



# TRAIL WALKER

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

## WE STAND UP FOR TRAILS

No matter what side of the political spectrum you're on, one thing we all value has come up for debate in the national conversation: the protection of public open space and our continued access to it. When conservation and stewardship are viewed as minor affairs by federal policymakers, the effect trickles down to the work of the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference. Several looming issues may significantly impact local parks and trails in the near future.

While it's not likely a marquee park such as Yosemite or the Grand Canyon will be turned over for commercial endeavors, the federal government's role in owning and safeguarding public land is a question that will not be resolved quickly or quietly. The Trail Conference maintains trails in three areas managed by the National Park Service—the Appalachian Trail, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, and Morristown National Historical Park. We also support trail building and maintenance efforts in New Jersey's Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge and Wallkill National Wildlife Refuge, both managed by the U.S. Fish and



DAN BALOGH

Wildlife Service. (Additional federal lands are overseen by the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service.) The Trail Conference proudly supports these vital arms of the government as our partners.

This conversation, in turn, intensifies the issue on a state

level. In the greater metropolitan New York area, the Trail Conference has been involved in open space protection since the 1930s. We have played an important role in the preservation of Storm King Mountain, the creation of Sterling Forest State Park, and the formation of several state forests along

the Long Path. Our advocacy work and role in purchasing key parcels of land for transfer to state ownership continues to aid in the creation and expansion of public parks. It allows us to improve access to the outdoors through the building of a better trail experience.

As the significance of open space is debated, funding for the agencies that manage public lands—on both the federal and state level—will be scrutinized even further. Without proper operating budgets, the possibility that these parks will be forced into piecemeal closures is very real. That's why Trail Conference representatives travel to Albany, Trenton, and Washington, D.C., to meet with elected officials and speak about the importance of access to nature for all. We raise awareness about our work building, maintaining, and protecting trails, and the health and economic benefits associated with experiencing the outdoors. Find out more about our conservation and advocacy efforts on pages 6-7.

Though the federal government's role in the protection of public lands is in question, one thing is certain: The people of the Trail Conference—members, donors, volunteers, and staff—will always take a stand for responsible access to public open space. Through a commitment to making a difference on trail lands in our region, we can all secure the value in our trails, our parks, and our connection with nature.

### Help Save AmeriCorps, Help Improve Trail Lands

At the time this issue of Trail Walker goes to print, there is another threat to the work of the Trail Conference: the potential elimination of AmeriCorps from the federal budget. This program provides the structure of the

Trail Conference Conservation Corps and the funding to provide AmeriCorps Education Awards to our Corps members. The Trail Conference Conservation Corps leveraged 602 community volunteers in over 5,132 hours of service last season. Together, our Corps members and volunteers inventoried and maintained more than 124 miles of trail, improved/built over 4 miles of trail, and improved

over 70 acres of our public lands. AmeriCorps is one of the many ways that the Trail Conference is able to engage our community in service, and we encourage everyone to spread the word that this program deserves funding. AmeriCorps not only works to improve parks, it's training the next generation of conservation leaders. Learn how you can help save AmeriCorps at [bit.ly/tc-sac17](http://bit.ly/tc-sac17).

### Recreation as Activism

Making a difference starts in our own communities. The Trail Conference works to improve the trail experience in a relatively small but incredibly diverse region: from NYC to the Catskills, the Water Gap to Breakneck Ridge—all the places that make this area so incredible to explore.

Through our partnerships with land managers, these trail lands are protected and cared for by our members, donors, volunteers, and staff—outdoor-loving people just like you. YOU can make a difference to ensure our parks and trails remain open and safe for all to enjoy. Please consider making a gift to the Trail Conference at [nynjtc.org/donate](http://nynjtc.org/donate). Your support has never been more important.

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# Trail Conference Receives Highest Rating from Charity Navigator

Great news: The Trail Conference has received the highest ranking from Charity Navigator, again!

The New York-New Jersey Trail Conference has received a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, America's largest and most-utilized independent evaluator of charities. This is our fourth consecutive

4-star rating as a charity.

This highest ranking indicates that we adhere to best practices and execute our mission in an accountable, transparent, and financially efficient way. A 4-star rating verifies that the Trail Conference exceeds industry standards and outperforms most charities in our area of

work. Only 10 percent of the charities evaluated receive at least four consecutive 4-star evaluations. This designation sets the Trail Conference apart from its peers as a trustworthy, responsibly managed charity. Trail Conference donors expect accountability, transparency, and concrete results, and we are proud to

be recognized as 4-star organization.

With more than 1.5 million nonprofits across America, Charity Navigator aims to accentuate the work of efficient and transparent organizations. Check out what it means to be a 4-star charity and view our exceptional rating at [bit.ly/tc-cn](http://bit.ly/tc-cn). [Jennifer Zack](#)



JERRICA LAVOY

## Show Your Love of Trails at Our National Trails Day Open House

National Trails Day is an event held across the country recognizing the power trails have in connecting people with nature. On Saturday, June 3, the Trail Conference will be celebrating National Trails Day with an open house at our historic headquarters in Mahwah, N.J. In partnership with REI, we'll be hosting guided hikes through Ramapo Valley County Reservation and stewardship opportunities—including a litter pickup and invasives removal—to help make a difference at this popular park, located right next door to our building. We'll be leading tours of our 125-year-old headquarters, where you can check out an art exhibition dedicated to the beauty of wildflowers. Our friends from REI and some of our other partner organizations will also be sharing ideas on ways to engage with trails and nature year-round. Refreshments will be available. Check [nynjtc.org/events](http://nynjtc.org/events) for more details.

## HQ Reopening Saturdays During Peak Season

With warmer weather comes extended hours at Trail Conference Headquarters. Our Trail Store will be open Saturdays during peak hiking season, beginning April 1. Stop by 600 Ramapo Valley Rd. in Mahwah, N.J., for maps, sunscreen, hats, and more from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., every Saturday through November. We'd love to chat about trails with you.

If sharing hiking knowledge with your fellow out-



door enthusiasts sounds like a fun way to spend a few hours, we have a volunteer position for you! We are seeking front-desk volunteers to tell folks where to hike, spread our mission, and take sales. Bonus: Ramapo Reservation is right next door for great hiking before or after! Contact Jennifer Zack at [jennifer@nynjtc.org](mailto:jennifer@nynjtc.org) or 201.512.9348 x824 for details.

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201.512.9348

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email: [info@nynjtc.org](mailto:info@nynjtc.org)  
editorial email: [tw@nynjtc.org](mailto:tw@nynjtc.org)  
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### TRAIL WALKER

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AMBER RAY EDITOR  
STEPHANIE HINDERER DESIGNER

#### MISSION STATEMENT

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

- Developing, building, and maintaining hiking trails.
- Protecting hiking trail lands through support and advocacy.
- Educating the public in the responsible use of trails and the natural environment.

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The New York-New Jersey Trail Conference is a volunteer, non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization. It is a federation of more than 100 outdoor groups and 10,000 individuals.

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FROM THE  
EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTORThe Key to  
Our Resiliency

Resiliency is the ability to recover readily and repeatedly. It is an essential characteristic of longevity.

