



# TRAIL WALKER

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

## Appalachian Trail Restoration Named Project of the Year

The New York-New Jersey Trail Conference's Bear Mountain Trails Project has been selected as a 2019 Project of the Year by The Corps Network. This national award recognizes Corps that have undertaken especially noteworthy endeavors within the past year.

In September, the Trail Conference finished construction on the historic Bear Mountain Trails Project—not only the most ambitious rehabilitation of the Appalachian Trail (A.T.) ever conducted, but also the project that launched our Conservation Corps program. Over the last 14 years, the Trail Conference has rallied the community to help transform the A.T. at Bear Mountain from an eroded, washed-out, 10-foot-wide scar into a safe, sustainable footpath and educational destination.

Work on the tread itself involved hardening the Trail with more than 1,300 granite steps, weighing an average of 500 to 800 lbs. each, from the bottom of Bear Mountain to its summit. This trail work was primarily done by hand. The project included building the first ADA-compliant section of the Appalachian Trail, and *Trails for People*, the first outdoor interpretive exhibit aimed at teaching park visitors how trails are made.

Twenty-five Corps members served more than 22,500 hours

on this A.T. rehabilitation over the last five years. Our Corps enabled thousands of people from the community to contribute to the project; our crews trained nearly 3,000 volunteers who donated more than 83,000 hours of service. Read about some of the inspiring people who worked on the project on **pages 3 and 6**.

The Project of the Year Award celebrates the important services Corps provide to communities and young people across the country. Projects of the Year are innovative and demonstrate a Corps' ability to give Corps members a positive experience and provide the community with meaningful improvements. The Trail Conference will receive this prestigious honor at The Corps Network's annual National Conference in Washington, D.C., in February.



Appalachian Trail on Bear Mountain

### How It All Began

The Bear Mountain Trails Project was the catalyst for the creation of the Trail Conference Conservation Corps. With support from REI, our AmeriCorps program was born in 2014 from the need to have a full-

time presence on this A.T. restoration. The project had two specific outcomes: build a safer, more sustainable trail for visitors; and develop a pool of trained volunteers to support the vast network of trails in the Hudson River Valley. Training and deploying a Conservation Corps was essential in accomplishing both these goals.

The Trail Conference now fields several Corps crews every season. Our Conservation Corps trains the next generation of environmental stewards to preserve the integrity of trails and natural areas and engage volunteers to inspire a deeper appreciation for the care that open space requires. Get involved at [nynjtc.org/corps](http://nynjtc.org/corps).



Vista Loop Trail at Ramapo Valley County Reservation

### Building Your Next Adventure

Looking back at an incredible 2018 work season, the success of the Trail Conference isn't defined simply by the number of linear feet of new trail constructed or acreage improved. It's in the creation of great, safe trail experiences for everyone to enjoy. It's in the inspiring, sometimes life-changing stories of those who worked in the service of their fellow outdoor-lovers.

In this issue of Trail Walker, you'll read about the ambitious new ways we are working with new partners—including a dog!—to combat invasive species threatening our native ecosystems. Read about the multigenerational crew in Westchester County that shared as many life lessons as trail-building skills, and members of several trail crews, member clubs, and park staff coming together as Trail Family to build a much-needed bridge in New Jersey. Check out their stories and more on **pages 5-9**.

This extraordinary community is carrying on a 100-year tradition of ensuring the parks we all cherish are accessible by well-maintained trails and trail lands. Come build your next adventure with us!

*Our Trail Family welcomes all who enjoy the outdoors. YOU make great trails possible by becoming a volunteer or member or donating to our mission. Find out how to get involved at [nynjtc.org](http://nynjtc.org).*

#### WHAT'S INSIDE:

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A Plan to Strengthen the Role of Volunteers in Caring for Public Lands page 3



Running the Shawangunk Ridge Trail page 10



## Call for Volunteer Award Nominations

Trail Conference volunteers make incredible commitments to the trails and lands they

love. Our success as an organization comes from the hard work, dedication, and support of the many volunteers who selflessly share their time. Each year we recognize a number of outstanding individuals

and organizations that exemplify the Trail Conference mission.

We need you to tell us about a volunteer blazing the way for good! We know there are many volunteers worthy of an award, and your

nominations help us identify the outstanding people who deserve that special recognition for their efforts.

Nominations will be open from Jan. 1 to Jan. 31, 2019. Awards will be presented in March at the annual Volunteer

Appreciation Event.

Check [nynjtc.org/awards](http://nynjtc.org/awards) for the awards categories and updates on the event. To nominate someone, fill out the online form or e-mail it with supporting statements to [volunteer@nynjtc.org](mailto:volunteer@nynjtc.org).

STEVE AARON



Trails make this view of the Blackhead Range in the Catskills possible! Support the Trail Conference and help us take you to beautiful places.

# Your Trails. Your Land. Your Support.

We asked our supporters to be part of the global giving phenomenon surrounding #GivingTuesday—and the response was astounding! We challenged our friends, partners, and the greater community to show their support during our #TrailsGiving Week, Nov. 20 through 27. With your help, \$18,716 was raised and doubled. That means a total of \$37,432 raised during #TrailsGiving Week will go towards supporting the nearly 2,000 volunteers who steward your trails and the

lands they traverse. It's incredible what we can accomplish as a Trail Family!

In the spirit of the season, a generous donor extended this matching period to create our December Challenge. Through Dec. 31, 2018, your gift is doubled, meaning \$50 automatically turns into \$100 to protect the trails and parks you love. Give today at [nynjtc.org/donate](http://nynjtc.org/donate)!

It costs us close to \$3 million annually to keep trails in our region open, safe, and protected. And the new tax laws

and competition for funds during the elections have affected our fundraising efforts. If you value all the Trail Conference does for your quality of life by keeping trails and the lands they pass through free and safe, your continued support—today and throughout the year—is essential. When you head outside, you count on great, well-maintained trails and parks—and we count on the support of every outdoor-lover to make that possible. Your generosity makes a difference!

## In Memoriam

### Albert Kent

Albert Kent, founder of several notable trails in New Jersey, passed away Sept. 17 at the age of 92.



Al grew up in New Jersey and attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, graduating in 1946. He met his wife Dorothy when both worked at Curtiss-Wright in Ohio after World War II. He was vice president, then president of the Home Fuel Oil Company of East Orange, N.J., from 1950 to 1976.

From 1989 to 2009, he was employed by the Morris County Park Commission as coordinator of trail and greenway projects. He was the prime mover in the creation of the Liberty-Water Gap Trail across New Jersey, the Lenape Trail in Essex County, and the Patriots' Path in Morris County. He was a life member of the Trail Conference and was active with the New Jersey Environmental Lobby and Sierra Club.

In 2010, the Trail Conference began work to revitalize the 34-mile Lenape Trail, which Al had nearly single-handedly blazed and maintained since 1979. The Lenape Trail connects 18 parks in Essex County and is arguably one of the oldest and most unique "urban greenways" in the Northeast. Thanks to support from the Partners for Health Foundation, the Trail Conference has been able to make major trail re-routes that resulted in improved visibility, enhanced volunteer recruitment, and new partner connections all along the Trail.

"I know my dad would have been very pleased with the progress and efforts your volunteers have put into the Lenape Trail," said Al's daughter Susan Bennett. "My family and I appreciate it. To the end, the hiking and walking was always with him."

### Robert Green

Robert Green, former treasurer of the Trail Conference, died at age 95 on Feb. 8, 2018,



in Anthem, Ariz. Bob spent his early years in Brighton, England, serving as navigator with the Royal Air Force during World War II. He was the executive director of the Society of Die Casting Engineers in Detroit; his legacy is his editorship of Machinery's Handbook, published by Industrial Press. Bob was an avid bicyclist, winning many track and long-distance cycling awards and medals. He particularly enjoyed hiking and cross-country skiing, and is survived by wife Stella Green (former Trail Conference vice president), three sons, and five grandchildren.

### Rolande Chapeau

Rolande Chapeau, a leader for more than 30 years for the Outdoors Club based out of New York City, passed away on Nov. 24.



Rolande was an important part of the Outdoors Club—a member club of the Trail Conference—not only for the many hikes she led but also for her ability to recruit leaders and volunteers. She also led for the N.Y. Hiking Club and was an officer and leader for many years for Urban Trails. She was a hiking inspiration and role model for many leaders and members. She will be sadly missed by all whose lives were enriched by her great hiking spirit, intellectual curiosity, and love of nature. May her optimism, energy, and determination lead and guide us through life.

