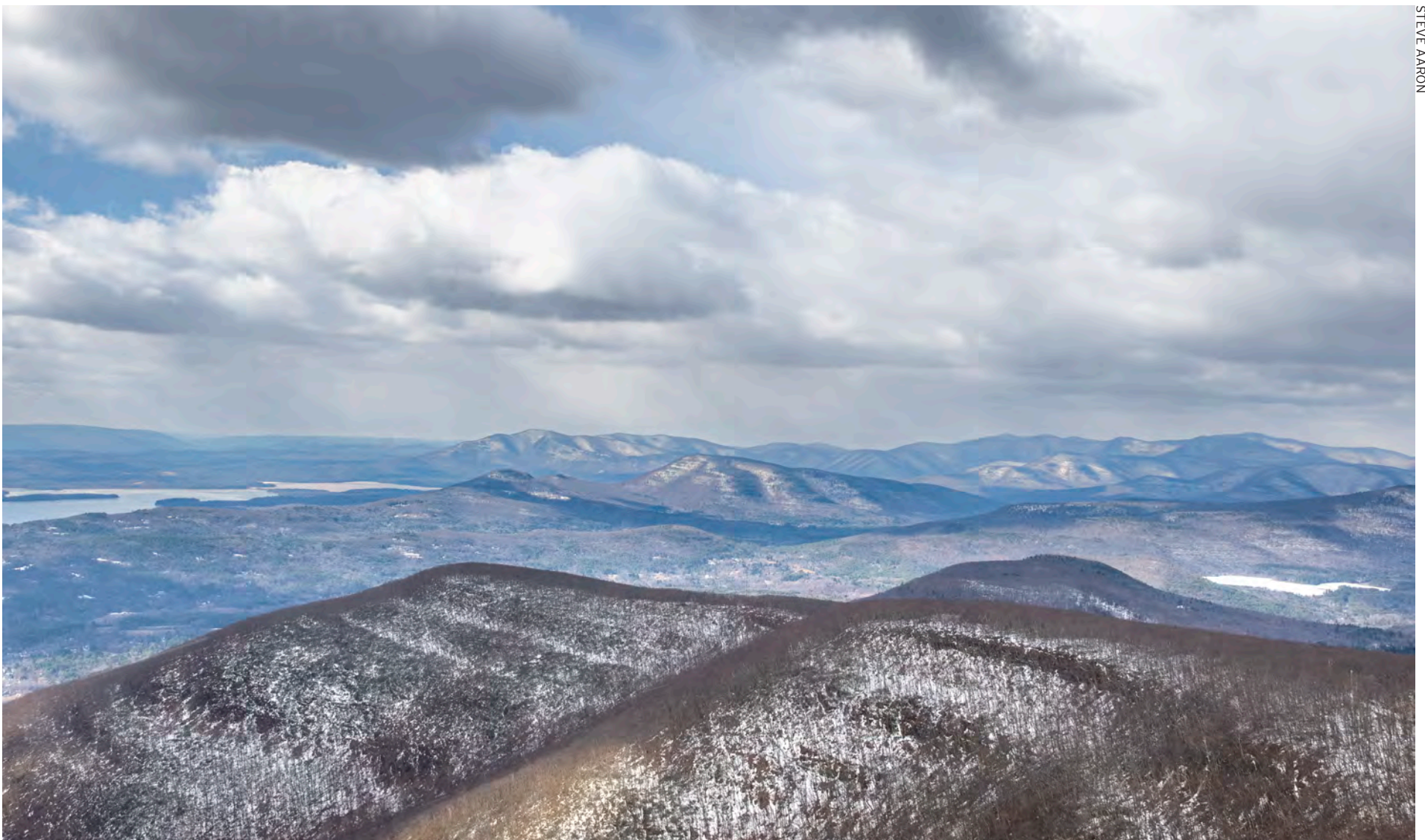




# TRAIL WALKER

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

# 2021 IN REVIEW



STEVE AARON

We are grateful for a year of extraordinary volunteer efforts and community support to make outdoor experiences like hiking to this view, from the Catskills' Overlook fire tower, possible.

As we close 2021 and look forward to a new year, we send our gratitude to the trail community and all who believe in the power of nature.

Thanks to you, the Trail Conference continues to be an incredible force multiplier, recruiting and training more than 2,500 volunteers who care for and protect our region's natural areas and the trails that provide access to them. Our volunteers' efforts

result in approximately \$3 million in labor given to the improvement of public lands annually. That's \$3 million of care given to local trails and parks to ensure your experiences outdoors are safe and enjoyable.

In 2021, the Trail Conference celebrated a century of providing that service to our friends, neighbors, and all who recreate on these lands. The pandemic continued to

create unprecedented circumstances and challenges for the trails and our service community, yet we persevered. Although our headquarters remains closed to the public, our programs and operations found renewed success in a hybrid model of outdoor, in-person workshops and work trips while continuing to leverage our Online Learning Library and holding virtual meetings.

At the same time, we have continued to see trails face remarkably high usage with millions of people seeking respite outdoors. Despite these challenges, our Trail Family demonstrated resilience. We had many great successes this year.

You'll find these wins for the outdoors—from conserving critical land and trail access in New Jersey, to helping lead efforts to stop the dread-

ed spotted lanternfly in New York—highlighted on pages 6 through 10. As we look back on the 2021 successes we've had in improving access to nature, we look forward to 2022 and the ways we can use what we have learned to become a stronger, more impactful organization. Whatever the new year brings, we're excited to continue this journey with you, and grateful to have you along with us.

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# One Night for One Century

We are still head over boots and buzzing from our Centennial Gala on the evening of Oct. 16. It was well worth the wait to celebrate a century of service with so many of the people who make our mission possible.

Just a few days later, on Oct. 19, the Trail Conference turned 101. We never could have made it to our second century—let alone through the last 20 months!—without the generosity of people who understand the power of connecting with nature. Without people like you.

Our gala honoree, Dr. Lucy Rockefeller Waletzky, is a shining example of the incredible impact one person can have on

protecting the integrity and accessibility of our natural areas. Her passion and philanthropy for conservation efforts have not only been a tremendous benefit to the Trail Conference mission; they've also helped shape the future of outdoor recreation and conservation throughout this region.

It is thanks to this Trail Conference community that millions of people throughout the region have been able to experience the outdoors for the last 100 years. Generations more will know the joys of nature through our—your—continued efforts. We are moved by nature; we are united by trails.

Thank you for being part of such an important legacy.



**Erik Kulleseid, left, and gala Master of Ceremonies Fred Osborn III.**



**Taconic Regional Commissioners and friends, from left: Edgar Masters, Emily Saland, Fred Osborn, Henry Neal, Lucy R. Waletzky, Arthur Gellert, Erik Kulleseid, and Linda Cooper.**



**Raymond H. Torrey Awardees Walt and Jane Daniels, left, with Director of Donor Advising Don Weise and wife Kim.**



**Speaker Peter Dolan, Trail Conference Trail Program Manager.**



**NYS Parks Commissioner Erik Kulleseid with Gala honoree Dr. Lucy R. Waletzky.**



**Next Generation of Environmental Leadership speaker, Executive Assistant Kathleen Bezik.**



**Centennial Gala attendee gifts, including Reflections: 100 Years of the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference.**



**Director of Programs Hank Osborn, left, and Executive Director Joshua Howard.**

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## TRAIL WALKER

VOLUME L, No. 1 WINTER 2022

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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**Gala attendees, from left: Silvia and Kal Ghosh, David Epstein, President of The Land Conservancy of New Jersey, Steve Aaron, and Senator Elijah Reichlin-Melnick.**



### 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. 29, 2021, the average number of copies of each issue during the preceding 12 months was 8,376; the actual number of copies of the single issue published nearest to the filing date was 8,500. The paper has a total paid and/or requested circulation of 5,455 (average) and 5,749 (actual, most recent issue). The free distribution for the 12 months preceding the filing date was 2,882 (average) and 2,726 (actual, most recent issue). The total average distribution was 8,337; the actual distribution of the single issue published nearest to the filing date was 8,475. This information is reported on U. S. Postal Service Form 3526 and here as required by 39 USC 3685.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

What Comes Next

What do you do for the encore to a Centennial celebration? That's a tough question to answer, considering the Trail Conference has successfully fulfilled its mission of providing access to the best system of trails for the public for 100 years. To remain an impactful organization, we need to grow and evolve. There is a delicate balance of old and new. Innovative solutions are required for new challenges; however, we also need to remain grounded in what has made us so successful for the past century.



I'm excited to see our organization continuing to fulfill the promise of empowering everyone

who seeks nature to find safe, enjoyable access through trails. We continue to honor our past with a strong and vibrant volunteer program, which is supported and enhanced by our growing Conservation Corps and the service members who make a similar commitment to our mission.

As you read through this edition of Trail Walker, you will see our achievements from the past year and our ambitions for the year to come. While our trail work season may be winding down, the staff and volunteers are busy preparing for next year's projects.