The Trail Conference is a resilient organization. We have been true to our core mission for our 97 years of existence, making sure that people of the greater New York metropolitan area have been able to enjoy trail outings countless times. There have been good times and bad, including the Great Depression and World War II, and decades of voracious development while demand for outdoor recreation has soared.

We face trying times now. In some ways, we are a casualty of our own success. We increased our trail stewardship from 1,300 miles to more than 2,100 over the first 15 years



of this century. Even so, there is more demand, and need, for our services now than ever

before. This is predictable as operating budgets of parks have declined or remained stagnant while acreage and usage have gone up. In the last several years, we have noticed a growing number of destinations are becoming unsustainably popular, apparently driven by the explosive pace of information on the internet. To help mitigate the impact of overuse, we have deployed trail stewards to some of the most distressed locations and adjusted the way we promote these areas, encouraging users

to seek alternative but equally spectacular trails.

State and county problems aside, we now have a U.S. government threatening to defund programs that protect our environment, provide access to public lands, and respond to catastrophic climate change. Federal bills to defund AmeriCorps, Fish and Wildlife, and the EPA, as well as dismissive talk about climate change and science in general, have become regular headlines. The turmoil to come is of real concern.

Yet the Trail Conference will persevere. As a steward of the organization's legacy, our resiliency is something that is always on my mind. The Trail Conference carries on because we respond to a never-ending need with an everlasting resource: people who care. Our members, donors, staff, and especially our volunteers are the key to our resiliency. The Trail Conference's strength has never been self-promo-



**The Trail Conference carries on because we respond to a never-ending need with an everlasting resource: people who care.**

Goodell



tion or fundraising. But there have been, and always will be, people eager to care for and grow trail networks and other ways to connect with nature. Where does this perpetual impulse come from?

Many have commented on an innate human desire to experience nature. After evolving as hunter-gatherers for 10,000 generations, simply walking in the woods connects us with a primal part of the human experience. It is about as close as we can get to who we were designed to be. People are drawn to parks and

outdoor recreation as a way to connect physically, emotionally, and spiritually with the natural world and oneself. Many have found that volunteering to protect the nature within us all provides an even more profound connection.

Love of nature is a perpetual resource that not only increases the resiliency of our park systems, but will also help us conquer problems both local and global. So when you consider helping the Trail Conference, know that it is about more than trails and maps. Your support of this organization is about building the capacity and resiliency of the outdoor recreation system in your neighborhood and the larger region. Together we can do this.

Edward Goodell  
Executive Director  
goodell@nynjtc.org

# Multi-Use Hutchinson Trail Opens in Sterling Forest



SONA MASON  
WEST HUDSON  
PROGRAM COORDINATOR

The Trail Conference is pleased to announce the official opening of a new, single-track, multi-use trail at Sterling Forest State Park on Saturday, March 25, at 11 a.m. The 3.5-mile Hutchinson Trail heads southward from the caretaker parking lot off of Long Meadow Road, where the ribbon-cutting ceremony will take place, through a beautiful hemlock forest. It joins up with the Red Back Trail, passing by the Red Back mine and smoker, remnants of the early days of iron mining at Sterling Forest. The southern terminus is at the South Gate Road parking lot, near the junction of Buttonwood Drive.

Former Sterling Forest park manager Jeffrey Hutchinson, after whom the new trail is named, will cut the ribbon. It was his wish to open up this area of the park to a diverse group of users for non-motorized travel, including hikers,



ROBERT FERNANDEZ

## Work in Progress

Please note that the Red Back Trail is currently open to foot traffic only. A few steep sections still need to be remediated before the trail can be considered safe for horseback riding and mountain biking. Every-

one is welcome to help us restore these sections of the trail, as well as build the multi-use Eagle Mountain Trail. No experience is necessary! We'll teach you everything you need to know to help build sustainable trails for generations to enjoy. Call 201.512.9348 or email [volunteers@nynjtc.org](mailto:volunteers@nynjtc.org) for more info.

equestrians, and mountain bikers.

The trail is a joint project of the Trail Conference, Sterling Forest State Park, and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Thousands of hours of labor have gone into the building of this trail by the Trail Conference's Palisades Crew, alongside many local hiking and mountain-biking volunteers, who often worked long into the winter, after most trail crews had packed their tools away for the season.

The trail has been designed to incorporate a pleasing sense of flow, with speed controls and good sight lines for harmonious use. An eastern loop, the Eagle Mountain section, is currently under development. Once completed, it will join with the Hutchinson Trail to create a 7-mile loop.

Please join us for a hike/ride on the new trail after the ceremony. Wear comfortable shoes, dress for the weather, and bring water and a lunch. For more details, visit [bit.ly/tc-hto17](http://bit.ly/tc-hto17).

## Trail Update

### Lenape Trail Improvements in the Works

The Trail Conference thanks the Partners for Health Foundation for their support of the Get Outdoors Essex County grant. This funding supports the improvement and promotion of the Lenape Trail to engage Essex County residents in healthy activities. With this grant, the Trail Conference aims to promote the Lenape Trail and the 19 parks it connects, as well as to engage people in outdoor volunteerism.

This year, the Trail Conference has hired a part-time Lenape Trail field manager, funded by Partners for Health. The field manager will provide GPS inventory and assessment data on the trail, oversee project completion, collect and coordinate historic materials on the trail, and provide training to volunteers.

If you're interested in getting involved with this fascinating urban trail, email [volunteers@nynjtc.org](mailto:volunteers@nynjtc.org) for more info.

## News in Brief

### Rock the Ridge Raises Funds for Conservation

The Trail Conference is participating as a fundraising partner in Rock the Ridge, the 50-mile endurance challenge taking place for the fifth year on May 6 through Mohonk Preserve and Minnewaska State Park Preserve. The 24-hour time limit and carefully maintained carriage roads

make it an event that is accessible to a wide range of participants, who commit to raising a minimum of \$250 in support of the Mohonk Preserve and other causes such as the Trail Conference's conservation efforts. Registration is open through April 29. To join the Trail Conference team, enter the code "NYNJTC" during registration. Learn more at [rocktheridge50.org](http://rocktheridge50.org).

### Wildflowers Exhibition Call for Entries

The Trail Conference is accepting submissions of artwork for a group exhibition depicting wildflowers. Works done in all two-dimensional media will be considered, including photography. The exhibition is scheduled to run June 2 through Sept. 29 at Trail Conference Headquarters.

Each artist may submit digital images of up to three artworks for an entry fee of \$15. The works should depict or be inspired by wildflowers. Species that grow in this general area are preferred, but not required. Work must be framed and ready for hanging. Email your submissions to [brendan@nynjtc.org](mailto:brendan@nynjtc.org). Submission deadline is Monday, April 17. For more info, visit [bit.ly/tc-wfe17](http://bit.ly/tc-wfe17).

### Shop AmazonSmile, Support Trails

Give back to your favorite trails at no cost to you when you shop AmazonSmile. When you make purchases at [bit.ly/tc-as](http://bit.ly/tc-as), Amazon will donate 0.5 percent of the purchase price on eligible orders to the Trail Conference. Thanks to our supporters for raising \$97.49 in the fourth quarter in 2016!