TRAIL WALKER (USPS Permit #970-100) (ISSN: 0749-1352) is published quarterly by the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference as a benefit of membership. Subscriptions are available to libraries only at \$15 a year. Periodical postage paid at Mahwah, N.J., and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to the address below.

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New York-New Jersey  
Trail Conference, Inc.  
600 Ramapo Valley Road  
Mahwah, NJ 07430  
201.512.9348

Opinions expressed by the authors do not necessarily represent the policy or position of the Trail Conference. Submissions for print consideration are welcome. Any unsolicited material accepted for print may be edited for style and length. Submission deadlines for TRAIL WALKER are Feb. 15 (Spring issue), May 15 (Summer issue), Aug. 15 (Fall issue), Nov. 15 (Winter issue). For information on advertising rates, please write or call.



## TRAIL WALKER

VOLUME XLVI, No. 1

WINTER 2019

AMBER RAY EDITOR  
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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### Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation

Trail Walker is a quarterly paper published by the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference, 600 Ramapo Valley Road, Mahwah, NJ 07430. The editor and managing editor is Amber Ray, at the same address. The annual subscription price is \$15; contact person is Amber Ray; telephone number is 201-512-9348. The tax status of the organization has not changed during the preceding 12 months. As of the filing date of Sept. 28, 2018, the average number of copies of each issue during the preceding 12 months was 11,701; the actual number of copies of the single issue published nearest to the filing date was 12,500. The paper has a total paid and/or requested circulation of 5,542 (average) and 5,378 (actual, most recent issue). The free distribution for the 12 months preceding the filing date was 5,668 (average) and 6,100 (actual, most recent issue). The total average distribution was 11,210; the actual distribution of the single issue published nearest to the filing date was 11,478. This information is reported on U. S. Postal Service Form 3526 and here as required by 39 USC 3685.



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FROM THE  
EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR

## Calling All Trail Angels!

People who magically provide long-distance hikers with water, shelter, and food are known as “trail angels.” The volunteers who build and maintain the trails should be celebrated as trail angels, too. In fact, everyone has a chance to be a trail angel through their support of Trail Conference volunteers.

Volunteers are not free, in the sense that they need administrative support, education, equipment, and recognition. About one-third of the Trail Conference’s income is used for volunteer engagement, but every year is a fundraising struggle to meet our budget.

To help us meet those needs,



I propose that we celebrate our upcoming centennial with an endowment campaign.

An endowment of \$10 to \$20 million will provide a permanent source of income that will help us ensure that trails and natural areas in this region are sustainable and accessible for all to enjoy for generations to come.

Public parks are an oasis for nature-starved urban populations, but park operating funds have been declining while park acreage continues to climb.

As a result, the backlog of deferred maintenance in state parks in New Jersey amounts to \$400 million and more than double that in New York.

At the same time, the combination of increasing numbers of trail users and the harsh weather of climate change is threatening the sustainability of popular trails and parklands. Where will the resources come from to preserve and secure access to nature, and how can the Trail Conference help?

Expanding and strengthening the role of volunteers is an overlooked but important part of the answer to caring for our public lands. The Trail Conference has proven that people’s love of nature, expressed in their volunteering, is a powerful and renewable resource. For decades Trail Conference volunteers have reliably built, maintained, and



**Expanding and strengthening the role of volunteers is an overlooked but important part of the answer to caring for our public lands.**

Goodell



protected nearly 2,200 miles of trails. Currently, about 2,000 volunteers are contributing 100,000 hours of donated time annually. This is a 300 percent increase since 2000—but more is needed, and an endowment can help.

The purpose of an endowment is to provide a reliable income over a long term, which makes it ideal to be funded by planned gifts, such as a bequest in one’s will. To fund the en-

dowment, we would launch a legacy society open to anyone that makes a gift to the endowment or confirms a bequest in their will or other planned gift. Perhaps we should call it the “Trail Angels Society.”

Over the last 100 years, the Trail Conference has been a source of innovation and resilience for the park and trail systems of New York and New Jersey. Engaged volunteers have been the engines of that innovation and resilience. A “Trail Angel” fund could ensure that skilled volunteers will be plentiful enough to protect our public lands and trails for our next 100 years.

*Edward Goodell*

Edward Goodell  
Executive Director  
goodell@nynjtc.org



Pictured with her Conservation Corps crew, Emma Chilton, second from right, was honored in September.

## Chilton Named Rising Environmental Leader

Emma Chilton, leader of the Trail Conference’s 2018 Conservation Corps crew at Ramapo Valley County Reservation, is the embodiment of a burgeoning environmental leader: engaging, passionate, knowledgeable, selfless. And on Sept. 14, she was honored by the Hudson Highlands Nature Museum as a Rising Environmental Leader of the Hudson Valley at their annual Champagne Brunch.

A recent environmental engineering graduate of Cornell, Emma has faithfully spent her free time volunteering with local environmental organizations such as the Trail Conference and the Rockland County Conservation Corps (RCCC). In 2013, Emma served as a Corps member for the RCCC under the Rockland Department of Environmental Resources, improving trails around the county. She spent the remainder of that

summer break swinging a pick-mattock, building trails alongside the Trail Conference Conservation Corps. A self-starter and team player, Emma continued volunteering with the Trail Conference during breaks from college, grad school, and work, helping out with challenging office tasks with characteristic enthusiasm and resourcefulness.

In 2018, she proved to be a high-performing trail crew leader, motivating her team to greater levels of success in all conditions, be it hot, muggy weather or cold rains as they worked on the Vista Loop Trail. She has excelled in creating rewarding outdoor experiences for large volunteer and corporate groups. We have every reason to believe that Emma will become one of New York’s brightest environmental leaders because she has already proven herself as one of the Trail Conference’s finest.

## Celebrating 95 Years of the Appalachian Trail at Bear Mountain

It was a historic fall for the Trail Conference, particularly in regards to our work protecting the Appalachian Trail.

On Sept. 27, we placed the final stone step on the Appalachian Trail at Bear Mountain, completing a reconstruction project that had been 14 years in the works.

Ten days later, we marked the 95th anniversary of the birth of the Appalachian Trail, which was built and blazed by Trail Conference volunteers through Bear Mountain and Harriman state parks. That original section of Trail was opened on Oct. 7, 1923.

And on Oct. 18, the Trail



Campmor representatives and Karen Lutz, seen with the Trail Conference’s directors, were honored at the Gala.

Conference celebrated the people who are part of our legacy of stewardship at our Annual Gala. We honored our friend and partner Karen Lutz, who retired as the Appalachian Trail Conservancy’s Mid-Atlantic Regional Director, as our Public Partner of the Year. And we celebrated the steadfast support and friendship of outdoor retailer Campmor as our Corporate Partner of the Year. The evening included live

music by the Gravikord Duo, a silent auction, and local fare.

The community that gathered on this evening—our volunteers, members, partners, and supporters—is what makes the Trail Conference so special. Together, we are a vigilant force in ensuring that the Appalachian Trail—that all trails and natural areas we love and share—are sustainable and accessible for all to enjoy for generations to come.



John Gunzler’s family was in attendance for the dedication of the “Art of the Possible” memorial in November.

## Trail Champion Gunzler Remembered

John Gunzler, a tireless champion of the Trail Conference for decades, was honored at an event celebrating his life this fall. Over 50 friends and family gathered around his wife Marianne and their daughters Melissa and Nicole at Trail Conference Headquarters on Nov. 3, nearly one year after John passed away at the age of 82, to remember this extraordinary man. John generously gave back to the trails he loved through volunteer service and financial gifts to the Trail Conference, and as part of the tribute, an engraving in his honor was unveiled beside a new trail leading from Headquarters to Ramapo Valley County Reservation. Capturing one of his favorite phrases—“The Art of the Possible”—the memorial is an embodiment of the accomplishments of all Trail Conference volunteers and supporters.

## Shop at AmazonSmile, Support Trails!

Want to know how to support the Trail Conference at no cost to you? When you shop at AmazonSmile,

Amazon will donate 0.5 percent of the purchase price to the Trail Conference. Bookmark [bit.ly/tc-as](http://bit.ly/tc-as) and support us every time you shop. Thank you to our supporters for raising \$144.06 in the third quarter in 2018!