That planning not only includes our work for 2022, but also preparing the organization as a whole to find success in its second century. We have begun reviewing and revising our strategic plan; we are assessing the tools and technologies we use to support our programs; and we are investing in our volunteers with a reinvigorated Trail University.

Excitement is palpable from our Conservation Dogs team



To remain an impactful organization, we need to grow and evolve. There is a delicate balance of old and new.

Howard



and their successful training of a new dog, multiplying our ability to fight the emerging invasive species that are threatening the lands we love. Our outreach and education efforts are reaching more trail users than ever before through our website, books and maps, and trailhead and summit Stewards. And I would be re-

miss without recognizing the amazing work of our trail volunteers like the Long Distance Trails Crew, who keep building amazing trails like the new Upper Nyack Trail on Hook Mountain.

The future of the Trail Conference is just as promising and exciting today for our new leaders like Amy Arato, Michael Pashley, and Rich Rockwell, as it was to Major Welch, Raymond Torrey, and Ashton Allis atop the Abercrombie & Fitch building when they met and formed the Trail Conference back in 1920. I can't wait to see what comes next for our amazing organization.

Joshua Howard  
Executive Director  
executivedirector@nynjtc.org

# Making Great Trail Experiences Possible

We send a hearty thanks to all who participated in our fundraising events this year. Our ability to remain steadfast in our mission not only this year, but for the last 100 years, is thanks to supporters like you.



DIANA RICHARDS

Trail-A-Thon 2021

Trail lovers everywhere enthusiastically took on the Trail-A-Thon 2021 challenge to walk, hike, run, or ride 101 miles to help celebrate the close of the Trail Conference's Centennial and our 101st birthday on Oct. 19. Over 100 Trail-A-Thoners from five states, ages 5 to 84, geared up to venture more than 8,000 miles. They came together in the spirit of what our organization was founded on: ensuring great outdoor experiences are possible today, tomorrow, and for generations to come.

While ticking off those miles, our community helped raise nearly \$29,000 to support our mission. When we work together as a Trail Family, anything is possible. Thank you!

Trailsgiving

We asked our supporters to be part of the global giving

movement known as Giving Tuesday—and the response was incredible! We challenged our friends, partners, and the greater community to show their support during our TrailsGiving Week, Nov. 23 through 30. With your help, more than \$20,000 was raised. With the match from our generous Board of Directors, over \$30,000 raised during TrailsGiving will go toward supporting our volunteers caring for your favorite trails and protecting the land you love. Thank you for your generosity!

December Challenge: Your Gift Is Doubled

In the spirit of the season, our Board is extending this matching period (up to \$115,000) through the end of 2021 to cre-

ate our December Challenge. Through Dec. 31, 2021, your gift is doubled, meaning \$50 automatically turns into \$100. Donate at [bit.ly/tc-eoy21](https://bit.ly/tc-eoy21).

We expect the increased usage of trails to continue in 2022. That means trails and natural areas will need the care and attention of even more Trail Conference volunteers and service members to remain safe and enjoyable. Because you value the physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing found in nature, we are asking for your help by donating today. You will be contributing to the resiliency that ensures opportunities to connect with nature are available to everyone, both now and in the future. Your generosity makes a tremendous difference!

## Welcome, New Board Members

New Board members Sreeni Nair, Kalyan Ghosh, Barbara Evans, and Carol Ann Benton were appointed to the Trail Conference Board of Directors in November at the Trail Conference Annual Meeting.

**Sreeni Nair** lives in Mercer County, N.J. He has been an avid hiker all his life—first, in the mountains of India, and later in the States. He



got introduced to the Trail Conference through the Trail Conference's group hikes. Sreeni is also a well-known runner in the local community, where he has used his running fame to raise money for numerous causes. Professionally, he works for Bank of America. Sreeni is a member of the Trail Conference Strategic Planning Committee.

**Kalyan "Kal" Ghosh** is senior programmer/analyst at Fisher Brothers and a graduate of DA College in Calcutta, India, with a degree in mathematics. Kal is an avid hiker, runner, skier, and swimmer. He has volunteered as a maintainer in the Catskills, attended the recent Gala, and participated on the Trail Conference DEI committee.

**Barbara Evans** is associate executive director, Institutional Advancement & Communication, at The City College of New York. She has extensive philanthropic fundraising and event management experience, including four years as development officer at Appalachian Mountain Club. An avid hiker and

trail runner, she recently completed section-hiking the Long Path. Barbara has participated on the Trail Conference Board Development Committee.

**Carol Ann Benton** is a retired public school administrator and special education teacher with degrees in special education from University of Houston and Syracuse University. After completing her master's degree, Carol Ann obtained a certificate of advanced studies degree in educational administration from Fordham University. She is a longstanding member of the Trail Conference, the AMC, the Sierra Club, ADK, Westchester Trails, and Tri-State Ramblers and is an avid hiker both in the U.S. and internationally. Carol Ann is a member of the Trail Conference Nominating Committee.



Board directors Ken Posner (secretary), Sue Barbutto, Charlie Gadol, Deanna Culbreath, and Mary Ann Villari were reappointed to 3-year terms.

Additionally, the following individuals were appointed to 1-year terms serving as Delegates-at-Large for the Trail Conference:

- ▶ Suse Bell
- ▶ Kevin Bukowski
- ▶ Daniel Chazin
- ▶ Jane Daniels
- ▶ Matt Decker
- ▶ Jack Driller
- ▶ William Gannett
- ▶ Robert Lehmann
- ▶ Deborah Padula-Genna
- ▶ James Piombino
- ▶ Anne Powley
- ▶ Kristin Reeves
- ▶ Peter Reiner
- ▶ Ron Rosen
- ▶ Ruth Rosenthal
- ▶ Eddie Saiff
- ▶ Susan Scher
- ▶ Doug Sohn
- ▶ Dave Stuhr
- ▶ Lydia Zakim

Staff Update

### Welcome, Dan and Peat

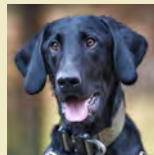
**Dan Cummings, Volunteer Engagement Associate**, grew up in Bergen County and spent most of his childhood outdoors, either on a Boy Scout trip or on one of his family's car trips to a national park. After graduating from St. Thomas Aquinas College with degrees in psychology and philosophy/religious studies, he went on to work



as their director of campus ministry and volunteer services. For the past 10 years, Dan has helped facilitate and organize different volunteer opportunities for students, including park clean-ups, clothing drives, social justice programs, and human rights advocacy. Dan loves spending time with his wife Amanda, son Elias, and dog Chewbacca. He is a fan of Star Wars, D&D, and reading anything he can get his hands on.

**Peat Blumenthal, Conservation Dog**, is an American Field Labrador

born on Christmas Day, 2020. He started working on his first species, Scotch broom, at only 9 months old! This goofy, hardworking, and ultra-motivated guy has a long career ahead of him. Peat is still a veritable puppy who loves giving sloppy kisses and doesn't quite know where his limbs are just yet. In his free time, Peat likes to solicit belly rubs, steal socks, lick the countertops, and of course, play, play, play!



# Senator Cory Booker Hits the (Hiking) Trail



**MARY PERRO**  
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

We love meeting new people on the trail. And we loved getting to show off the hard work of our volunteers and Corps members on a hike with U.S. Senator Cory Booker!

On a Saturday in late September, the United States Senator from New Jersey met up with Trail Conference Executive Director Josh Howard, Chief Financial Officer Mary Perro, and volunteer Juan Melli for a hike at Pyramid Mountain Natural Historic Area in Morris County. Several of Senator Booker's

aides, family members, and friends came along for the walk, which featured stops at Tripod Rock, Lucy's Lookout, the reservoir, and the current worksite of our Conservation Corps crew. It was at least one person's first hike!

Josh and Juan kicked off the hike with an introduction to the Trail Conference and info about the park. During the hike, our team pointed out the impacts of climate change on trails, spoke about our efforts to combat spotted lanternfly, and explained how our projects are mostly funded through the support of Trail Conference members and donors. The hike included a visit

with our Conservation Corps crew working on trail improvements at Pyramid Mountain and throughout Morris County; that crew is generously financed by the county. The senator was very interested in the techniques and tools the crew uses and how they make decisions about where to build trails. He was impressed with the stone staircase the crew had built, which was part of the hike route, and the wild blueberry plants they helped replant. Senator Booker was very grateful for the service of the crew's Corps members and volunteers.

Juan and Mary showed Senator Booker how to read blaz-



Senator Cory Booker learned about the Trail Conference on a hike with staff executives Mary Perro and Josh Howard.

es, and Juan told him about the techniques he uses to touch up any blazes in need of care. The team shared our efforts to reblaze trails at several parks in New Jersey to create better loop hike options and positive hiker experiences. They also spoke about our Trail Stewards and Leave No Trace efforts—fortunately, they didn't pass too much trash!

At the end, the senator

handed out vegan treats for everyone to enjoy. He said he would love to go out hiking again; our team gave him a map, a copy of Trail Walker, and more information about our organization. Everyone was super friendly and had a great time.