# Matching Challenges Double- and Triple!—Your Gift to Trails



**JENNIFER ZACK**  
MEMBERSHIP AND  
DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

As Trail Conference staff and volunteers gear up for peak trail-improvement season, several donors have ramped up their efforts to ensure we're able to keep local trails open and safe for everyone to explore. These generous donors are sharing a little bit of trail magic by doubling—or tripling—your gifts to five funds that support the Trail Conference's work across the region. Here's your chance to turn your dollars into extra miles of trails to be enjoyed for years to come. Put your money where your passion is! Here's how.

## Long-Distance Trails Memorial Grant

This fund was created to honor the memory of volunteer Jakob Franke, whose contributions to the Long Path and Shawangunk Ridge Trail were immeasurable. The donor will match your gift of \$500 or more to benefit the Trail Conference's work on the Long Path, Shawangunk Ridge Trail, or any public parkland through which either of these trails runs (examples: Harriman State Park, Schunmunk Mountain State Park, Minne-

waska State Park Preserve, Catskill Forest Preserve). The Tuxedo Trails Project is also eligible for this match.

- ▶ **MINIMUM DONATION:** \$500, with the option to pledge your amount over several years
- ▶ **MATCH TYPE:** Dollar for dollar (1-to-1)
- ▶ **INSTRUCTIONS:** Write "Long Distance Trails" or the name of an eligible park in the special instructions box when donating online, or in the memo line when writing a check. Donor matching funds will go to the Long Path/Shawangunk Ridge Trail only.



## Ramapo Trails Fund

Your gift of any amount will be double-matched to support trail improvements in Ramapo Valley County Reservation and adjoining properties in Bergen County, N.J.

- ▶ **MINIMUM DONATION:** None
- ▶ **MATCH TYPE:** \$2 for every dollar contributed (2-to-1)
- ▶ **INSTRUCTIONS:** Write "Ramapo Trails" in the special instructions box when donating online or in the memo line when writing a check.



## Tuxedo Trails Improvement Project

Donations will fund reconstruction and improvements to Harriman trails accessible from Tuxedo, N.Y., including the Ramapo-Dunderberg (built in 1921) and Kakiat trails.

- ▶ **MINIMUM DONATION:** None
- ▶ **MATCH TYPE:** Dollar for dollar (1-to-1)
- ▶ **DOUBLE MATCH**

- ▶ **OPPORTUNITY:** Donations of \$500 or more will be additionally matched by the Long Distance Trails Memorial Fund (until that fund reaches its limit).
- ▶ **INSTRUCTIONS:** Write "Tuxedo Trails" in the special instructions box when donating online or in the memo line when writing a check.



## Catskills Summit Steward Fund

Donations will support our growing Summit Steward program in the Catskills. After two successful seasons aiding and educating hikers, we are looking to expand the program to other locations to help even more people have a fun, safe, and responsible time on the trails.

- ▶ **MINIMUM DONATION:** None
- ▶ **MATCH TYPE:** Dollar for dollar (1-to-1)
- ▶ **INSTRUCTIONS:** Write "Catskills Summit Steward Fund" in the special instructions box when donating online, or in the memo line when writing a check.



## Zakim Tool Fund

Donations to the Zakim fund go toward the purchase of trail-building tools and equipment.

- ▶ **MINIMUM DONATION:** None
- ▶ **MATCH TYPE:** Dollar for dollar (1-to-1)
- ▶ **INSTRUCTIONS:** Write "Zakim Tool Fund" in the special instructions box when donating online or in the memo line when writing a check.

## MRCC/Trail Conference 5K Race & 3K Walk Set for May 21

Join us for the third annual Mahwah Regional Chamber of Commerce/Trail Conference 5K Race & 3K Walk at Trail Conference Headquarters on Sunday, May 21. Starting at Trail Conference Headquarters at the restored Darlington Schoolhouse, the relatively flat, 3.1-mile course features the scenic Ramapo Reservation and River, the beautiful Hunt & Polo Club neighborhood, and Ramapo College's historic Havemeyer House. The course follows a combination of paved roads, wide woods roads, and well-maintained grass and dirt trails.



DANIELLE RICHARDS

The course finishes back at the Darlington Schoolhouse, where food, an awards ceremony, and free tours await. On-site registration opens at 7:30 a.m.; start time for the 5K is 9 a.m. Proceeds benefit

both the Trail Conference and MRCC. For more info and to preregister, visit [bit.ly/tc-5k17](http://bit.ly/tc-5k17). If you're interested in volunteering at the event, email [volunteers@nynjtc.org](mailto:volunteers@nynjtc.org) or call 201.512.9348.

## Memorial to Honor Jakob Franke May 20

Friends and family will honor the extraordinary life and service of Jakob Franke, a tireless volunteer and remarkable leader who dedicated himself to the Trail Conference's mission for nearly a quarter century, at a memorial service on Saturday, May 20, at Trail Conference Headquarters. Further information on the memorial will be posted at [nynjtc.org/events](http://nynjtc.org/events).

Jakob's influence extended beyond his passion for trails and trail lands to the volunteers he recruited with his friendly, welcoming attitude and infectious



enthusiasm. He was awarded the Trail Conference's highest honor, the Raymond H. Torrey Award, just five days before his passing on Nov. 10. His legacy will impact outdoor recreationists for generations to come.

# PEOPLE FOR TRAILS TRAILS FOR PEOPLE

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

## The Restoration of the Long Pond Ironworks Bridge

The rebuilding of the bridge at Long Pond Ironworks State Park crossing the Wanaque River—washed away in 2011 by Hurricane Irene—was finally completed at the end of 2016. How could a “simple” hiking trail footbridge take so long to rebuild? We break down the process.

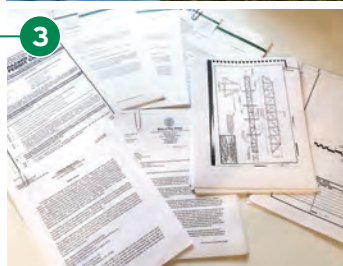
► **FEBRUARY 2012:** The Trail Conference works on a New Jersey Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant application to help fund construction of a new bridge. Due to bank erosion, the old, 30-foot crossing now needs to be 70 feet long.

► **JANUARY 2013:** The RTP is awarded by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). Staff turnover at the Trail Conference puts the project on hold for several months.

**1. APRIL 2014:** Scouting begins to plan construction. This photo shows the crossing of the Highlands Trail, Sterling Ridge Trail, and Hasenclever Iron Trail from the western bank of the Wanaque at that time. Your ankles would get wet without a bridge, to say the least!

**2. JULY 2015:** Volunteer and professional engineer Tibor Latincics provides the ability to survey the site and prepare permits. His expertise is critical at every stage of the project.

**3. DECEMBER 2015:** Trail Conference staff, volunteers, and NJDEP partners compile the large permit packet for final submission and approval. It contains



Though the bridge is restored, we still have lots of need for volunteers in the area. If you're interested in giving back to the hiking community, we'd love to hear from you! Email us at [volunteers@nynjtc.org](mailto:volunteers@nynjtc.org).

PHOTOS: TRAIL CONFERENCE; CENTER: KEVIN SIMPSON

professionally engineered bridge blueprints, a topographic site survey map, river cross-section, soil information, letters of support from local archaeologists, environmental impact assessments, and more.

**4. APRIL 2016:** The final permit is received. The following month, Tibor fords the river for measurements while Steve Bianco of Marlboro Mountain Construction assists.