# A New Vision for the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail, Breakneck

PHOTOS: JESSIE JOHNSON AND MATT SCHNEIDER/LEAVE NO TRACE



Visitors to Breakneck Ridge and the Hudson Highlands State Park Preserve, as well as residents of nearby Beacon and Cold Spring, don't need to be told that visitation to this hiking corridor is steadily on the rise. But what is the carrying capacity of these communities and natural attractions? And if new improvements are needed to protect people, the environment, and quality of life, who is going to implement and pay for them?

A coalition has been working on an answer to those crucial questions for several years. With the collaboration of 18 organizations representing local municipalities, state agencies, nonprofits, and citizen groups, as well as public input, the idea for the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail was born. Early attention focused on meeting critical safety needs, such as pedestrian safety around hiking attractions between the Cold Spring and Beacon train stations.

Yet even as construction plans for the Fjord Trail were going out to bid, visitation had already changed dramatically. Amy Kacala, the project manager from Scenic Hudson, notes that in the two years between completing a mas-



ter plan draft and preparing to build the first half-mile of trail, Trail Conference Steward counts indicated that visitation at Breakneck alone had increased roughly 50 percent from the time conversations had started. "Community stress was high," she said. "Visitation impacts on a cherished landscape were taking their toll. It was clear the project needed to do more, be more, in order to succeed."

After an unsuccessful bid opening, the group took the opportunity to reassess the project's scope. Fortunately, a foundation with roots in the area approached the coalition to help bring in private resources to ensure the project achieved the highest levels of design to best serve both the community

and the Highlands landscape.

Locals with global expertise in architecture, design, and construction were convened, and construction management firm About the Work was brought in to help build the new team. SCAPE, a landscape architecture firm, was selected as the lead planning and design consultant. "We look forward to seeing how SCAPE's involvement will help shape this project from simply functional to restorative of past damage and resilient to future impacts of climate change," said Trail Conference Senior Program Coordinator Hank Osborn, who participated on the interview committee. Applications are now pending for the selection of a project architect in charge of designing elements such as the new welcome center and bridges.

The Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail, at the most basic level, is now envisioned as a linear park that includes not only a trail, but also a better way to think of complementary improvements along the route to repair, enhance, and maintain the landscape for the long-term. The new team of consultants will begin work in January 2019, with several opportunities for public input.

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**Editor's Note:** *The Spring 2018 Trail Walker listed a contribution from Greater Horizons to the annual fund. We regret we did not specifically thank Vicki Steinhardt for the gift at that time. Thank you, Vicki!*



## ECOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP

# Kudzu: The Plant That Ate the South Is Now Nibbling on the North



**MICHAEL YOUNG**  
TERRESTRIAL INVASIVE  
SPECIES PROJECT MANAGER

The first time I saw kudzu was as a kid on a family vacation to the Carolinas. We drove down from New Jersey, and I remember seeing carpets of green along the highways. It was an impressive sight for sure, and looking back I can see why it was thought to have “eaten the South.” My father told me it was planted as a solution for erosion around infrastructure. While it seemed to control erosion, it also had the effect of smothering everything around it: trees, shrubs, even buildings.

Those of us in New York and New Jersey may have heard of the plant or seen it on travels as I did, but it comes as a surprise to most that we have kudzu in our area, too. Similar “solutions” brought it to the North: erosion control and the occasional ornamental planting. Until I joined the Trail Conference and the Lower Hudson

PRISM last year, I was one of the people who believed kudzu was a Southern problem and our cold climate couldn't support the vine. As it turns out, kudzu is perfectly content in our region, and with climate change occurring, will likely become more aggressive in the coming decades.

But there is hope! Under New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) NYCRR Part 575 Invasive Species Regulations, kudzu became a prohibited plant in New York State. This has made it illegal to knowingly sell, import, purchase, transport, introduce, or propagate kudzu. A couple years ago, the DEC began to actively manage known populations, and the Trail Conference assumed responsibility for the majority of the sites in the Lower Hudson Valley in 2018. There are around 40 populations being managed with the intention to completely remove it from the region. This is an organized

effort of DEC crews, the Lower Hudson PRISM's Invasive Strike Force, “friends of” organizations, and private invasive management companies working toward a common goal of invasive plant management.

This past season, the Trail Conference's Invasive Strike Force, with help from the folks at the NYS DEC, Naja Kraus, Andrew MoskaLee, and Sylvia Albrecht, was able to continue management on 16 kudzu populations. We are seeing good progress. The monocultures of kudzu are being knocked back quickly, and subsequent crews are finding only individual plants mixed amongst other plants. Sites are beginning to have no kudzu plants present, showing that eradication from our region is a real possibility. This effort has been awesome, and with continued support and management, we really do have a chance to nip this one in the bud before climate change allows it to become established here.



JILLIAN ALDRIDGE

An ISF crew member is swallowed by kudzu. Don't worry, crew members don't taste great and it spit her right out.

## Tackling New Fronts in Invasive Species Work

The 2018 season marked the addition of the Invasives Strike Force Aquatic AmeriCorps seasonal crew in partnership with the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater. The aquatics crew is composed of several components, all geared toward protecting New York's waterways from the spread of aquatic invasive species. The Watercraft Inspection Steward Program is responsible for educating boaters and anglers about identifying invasive species when they're out on the water and proper spread prevention, or the Clean,

Drain, and Dry protocol. This season, the crew performed over 600 boat inspections and spoke with more than 1,000 recreational users. The aquatics crew also participates in education and outreach events, aquatic vegetation surveys, and invasive plant removals. While there was only one crew member this year, the 2019 season, managed by Teatown, will boast four crew members and one crew leader, greatly increasing our capacity for outreach, plant removals, and scientific research through aquatic vegetation



surveys. The 2019 season will be an incredible opportunity to expand interpersonal communication skills, field work, and data management experience, and be a part of the conservation of our valuable water resources throughout the Lower Hudson region.

We also created the Conservation Detection Dog program pairing Joshua Beese, an experienced search and rescue dog handler, with a promising young Labrador retriever named Dia. Dia is being trained to sniff out invasive species, which cause billions of dollars of damage to our forests and economy annually. Our program using conservation dogs is the first of its kind in the Northeast and allows us to catch invaders in the critical early stage of infestation when eradication is the most cost-effective. We partnered with Working Dogs for Conservation in Montana, the premier conservation dog program in the world, to help us train Dia to recognize her first species. The 2019 season will be Josh and Dia's first year in the field working to find invasive species before they get established.



KASEY LANE

Invasives Strike Force crew members search for invasives along Rondout Creek.

## The Close of a Successful Year Battling Invasive Species

The invasives programs at the Trail Conference provided almost 3,200 hours of volunteer surveying, data management, and invasive species removal, as well as nearly 5,000 hours of intern and Conservation Corps work protecting our natural areas. We continued our Invasives Strike Force surveyor program for the eighth year and surveyed 125 miles of trail; our new Blockbuster program provided surveys in 32 blocks each measuring 5-by-5 miles; and volunteers helped check insect traps for southern pine beetle and spotted lanternfly. Our Invasives Strike Force Conservation Corps seasonal crew and ISF trail crew volunteers reached new milestones by

removing over 1.5 million invasive plants across the region. This comprehensive attack on invasive species is making great strides and having a real impact.

Meanwhile, our volunteers also spent over 600 hours creating and maintaining native habitat. The Habitat Helpers Crew helped create and maintain a native plant habitat at Trail Conference Headquarters and at the Bear Mountain Trails for People exhibit, and our Appalachian Trail Natural Heritage Program monitors watched over rare and endangered plant populations.

Want to get involved? Apply for the 2019 Invasives Strike Force crews of the Trail Conference Conservation Corps at [nynjtc.org/job-openings](http://nynjtc.org/job-openings) or visit [nynjtc.org/invasives](http://nynjtc.org/invasives) for more opportunities to make a difference.



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## PEOPLE FOR TRAILS TRAILS FOR PEOPLE

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

# Placing the Bear Mountain Trails Project's Final Step

On Sept. 27, members of the Bear Mountain Trail Crew placed the final stone step on the Appalachian Trail at Bear Mountain, completing a reconstruction project that has been 14 years in the works. Our friend Karen Lutz, who

retired as the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's Mid-Atlantic Regional Director, set the last step during an event celebrating this achievement and her remarkable career protecting the Trail.