Our sincere thanks to Senator Booker, his staff, family, and friends for taking the time to share a hike with us!

# NJ Increases Fines for Illegal ORV Use



**PETER DOLAN AND CORY TIGER**  
TRAIL CONFERENCE STAFF

One of the most common causes of trail degradation in New Jersey is the illegal use of off-road vehicles (ORVs). New Jersey trail systems, specifically in Abram S. Hewitt State Forest, Ramapo Mountain State Forest, Norvin Green State Forest, Long Pond Ironworks State Park, and the Pequannock Watershed, are covered in tire marks and deep ruts from ORVs, namely Jeeps, dirt bikes, and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs).

Recreational use of ORVs on state land is prohibited due to safety risks and the nuisance posed to legal trail users, as well as the significant impacts made on ecosystems and trails. Motorized vehicles are too fast, loud, and large to safely share the trail with other users. They disrupt natural habitats and severely erode trail tread.

For our volunteers, the greatest frustration of all is the insignificant impact the existing restrictions have on the occurrence of illegal use of ORVs on trails. Trail Conference volunteers spend countless hours building and maintaining trails but feel at a loss when it comes to ATV/ORV damage. Nick McKenna, the Trail Chair for Farny, Wawayanda, and the Pequannock Watershed, states, "volunteers often find themselves discovering, for example, that what was once a peaceful narrow trail through a mountain laurel thicket has suddenly become a mud pit: difficult to walk through and a scar on the landscape. And it feels like ORV damage to our trails is increasing year after year. It's easy for a volunteer to feel discour-



NICK MCKENNA

Unlawful ORV use causes significant damage to trails, often leaving volunteer maintainers feeling discouraged.

aged and powerless to do anything about it."

For almost two decades, Pinelands Preservation Alliance, the Trail Conference, New Jersey Conservation Foundation, and other partners have advocated for changes in fines, laws, and enforcement of illegal ORV activity on public lands. In 2009, legislation passed that increased fines and penalties for this illegal activity. However, the fines were kept at a mere \$74 per offense. Fortunately, our continued efforts to push the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the New Jersey Attorney General's office (DAG) to implement requirements of the 2009 law are start-

ing to pay off.

Recently, Aaron Kleinbaum, Assistant Attorney General, notified Pinelands Preservation Alliance that the Administrative Office of the Court updated the Statewide Violations Bureau Schedule. As of July 2021, the NJ Judiciary advised "Operate/dirt bike, all terrain, off road vehicle on state property, payable amount changed from \$74 to \$274." Issues around enforcement and education are still present; however, promises made by DEP Commissioner Shawn LaTourette for tougher penalties, a permitting system, and new regulations indicates that the concerns of advocate and conservation groups are being heard.

## News in Brief

### Seasonal Road Closures in Harriman-Bear Mountain

Seasonal road closures in Harriman-Bear Mountain state parks went into effect on Dec. 1. The affected roads are expected to re-open on April 1. Arden Valley Road will remain open this year. Due to bridge repairs, Elk Pen Hikers Lot will continue to be accessible from the Tiorati Traffic Circle only. There is no thru traffic to/from Rt. 17. For more details and a full list of closures affecting trails in our region, visit our Trail Alerts page: [nynjtc.org/news-center/trail-alerts](https://nynjtc.org/news-center/trail-alerts).

### NYS Birding Trail Takes Flight

In October, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation launched the NYS Birding Trail to highlight world-class birding opportunities across the state. Though not a physical trail, the Birding Trail provides information on places to find birds amid beautiful natural settings across New York. This network of promoted birding locations can be accessed by car or public transportation. Learn more at [bit.ly/nysbirdtrail](https://bit.ly/nysbirdtrail).

### Essex-Hudson Greenway Receives \$65M Commitment

In November, New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy committed to funding the \$65 million land purchase

required to build a rail trail connecting Hudson and Essex counties. The Essex-Hudson Greenway will repurpose a nearly 9-mile portion of NJ Transit's old Boonton Line into New Jersey's newest state park. The rail trail will become a walkable and bikeable route from Jersey City to Montclair.

### Mark Your Calendars for A.T. Vista

The Trail Conference will host the 4-day, in-person A.T. Vista Aug. 5–8, 2022, at State University of New York (SUNY) in New Paltz. The program will offer hiking, learning opportunities, and excursions to explore the area, just as traditionally done in the former A.T. Biennial programs.

Visit [atvista.org](https://atvista.org) for information and to sign up for the monthly newsletter. We are currently seeking hike leaders and other volunteers for workshops, excursions, and overall assistance for the event. Sign up at [atvista.org](https://atvista.org) or email [atvistainfo@gmail.com](mailto:atvistainfo@gmail.com) with questions.

### Go Digital With Your Trail Walker Subscription

We know that many of our supporters love receiving their quarterly issue of Trail Walker in the mail. We also know that many of our members and volunteers have "gone digital" and prefer to receive their updates from us digitally. If you would like to stop receiving mailed copies of Trail Walker, please let us know by emailing [tw@nynjtc.org](mailto:tw@nynjtc.org).

# Exploring the Outdoors and New Opportunities



Every Christmas before I turned 10, my parents would load up the car and drive my sisters and I 400 km (about 250 miles) from Lagos to our village in Edo state to visit our grandparents. We drove through the tropical rainforest dotted with red sand anthills and thick bush as far as the eyes could see. My sisters and I never stopped to explore these forests because there were no marked trails. Instead, our minds (and parents) filled in the gaps, positioning the forest as a place housing dangerous creatures. As a young child, inherited fear and inaccessibility held me back from exploring the world.

After many years of solo backpacking outside Nigeria, including more than a few bear encounters, fear of wild animals no longer holds me back from exploring. Instead, I am held back from exploring Nigeria by my fear of humans: humans coerced into crime due to unemployment; humans laying in ambush on deserted roads and forests to kidnap

people for ransom; humans that turn violent at a moment's notice when in the presence of a solo female traveler. I was reminded of this insecurity when I moved back to Nigeria in 2019, and I saw it get worse after the economy was decimated following the COVID-19 pandemic. Initially, the insecurity did not stop me from staying active outdoors. I ran daily along the Lekki-Ikoyi bridge, and went on monthly hiking trips, notably Mt Cameroon, Chappal Waddi (the highest point in Nigeria), making sure to only go to places where I felt comfortable. A grueling work schedule stopped me from exploring, and by the time I got my work schedule back to a reasonable 40 hours per week, security had gotten so dire that my parents cautioned me against hiking.

I realized how important physical activity and time in nature is to me when I couldn't go hiking anymore, and so I started looking for opportunities outside Nigeria to work outdoors. I found the Trail Conference Conservation Corps through a Google search and spoke with managers Tori Finn and Ben Sugar.

Six months, 100 constructed staircases, and 300-plus miles of hiking later, I can say that I've rekindled my connection with nature. I said yes to many new experiences and let fear take the backseat: I learned to drive on the highway, bought and sold my first car, hiked in the dark to catch phenomenal sunrises on Mt. Beacon, tagged along on impromptu birding adventures in Constitution Marsh, and made many new friends in the process. I rediscovered the therapeutic capabilities of green spaces while noting that activities like these were not as accessible back home. Perhaps that is why I welcomed each new outdoor activity with open arms—by virtue of being in the U.S., I was privileged to access these spaces and I vowed to never take this privilege for granted.

One of the most important things I learned this summer from Dr. Dick, a veteran and wilderness first aid instructor, is to never let fear stop you from doing what you love. From the fear of leaving a stable job to the fear of moving away from my community and driving on the highway—I had to tackle all of these to fully ac-



TORI FINN

Onome Ofoman

cess the outdoor spaces in the New York-New Jersey region. In the process, a whole new world in ecological conservation has opened up to me.

So, what's next? I'd like to lean into this newfound interest and learn about how land trusts can be used to create accessible state parks in Nigeria.

I believe that everyone who seeks the outdoors should have the opportunity to connect with nature, and for those who don't seek nature yet, nature should be brought to them. This might sound like a pipe dream, but as I learned this summer, anything is possible once you let go of fear.

## Conservation Dogs Featured in New Film

*Uninvited: The Spread of Invasive Species* is an exciting and informative 55-minute film by Westfield Production Company—and it stars some familiar faces! The documentary introduces the concept of invasive species and highlights some of the species threatening New York's environment and economy, while also showing innovative ways that New York State is combating

these threats—including our Conservation Dogs team. *Uninvited* features the collaborative work of the New York State (NYS) Department of Environmental Conservation and its partners, including NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets, the eight Partnerships for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISMs, including the Lower Hudson PRISM



managed by the Trail Conference), New York State Invasive Species Research Institute, and more. Our Ecological Stewardship team participated in screenings and Q&A sessions over the fall; you can watch the film anytime for free at [bit.ly/tc-udoc](http://bit.ly/tc-udoc).