**5. SEPTEMBER 2016:** Ground is broken for the project. Marlboro Mountain Construction, with help from Trail Conference staff, begins construction of the abutments. Paul Frost, President of the Friends of Long Pond Ironworks, is on hand to ensure that nothing of historical or archaeological significance is disturbed.

**6. OCTOBER 2016:** The abutments, now completed, are almost 10 feet tall. Much of these structures will be buried underground and invisible to hikers.

**7. NOV. 7, 2016:** Trusses are delivered by Tahawus Trails. Cold temps and rain don't stop volunteers, including several members of the Long Distance Trails Crew, from contributing nearly 100 hours to the project.

**8. NOV. 15, 2016:** After years of work, the bridge finally stands completed. Hikers can once again utilize the long-distance Highlands Trail, access the historic Hasenclever Iron Trail, and follow the Sterling Ridge Trail into Sterling Forest State Park. *Peter Dolan*

## The German Hollow Lean-to Takes Flight



Over a year ago, a pile of logs was delivered to the Catskill Interpretive Center in Mt. Tremper, N.Y. They were destined to become two new lean-tos, thanks to a generous grant from REI. One would replace the German Hollow Lean-to that was crushed by trees in 2009. The other would replace the Batavia Kill Lean-to near Windham.

In 2016, volunteers worked through the heat and other unsavory weather conditions to construct these lean-tos. Each piece was carefully labeled, then the completed

lean-tos were dismantled for transport by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC). Due to the remoteness of their final locations, the lean-to bundles would need to be flown to their destinations via helicopter.

This January, the German Hollow lean-to took flight. It was successfully delivered to its new site on Dry Brook Ridge. Special thanks to the NYSDEC Forest Rangers and the New York State Police Aviation Unit for their hard work in making it happen.

This spring, the Batavia Kill shelter will be flown into its new site near the existing lean-to. And then we get to work! The final steps involve putting the pieces together like Lincoln Logs—but we need your help. Site prep, the construction of the foundation, and the setting and spiking of logs, roof boards and shingles is needed to make these new lean-tos safe and usable for the public.

For more info or to sign up to be part of Catskills history, email [catskills@nynjtc.org](mailto:catskills@nynjtc.org). *Doug Senterman*

## CONSERVATION &amp; ADVOCACY



**AMBER RAY**  
COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Our voices are one of the most powerful tools we have in ensuring trail lands remain protected, open, and safe for all people to access. That's why Trail Conference staff and volunteers traveled to Albany over several days this winter to speak with elected officials about the importance of connecting people with nature. This year, we focused on the following issues:

**FEBRUARY 7**  
**Catskill Park Awareness Day**

As a member of the Catskill Park Coalition, the Trail Conference asked state representatives to support a \$10 million "Catskills Package" derived from funding sources that include the Department of Environmental Conservation Aid to Localities budget and the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF). This funding would directly impact our ability to improve the trail experience in the Catskills through support of our Trail & Summit Stewards Program and our work as managers of the Catskill Conservation Corps.

**FEBRUARY 14**  
**EPF Day**

In January, Governor Andrew Cuomo proposed a \$300 million appropriation for the 2017 Environmental Protection Fund, continuing the historic funding level he established for the EPF last year. The EPF directly supports the Trail Conference by funding all New York State acquisition of public open space. The EPF funds our rehabilitation



# NY Lobby Days: Encouraging Support for Trail Lands

of trails on Bear Mountain, including the original section of the Appalachian Trail, as part of the Bear Mountain Trails Project. It funds the Lower Hudson Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management, for which the Trail Conference serves as the host organization. The EPF is an annual avenue of support for Trail Conference projects, and we asked representatives to back its full funding.

**MARCH 2**  
**Empire State Trail  
Advocacy Day**

In January, Governor Cuomo announced his commitment to completing and connecting the Empire State Trail. This 750-mile, multi-use trail will connect New York City with the Canadian border via the Hudson River Greenway and Champlain Canalway Trails, and Albany with Buffalo via the Erie Canalway Trail. The Empire State Trail will act as a spine connecting many Trail Conference-maintained trails through Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess, and Columbia counties—and beyond.

The Trail Conference is an active participant in the New

York State Greenway Gap Analysis initiative out of Albany to help identify existing trails, proposed trails, trail projects, and missing gaps. The Greenway has been adopted by the Empire State Trail as a working framework upon which to build a fully connected Greenway Trail from Battery Park in Manhattan to the Adirondacks. It is approximately 50 percent complete. The Trail Conference asked representatives to support the completion of the Greenway and Empire State Trail and the increased access it will bring to our trails.

**MARCH 13**  
**Park Advocacy Day**

The Trail Conference supports the continued revitalization of the New York State park system, home to a significant number of trails that we maintain and monitor for invasive species. We met with representatives to stress the importance of funding for state parks, particularly the operating resources that keep our parks open. Inadequate staffing of maintenance crews and forest rangers affects park accessibility and visitor safety. It is a perennial issue that we will continue to raise.



# Momentum for NJ Open Space Protection Continues

As a member of the New Jersey Keep It Green (KIG) Coalition, the Trail Conference helped secure a great victory last year when N.J. Governor Chris Christie approved legislation to allocate long-awaited, voter-mandated funds for open space, farmland, and historic preservation projects. This victory was the result of 18 months of advocacy work both directly in the Statehouse and through the coordinated efforts of Keep It Green's members and their constituencies. The Coalition, which represents more than 180 conservation-related organizations throughout the state, met recently to discuss initiatives in 2017 and beyond.

Top of the agenda is Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT), a state-implemented program that supports municipalities' efforts to preserve open space. However, the program has seen funds greatly reduced since 2010. KIG wants to ensure that the funds are properly allocated to the PILOT program so that local governments are motivated to continue pursuing

open space purchases. KIG will monitor the upcoming state budget address and any proposed legislation closely in regards to funding for the PILOT program and allocation of a portion of the Corporate Business Tax, which funds open space, farmland, and preservation projects.

This is a big year for the New Jersey Legislature—all seats are up for re-election in the Assembly and Senate. KIG will be working to educate all candidates on the importance of open space preservation. In tandem with that effort, KIG is circulating a resolution of Support for Open Space and is working to promote it in communities and counties across the state. If you think this is something your town would like to adopt, message Keep It Green on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram for more details.

Lastly, we'll be working with Keep It Green in celebrating the inaugural New Jersey Open Space Month in June. Additional information will be available soon; check [nynjtc.org](http://nynjtc.org) for details.

Adam Page Taylor

# Revisiting the Battle for Storm King



KELLY LEWIS

The beauty of the Hudson River Valley was a legendary subject for artists during the 19th century. They portrayed its bucolic settings and humans in harmony with nature as the physical manifestation of God's work on Earth. More than 100 years later, those sentiments would be tested as never before. In the fall of 1962, Trail Conference Conservation Chair Leo Rothschild raised the alarm that Consolidated Edison of New York, the nation's largest utility company, planned construction of a pumped-storage hydroelectric power plant at Storm King Mountain on the Hudson River, 40 miles north of New York City. Over the next 18 years, Con Ed's clash with environmentalists would culminate in the abandonment of the project.