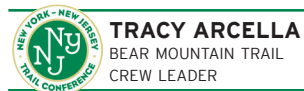
More than 3,000 volunteers, 85,000 hours, and

roughly 1,300 steps since the Bear Mountain Trails Project began, the most ambitious rehabilitation of the Appalachian Trail ever conducted is complete. Thank you to everyone who was part of this journey and helped make it happen!



Volunteers, Corps members, and professional trail builders all contributed to rehabilitation efforts.

## One Step at a Time



**TRACY ARCELLA**  
BEAR MOUNTAIN TRAIL  
CREW LEADER

The Bear Mountain Trail Crew started the 2018 season with one goal: Finish the Appalachian Trail. I have to admit—I wasn't sure we would be able to complete the project on time. But through a lot of blood, sweat, and wasp stings, we finished the Trail ahead of schedule.

Five Conservation Corps members, including myself, worked on the Trail five days a week from May through October: Michael Girard, Sam Walters, Tori Welch, and Yuliya Semenova were the best crew I could have asked for. Our most dedicated volunteers were Sean Sullivan, Daniel Yu, and Kevin Morales. These guys were out every single week helping us build. Their commitment to the Bear Mountain Trails Project was truly inspiring, and we were so thankful to have them. Everyone worked so hard and really committed themselves to getting this project completed, despite the challenges.

Dealing with the weather felt like a constant struggle. There were quite a few days where the rain was so bad that our entire worksite became a giant mud pit. Even worse than the rain, however, were the hot, humid days. Working at the top of the mountain, there were no trees to shade us from the heat. We were also frequently under attack from wasps.

In terms of building, our biggest challenge was the double crib wall staircase. On that section of Trail, we were only averaging about one stair placed a week. Despite the struggle, the crib wall staircase ended up looking great, and will protect both hikers and the mountain itself for years to come. It was an incredible feeling to finally be finished with the build and open the trail up to the public. We got so much positive feedback from hikers using the new trail!

It is hard to put into words what working on the Bear Mountain project has meant to me. When I joined the Corps in 2017, I was frustrated with how my life had been going. I stumbled upon a posting for a trail crew member with the Trail Conference and fell in love with trail work right away. I felt



More than 1,300 stone steps were placed on Bear Mountain to make the Trail here sustainable.

like I was doing meaningful work and was happier than I had been in a long time.

I ended up coming back for a second season on Bear Mountain, this time as crew leader. There was a lot of pressure, as the project absolutely needed to be finished

this season. But through it all, the crew persevered with a great attitude. I am thankful for having found something I truly love doing and even more thankful for the amazing people I've met along the way through this AmeriCorps program.

## From Thru-Hiker to Trail Builder

From their Appalachian Trail thru-hikes to joining the Trail Conference Conservation Corps, Kremlin, Pineapple, and Logjam share their experiences of what the Trail means to them and the importance of giving back.

### Yuliya/Kremlin

► 2016 SOBO to Bear Mountain Trail Crew  
► Read her story at [bit.ly/tc-thtb-yk](http://bit.ly/tc-thtb-yk)



### Mike/Pineapple

► 2017 SOBO to Bear Mountain Trail Crew  
► Read his story at [bit.ly/tc-thtb-mp18](http://bit.ly/tc-thtb-mp18)



### Matt/Logjam

► 2017 NOBO to Taconic Trail Crew  
► Read his story at [bit.ly/tc-thtb-ms18](http://bit.ly/tc-thtb-ms18)



## West of Hudson South Crew

### Building Better Trails in Harriman-Bear Mountain

The West of Hudson South Crew has completed a successful 2018 season that

included a variety of projects on several different trails in Harriman-Bear Mountain state parks. We finished stone steps on the Suffern-Bear Mountain Trail as part of a trail relocation. We spent time over two seasons on the Cornell Mine Trail installing water bars and re-

habbing/restoring preexisting water bars; we also took out a number of blowdowns that were blocking the trail. The crew also built one water bar and restored another to prevent severe erosion on the Ramapo-Dunderberg Trail where it crosses a pipeline. We finished the season

on the Arden-Surebridge Trail. There we found the trail taking on a significant amount of water, so we built an approximately 600-foot reroute around one particularly muddy section. I would like to thank all the crew members who were able to make it out this season: Bri-

an Buchbinder, Ed Clafin, John Collins, Charles Frankel, Joyce Gallagher, Claudia Ganz, Dennis Hickey, Mary Hilley, Richard Lynch, John Mack, Gay Mayer, Diane Menna, Hanson Wong, and Steve Zubarik.

Chris Ezzo, West of Hudson South Trail Crew Chief



## West Jersey Crew

# Getting Muddy So Hikers Don't



**MONICA & DAVID DAY**  
WEST JERSEY TRAIL  
CREW CHIEFS

In spring 2018, the New Jersey Appalachian Trail Committee applied for and received a grant to replace the puncheon planking on the Appalachian Trail in the two fields immediately “trail south” of Route 94 in Vernon Township. The \$7,475 from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy through the L.L.Bean Grants to A.T. Clubs program funded the replacement of 1,128 linear feet of planking. Because it was cost-prohibitive to replace the deteriorated 3-inch planking with similar material, the new planking would be two 2-by-10 planks sandwiched together.

## Pochuck Gets a Facelift

The West Jersey Crew carried out the work on Pochuck Boardwalk on six consecutive Saturdays this fall. The lumber was delivered into “field 1”; special thanks to Neversink Lumber for driving far into the field with the delivery! With the assistance

of Wawayanda State Park’s Kubota service vehicle, the crew moved the materials into “field 2” and to large piles at either end of the boardwalk in “field 1”—as far as the Kubota could reach in the soggy field near the boardwalk.

Although none of the work dates were rained out, there was substantial rainfall every week during the project, and the work area was wetter and muddier every week. High rubber boots were essential, and it was common to sink 6 or more inches into the mud while working. Cattle are grazed in “field 1,” which further contributed to the muddy conditions.

The crew organized itself into teams: one team removed the bolts from the old decking; another team “laminated” pairs of 2-by-10 planks into the new planking; a third team moved the laminated planks to where they were to be positioned; a fourth team removed the old planking, re-set the sleepers as needed, and placed the new planking; and a fifth team affixed the new planking to the sleepers with 6-inch timber screws. Everyone got muddy.

This section of the A.T. is very popular, and the crew saw many hikers every workday. As the old planking was removed, the crew laid each plank in the mud next to the puncheon, providing a detour route, however precarious, for hikers to pass while the crew worked.

Once the replacement work was completed, the old planking was taken up from the mud and carried to locations at the end of the boardwalk reachable by the Kubota. There it was cut into smaller pieces and removed with the assistance of Wawayanda State Park staff.

We thank the Appalachian Trail Conservancy for awarding the grant for this necessary project, and thank L.L.Bean for their generous Grants to A.T. Clubs program. We are also grateful for the support from Wawayanda State Park staff, and from the owner of the cattle that graze in “field 1” for graciously moving the cattle for most of our work days. A special thank you to the members of the West Jersey Crew, who returned week after week, got muddy, and worked hard until the job was done.



The West Jersey Crew worked six weekends replacing planking on the Pochuck section of the A.T.

## Ramapo Crew



At the popular Ramapo Valley County Reservation, volunteers were eager to learn about trail building and make a difference in their park.

# Finding Joy in Even the Hardest Challenges



**EMMA CHILTON**  
RAMAPO TRAIL  
CREW LEADER

The Ramapo Trail Crew completed the construction of a stone staircase near a popular waterfall on the Vista Loop Trail in Ramapo Valley County Reservation. The backbone of the crew was Conservation Corps members Shane Caffrey, Ryan McLean, and Nicole Vargas, led by Emma Chilton.

## Building the Waterfall Staircase

This season was many things. There were times when it felt like a whirlwind, and times when it felt like time was dragging on forever. There were incredibly frustrating weeks, and ones where it seemed everything was seamlessly falling into place. Overall, it was everything we could have imagined it to be and more. We accomplished exactly what we set out to

do—build a sustainable and beautiful trail. In doing so we made memories and friendships that we will cherish forever.

The most frustrating, but ultimately satisfying part of the trail was the bedrock staircase. It involved two whole months of chipping away at the stone. We tried double jacking it, using shaping hammers, using larger shaping hammers with the double jack, using the drill, using a chisel bit on the drill, using a bull point bit—pretty much anything that might get us through the stuff, we tried. What finally worked well was this stuff called Eco-Bust. It is basically cement that you pour into drilled holes, and as it dries it splits the rock apart. Finally breaking away enough rock to set the staircase was an incredible feeling. When we set the last step, I almost cried I was so happy.