## Liberty Shares the Love

Plans to buy or lease a new car? During Subaru of America's annual Share the Love event, Liberty Subaru in Emerson, N.J., has once again named the Trail Conference as their Hometown Charity. At Liberty Subaru now through Jan. 3, 2022, for every new vehicle purchased or leased, Subaru will donate \$250 to the charity designated by each buyer/lessee. Make sure to choose the Trail Conference and make a positive impact on the trails and land you'll be exploring via your new ride.

Sweetening the deal, the Liberty Family of Dealerships

has decided to "share the love" at Liberty Hyundai & Genesis in Mahwah, and Liberty Kia in Ramsey as well. Just show your membership card when buying or leasing through Jan. 3, 2022, and they'll donate \$250 to the Trail Conference, too.

Don't forget that Trail Conference members get special pricing on Subaru, Hyundai, Kia, and Genesis vehicles at the Liberty Family of Dealerships. This offer applies to the purchase of any new vehicle at any of the four Liberty franchises, except for special edition or low availability vehicles. The Liberty discount entitles Trail Conference members in good standing to purchase the vehicle they choose (subject to the previously mentioned restrictions) at a special price. Our thanks to Liberty and everyone who chooses to support the Trail Conference mission!

## YOU DRIVE. WE DONATE.

When Trail Conference members take delivery of any new Subaru, Hyundai, KIA, or Genesis between November 18th and January 3rd, the NY-NJ Trail Conference will receive \$250\*!

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# TRAIL CONFERENCE 2021 LOOK BACK, ◀ ▶ 2022 LOOK AHEAD

## ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

### RECRUITMENT

This season, we put an emphasis on volunteer leader recruitment and onboarding. So far, 21 new leaders (15 Trail Supervisors, five Trail Chairs, and one ISF Crew Leader) were placed and received an individualized onboarding. Previous years saw the following number of new leaders placed:

2020: 11 new leaders  
2019: 11 new leaders  
2018: 10 new leaders

*Note: The numbers reflect individuals placed, including co-leaders, not regions filled.*

We also recruited and trained 54 new Invasives Strike Force Surveyors, 265 Trail Maintainers, six Trail Stewards, five Appalachian Trail Corridor Monitors, and five Shelter Caretakers.



HEATHER DARLEY

### NEW INITIATIVES

We launched a successful new initiative this season to deploy Corps crews to fulfill volunteer leader projects. Six volunteer leaders had one or two Corps crews come out to help execute projects—from removing invasives to building stone stairs to installing water bars. The feedback we received was all positive, including:

▶“This program allowed us to address longstanding water problems on one of our trails, which we have previously been unable to find a crew to address.”

▶“We are grateful for the exceptional work they did. They exceeded our expectations by helping us clear a 5,000-square foot section of trail of Japanese barberry and multiflora rose. And, they said they enjoyed it!”

▶“Today was a huge success! I wish all my workdays were as productive as today.”

Online reporting for individual trail volunteers entered a trial phase in November, which is expected to run through mid-April. Five supervisor regions and one corridor manager region were selected to participate in the trial. The goal is to have a full launch in July 2022.



Workshop with Hike and Draw NYC and Adventure Untamed.

### TRAINING (DIGITAL AND IN-PERSON)

Our volunteers, Corps, and staff held 43 live workshops to train volunteers in 2021. Additionally, we continued to leverage on-demand digital content in 2021 to train new volunteers. So far, we have trained 147 Trail Maintainers with our pre-recorded Trail Maintenance Workshop.



CONNIE STERN

Volunteers of the East Hudson RTC (Regional Trails Council) gathered for a picnic.



FRED STERN

The volunteers of the Trail Tramps made significant improvements along the Briarcliff Peekskill Trail in New York's Westchester County thanks to the support of a donor.

## Trail Tramps Take the BPT Back Into the Woods



MARILYN BLAHO  
TRAIL TRAMPS CREW MEMBER

In 2020, before the COVID-19 pandemic began, hiker Mark Perreault walked the Briarcliff Peekskill Trail in New York's Westchester County and became concerned about the trail's need for extensive revitalization. He then contacted the Trail Conference and the county. Connie Stern and Michael Pashley, volunteer crew leaders of the Trail Tramps, sent him their proposal for upgrading the BPT to Trail Conference standards. Mark generously offered to finance its many major improvements.

The BPT, a 12-mile linear route from Ryder Road in Ossining to Blue Mountain Reservation in Peekskill, was once earmarked as a major highway, then spared by Westchester County when it was designated a hiking path. The major problem for the midway section at Mt. Airy Road East in Cortlandt is that it led hikers onto a busy road. It had to be brought back into the woods.

Over time, flooding and undergrowth had destroyed the original tread. Moving uphill was the best solution for a new trail. The donor's

support would enable these major changes, including new boardwalk over wet muddy terrain.

After gaining approval and assistance from Westchester County Parks Division, Michael and Connie engineered a new track and planned a work schedule for the Trail Tramps, who regularly meet on Wednesday mornings. With the new funds in hand, measurements were taken, a path was laid out, lumber was ordered and delivered, and the Trail Tramps hauled it a quarter mile to the work area.

“We knew we had to elevate the boardwalk to clear the existing wet conditions,”

Michael says. After removing fallen trees, the crew, often deep in mud, built 140 feet of boardwalk spanning tree roots, rocks, and streaming water. “When each 8-foot section was assembled, builders cheered as more wet, muddy ground was covered,” Connie says. From the project's start in September 2021 to completion on November 3, the Trail Tramps logged over 320 hours on this project.

Were it not for Mark's generous support, hikers would still be on the road dodging traffic. Now there is a serene woodland boardwalk which retains the forested landscape and provides safe, dry passage.

The Trail Tramps have taken great care in restoring the Briarcliff Peekskill Trail. To date, they have blazed, removed fallen tree blockages, built and repaired over 300 feet of boardwalk and puncheon, re-routed tread from impassable wet areas, and cleared debris and invasives up and down the trail. Future plans for the BPT include building additional boardwalk through boggy stretches, further relocations to avoid road sections, the updating of kiosks and website information, and continued trail maintenance.

The Trail Tramps are: Mary Ayers, Marilyn Blaho, Gail Blumenfeld, Rose Bonanno, Jane Daniels, Walt Daniels, Stuart Faust, Bob Gurian, Phil Heidelberg, Dave Margulies, Helen Pashley, Martha Rabson, Fred Stern, and Steven Russ, led by crew leaders Connie Stern and Michael Pashley.

TRAIL PROGRAM

NEW YORK

CATSKILLS



Volunteers rebuilt the floor of the Baldwin Memorial Lean-to.

► Baldwin Memorial Lean-to improvements: In addition to rebuilding the lean-to floor, the shelter's accompanying privy, which had fallen into disarray over the past few years, was also rehabbed. Long-time Trail Conference shelter caretaker, Eric Friedman, in coordination with the DEC, stepped into action using his years of carpentry experience to bring the privy back to working condition. With support from Trail Conference staff, Eric rallied the help of a group of volunteers, along with staff and interns from DEC, to carry in approximately 280 pounds of materials, tools, and supplies for a four-day work trip. Although Eric camped out in the lean-to for the full trip, new volunteers hiked up to the site every day to help get the job done.

- Biscuit Brook privy rehab and relocation
- Echo Lake Lean-to fire-place rebuild
- Willowemoc Wild Forest trail improvements

FAHNESTOCK STATE PARK

► Restoring access to the Perkins Trail: Following heavy rainstorms, the bridge near Glenwood Road on the Perkins Trail in Fahnestock State Park was washed out. The stream was nearly impossible to cross during high water. To fix the crossing and regain access to trails in this area of the park, volunteer Trail Supervisor John Magerlein led a group of volunteers and members of park staff to place very large stepping stones in the stream.

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

HARRIMAN STATE PARK

► Nurian Trail improve-

ments: The bridge crossing the Ramapo River on the Nurian Trail had become very dangerous after most of the planks had rotted away. The West Hudson South Trail Crew completed a project this summer to replace the many broken planks on the bridge to ensure a safe crossing for hikers.

HARRIMAN CONSERVATION CORPS CREW

The 2021 TCCC Harriman Crew focused their efforts this year on restoration work on Harriman's Ramapo-Dunderberg and Triangle trails. The Ramapo-Dunderberg Trail is very popular with hikers and backpackers, in part due to the trailhead's proximity to the Tuxedo train station; this trail is also 100 years old and the first-ever built trail in Harriman. It was in definite need of improvements. The beginning section was braided with social trails due to sections of rock staircases becoming unusable. Before this season's improvements, this section of trail had flooded significantly, even with light rain.

Most notably, the crew completed the welcoming new stairway at the entrance to the Ramapo-Dunderberg Trail. Improvements on the Triangle Trail included installing waterbars to improve drainage, setting stone stairs, and setting stepping stones across a river.