In *Power on the Hudson*, author Robert D. Lifset offers

an original case study of this monumental event in environmental history, when a small group of concerned local residents initiated a landmark case of ecology versus energy production. He follows the progress of this struggle, as Con Ed won approvals and permits early on, but later lost ground to concerned citizens and local organizations—including the Trail Conference—who were able to raise questions about the potential damage to the habitat of Hudson River striped bass.

Lifset uses the struggle over Storm King to examine how environmentalism changed during the 1960s and '70s. He also addresses the financial challenges and increasingly frequent blackouts faced by Con Ed, along with the pressure to produce ever-larger quantities of energy.

## If You Go

- ▶ **Book Talk and Signing:** *Power on the Hudson* by Robert Lifset
- ▶ **When:** Saturday, April 21, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- ▶ **Location:** Fort Lee Historic Park Visitor Center, Hudson Terrace, Fort Lee, N.J.
- ▶ **Description:** Professor Lifset discusses the historic battle to save Storm King Mountain and its impact on environmentalism and the utility industry. Sponsored by the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference and the Palisades Interstate Park Commission. For more information, call 201.512.9348, ext. 813.

As Lifset demonstrates, the environmental cause was greatly empowered by the fact that through this struggle, for the first time, environmentalists were able to gain access to the federal courts. The cause was greatly advanced by adopting scientific evidence of ecological change, combined with mounting public awareness of the environmental consequences of energy production and consumption. These became major factors supporting the case against Con Ed, spawning a range of new local, regional, and national environmental organizations and bequeathing to the Hudson River Valley a vigilant environmental awareness. A new balance of power emerged, and energy companies would now be held to higher standards that protected the environment. Don Weise



David hiked the entirety of the Highlands Trail in New Jersey in 20 sections over 47 days.

## Discovering New Jersey—and a Part of Himself—on the Highlands Trail

At 43 years old, lucky in health, family, love, and financial stability, my life nonetheless felt devoid of something elemental. So, I did what any soul-searching New Jerseyan would do—I decided to hike across the state to figure it out, guided by the teal blaze of the Highlands Trail.

A few years ago, I started obsessively watching TV shows like *Survivorman* and *Dual Survival*, drawn to them for a reason I couldn't explain. I had gotten into hiking later in life, at 37 years old. My only real outdoors experiences growing up were on a Jewish teen tour out West when I was 15. Yet I felt compelled to go into the woods, on my own. I read a lot and studied a lot, trying to eliminate the fear of the unknown. I started slow, then eventually immersed myself in exquisitely wild places like Norvin Green, Abram Hewitt, and Wawayanda.

Deeper research was required to hike the entirety of the Highlands Trail in N.J. My first step in this adventure was to become a mapmaker, piecing together trail and road maps, so I could visualize the whole trail as one. I mentally walked the trail inch by inch, mile by mile, breaking it down into digestible daily hikes that ranged anywhere from 3 to 10 miles long, identifying the starting and ending points by the circled "P" on the map. I compiled a play-by-play spreadsheet

of all the hikes, including points of interest, maps to use, estimated distances, parks/forests I'd see (18) and counties I'd pass through (six). It totaled 20 hikes and over 100 miles.

Actually doing the hikes was an entirely different matter. Every day was a new and different adventure and logistical challenge, which I documented on my website, davidmblanke.com. I started on January 6, my birthday.

I hiked across the Highlands Trail to be with me and the beauty of the world. I hiked it to pause the texts, emails, likes, follows, tweets, and other madness. I hiked it because I wondered, with the onslaught of real estate development happening in New Jersey, if there might not be any real forest—anything wild—left in the coming years.

The biggest lesson I learned: Exploration is the lifeblood of the fully lived life. By challenging ourselves to do things we have never done before, maybe even seemingly outrageous things, we forge a strength that we never believed was possible from a place we never knew was there.

**David M. Blanke** is an avid hiker and nature skills enthusiast. He lives in Edgewater with his wife and three children. When David is not hiking, he helps high-growth startup companies build for success, including team outings to develop self-reliance skills in nature.



JOHN TAYLOR

## LG Groundbreaking a 'Win-Win'

The Trail Conference and four other conservation groups joined LG Electronics at a groundbreaking ceremony for the new LG North American headquarters in Englewood Cliffs, N.J., on Feb. 7. The groups had previously raised concerns about the original proposed height of the building adjacent to the New Jersey section of the Palisades Interstate Park. A lawsuit was filed in 2012 by the New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs, Scenic Hudson, and Trail Conference members Margo Moss and Jakob Franke. A series of grassroots advocacy efforts to persuade LG to build below the tree line followed. LG and the groups reached agreement in 2015 on a new design, which all parties celebrated as a "win-win" solution. Read more at [bit.ly/tc-lg17](http://bit.ly/tc-lg17).

# Trail Conference Leads Regional Invasives Work in New York



**LINDA ROHLEDER**  
DIRECTOR OF  
LAND STEWARDSHIP

The challenge of protecting our environment from invasive species is ever-present in the greater New York metropolitan area, where global commerce invites global threats into our area. New York State has pledged increasing support for the issue of combatting invasive species—\$12 million last year, which was nearly double from 2015. As leaders of the Lower Hudson Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (LHPRISM), the Trail Conference is doing our part to protect the rich biodiversity of the region.

Lower Hudson PRISM is one of eight regional partnerships in the state of New York funded by the Department of Environmental Conservation through the Environmental Protection Fund. The Trail Conference's Director of Land Stewardship, Linda Rohleder, is the Lower

## Learn More

To find out more about what the Lower Hudson PRISM is doing to combat invasives, visit [lhprism.org](http://lhprism.org) and our Facebook page @LHPRISM.

er Hudson PRISM program coordinator.

The LHPRISM is made up of more than 45 partner organizations. The Trail Conference guides these partners in developing strategies to ensure our invasive species management efforts will be of the most benefit. Collectively, we focus on likely areas of introduction and methods of early detection and rapid response. We gather and share information, engage volunteers, and educate the public.

Last year was very successful in the fight against invasive species in the Lower Hudson region. Here are some of our achievements in 2016.

## 2016 Statistics

- ▶ **44**  
Invasive species targeted
- ▶ **99**  
Eradication projects
- ▶ **185**  
Events held
- ▶ **472**  
Acres treated
- ▶ **1,900**  
Volunteers
- ▶ **11,115**  
Hours donated
- ▶ **57,000**  
Individuals engaged through training sessions, presentations, and outreach

## Partner Invasives Removals

LHPRISM partners have teamed with the Trail Conference's Invasives Strike Force Conservation Corps Crew to manage invasives throughout our region.

- ▶ We've seen success in controlling hardy kiwi and its relative, silver vine, in Westchester County.
- ▶ To prevent the spread of mile-a-minute into northern areas of New York, which have not yet seen this invasive, our ISF Crew worked with Trillium ISM and Scenic Hudson in Esopus, N.Y., focusing on creating a suppression scenario by cutting into the population from the edges to contain it.



**Incised fumewort**

- ▶ The ISF Crew also worked with Trillium ISM, New York City DEP, and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Putnam County to monitor and control giant hogweed, a federally listed noxious

plant.

▶ The New York Botanical Garden, in collaboration with the Bronx River Parkway Reservation Conservancy, conducted a survey of the Bronx River in Westchester to determine the extent of the incised fumewort infestation, first detected in the river in 2005.