We certainly could not have had a successful season without all our volunteers. They were some of the most

memorable parts of our time in the woods. Taking people who had no idea that trail work was even a thing and showing them how to crush rocks and define tread was very fulfilling. Through teaching, we all honed our own skills and learned how to explain concepts more clearly. In the rough times, the constant flow of volunteers with their fresh energy and drive helped brighten our days. During the triumphant moments, it was wonderful to have volunteers to share our successes.

I think the thing we’ll remember most from this remarkable season is the laughter. I’ve laughed more in those six months of working outside with the crew than I have my whole life. Finding that level of joy in what you’re doing is infectious; it bleeds into all parts of your life, making the world seem like a better place. That’s what I’ll take with me the most—that the ability to laugh can make anything bearable, and can make everything enjoyable.



## DAY IN THE LIFE: ANDRE NIZZARI



**Trail Conference Roles:**  
*Trail Maintainer, Appalachian Trail Corridor Monitor, Volunteer Trail Steward*

Monday through Friday, Andre Nizzari works as an electrician in Manhattan. On the weekends, he spends almost all his time hiking. That's when he becomes a trail superhero.

"It's amazing that I get to volunteer my time to protect my favorite parks. I feel like I really am a part of something," says Andre. He is among one of the organization's most ambitious volunteers. Andre joined the Trail Conference family as a member in January 2018. Since then, he's become an Appalachian Trail corridor monitor, a trail maintainer, and one of our first volunteer Trail Stewards at Breakneck Ridge.

Andre's passion for the outdoors and excitement for the organization is contagious, which makes him a perfect role model for getting outside and giving back. "Wherever I hike now, I feel like I'm always acting as a steward or maintainer: cleaning up trails and helping lost or hurt hikers," he says. "I think it's so important to give back to the hiking community while also protecting nature."

As a monitor and maintainer, Andre cares for about 2.5 miles of the A.T. and about 5.5 miles of trail in Harriman State Park, Hook Mountain State Park, and the Catskill's Platte Clove Preserve. "I love the Catskills," he says. "I maintain the three trails at Platte Clove, and I'm really proud of that place. It's so clean, has so much history, and allows me to access the Devil's Path."

Creating and protecting trails is a labor of love. We celebrate our volunteers—their passion, dedication, and leadership make the trails we all love possible. To become a trail superhero like Andre, get outside and volunteer, or support your trail community by becoming a member.

## Palisades Crew



**MEGAN LACASSE**  
PALISADES CREW MEMBER

The Trail Conference and New York State Parks held a grand opening of a 7-mile, multi-use, single-track trail loop at Sterling Forest State Park on Sept. 30. The ribbon-cutting was followed by a guided ride, trail run, and hike beginning on the Munsee-Eagle and returning on the Hutchinson Trail. About 50 crew members, volunteers, partners, and supporters attended the momentous event. Trail Conference staff and volunteers began work on the new multi-use trail loop in October 2015. Since then, a small army of Trail Conference volunteers and Conservation Corps members has given more than 13,000 hours constructing the Munsee-Eagle/Hutchinson/Red Back loop.



The Munsee-Eagle Trail was built and the Hutchinson Trail improved this season to complete the new multi-use loop in Sterling Forest.

MIKE GIRARD

## Multi-Use Trail Loop Completed

This season was a great success! We blazed 7,469 feet of new trail, built berms, ramps, and crib walls, weathered heat and rainstorms, tested our personal capabilities, and made friends. During

this program, I've had an incredible opportunity to challenge myself and foster a better sense of self-discipline. Walking away from this program I am left with a strong sense of accomplishment, empowerment, and many fond memories of worksite dance parties,

wild blueberries and belly laughs. My crew and I made it through countless days of mosquitoes, sore muscles, and torrential downpours. We have made the most of it, struggled together, and emerged stronger. There's a new trail out there to show for it, too. We did it!

## Erik Mickelson Honored for Trail Work in Sterling Forest

From layout and design to construction, Trail Conference field manager Erik Mickelson has been a driving force behind the

new multi-use trail loop in Sterling Forest coming to life. In recognition of this and in support of his past and future trail advocacy and builds, Santa Cruz Bicycles presented him a new 2019 CC XO1 Reserve bike in November. Santa Cruz rep Sandy Chapman, his son Chris, and JORBA

president Tom Hennigan were on hand to present the award. "Erik's focused commitment, collaborative leadership, and skilled read of the unique topography in Sterling have yielded a world-class riding experience," Sandy says. "These trails will be enjoyed by many for years to come."



Erik, left, and Sandy

## Taconic Crew



**JOSH DELRIO**  
TACONIC TRAIL CREW LEADER

The Taconic Trail Crew—comprised of Conservation Corps members Matthew Shannon, Matthew MacDermant, Devin O'Donnell, leader Josh Delrio and a rotating cast of volunteers—served on trails around Breakneck Ridge to create safer, more sustainable routes for hikers.

## Better Trails for Breakneck

*Leaves litter  
Acorns shower  
Squirrels gather  
Birds depart*

It is October in the hills of

# Reflections From the End of the Season

New York. It is for us Corps members the end of the line. As the nights grow cold and long, we must be on our way.

Some will be on to Texas. Others will be headed to New Jersey, Pennsylvania, or Colorado. For many, this is the first step on a trail-building career path. For others, it is the one and only stop. Some of us will meet again, work together again, dwell together, eat together, laugh together. Others will be departing for good, with this moment as our only shared waypoint on the long path of life. There is joy and there is sadness. All things, for better or worse, must come to an end. All is finite.

As my fellow Taconic Trail Crew members and I closed out our last week together, we finished up several key



The Taconic Crew built steps along the Undercliff Trail to provide a safe route for Breakneck hikers.

projects. A reroute around a swampy abyss down by Breakneck Brook will keep hikers out of the ever-present mud flats. Another critical piece of trail will stand in for an ice hazard zone under the Undercliff Trail cliff on the way to Breakneck. Instead of treading over exposed roots soaked by streams of cliff runoff, travelers now have a new set of stairs to traverse. The once disconnected staircase projects slowly came together over the summer and fall, and there is now a continuous path from brook

to Breakneck.

As we wrap up we reflect on this progress. We reflect on the journey. It was sometimes hard and aggravating. It was often hot and wet. Through all this, friendships were forged, and real work was done. There is nothing abstract about our towering staircases. We set out to get people up this mountain and now we have completed our work. I look forward to all the changes still to come; 2019 will bring another full docket of work for next year's crew, and I look forward to harvesting its fruits.



## Yorktown Trail Crew

# Down by the Boardwalk, All Ages Lend a Hand



**JANE DANIELS**  
YORKTOWN TRAIL  
CREW CHIEF

In the Town of Yorktown's version of Monopoly, everyone gets to own Boardwalk! Well, at least the boardwalk on the Mohansic Trailway in Westchester County. It is valuable because it connects the North County Trailway with the east side of FDR State Park along a 0.4-mile former rail bed. But more importantly, during its construction it connected youth and adults. Teens saw a volunteer their grandparents' age being physically active, making a difference, and welcoming them as part of a team. This intergenerational team worked for over 800 hours, moved almost 45,000 pounds of lumber, and hammered about 140 pounds of nails to build an 8-foot wide, 564-foot-long boardwalk.

This project is not just

about the work done, but also about who was on the crew. Some trail volunteers, unfortunately, frown upon working with youth because there is the thought that they may not be there for the long term, can be unreliable, or their work is not up to par. The adults working on this project, however, had a different view and valued their participation. As the project manager, I saw how the teens' skills improved and that they were willing to learn.

It's the long-term benefits that matter, according to Nikhil Singh and Lucas Petruzzo, both 15. They pointed out that not only was the work fun and rewarding, but it also taught them important things about functioning in everyday life: teamwork, hard work, efficiency, and safety, which are also the backbone on which the boardwalk was built. Nikhil and Lucas felt it

was rewarding to work with people of all ages, become friends, and even get dirty in all sorts of weather. "It may sound corny, but the most important thing we learned this summer was to be safe," says Nikhil. "Jane Daniels always made sure that we were aware of our surroundings and always wore our work gloves."