Highlights:

- 1.4 miles total trail improved (Triangle and Ramapo-Dunderberg trails)
- 200 linear feet trail rerouted
- 46 new stone stairs installed
- 24 stone stairs repaired/improved
- 11 step stones installed
- 7.5 square feet stone crib wall constructed
- 12 drainage structures constructed or restored
- 250 feet of trail renaturalized



Harriman State Park, Ramapo-Dunderberg entrance steps

HOOK MOUNTAIN/NYACK BEACH STATE PARK

► Upper Nyack Trail construction: The new and improved Upper Nyack Trail was opened to the public in June. Though less than a mile in length, the technical work required to build a safe, sustainable route through such challenging conditions took almost 2 years to complete.

The Long Distance Trails Crew installed 351 stone steps, built 2,537 square feet of crib wall, and constructed 3,775 feet of sidehilled trail to complete the project.

HUDSON HIGHLANDS STATE PARK PRESERVE



The Taconic Crew worked on projects on high-traffic trails this season.

TACONIC CONSERVATION CORPS CREW

The 2021 TCCC Taconic Crew worked on multiple projects in Hudson Highlands State Park Preserve. The crew completed the Washburn Trail reroute, which concluded 2 years of work by the Trail Conference Conservation Corps. This project involved substantial trail improvements along a one-third mile stretch of trail leading up from the old quarry to the Cold Spring overlook. This section of trail had become extremely eroded with poor trail tread definition in part due to very high traffic volumes.

Many improvements were made on the Wilkinson Memorial Trail, which included closing 212 feet of social trail, installing drainage features along the trail, and repairing and building multiple staircases, stepping stones, head wall, and new tread surfaces.

The Taconic Crew also completed the Undercliff Trail reroute, which Crew Leader Snowden Jones called "one of the most difficult but exciting projects this season." The goal of this 4-year project is to connect the Undercliff Trail to the Breakneck Ridge Trail, giving hikers an option to take a shorter loop around Breakneck instead of continuing on the final stretch of the challenging scramble.

The crew faced some challenges, including Hurricanes Ida and Henri stalling work due to muddy conditions making it difficult to set stone stairs. Nevertheless, the crew achieved their goal of completing two trail projects before the end of the season.

Highlights:

- 0.7 miles total trail improved (Wilkinson Memorial and Undercliff)
- 110 linear feet of trail rerouted
- 61 stone steps installed
- 4 stone steps repaired
- 3 stepping stones installed
- 32 square feet retaining wall constructed
- 13 drainage structures constructed or restored
- 875 feet of trail renaturalized



Volunteers worked on improving the Wolf Brook crossing in the Neversink River Unique Area.

MINNEWASKA STATE PARK PRESERVE

The Mossy Glen Trail is historically wet and has several drainage issues. The Hudson Nor'westers Trail Crew spent much of the 2021 season making improvements to the trail, including stepping stones, water bars, and treadway enhancements in wet areas.

NEVERSINK RIVER UNIQUE AREA

The Wolf Brook bridge in the Neversink River Unique Area had been in need of repairs. It is essential in wet seasons for access to the Blue Trail East. Trail Supervisor Lou Baldanza, with help from other volunteers, led a work trip to repair the bridge and improve access to the trails south of the brook.

STERLING FOREST STATE PARK

PALISADES CONSERVATION CORPS CREW

The 2021 Palisades Crew consisted of four TCCC members working in Sterling Forest State Park along the McKeags Meadow Loop and McKeags Connector trails. Significant work has been put into building a network of multi-use trails in this park over the past few years; this year's crew contributed to the efforts. The crew improved 0.4 miles of these trails with 165 linear feet of stone turnpike, 55 square feet of crib wall, and the construction of five drainage structures.

The Palisades Crew had a robust group of volunteers, which included several friendly returnees who proved to be essential to the project's progress. Palisades Crew Leader Bob Delap ap-

preciated the help and said, "It really can't be overstated how useful the eager hands of a volunteer can be. Thanks to those who turned out for us."

The crew faced some challenges, including a stretch of oppressively hot weather. Despite the setbacks, the crew kept their morale high and made excellent progress on the trail this year. When fully opened, the loop is sure to be an enjoyable option for hikers and the mountain biking community.

Highlights:

- 0.4 miles total trail improved (McKeags Connector and McKeags Meadow Loop)
- 1,981 linear feet of trail rerouted
- 165 linear feet of stone turnpike
- 55 square feet of crib wall
- 5 drainage structures constructed

TACONIC STATE PARK

► The Bash Bish Trail Crew, led by Crew Leader Andrew Seirup, recently completed several projects over the course of 3 years to tackle issues and improve the experience for users on the Cedar Brook Trail.

► Quarry Trail Improvements: The Bash Bish Trail Crew worked on rerouting and improving a particularly eroded and steep section of the challenging Quarry Trail in Taconic State Park. The crew worked to install stone steps and create a more sustainable reroute of the trail around a challenging rock scramble.

WESTCHESTER COUNTY

The Trail Tramps continue to work on the Briarcliff Peekskill Trail (see page 6).



Volunteers of the Bash Bish Trail Crew tackled a reroute of the Quarry Trail in Taconic State Park.

## TRAIL PROGRAM

## NEW JERSEY

## ABRAM S. HEWITT STATE FOREST

Relocated the intersection of the Ernest Walter and State Line trails to allow the Ernest Walker to follow a more sustainable route and to improve hiker navigation.

## FARNY STATE PARK

- ▶ Relocated the start of the Winnebago Trail to reduce instances of lost hikers entering a neighboring Scout camp.
- ▶ Extended the red-blazed Durham Trail. It now ends at the blue-blazed Splitrock Loop Trail.
- ▶ Adopted the Orange Trail at the north end of Splitrock Reservoir. This trail offers scenic views and facilitates loop hikes.

## HIGH POINT STATE PARK

- ▶ Iris Trail bridge repair
- ▶ West Jersey Trail Crew rerouted a section of the Mashapacong Trail from a badly eroded road drain to a more sustainable, walkable alignment.

## JENNY JUMP STATE FOREST

The West Jersey Trail Crew created a new extension to the Orchard Trail, facilitating its role in the new Solar Walk recently installed in the park by the adjacent amateur astronomy club.

## MORRISTOWN NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

Volunteer leaders Bob Jonas and Estelle Anderson created a roving trail crew dubbed the Clipping Brigade. They tackle the park's trails most in need of care at any given time. As of September, the crew had already gone out on nine work trips to address invasive plant overgrowth encroaching on the trails.

## MORRIS COUNTY

## Pyramid Mountain Natural Historic Area:

- ▶ Reconfigured trails in all three sections of the park to prevent hikers from wandering into neighboring housing developments far from the parking lots. To keep visitors on the trails, two loops in the Turkey Mt. and Pyramid Mt. sections were created by connecting existing trails, accomplished over one week in March.
- ▶ An Eagle Scout installed signs throughout the park with improved directions to popular features and the main parking lot on Boonton Avenue.
- ▶ Volunteer trail maintainers have helped keep up with crowds of visitors—many



The Morris Conservation Corps Crew enjoyed the help of volunteers on several projects this year.

novice hikers—which has been a goal of both the park commission and the Trail Conference.

## MORRIS CONSERVATION CORPS CREW

The 2021 TCCC Morris Crew worked on trail improvement projects in multiple Morris County parks. The crew worked on the Green Trail in Lewis Morris County Park in Morristown and the Blue Trail in Pyramid Mountain Natural Historic Area in Montville.

The goal of the Lewis Morris project was to reroute a section of the Green Trail that had several problems. Issues included erosion damage due to steep trail grades and trail braiding as a result of the tread not properly providing a durable and defined surface for users. In this case, the problems of the original trail were too extensive to mitigate. Rerouting the trail was the best solution.

The scope of the Pyramid Mountain project was to reroute sections of the Blue Trail that are suffering from issues like erosion, undefined tread, braiding, and hard-to-navigate sections of boulder scramble. Our crew is constructing a reroute of the Blue Trail that will connect from the Orange Trail on the southwest end of the mountain to the Yellow-Dot and Blue-Dot trails, getting hikers to an overlook and near points of interest such as Tripod Rock.

The crew has been grateful to have an enthusiastic volunteer participate in work days. Throughout the season, this crew was met with challenges that interfered with the goal of completing the reroute by the end of the season. They remained hard-working. Though they were down a crew member beginning mid-July and their crew leader faced an injury toward the end of the season, the crew nearly completed the reroute, which next season's Corps members will take on to complete.

## Highlights:

- ▶ 0.75 miles of trail improved (Lewis Morris: Green Trail; Pyramid Mountain: Blue Trail)
- ▶ 3,944 linear feet of trail rerouted
- ▶ 30 stone steps constructed
- ▶ 21 square feet stone retaining wall constructed
- ▶ 19 linear feet of turnpike built

- ▶ 2 drainage structures installed
- ▶ 125 linear feet of trail closed/renaturalized

## NORVIN GREEN STATE FOREST

MEVO Trail Crew rerouted over 700 feet of trail to improve the hiking experience and sustainability of the recently blazed Lake Sonoma Loop.