▶ Several partners also worked with the ISF Crew on their preserves to conduct general invasives removals and hold volunteer events. These partners include: Westchester Land Trust, Friends of Old Croton Aqueduct, Teatown Lake Reservation, The Invasives Project-Pound Ridge, and Mianus River Gorge.

## Join the Fight Against Invasive Species

Have a love of nature, but have no idea what you're looking at when you're hiking? The Invasives Strike Force (ISF) offers identification trainings and volunteer opportunities to give hikers and nature nerds the chance to learn about ecology and the role invasive species play in our parks.

ISF currently has four different programs giving volunteers hands-on experience with identifying, surveying, monitoring, and removing invasive species.

Our ISF programs include invasive plant surveying, invasive plant removals, southern pine beetle trap monitoring, and endangered plant monitoring.

ISF surveyors take a one-day workshop teaching them invasive plant identification, survey protocol, and how to operate a GPS unit. Surveyors are then assigned 1- to 2-mile trail segments to inspect for invasive plants. Our ISF crew then goes out to remove the invasives found by our surveyors. The



**Trillium Invasive Species Management treats giant hogweed.**

MATT SIMONELLI

## Aquatic Invasive Species

In aquatic systems, prevention is the best method of dealing with invasive species. That's because once a water body is invaded, treatment becomes very difficult, costly, or simply impossible. Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, based in Beacon, N.Y., heads the LHPRISM aquatic program. In 2016, 40 locations

were surveyed for aquatic invasives. Volunteer stewards inspected 1,317 boats at three launches along the Hudson River, and spoke with 3,300 boaters. An additional 2,700 people were reached at events. In addition, SOLitude Lake Management worked to survey the Croton River for hydrilla tubers and monitor the population growth of this aggressive invader first spotted in the river in 2013.

## Southern Pine Beetle Monitoring

In May and June, LHPRISM participated in monitoring for southern pine beetle (SPB), an invasive insect emerging in our area. Fifteen volunteers checked 12 SPB traps. The monitoring effort took a total of 174 volunteer hours that contributed to the detection of SPB at Bear Mountain, Schunnemunk Mountain, and Minnewaska state parks, and Roosa Gap State Forest.



## BlockBuster Survey

The BlockBuster Survey focuses on searching for a targeted list of invasive plant species in 3x3-mile blocks throughout the Lower Hudson Valley. By spreading our survey efforts and searching in likely locations for invasive species, we hope to fill in gaps in our knowledge about various species distributions, and also make some early detections. In July, our Cornell Cooperative Extension offices

trained 115 volunteers to survey for our focal invasive plants for the BlockBuster Survey program. The Lower Hudson region was divided into 377 blocks, and 112 of these blocks were assigned to our surveying volunteers. So far, we have received data from 74 blocks—or close to 20 percent—of our total blocks in the region and have identified several early detection locations. We plan to run this survey effort every year.

## Education for Gardeners

Hudsonia LLC and the Cornell Cooperative Extension office in Rockland County developed additional training on best management practices for common invasive plants in home gardens and held sev-

eral presentations throughout the region. The Cornell Cooperative Extension of Dutchess County developed additional training on native alternatives to invasive ornamental plants, as well as other educational materials.

crew is made up of volunteers and Trail Conference Conservation Corps members. Everyone is invited to help us dig up invasive plants on weekends throughout the summer.

Our southern pine beetle trap monitors learn how invasive insects affect forest health. Trap monitors are assigned a beetle trap located along a ridge trail in a New York State park or forest, which is checked every two weeks. Trap contents are sent out to the Department of Envi-

ronmental Conservation lab for evaluation. Endangered plant monitors are taught about rare and endangered plant communities along the Appalachian Trail. They receive an assignment of a species to find and check on within a specified location.

Interested in learning more about the Invasives Strike Force and becoming an ISF warrior in the fight against invasives? Get in touch at [invasives@nynjtc.org](mailto:invasives@nynjtc.org). Heather Darley



## ASK A TRAIL BUILDER

### What are the characteristics of a sustainable trail?



**KEVIN SIMPSON**  
Bear Mountain Field Manager

When designing and building trails, the aim is to create a sustainable product. The end result should be a trail that fits into the surrounding landscape lightly and with little disturbance or negative impact to the environment. A sustainable trail will require less maintenance, provide positive user experiences, and withstand the test of time.

We can understand what makes a trail sustainable by

breaking it down into five key elements:

1. The Half Rule
2. 10 Percent Average Grade Guideline
3. Maximum Sustainable Grade
4. Grade Reversals
5. Outslope

Take a look at the diagram to the right. The left side of the trail follows sustainable design; the right side does not.

In the sustainable trail, notice the relationship between the trail's grade and side slope (the grade of the mountain). A trail's grade shouldn't exceed half the grade of the side slope. This is the half rule.

The second principle defines the average grade of an ideal trail as 10 percent, or as close to 10 percent as possi-

ble. That is, for every 100 feet of trail, elevation gain or loss is 10 feet.

The maximum sustainable grade is calculated by examining the relationship between such factors as the half rule, soil type, watershed, climate, number of grade reversals, user type, number of users, and difficulty level.

To avoid the erosion seen in the unsustainable trail sections in this diagram, grade reversals are used. A grade reversal literally refers to reversing, or changing, the grade of a trail—going downhill to uphill, and then back downhill again (or vice-versa). Good

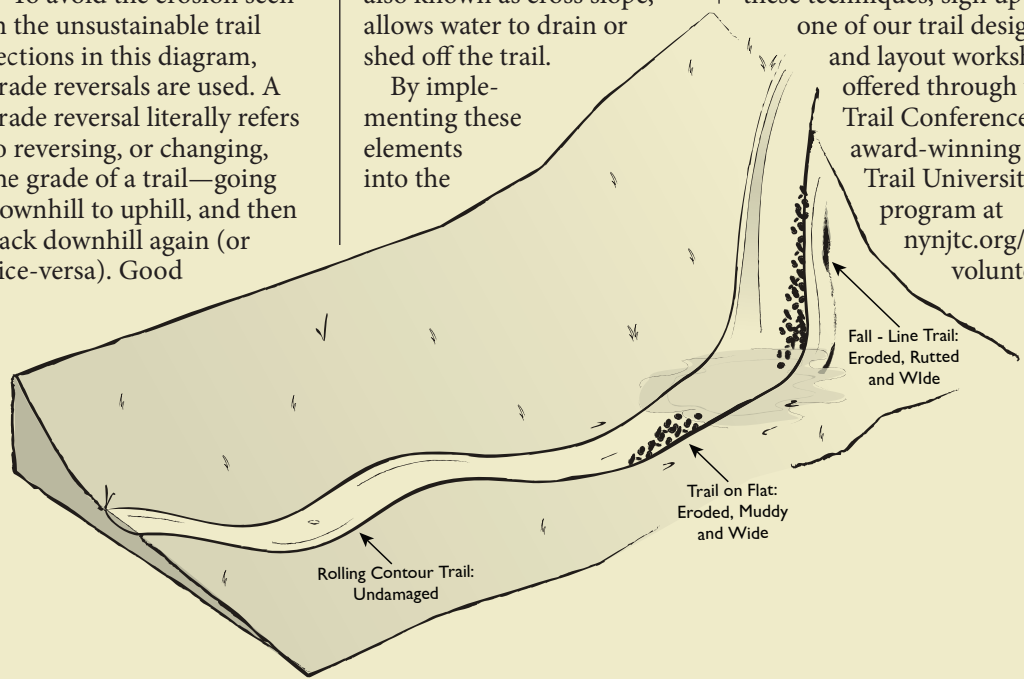
grade reversal takes advantage of the land's natural contours, allowing water to drain or shed off the trail. Read more about grade reversals at [bit.ly/tc-atb-gr](http://bit.ly/tc-atb-gr).