Siblings Marie (15), Claire (14), and Nick (11) Ducey all said they learned how important teamwork is. "If we didn't have an assembly line of different jobs, we never would have gotten this boardwalk done," says Marie. Their father Terry was pleased that they were able to learn new skills, apply what they had learned on previous projects, and work under the tutelage of different adults.

John Settembrino, a Trail Conference member volunteering on his first trail construction project, espe-



Experienced volunteers and young newcomers alike worked hard—and had fun!—building a new trail.

cially enjoyed working with the younger crew. "Their enthusiasm and work ethic were inspirational!" he says. "Nice when you meet young people who want to make a difference." He often used the phrase "the hammer is the educator," which Nikhil and Lucas say is forever etched into their minds. They also note that John always encouraged them to study hard if they want to make something of our lives.

Trail Conference member Terry Ducey, who worked on trail projects at FDR Park last

year, summed up his experience in a way the entire team could agree upon: "When all the volunteers and activity are long gone and we stroll along the boardwalk passing a group of boys and girls riding their bikes, our small efforts will be rewarded. And that is how it should be."

*The Mohansic Trailway construction is a project of Yorktown Trail Town Committee, a member of the Trail Conference. Work will continue in spring 2019. For more info, contact Jane Daniels [wjdhikes@gmail.com](mailto:wjdhikes@gmail.com).*

## Long Distance Trails Crew

# Improving the Appalachian Trail



**MARTY COSTELLO**  
LONG DISTANCE TRAILS  
CREW MEMBER

The Long Distance Trails Crew (LDTC) had another exciting and very productive year putting forth a lot of volunteer effort into two Appalachian Trail projects. Starting in March, we completed a rehabilitation and short reroute of the A.T. on West Mountain, a project that we started in 2017. Upon completing that final section, the LDTC has rehabilitated or re-routed the entire A.T. on the west side of West Mountain, work that began in 2013.

In early June, the LDTC undertook the task of rehabilitating the A.T. on the west side of Black Mountain. (The crew completed a substantial A.T. reroute on the east side of the mountain in 2016.) For this project, we are building steps,

crib walls, water bars, and other structures to stabilize and make the A.T. sustainable. By November, we had built over 150 steps, hundreds of feet of crib walls, and many waterbars.

Of course, nature is always our biggest challenge—whether it's the steepness of the hillside, the large rocks we need to find and move, or the abundant amount of rainfall we had to endure this year. Speaking of challenges, either task or weather-related, our crew rises to each and every test with energy and enthusiasm—and the resulting new trail is awesome. I am humbled and amazed that this vast amount of quality work is accomplished by a handful of dedicated volunteers. I want to offer a big thank you to our crew. Well done, everyone.

Read more from the crew at [longdistancetrailscrew.org](http://longdistancetrailscrew.org).



The LDTC had another successful season making the Appalachian Trail safe and sustainable.

## North Jersey Volunteers



When the lumber required to build this bridge needed to be quickly hauled to the worksite, the trail community responded to get the job done.

# All Together Now



**ESTELLE ANDERSON**  
CENTRAL NORTH JERSEY  
TRAIL CHAIR

Many years ago, a wonderful rustic bridge was built along the Two Brooks Trail in the Pequannock Watershed by the North Jersey Trail Crew. However, time and weather compromised the structure, and it became quite wobbly. Fast-forward 10 years to this fall and a reconstruction project undertaken by the West Jersey Trail Crew and a full complement of volunteers from across the region.

Estelle Anderson, Central North Jersey Trail Chair, was responsible for recruiting enough hands to quickly get the material into the worksite, knowing a full load of lumber left alongside the road would "disappear"

overnight. After only six people had signed up for the task, a full-scale recruitment effort began; ultimately, 29 willing haulers showed up to help. We had people from across New Jersey respond to our call: volunteers and staff from Pequannock Watershed, Wawayanda State Park, Hudson Valley Hikers, NJ Search & Rescue, Norvin Green State Forest (South), and our own Conservation Corps. And, of course, the West Jersey Crew was out in full force.

The workday started with the lumber being delivered along Clinton Road. Crew Chief David Day immediately set up his chop saw, cutting all the necessary pieces. Bob Jonas, Central North Jersey Trail Chair, coordinated the load with

volunteers at the trailhead, who hauled the material to the worksite, one-half mile away. Fellow Crew Chief Monica Day directed and coordinated volunteers at the worksite. Thanks to all that cooperative effort, a truckload of lumber was carried where it needed to be within a few hours. Brownies and cake were enjoyed by all!

The replacement bridge was then constructed by the West Jersey Crew over three weekends, creating a safe and proper crossing of the brook. The work included a significant amount of side-hilling to improve the trail approach, with the fitting reward of more brownies from Monica and a great sense of teamwork and accomplishment.



# Challenge Accepted: Running the Shawangunk Ridge Trail



**KEVIN MCGUINNESS**  
LONG PATH SOUTH CHAIR

The fifth edition of the Shawangunk Ridge Trail Race (SRT) took place Sept. 14-15. Over 200 participants took on the half marathon, 30, 50, or 70-mile courses on the rugged Shawangunk Ridge Trail, which runs from High Point, N.J., to Rosendale, N.Y. Why two days? Because the 70-mile racers start the evening before, run through the night, and

have until midnight the next day to finish!

According to race director and founder Ken Posner (also a Trail Conference Board member and volunteer), the SRT race is very different from conventional trail races. While there are checkpoints for accountability and safety, there are no aid stations providing food or water. Also, the course is not marked; instead, participants follow a special map created by the Trail Conference's cartographer on

their phones using the Avenza map app (which works so well with all Trail Conference digital maps). This makes the event extra challenging, but attracts a group of participants who are serious, mindful, and well-prepared.

The race was full of excitement with new course records set for the female and male half-marathon and the female 50-mile race. The weather was clear, sunny, and warm, but recent rains left the trails wet, meaning participants ran in



STEVE AARON

soggy shoes most of the time. Andrew Wilkins traveled from Olympia, Wash., to win the men's 70-mile event in a time of 18 hours and 13 minutes, just 2 minutes off the record. "With challenging trails and beautiful scenery, the SRT is the perfect place for athletes of any level to challenge themselves mentally and physical-

ly," Andrew says. "Combine that with incredible management from the race directors and volunteers, and you have yourself one awesome day on the trails!"

The 2019 SRT race will take place Sept. 13-14. More info is at [srtrunhike.com](http://srtrunhike.com) with registration discounts through the end of 2018—so sign up now!