## RAMAPO VALLEY COUNTY RESERVATION

MEVO Trail Crew improved the popular Reservoir Loop by elevating a 60-foot section of trail tread above a perennial wet area. This involved creating a variety of technical trail structures—including a retaining wall, drainage lenses, and cross drains.

## STOKES STATE FOREST

- ▶ West Jersey Trail Crew installed two larger stone-step stream crossings on the Deep Root Trail.
- ▶ West Jersey Trail Crew installed step stones along the Stony Brook Trail.

## SWARTSWOOD STATE PARK

West Jersey Trail Crew installed a cribbed timber staircase on the Grist Mill Trail.

## WAWAYANDA STATE PARK

- ▶ Relocated the intersection of the Terrace Pond Red and Terrace Pond North trails due to beaver dam flooding.
- ▶ The West Jersey Trail Crew replaced a missing puncheon “bridge” on the Appalachian Trail near Long House Drive.
- ▶ In partnership with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC), the Trail Conference spearheaded the revitalization of kiosk signage along the Appalachian Trail at the popular Pochuck Boardwalk.

## WILDCAT RIDGE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

Jersey Off Road Bicycle Association (JORBA) and the Trail Conference collaborated on a much-needed bridge replacement on the Splitrock Loop Trail.

## OUTREACH AND EDUCATION



Conservation Corps Trail Stewards also help with trail maintenance.

## TRAIL STEWARD PROGRAM

For nearly a decade, the Trail Conference has joined with land managers and local partners to provide training, management, and oversight to several Trail Steward programs at multiple trailheads and summits in New Jersey and New York. Trail Stewards help to protect the trails, the environment, and the visitor experience and promote local communities—a vital job in 2021 as more people than ever before began to explore trails throughout the region.

## VOLUNTEER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Trail Conference Volunteer Stewards and Stewards working for other environmental organizations trained by the Trail Conference provided Steward presence in Hudson Highlands State Park Preserve, Fahnestock State Park, the Ashokan Rail Trail, and several NJ DEP parks. The visitor count at the Ashokan Rail Trail from January to October was more than 200,000 people.

## CONSERVATION CORPS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Trail Conference Conservation Corps Trail Steward program trained 18 AmeriCorps members to serve in the Hudson Valley and the Catskills in 2021. Locations included Hudson Highlands State Park Preserve, Fahnestock State

Park, the Appalachian Trail at Bear Mountain State Park, the Croton Gorge Unique Area at the Old Croton Aqueduct, Minnewaska State Park Preserve, the Sam's Point area of Minnewaska, and several summits in the Catskills. From May to October, Corps Stewards engaged over 50,000 trail users. They are key in protecting the ecological integrity of these special places being threatened by issues such as misuse and high usage.



Trail Stewards were stationed at several locations in the Catskills.

## PUBLICATIONS

The third edition of *Walkable Westchester*, the completely revised and improved guide to more than 225 parks and 635 miles of trails in Westchester County, was a record-breaking hit after arriving in early 2021. So was the eighth edition of our **Delaware Water Gap & Kittatinny Trails map set**, which covers more than 325 miles of trails along the Kittatinny Ridge and adjacent Delaware River in three states.

The much-anticipated new **Northern New Jersey Highlands Trails maps** arrived in December in print and digital Avenza Maps app formats. Additionally, **Reflections**, the 100th anniversary book recounting the Trail Conference's first century of service, was published in time for our Centennial Gala. Read more about both publications and how to get your copies on page 16.



Trail Steward Lily Gelfars provided information and directions to hikers at Bear Mountain.



## ECOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

### VOLUNTEER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

#### TRAINING AND EDUCATION RESOURCES

Our Ecological Stewardship team created 30 new educational videos that have received over 21,000 views on YouTube for an additional 2,000 hours of viewed content by our volunteers this year. Our Ecological Stewardship team also presented 42 informational webinars and led guided invasives walks to educate the public about invasive species. These events were attended by over 1,900 participants.

#### SURVEY EFFORTS

The Invasives Strike Force Plant Survey season officially wrapped up at the end of October and the final numbers are incredible! This year, we had 149 volunteers dedicate over 1,700 hours to searching for and reporting invasive plants along 142 trail sections in our region's natural areas. Altogether, this included greater than 240 miles of trail surveyed: approximately the distance between New York City and Washington, D.C.! These hours and committed efforts are on par with the record-breaking production of the 2020 survey season.

#### SPOTTED LANTERNFLY

Our Ecological Stewardship team, together with our dedicated community partners, agencies, and volunteers, have continued in earnest with our Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) early detection and rapid response efforts. Our all-new Spot the Spotted Lanternfly program engaged 134 volunteers who dedicated over 850 hours to surveying for spotted lanternfly adults and egg masses across 289 distinct survey locations in the Lower Hudson Valley and northern New Jersey. We also led 12 SLF-specific workdays that engaged



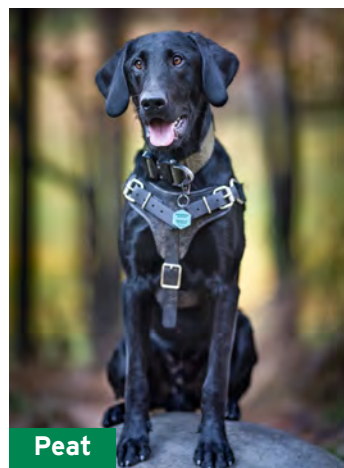
The Invasives Strike Force removed more than 100,000 invasive plants this season.

97 different volunteers. They dedicated approximately 400 hours to erecting insect traps on species of trees that SLF is attracted to, clearing vines and other vegetation for easier access for our management team, and squashing any SLF they found. Altogether, we installed 166 SLF traps across 11 different parks/townships in known infestation areas in the Lower Hudson PRISM region. These traps were regularly checked by volunteers and staff and enabled us to remove over 8,500 adult and young spotted lanternflies. An additional 700 egg masses were removed from the environment by volunteers. In addition to these manual removal efforts, we also treated hundreds of the SLF's host tree, tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), with insecticide so that any SLF feeding on these trees were killed or weakened. This multi-faceted and cooperative effort to control such an economically and environmentally damaging species highlights our leadership as the go-to resource for invasives management in our region.

#### NATIVE RESTORATION

In 2021, our Ecological Stewardship programs added an additional emphasis on ecological restoration and native plant reintroduction. With the help of volunteers from our Habitat Helpers Crew, our volunteers grew 23 different

species of native plants to be introduced into strategically targeted natural areas. As a result, 1,276 native species were planted at four different restoration sites. Three of those sites were in Harriman State Park, where 892 native species were planted.



Peat

### CONSERVATION DOGS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Conservation Dogs program targeted eight species in 2021: six invasive plants (Scotch broom, sticky sage, kudzu, Chinese bush clover, crested late-summer mint), one invasive insect (spotted lanternfly), one invasive fungus (oak wilt), and a native species of concern in New York State (wood turtles). The team surveyed 414 acres for invasives, and over 7,700 invasive plants were treated. The Conservation Dogs program dedicated efforts to the early

detection of spotted lanternfly by surveying 20 sites over 17 days for 61 hours.

Four paws were added to the program with the introduction of Peat in November. Peat is an American Field Labrador born on Christmas Day 2020. He started working on his first species, Scotch broom, at only 9 months old! This goofy, hardworking, and ultra-motivated guy has a long career ahead of him. Peat is handled by Conservation Dogs Program Coordinator Arden Blumenthal.

All the invasive species that our conservation dogs are trained to sniff out are not yet common in our region's natural areas. So, early detection by the dogs, followed by rapid response removal efforts by our ISF Crew, can be carried out with the possible goal of full eradication at our target sites. It is the synergistic connections between our various programs and our focused efforts in inspiring a sense of shared responsibility for environmental protection that will continue to drive our Ecological Stewardship Program into 2022 and beyond.

### CONSERVATION CORPS CREW ACCOMPLISHMENTS

#### TERRESTRIAL

From forests to meadows to suburban neighborhoods, the ISF Crew traveled across the Lower Hudson Valley to complete 35 projects to tackle emerging invasives, protect conservation targets, and restore natural areas. In total, they surveyed 420 acres, managed 112 acres, and removed over 100,000 invasive plants! Along the way, they made some unforgettable memories and forged unbreakable friendships. Work-related highlights were circulated throughout the season in newsletters and social media posts (find them at [nynjtc.org](http://nynjtc.org)

and [instagram.com/tcconservationcorps](https://www.instagram.com/tcconservationcorps)), so here are a few fun highlights: trying every flavor of Oreos currently available, feasting on potato cones while camping at Ward Pound Ridge Reservation, and spending long summer nights lakeside at Welch Trail Education Center!



LINDSAY KODER

The Aquatics Crew surveyed at Lower Twin Lake in Harriman State Park.