Also helping to minimize erosion is the trail's outslope. This is the downhill tilt of the tread, which should be at least 5 percent. Outslope, also known as cross slope, allows water to drain or shed off the trail.

By implementing these elements into the

design and build process, we are doing our part to not only develop sustainable hiking trails, but also protect hiking trail lands. Through our use of these best practices, we can help educate the public in the responsible use of trails and the natural environment.

To get a firsthand look at these techniques, sign up for one of our trail design and layout workshops offered through the Trail Conference's award-winning Trail University program at [nynjtc.org/volunteer](http://nynjtc.org/volunteer).



## 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.

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

**Long Island Greenbelt Trail Conference**  
[www.ligreenbelt.org](http://www.ligreenbelt.org)

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

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

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

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

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

**ADK Mid-Hudson Chapter**  
[www.midhudsonadk.org](http://www.midhudsonadk.org)

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

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

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

**New Jersey Search and Rescue Inc.**  
[www.njsar.org](http://www.njsar.org)

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

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

**TriState Ramblers**  
<http://TSR.nynjtc.org/Schedules.html>

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

**University Outing Club**  
[www.universityoutingclub.org](http://www.universityoutingclub.org)

**WWW**  
<http://www.weishike.com/>

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

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

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

**Sierra Club Mid-Hudson Group**  
[newyork.sierraclub.org/midhudson/](http://newyork.sierraclub.org/midhudson/)

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

**Boy Scouts of America-Northern NJ Council**  
[www.nnjbsa.org](http://www.nnjbsa.org)

**Friends Of The Shawangunks**  
<http://shawangunks.org/>

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

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

**New York Ramblers**  
[www.nyramblers.org](http://www.nyramblers.org)

**Boy Scout Troop 8, Brooklyn**

**Protectors of Pine Oak Woods**  
[www.siprotectors.org](http://www.siprotectors.org)

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

**Mohonk Preserve**  
[www.mohonkpreserve.org](http://www.mohonkpreserve.org)

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

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

**NYC Outward Bound Center**  
[www.nycoutwardbound.org/](http://www.nycoutwardbound.org/)

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

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

**Hilltop Conservancy, Inc.**  
[www.hilltopconservancy.org](http://www.hilltopconservancy.org)

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

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

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

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

**Wappingers Greenway Trail Committee**

**Catskill Mountain Club**  
[www.catskillmountainclub.org](http://www.catskillmountainclub.org)

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

**Bellvale School**  
[www.bruderhof.com/en/international-directory/united-states/bellvale](http://www.bruderhof.com/en/international-directory/united-states/bellvale)

**Hudson Highlands Gateway Task Force**  
[www.TownofCortlandt.com](http://www.TownofCortlandt.com)

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Boy Scouts of America, Troop 21**

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

**The Storm King School**  
<http://www.sks.org>

**Lake Hopatcong Foundation**

**Canal Society of New Jersey**

**Harmony Hall - Jacob Sloat House**  
[www.friendsofharmonyhall.org](http://www.friendsofharmonyhall.org)

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

**New Jersey Highlands Coalition**

**Discover Outdoors**  
[www.discoveroutdoors.com](http://www.discoveroutdoors.com)

**Yeshiva University High School Outdoors Club**

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

**Community Search and Rescue**  
[www.commsar.org](http://www.commsar.org)

**ADK Mohican Chapter**  
[www.adkmohican.org](http://www.adkmohican.org)

**Hudson River Valley Greenway**  
[www.hudsonrivervalley.com](http://www.hudsonrivervalley.com)

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

**Catskill 3500 Club**  
[www.catskill-3500-club.org](http://www.catskill-3500-club.org)

**Friends of Van Cortlandt Park**  
<http://vancortlandt.org/>

**SAJ - Society for the Advancement of Judaism**  
[www.thesaj.org/](http://www.thesaj.org/)

**Adventures for Women**  
[www.adventuresforwomen.org](http://www.adventuresforwomen.org)

**Salt Shakers Trail Running Club**  
[www.saltshakersrun.com](http://www.saltshakersrun.com)

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

**New York Alpine Club**  
[www.nyalpine.com](http://www.nyalpine.com)

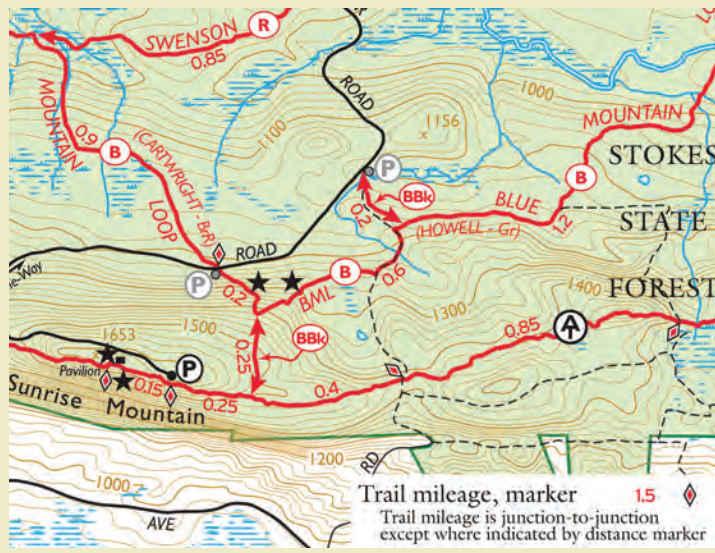
**Morris County Park Commission**  
[www.morrisparks.net](http://www.morrisparks.net)

**The Highlands Natural Pool**  
[www.highlandsnaturalpool.org](http://www.highlandsnaturalpool.org)



## MAP TALK

As the Trail Conference cartographer for nearly 10 years, I have received praises on the quality of our maps, as well as many inquiries about them. The purpose of this column is to share some answers to questions I regularly receive. If you have a question about our maps, email [apgar@nynjtc.org](mailto:apgar@nynjtc.org) and include "Map Talk Question" in the subject line. Your question might appear in the next issue of Trail Walker.



## Many of your maps show trail mileages directly on the front. How are these mileages calculated?



**JEREMY APGAR**  
Trail Conference Cartographer

Mileage numbers—a much-requested feature—first appeared on our 2010 Catskill Trails map. To create an accurate dataset of mileages, volunteers Dave and Carol White with the Adirondack Mountain Club provided wheeled measurements of nearly all trails on the map. They physically walked the trails with a measuring wheel, capturing every zig and zag. Since 2010, we have placed mileage numbers on more than half our maps, including Harriman-Bear Mountain, South Taconic, West Hudson,

and just this past fall, Kittatinny and Sterling Forest. Many users find them extremely helpful for planning or navigating, so we examine whether mileage numbers can be included with every map revision.