## 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 Membership and Development team at 201-512-9348.

**ADK Long Island**  
<http://www.adkli.org>

**ADK Mid-Hudson Chapter**  
<http://www.midhudsonadk.org>

**ADK Mohican Chapter**  
<http://www.adkmohican.org>

**ADK New York Chapter**  
[www.adkny.org](http://www.adkny.org)

**ADK North Jersey Ramapo Chapter**  
[www.hudsonhikers.org](http://www.hudsonhikers.org)

**Adventures for Women**  
<http://www.adventuresforwomen.org>

**Alley Pond Environmental Center**  
<http://www.alleypond.com>

**AMC Delaware Valley Chapter**  
<http://www.amcdv.org>

**AMC Mohawk Hudson Chapter**  
<http://www.amcmohawkhudson.org>

**AMC New York North Jersey Chapter**  
[www.amc-ny.org](http://www.amc-ny.org)

**Black Rock Forest Consortium Inc.**  
<http://www.blackrockforest.org>

**Boy Scout Troop 121-Hudson Valley Council - Rockland District**

**Boy Scout Troop 8, Brooklyn**

**Boy Scouts of America-Northern NJ Council**  
<http://www.nnjbsa.org>

**BSA Troop 21 - Hudson Valley Council**  
<http://www.suffern21.mytroop.us/>

**Byram Township Environmental Commission**  
<http://www.byramtwp.org>

**The Catskill Center for Conservation & Development**  
<http://www.catskillcenter.org>

**Canal Society of New Jersey**  
<http://www.canalsocietynj.org/>

**Catskill 3500 Club**  
<http://www.catskill-3500-club.org>

**Catskill Mountain Club**  
<http://www.catskillmountainclub.org>

**Chinese Mountain Club of New York**  
[www.cmcny.org](http://www.cmcny.org)

**Church Communities Foundation - Platte Cove Community**  
<http://www.bruderhof.com/>

**Closter Nature Center Association**  
[www.closternaturecenter.org](http://www.closternaturecenter.org)

**Community Search and Rescue**  
<http://www.commsar.org>

**East Hampton Trails Preservation Society**  
[www.ehtps.org](http://www.ehtps.org)

**Finger Lakes Trail Conference**  
[www.fingerlakestrail.org](http://www.fingerlakestrail.org)

**Flat Rock Brook Nature Association**  
[www.flatrockbrook.org](http://www.flatrockbrook.org)

**Friends Of Garret Mountain**  
[friendsofgarretmountain.blogspot.com](http://friendsofgarretmountain.blogspot.com)

**Friends of Pelham Bay Park**  
<http://www.pelhambaypark.org/>

**Friends of the Hackensack River Greenway in Teaneck**  
<http://www.teaneckgreenway.org/>

**Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct**  
<http://aqueduct.org/>

**Friends of the Shawangunks**  
<http://shawangunks.org/>

**Frost Valley YMCA**  
<https://www.frostvalley.org>

**German-American Hiking Club**  
<http://gah.nynjtc.org/>

**Greener New Jersey Productions, Inc**  
<http://www.greenernewjersey.org>

**Hilltop Conservancy, Inc.**  
<http://www.hilltopconservancy.org>

**Hudson Highlands Gateway Task Force**  
<http://www.TownofCortlandt.com>

**Hudson River Valley Greenway**  
<http://www.hudsonrivervalley.com>

**Hunterdon Hiking Club**  
[www.hunterdonhikingclub.org](http://www.hunterdonhikingclub.org)

**Interstate Hiking Club**  
[www.interstatehikingclub.org](http://www.interstatehikingclub.org)

**Little Stony Point Citizens Association**  
[www.littlestonypoint.org](http://www.littlestonypoint.org)

**Long Path North Hiking Club**  
[www.schoharie-conservation.org](http://www.schoharie-conservation.org)

**Mohonk Preserve**  
<http://www.mohonkpreserve.org>

**Monmouth County Park System**

**Morris County Park Commission**  
<http://www.morrisparks.net>

**Mosaic Outdoor Mountain Club of Greater New York, Inc.**  
<http://www.mosaic-gny.org/joomla/>

**Musconetcong Mountain Conservancy**  
<http://mmc.nynjtc.org>

**The Nature Place Day Camp**  
<http://thenatureplace.com/>

**Nassau Hiking and Outdoor Club**  
[www.nassauhiking.org](http://www.nassauhiking.org)

**Nelsonville Greenway Committee**  
[VillageofNelsonville.org](http://VillageofNelsonville.org)

**New Haven Hiking Club**  
<http://www.NHHC.info>

**New Jersey Forty Plus Hiking Club**  
[meetup.com/NJ-Forty-Plus-Hiking-Club](http://meetup.com/NJ-Forty-Plus-Hiking-Club)

**New Jersey Highlands Coalition**  
<http://www.njhighlandscoalition.org/>

**New Jersey Search and Rescue Inc.**  
<http://www.njsar.org>

**New York Alpine Club**

**New York City Audubon Society, Inc.**  
[www.nycaudubon.org](http://www.nycaudubon.org)

**New York Ramblers**  
<http://www.nyramblers.org>

**The Outdoor Club, Inc.**  
[www.outdoorsclub.info](http://www.outdoorsclub.info)

**Outdoor Promise**  
<https://outdoorpromise.org/>

**Palisades MTB**  
[facebook.com/groups/palisadesmtb](https://facebook.com/groups/palisadesmtb)

**Proactive - Adventure, Health & Wellness**  
<http://www.proactiveahw.com>

**Protect Our Wetlands, Water & Woods (POWWW)**  
[box292.bluehost.com/~powwworg](http://box292.bluehost.com/~powwworg)

**Ramapough Conservancy, Inc.**

**Rip Van Winkle Hikers**  
<http://newyorkheritage.com/rvw>

**Rock Lodge Club**  
<http://www.rocklodge.com>

**RPH Cabin Volunteers**  
[rphcabin.org](http://rphcabin.org)

**SAJ - Society for the Advancement of Judaism**  
<http://www.thesaj.org/>

**Salt Shakers Trail Running Club**  
<http://www.saltshakersrun.com>

**Shelton's Shooters Sussex 4-H Club**

**Sierra Club Lower Hudson Group**  
<http://www.sierraclub.org/atlantic/lower-hudson>

**Sierra Club Mid-Hudson Group**  
<https://www.sierraclub.org/atlantic/mid-hudson>

**Somers Land Trust**  
<http://somerslandtrust.org/>

**South Mountain Conservancy Inc.**  
[www.somocon.org](http://www.somocon.org)

**Southampton Trails Preservation Society**  
<http://southamptontrails.org/>

**Storm King Adventure Tours**  
[www.stormkingadventuretours.com](http://www.stormkingadventuretours.com)

**Sundance Outdoor Adventure Society**  
<http://www.meetup.com/Sundance-Outdoor-Adventure-Society>

**SUNY Oneonta Outdoor Adventure Club**  
[www.oneonta.edu/outdoors](http://www.oneonta.edu/outdoors)

**Teatown Lake Reservation**  
<http://www.teatown.org>

**Tenafly Nature Center Association**  
[www.tenaflynaturecenter.org](http://www.tenaflynaturecenter.org)

**Thendara Mountain Club**  
[www.thendaramountainclub.org](http://www.thendaramountainclub.org)

**Town of Lewisboro**  
[www.lewisborogov.com/parksrec](http://www.lewisborogov.com/parksrec)

**Trail WhippAss**  
<http://www.trailwhippass.com>

**TriState Ramblers**  
<http://www.tristateramblers.org>

**University Outing Club**  
<http://www.universityoutingclub.org>

**Urban Trail Conference, Inc.**  
[www.urbantrail.org](http://www.urbantrail.org)

**Valley Stream Hiking Club**  
[www.meetup.com/vshclub](http://www.meetup.com/vshclub)

**Wappingers Greenway Trail Committee**

**West Milford 13ers**  
<http://www.weishike.com>

**Westchester Trails Association**  
<http://www.westhike.org>

**Yeshiva University High School Outdoors Club**

**Yorktown Trail Town Committee**



# Two Exhibits to Inspire Adventure This Winter



**DIANE STRIPE**  
ART COMMITTEE MEMBER



## 'Pocono Platitudes' Paintings by Marie Liu

If you visit Trail Conference Headquarters this winter, you're in for a treat of visual and historical delights by Milford, Pa., artist, Marie Liu. Liu's solo show, "Pocono Platitudes," is a full-color display featuring many views from New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania that are favorite among hiking enthusiasts. As a previous resident artist of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (2015-16), Liu has also co-authored the book *Guide to 12 Waterfall Destinations Along the Delaware River*.

Rich in multicultural history and images, Liu's paintings include historical figures such as "America's first conservationist" Gifford Pinchot, the first chief forester to the Na-

### If You Go

► **What:** "Pocono Platitudes," Paintings by Marie Liu  
► **When:** Now through Jan. 8, 2019

► **What:** "Winter Trek" Group Art Exhibition  
► **When:** Jan. 11 through March 5, 2019; opening reception Jan. 17, 2019, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

► **Where:** Trail Conference Headquarters, 600 Ramapo Valley Road, Mahwah, N.J.  
► **Details:** Find more at [nynjtc.org](http://nynjtc.org).

tional Forest Service; and Marie Zimmerman, well-known metal artist of the early to mid-20th century whose beautiful home is in the Water Gap. Liu also references the region's earliest inhabitants.

Stop by for a brilliant visual delight of color featuring waterfalls, vistas, and histo-



RANDALL FITZGERALD

ry. "Pocono Platitudes" is on view to the public through Jan. 8, 2019, at Trail Conference Headquarters.

## 'Winter Trek' Group Art Exhibition

For trekkers who delight in getting out for a hike in the winter, this show is for you. "Winter Trek," a group art exhibition, opens Jan. 11, 2019, at Trail Conference Headquarters. This group show featuring photography and fine art reveals hikers' visual inspirations and experiences found along the trail, in the trees, and from vistas on high. These adventurers take us locally and to far away places through the ice and snow. On that winter day when you need to take a break from the elements, stop in and see the inspiring "Winter Trek" group exhibition. "Winter Trek" is on view Jan. through March 5, 2019. An opening reception will be held Jan. 17, 2019, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Trail Conference Headquarters.