#### AQUATIC

This was a banner year for the Aquatic Invasives Strike Force! Through their aquatic invasives monitoring and management program, the crew was able to survey 40 Hudson Valley lakes, ponds, and rivers (about 2,300 acres) for priority invasive plants and invertebrates. They found new reports of emerging species like fanwort and variable-leaf milfoil, young populations of water chestnut, and dreaded animal invaders like the zebra mussel and mystery snail, all of which help contribute to the understanding of distribution of these species across the state and assist with informing management priorities. They also removed record numbers of water chestnut—almost 121,000 plants—from 13 sites with the help of nearly 50 amazing Trail Conference volunteers. The crew got to experience the success of their

see **ECOLOGICAL**, page 10

# Improvements Continue at WTEC



**NANCY KRAUSE**  
CONSERVATION CORPS  
PROGRAM COORDINATOR

What a difference a year can make! The Welch Trail Education Center (WTEC) is blossoming into a seasonal home for our Conservation Corps members and a budding environmental center. With the COVID-19 vaccine came the help of volunteers that made all the difference. Last year, it was only my father, husband, and two sons pitching in. This year, it was them plus four weekday volunteers and several weekend volunteers.

All windows are repaired and refinished in the kitchen. More windows were refinished in the main hall, plus more being done this winter. Two sets of newly made double doors, complete with panic bar locks,



NANCY KRAUSE

Gordon Pellegrini was one of the reliable volunteers who stepped up to any challenge at WTEC this season.

were installed in the main hall. Volunteer Robert Ward took home all the screens from one cabin to repair and refinish over the coming winter.

Bong Kim and his cheerful hiking friends came many weekends and replaced damaged siding on two of the buildings. I followed right be-

hind with other volunteers and painted all the new boards. Except for some remaining touch-ups, three buildings were painted this summer. Mr. Kim's dedication to the WTEC continues through the changing seasons as we have planned a variety of improvements that he will continue to work on, weather permitting.

The weekday volunteers—Gordon Pellegrini, Joe Henderson, Marlys Litchfield, and Ray Gridley—enabled me to keep everything running smoothly all season. No job was too big or too small. We plodded away every week tackling a variety of jobs. I was very sad when first Ray moved, and then Marlys. Working with the volunteers had become so much more than a way to get more done; it was the connection with each

of them that made the rewards so much sweeter.

Some other improvements for the year: new roofs on the main hall, boathouse, bathhouse; new roofs scheduled for two lakeside cabins. Asbestos boards are cleared from the bathhouse and cabin 209 bathroom. A new dishwasher was installed, and the oven was repaired. Twenty-three gallons of stain were used, all of which was donated by Benjamin Moore. Architectural plans are being finalized for the new classroom building that is planned for 2022.

The 2021 AmeriCorps season may have ended and the WTEC is closed for the winter, but the wheels of progress continue thanks to our volunteers! If you would like to join this merry band, please contact [volunteer@nynjtc.org](mailto:volunteer@nynjtc.org).

## ECOLOGICAL, from page 9

effort firsthand, with one site that has been managed since 2019 down to just 110 plants from the 27,000 removed three years ago. Prevention is key to stopping new invasions, and the crew helped to do just that by participating in the Watercraft Inspection Steward Program, educating over 800 boaters and anglers about AIS spread prevention and inspecting 450 boats, resulting in the interception of 11 invasive plants.

Collaboration was a common theme for the crew this season as well. They teamed up with multiple partners and state agency leaders on AIS projects, such as post-treatment snorkeling for hydrilla in the Croton River with the

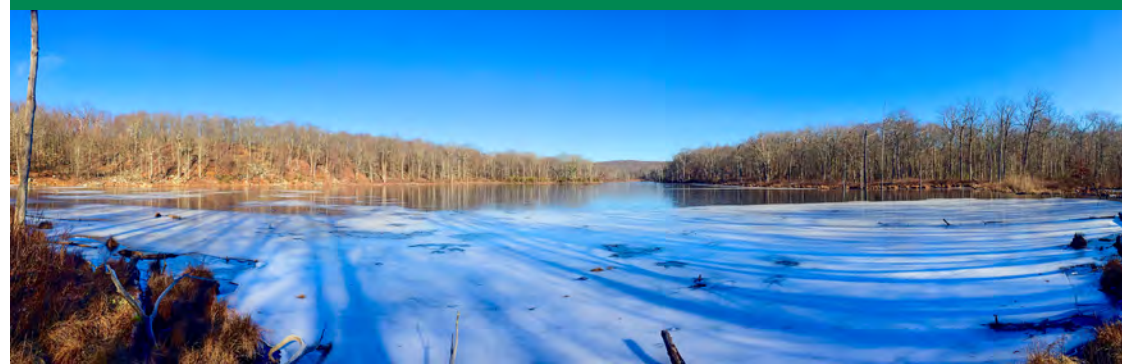


The Aquatics Crew surveyed for mystery snail in Seven Hills Lake in N.Y. this season.

NYS DEC; collecting water samples to potentially detect northern snakehead DNA in the Bashakill with the NYS DEC and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and monitoring snakehead

through electrofishing surveys with DEC's Region 1 Fisheries Unit. The AISF crew is managed, in part, by the LHPRISM Aquatic Invasive Species Program, hosted by Teatown Lake Reservation.

## CONSERVATION



The Trail Conference is a lead partner in two grand-scale trail connectivity plans that seek to create green corridors, improve access to nature, and grow economic opportunities for trail towns. They are the **Highlands West Trail Connectivity Plan** (Orange County, N.Y.) and the **Lake Hopatcong Regional Trails Plan** (Morris County, N.J.).

We worked with The Land Conservancy of New Jersey (TLC) to preserve two key parcels in New Jersey this year. In February, TLC announced the purchase of 40 acres of undeveloped land in Mahwah from the New Jersey Department of Transportation. This key parcel—an important wildlife habitat and watershed—buffers 13,000 acres of county and state parkland that comprises the

largest area of undeveloped land in Bergen County. Much of the land is rugged terrain and difficult for visitors to navigate, though its recreation potential—including a trail connecting Ramapo Mountain Preserve to New York State, through the village of Hillburn into Harriman State Park—is being assessed.

Another 2.5 acres, nestled between Wawayanda State Park and Abram S. Hewitt State Forest, secures permanent public access for a trail through the property, which will also act as a buffer for sensitive wildlife habitats. The land purchase was completed by TLC in October with open space funds from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, in partnership with the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference, Green Acres,

and private donors. It will be donated to the State of New Jersey and become an addition to Wawayanda State Park. (See story at right.)

In the spring, the Trail Conference acquired 113 acres of forested land in New York's Shawangunk region in Orange County. This property connects Gobbler's Knob State Forest with the Bashakill Wildlife Management Area and allows us to move another section of the coaligned Long Path and Shawangunk Ridge Trail (SRT) off the road, away from homes, and into the woods. Additionally, this parcel extends an already protected trail corridor to a length of 20 miles, permanently protecting both trails. The next step is to completely move the trail onto the protected land.

# Critical Trail Lands Protected and Added to Wawayanda State Park

A vital tract of land needed to secure the route of the Terrace Pond North Loop in New Jersey's Wawayanda State Park has been permanently preserved thanks to the Trail Conference, our partners, and our supporters.

The beautiful 2.5-acre parcel between Wawayanda State Park and Abram S. Hewitt State Forest was purchased from private owner Norma Schadegg in October. The Terrace Pond North Loop has long been routed diagonally across a corner of the Schadegg family's property on Warwick Turnpike. In our ongoing efforts to protect public trail lands, the Trail Conference had determined it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to reroute this trail if a new landowner were to ever rescind this partnership.

"Moving the trail was not an option; losing the section of trail and access to Terrace Pond was definitely not an option," said longtime Trail Conference volunteers Estelle Anderson and Bob Jonas, who provided funds to secure the land purchase. Additional investment came from open space funds from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection in partnership with The Land Conservancy of New Jersey, Green Acres, and private donors. The parcel will be donated to the State of New Jersey and become an addition to Wawayanda State Park.

"Paired with the protection of 10 adjacent acres by The Land Conservancy of New Jersey and the Trail Conference several years ago, this acquisition is a great victory for the public's enjoyment of the Terrace Pond North Loop and the beautiful land it crosses," said Trail Conference Executive Director Joshua Howard. "The protection of both parcels not only gives permanent protection to the Terrace Pond North Loop through Wawayanda; it also safeguards critical habitat for native flora and fauna. We are grateful for the partnership of The Land Conservancy in helping to identify, purchase, and protect critical trail lands such as this one, which offers

further access to the crossing at Terrace Pond and to the new and improved series of trails around the pond."

Historically, this part of the trail has seen relatively little use, with most people preferring to use the trail access from Clinton Road to reach Terrace Pond. However, the Terrace Pond trail network was expanded in 2020. This preserved trail section is part of a vital spur to parking on Warwick Turnpike. With the new loop option, we expect to see more people utilizing the trail as a full hiking experience rather than a simple out-and-back route to Terrace Pond.