The source of the mileage numbers has varied with each map. For our Harriman-Bear Mountain map, all trails had been wheeled for our *Harriman Trails* book, so this dataset formed the basis of the mileage numbers. To address recent relocations and new trails, we used GPS-derived, elevation-corrected mileages calculated using ArcGIS.

ArcGIS is the professional Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software that I use to organize trails data. Trail routes are typically captured by volunteers using handheld GPS units; since mileage information collected by the devices can be unreliable, I

use my GIS software to edit the data and produce clean trail lines. I then use elevation data to create elevation-corrected lines, since the terrain in our area can add upwards of 20 percent to flat-line distances. Once these lengths are calculated, we often compare a sample against known wheeled lengths as a verification step.

Aside from Sterling Forest, which also had a reliable dataset of wheeled measurements, the remaining maps have all primarily relied on GIS-calculated mileages.

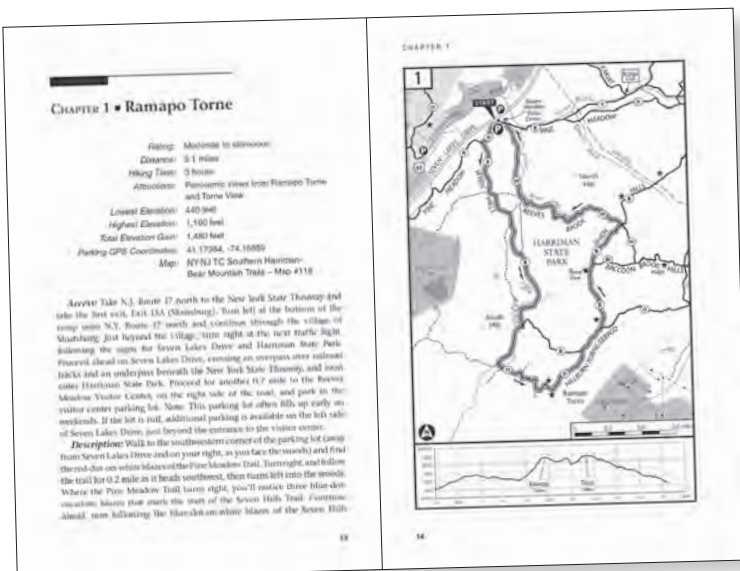
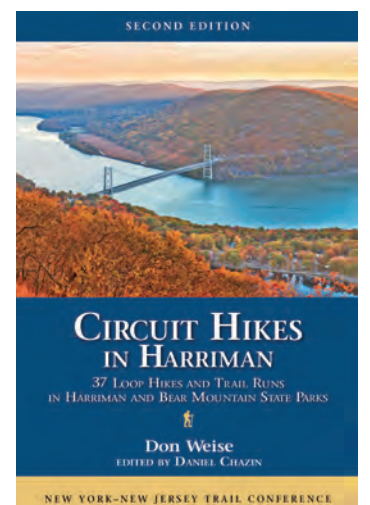
For these reasons, readings from your GPS unit or mobile device might differ from the map mileage. But I and our dedicated volunteers take great care in ensuring the mileages are as accurate as possible. If you're interested in collecting data that can go into making the maps, email me at [apgar@nynjtc.org](mailto:apgar@nynjtc.org).

# Circuit Hikes in Harriman 2nd Edition Now Available

The revised second edition of *Circuit Hikes in Harriman: 37 Loop Hikes and Trail Runs in Harriman and Bear Mountain State Parks* has arrived and is now available for purchase. This comprehensive guide to loop hikes in these highly visited parks includes two new circuits and several updates to existing hikes. The book has

already been well-received at several events held by author Don Weise, especially since it is perfect for those new to trails and experienced hikers alike.

Grab your copy before heading into Harriman-Bear Mountain this spring. Shop online at [nynjtc.org](http://nynjtc.org) or stop by our store at Trail Conference Headquarters.



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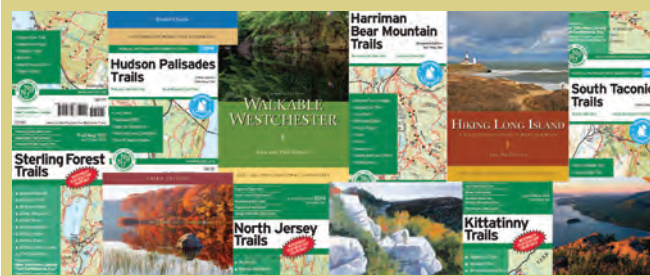
I bequeath to the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference, Inc., a not-for-profit organization, with principal offices located at 600 Ramapo Valley Rd, Mahwah, NJ 07430, the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_ (or \_\_\_\_\_%) for its general unrestricted environmental conservation purposes.

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

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

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# Staying in the Loop

Campgaw Mountain County Reservation in Mahwah, N.J., is in most seasons a refuge from the crowds across the road at Ramapo Valley County Reservation. Campgaw's 9 miles of hiking trails include a panoramic view from a mountaintop shared by skiers during winter months. As of February, the trail system is easier for newcomers to navigate through reconfiguration into a six-loop network.

Campgaw's new look is a consequence of the successful implementation of a 9-mile, five-loop network that was inaugurated last August in the Ramapo Reservation's core recreational area. One of Bergen County's goals in approving a loop system was to reduce the increasing number of lost hiker calls from inexperienced trail users. Happily, Parks Superintendent Todd Cochran reports that the loop network has achieved that goal at Ramapo Reservation. This outcome contributed to speedy

county approval for the similar loop plan at the county-owned Campgaw Reservation.

Campgaw's loop network comprises the following trails:

▶ **Old Cedar Trail:** red; hub of Campgaw trail system that loops 2.8 miles and connects with all other trails; rated moderate

▶ **Rocky Ridge Trail:** blue; loops 1.6 miles from Park Drive parking lot and accesses NYC skyline views atop Campgaw Mountain; rated moderate

▶ **Hemlock Trail:** orange; loops 0.7 mile around Fyke Pond; rated easy

▶ **Dogwood Lane:** pink; loops 1.1 miles from Park Drive parking lot; rated easy

▶ **Backslope Trail:** yellow; loops 1 mile on west side of mountain from Old Cedar Trail; rated moderate

▶ **Silver Trail:** silver; loops 1.45 miles from/to south side of Old Cedar Trail; rated easy-to-moderate

The Campgaw trail loop plan was proposed by Trail Chair Chris Connolly and New Jersey Program Coordinator Peter Dolan, with input from Campgaw Trail Supervisor John Moran. Six weeks after obtaining Bergen County approval, John Moran completed all reblazing necessary to establish the loop system. For detailed hike descriptions of the Campgaw trail network, visit [bit.ly/tc-cmcrh](http://bit.ly/tc-cmcrh).

Chris Connolly



PHOTOS: DANIEL CHAZIN



## FEATURED HIKE

### Details

- ▶ **Trail:** Six loops
- ▶ **Park:** Campgaw Mountain County Reservation, Bergen County, N.J.
- ▶ **Difficulty:** Easy to moderate
- ▶ **Length:** 9 miles total
- ▶ **Dogs:** Allowed on leash
- ▶ **Features:** Views, historic features



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