## Wear Your Support!

When you shop at the Trail Conference (online or at our headquarters), your purchase directly supports the trails and lands you love. Shop and give back!



### Thermal Dry Performance Quarter-Zip Fleece

Trim, warm, and lightweight, this performance fleece is great for cooler temps. This high-quality quarter-zip is perfect for layering; it traps body heat and adds an extra line of defense against wind. Available in men's and women's sizing.



### Trail Conference Knit Hat

The knit hat is an essential winter hiking accessory. Available in orange (a hunting-season favorite!), black, and gray; one-size-fits-all.

## Join the Trail Conference, Get Great Deals

Check out some of the latest Trail Conference Retail Partners and their great members-only discounts. Visit [nynjtc.org/retail-partners](http://nynjtc.org/retail-partners) for full details on all partner discounts.



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## Board, Staff Update

### Five New Board Members Appointed

At the Annual Meeting held Nov. 3 at Trail Conference Headquarters, four new Board members were approved to serve three-year terms: **Dylan Armajani, Justin Bailey, Susan Barbuto, and Katina Grays.** Directors **Ken Posner** and **David Stuhr** were re-elected.

Additionally, the immediate appointment of **Kathy Nolan** was approved to fill the term of Rick Levine, who resigned from the Board. Kathy, of Mt. Tremper, N.Y., is a very active public servant and outdoors enthusiast. She is the senior research director at Catskill Mountainkeeper, president and executive director of Catskills Live! Trails & Wilderness Association, and executive director of Tibet Aid. In 2017 she was elected to Ulster County Legislature, District 22, representing four towns in rural, western Ulster County.

### Welcome, Josh

**Joshua Beese**, our Conservation Detection Dog Handler, grew up in the suburbs of Chicago spending his childhood hiking with dogs through the local woods and swamps and helping to maintain the trees, flowers, and vegetable garden at his grandparents' house. An interest in other cultures led him to pursue studies and work in several states throughout the U.S., as well as Brazil and England. Even though he has enjoyed all of the locations he has lived, the Hudson Valley is the place he loves the most. Joshua is the owner of Painted Dogz training in New York City and is a canine search specialist with New Jersey Task Force 1 and FEMA. He is excited about the opportunity to combine his great respect for dogs and environmental conservation in an effort to help manage the forests and other natural places of the Lower Hudson Valley. Read more about our program on **page 5.**



### YOUR PLANNED GIFT TO THE TRAIL CONFERENCE WILL:

Help us protect trails and trail lands for future generations.  
Preserve people's connection to the natural world.  
Create a personal sense of responsibility for our wild places.

**Please consider including the Trail Conference in your will or as a beneficiary in an investment account or insurance policy today.**

You can make a bequest by sharing the following sample language with your attorney:

*I bequeath to the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference, Inc., a not-for-profit organization, with principal offices located at 600 Ramapo Valley Rd, Mahwah, NJ 07430, the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_ (or \_\_\_\_\_%) for its general unrestricted environmental conservation purposes.*

### TO LEARN MORE AND GET MATERIALS, CONTACT:

**Don Weise, Development Director**  
[dweise@nynjtc.org](mailto:dweise@nynjtc.org) | 201.512.9348 x813



## RAMSEY OUTDOOR

FREE Trail Conference cap offer with new membership!

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# Working Together to Protect Breakneck Ridge

**HANK OSBORN**  
SENIOR PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Consistently ranked the most popular day-hike destination in North America, Breakneck Ridge was identified as a 2018 Leave No Trace Hot Spot due to overuse and misuse. In other words, Breakneck has now been nationally recognized as a place in danger of being “loved to death.”

Oct. 29 to Nov. 5 was deemed Hot Spot Week at Breakneck Ridge. Hot Spot Week brought together New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, Hudson Highlands Land Trust, REI, the Subaru Traveling Trainers from the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics, and the Trail Conference for a week of discussion and solution-finding. These partners hosted stewardship events aimed at ensuring that outdoor-lovers do their part to respect and protect the rugged beauty of Breakneck Ridge.

The week kicked off with a Breakneck site visit and assessment by the the Traveling Trainers and partners responsible for managing the mountain and its trails, including NYS Parks and the Trail Conference. Partners then took part in Leave No Trace communications training, and the Trail Conference hosted an REI-sponsored Trail Chat with land managers and other partners invested in protecting open space. We worked to identify actions needed to mitigate the effects of the impacts from high-use at Breakneck



The Trail Conference and partners took part in Hot Spot Week to better the stewardship of Breakneck.

Ridge, such as the Trail Conference’s Steward program. Outcomes of the Trail Chat included solid plans for improving stewardship to protect the natural resources at Breakneck Ridge and similar high-use areas in the region.

Halloween was celebrated with a guest appearance from the Leave No Trace mascot, Big Foot, at Bank Square Coffee House and Mountain Tops Outfitters in Beacon, N.Y.—longtime sponsors of the Trail Steward program. REI hosted a forum at their SoHo store, which focused on the connection between outdoor photography and the importance of Leave No Trace ethics. This sold-out event was followed by a volunteer recognition party where the Trail Conference received an award for our stewardship efforts at Breakneck Ridge. It was an honor to be acknowledged for improving the safety and enjoyment of

visitors while working to protect the land itself.

The final days of Hot Spot Week saw an enhanced Trail Steward presence at Breakneck Ridge on Saturday and Sunday. Eleven Stewards assisted and educated hikers at five key points around the mountain. Volunteers participated in litter pick-up, trail maintenance, and habitat restoration efforts, focusing on rehabilitating treadway and clipping overgrown sections of trail. It was a typical beautiful fall day with over 1,500 visitors counted.

The number of visitors at Breakneck Ridge has increased at an alarming rate over the last five years—we estimate more than 100,000 people climb this mountain each year. Public engagement, education, and Leave No Trace awareness will be key to preserving the integrity of Breakneck and ensuring future generations can explore this cherished mountain.

## Member Benefit: Guided Hikes

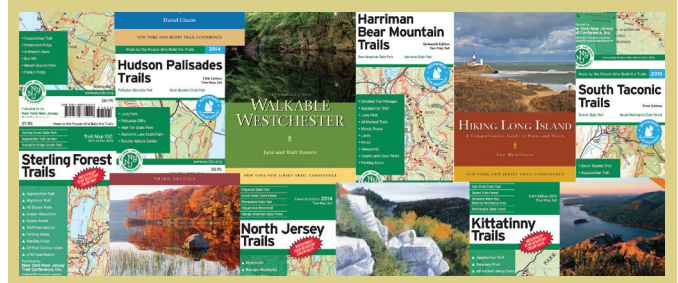
To thank you for making our work possible, we invite all Trail Conference members at the Sponsor Level (\$75 individual; \$90 joint) and higher to join our monthly Member Appreciation Hikes. Come meet your fellow members and see examples of our



recent work or trails we are targeting for improvements. Connect with us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter and sign up for our mailing list at [bit.ly/tc-esu](http://bit.ly/tc-esu) for our 2019 hike schedule!

## HIKERS' MARKETPLACE

GO PLACES WITH TRAIL MAPS AND BOOKS FROM THE TRAIL CONFERENCE



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



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Find all of our publications and select trail guides from others at [nynjtc.org](http://nynjtc.org), and get your member discount!

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

# Trail Conference BENEFITS

The Trail Conference maintains more than 2,100 miles of trails, advocates for parks, protects open space, and provides volunteer service opportunities in the great outdoors.

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

**25% Discount** on Trail Conference books and maps when purchased directly from the Trail Conference. Get a 10% discount on Trail Conference logo goods. Visit [nynjtc.org/shop](http://nynjtc.org/shop).

**Great Discounts** at supporting outdoor retailers and other businesses. See our full list of partners at [nynjtc.org/retail-partners](http://nynjtc.org/retail-partners).

**Free Enrollment** in our Trail University introductory courses.

**Workshops and Seminars** on trail maintenance and construction, leadership training, wilderness first aid, environmental monitoring, GPS operation, and more. Find details at [nynjtc.org/trailu](http://nynjtc.org/trailu).

**Access** to a wide range of volunteer opportunities on- and off-trail. Check out [nynjtc.org/volunteer](http://nynjtc.org/volunteer).

Join now at [nynjtc.org/membership](http://nynjtc.org/membership).

## Join/Renew Trail Conference Membership

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

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

### MEMBERSHIP TYPE

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

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*Tax deductible. Dues are not refundable.*