking for people who are enthusiastic about sharing their love of the outdoors with others. Whether you can give a few hours or are ready to roll up your sleeves and serve on the steering committee, we need you! Find out more, including what volunteer opportunities are available, at atvista2022.org/volunteer.

Stay up to date with everything A.T. Vista-related by signing up for the monthly newsletter at bit.ly/tc-vistanews.



HIKERS' MARKETPLACE

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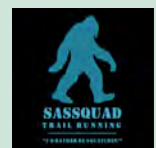
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Beacon, NY
845.831.1997
mountaintopsoutfitters.com



Matt's Sporting Goods
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242 Route 9W
Haverstraw, NY
845.429.3254



Sassquad Trail Running
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937.532.0829
sassquadtrailrunning.com



Wild Birds Unlimited
▶ 10% discount on regularly priced merchandise.
189 South Route 17
Paramus, NJ
201.599.0099
paramus.wbu.com

New Upper Nyack Trail Makes Hook Mountain Hike Even More Enjoyable



KEVIN MCGUINNESS
LONG PATH SOUTH
CHAIR

In the shadow of Hook Mountain, the Upper Nyack Trail has been an important connection from Nyack Beach State Park to the Long Path for many years. It is a utilitarian trail that facilitates a great 6-mile loop hike: over Hook Mountain on the Long Path into Rockland Lake State Park and returning to Nyack Beach on the River Trail. With 360-degree views from the top of Hook Mountain that feature stunning river vistas and the New York City skyline, the hike is one of the more popular in the region. The old Upper Nyack Trail, while useful, ran through some wet, dark areas and included a road walk. Thanks to the work of Trail Conference volunteers, the experience is now even more enjoyable.

The rerouted Upper Nyack Trail, opened to the public in June, was several years in the making. Its creation was made possible by the purchase of 30 acres of undeveloped land from the Marydell Faith and Life Center. Adjacent to Nyack Beach and Hook Mountain state parks, this parcel would have been coveted for residential development; its purchase by the Trust for Public Land in 2017 was a significant win for conservation in Rockland County. The acquisition was made possible through the combined efforts and funding of the Trail Conference, New York State, Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Corp., Town of Clarkstown, Village of Upper Nyack, Durst Organization, Open Space Institute, and the Trust for Public Land. Soon after the sale, work on the new trail began: A route for the trail was scouted, mapped, and proposed for approval by the leadership of the Long Distance Trails Crew to the Palisades Interstate Park Commission, who assumed management of the land once it was incorporated into Hook Mountain State Park. The approval took into consideration the access and safety of the route while ensuring no ecological or archeological resources would be affected.

The construction of the trail, along and through a steep talus slope of boulders eroded from Hook Mountain, was taken on by the skilled and dedicated volunteers of the Long Distance Trails Crew. This Trail Conference crew works on long-distance trails such as the Appalachian Trail, Long Path, and Highlands Trail. While the new Upper Nyack Trail is not technically a long-distance trail, because it is an important connection to the Long Path, the crew agreed to take on the challenge.

Construction began in 2019. Though less than a mile



On the Upper Nyack Trail project, the Long Distance Trails Crew installed 351 stone steps, built 2,537 square feet of crib wall, and constructed 3,775 feet of sidehilled trail.

in length, the technical work required to build a safe, sustainable route through such challenging conditions took almost 2 years to complete. The crew, which generally works Friday, Saturday, and Sunday every other week from early spring to early winter, put in 7,341 volunteer hours (and hundreds of gallons of sweat, as well as a little blood) into the project.

The easily accessible location for this project was a welcome change for the crew, which frequently works on projects that require several miles of hiking just to get to the worksite. However, the difficult and occasionally dangerous conditions posed by the slope of boulders over which the trail traverses created a significant challenge. Many of the experienced crew mem-

bers said that it was the most difficult site they had worked on; it was often challenging just to get level footing. Throw in rolling boulders, swarming bees, and an overly friendly wild turkey, and the challenge was on. The many bumps, bruises, and bites suffered by the crew resulted in renaming the site “Ouch Mountain.”

To create this trail, large boulders (up to 1,000 pounds each) had to be moved, manually, using rock bars and a high line. These boulders were moved into low spots and drainage channels to form stepping stones. In other places, rocks were placed along the route to level it, then smaller rocks were wedged into gaps around it. Then crush—literally gravel-sized rocks manually crushed by crew members from larger rocks—was used

to fill in the smaller gaps. The footbed was then finished by covering the rocks and crush with dirt that was dug up nearby and carried in buckets to the trail.

The trail has received rave reviews from many users, including experienced hikers. It was officially opened during a ribbon-cutting ceremony on June 18, which was attended by many of the politicians, volunteers, and partners who made the land acquisition and trail possible. Featuring spectacular summer weather, the event and subsequent hike was a true celebration of the lovely location and the successful completion of an amazing project.

“This marvelous trail provides much better access to Hook Mountain and completes the vision of the partners who worked with the Sisters of Mercy over several years to purchase this key property for public use,” said Carter Strickland, New York State Director of The Trust for Public Land. “Close-by nature helps provide a free outlet for physical exercise and the mental relief we all need, especially during COVID, and now more people will be inspired by the wonderful views of the Hudson River and highlands at the summit of Hook Mountain. Congratulations to the Trail Conference for the design and execution of a trail across very challenging and technical terrain.”

Check out this new trail for yourself! Find the full hike description at nynjtc.org.



Long Distance Trails Crew volunteers donated 7,341 hours to the Upper Nyack Trail project.



MARTY COSTELLO

New Life for the Old Trail

When the acquisition of the land from Marydell was completed, the intention was to build a new trail and abandon the old one. However, since the opening of the new Upper Nyack Trail, many have found that the two trails now facilitate a nice, 3-mile loop hike from Nyack Beach, up to the Long Path, and back to Nyack Beach. Additionally, the old trail provides access from Palmer Drive in Upper Nyack, a popular access point that led some to lobby to keep the old trail. While partly on private land—meaning the trail’s use is not within our control in perpetuity—for the near future, the old trail will continue to be maintained by the Trail Conference. Plans are in place to improve it, reblaze it, and extend it through the recently acquired and conserved River Hook: The Hester Haring Cason Preserve.

Special Thanks

Gratitude goes to the following for making the new Upper Nyack Trail possible:

► Chris Reyling, Erik Garnjost, Marty Costello, Dr. David Booth, Jeff Raskin, Russ Dooman, and the other volunteers of the Long Distance Trails Crew

► Bob Stien, David Neil, Elizabeth Co, Melody Patrick, and the rest of the Friends of Rockland Lake and Hook Mountain