Trail Conference Life Member Robert C. Ross, who played an integral role in the deal, said, "the Schadegg acquisition is the culmination of over 6 years of close collaboration between the Trail Conference and The Land Conservancy, as well as a number of other people, including a generous donation from Mrs. Schadegg. It protects the final section of a 25-mile trail route extending from Route 23 to the Appalachian Trail, ensuring the interconnectivity of many more miles of trail. It was a joy to work with everyone involved."

Significantly, Mrs. Schadegg was satisfied with the outcome as well. "I am happy to think that the lush growth of mountain laurel and hemlocks on this piece of property will remain to inspire the many drivers who pass and hikers who walk and take the time to contemplate the beauty of this natural setting," she said. "Thank you."

The Trail Conference is vigilant in seeking permanent protection for public access to nature. Without our volunteers, supporters, and partners, great trail experiences wouldn't be possible. We are grateful for those who participate in protecting the land they love and invite you to learn about the impact you can make by contacting Director of Donor Advising Don Weise at [dweise@nynjtc.org](mailto:dweise@nynjtc.org) or donating to our Land Acquisition and Stewardship Fund at [bit.ly/tc-lasf](http://bit.ly/tc-lasf).

## LOOK AHEAD

In 2022, we will keep striving to inspire the next generation of trail users to become champions of the outdoors through user education, public participation, and sustainable, on-the-ground solutions.

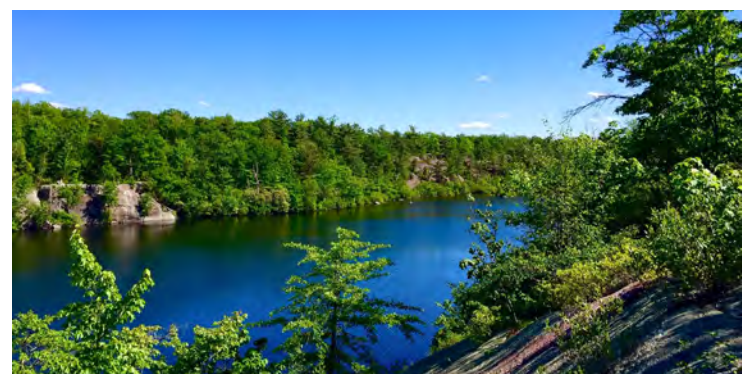
► To meet the current demands on public lands, **our volunteer force will continue to grow and be strengthened.** Recruitment of both volunteers and Conservation Corps members in 2021 surpassed our expectations, with more people than ever before seeking opportunities to give back to nature. That includes the successful recruitment of several integral leadership positions. We will build on

this success by launching an online reporting system and investing more energy and efforts into our Trail University offerings.

► We will continue to **collaborate with like-minded organizations to address challenges facing trails and equitable access to public lands.** Whether it is in organized coalitions like the New Jersey Trails Council, Catskill Park Strategic Planning Advisory Group, and New York Outdoor Recreation Coalition, or project-based work sessions with partners like JORBA, Black Rock Forest, and the New Jersey Palisades Interstate Park Coalition, we

will join forces with stakeholders to address issues such as overcrowding at trailheads and obstacles to diversity outdoors.

► By providing outreach and education, we can **empower the public to know and experience the joys of nature and all its benefits.** Our Trail Stewards and Ecological Stewards will serve at trailheads, summits, and boat launches throughout the region to assist and educate visitors. We will publish new trail maps and books and invest in new ways to engage people online to help them feel informed, safe, and prepared for the adventures that await them.



# Putnam County Woman Sets A.T. Record While Fundraising for Trails



**DON WEISE**  
DIRECTOR OF DONOR  
ADVISING

The 93.3-mile stretch of the Appalachian Trail in New York means so much to the people who live near it. To Katharine Spector, a 40-year-old interior designer, wife, mother, and ultrarunner from Kent Cliffs, the A.T. is a quiet oasis and place to connect with her family in nature. It was the proving ground on which she completed her greatest physical challenge: running the entire New York section of the A.T. On a hot October 15th day, Katharine completed this feat in just 26 hours, 24 minutes, and 4 seconds, establishing the supported Fastest Known Time (FKT) record for both male and female athletes.

Spector's special connection



**Katharine Spector stops for a photo during her FKT attempt on New York's A.T.**

to the trails began decades ago on her high school cross-country team, where she ran the woods around Claremont, N.H. As a California transplant, she was struck by the

friendships she made on the team and the like-minded people she met on the trails. After high school, she completed degrees in art history and interior design from Columbia and FIT, and her lifestyle shifted away from athletic pursuits. But after quitting smoking 10 years ago, she once again found the trails and with them, new friendships in the hiking and trail-running community. Many of those friends supported her as she completed her A.T. challenge.

On the day of her big run, Katharine was confronted with 88 degree weather—less than ideal conditions for a 93-mile run. She managed to cool off by lying down in a stream along the way. “Trail running has taught me that if you're creative and flexible, you can achieve big goals,” she says.

Katharine points out that she is not a pro athlete, but a regular person with a job, husband, and two sons. Despite working in Manhattan, she finds time to train by hitting Central Park, the Westside Greenway Park, and running from work to the Harlem train station!

Katharine understands the crucial nature of the Trail Conference's role in protecting and securing the future of trails. This was a key factor in her decision to do her FKT attempt as a Trail Conference fundraiser. Katharine regularly takes her boys on hikes and has recently signed herself and another person up to serve as A.T. trail maintainers. Thank you, Katharine, for inspiring us and demonstrating that regular people really can do extraordinary things.

## Trail Runners Go the Distance for Good

This fall, hundreds of enthusiastic runners participated in trail events ranging from 2 to 26.2 miles. From smooth carriageways in Rockefeller and the Ramapos to singletrack trails in Sterling Forest, these venues are helping runners connect with the Trail Conference and our mission.

### 2nd Annual Sterling Furnace Half Marathon and 7-Miler

Organized by Trail Conference Board member and race director Charlie Gadol, this run passes through Sterling Forest's “hole in the doughnut,” an exceptionally beautiful 575-acre section in the heart of the forest, which was preserved with the Trail Conference's help in late 2006. This masterfully built, moderately hilly trail network is a joy to run, walk or bike; it is currently being expanded to

provide even more options for exploration. Proceeds from the race are being shared with the Trail Conference and the Friends of Sterling Forest. Look for this race to return in spring 2022!

### MRCC Trail Conference Fall Back 5K Run and 3K Walk

Returning to Trail Conference Headquarters on a crisp November morning, this Mahwah Regional Chamber of Commerce event gave the community a chance to try out trail running and learn about the Trail Conference. Held on a mix of wide, level trails and some roads, the event benefitted the Trail Conference and will also return in spring of 2022.

### Pocantico Hills Marathon

This exceptionally hilly marathon was held to benefit both the Trail Conference



DANIELLE RICHARDS

**Participants in the MRCC Trail Conference Fall Back 5K Run enjoyed the trails at Ramapo Reservation.**

and Friends of Rockefeller State Park. The lands, which were donated by the Rockefeller family to New York State Parks, featured grazing livestock amid a pastoral backdrop of fields and forests. According to race organizer Charlie Gadol, this race is slated to return again in the fall of 2022.

### Trail Conference Trail Runs

Join us for free, monthly, non-competitive runs high-

lighting places where the Trail Conference builds and maintains trails. This fall, we explored Harriman, Ringwood, and Jockey Hollow, and also previewed the Sterling Forest and Rockefeller race courses. These “flex runs” offer two pace and distance groups to accommodate various ability levels. To learn more, join our Facebook group, Trail Conference Trail Runs, or find our runs on the Trail Conference website. [Don Weise](#)

### News in Brief

#### Looking for Our Member Clubs?

Trail Conference Member Clubs are our friends and partners who maintain trails and offer ways to get outdoors. They help support our mission and amplify the power of our likeminded efforts to help connect people with nature. While we were unable to separately run the full member club list in this issue of Trail Walker, they are included in our supporters list. Plus: You'll always find information about these valued partners at [nynjtc.org/member-club](http://nynjtc.org/member-club).

#### In Memoriam

Jo-Ann Senterman, a longtime Trail Conference volunteer and supporter passionate about the Catskills, passed away on Oct. 19. She was 74. She was an administrative assistant for 16 years for IBM and had been employed by Package Pavement of Stormville, N.Y. She had been a summer resident of the Catskills since 1969, and full-time for approximately the past 10 years. She had a green thumb and enjoyed hosting family gatherings, as well as helping to put on Catskill volunteer picnics. Jo-Ann was a deeply caring individual who could be

counted on to assist anyone in need. She will be missed.

#### Join the Archives Committee

The Trail Conference is proud of its 101-year history, much of which can be read in *Reflections*. But more stories are waiting to be told—if you can find the details in the archives. In early 2022, volunteer Jane Daniels is forming an Archives Committee to organize and preserve more information about the Trail Conference's history. Researching how trails were developed and by whom is just

one project; another is developing a file system for print material and photos. Learn more and sign up at [nynjtc.org/news/join-archives-committee](http://nynjtc.org/news/join-archives-committee). [Jane Daniels](#)

#### NY Voters Say Yes to Green Amendment

This November, New Yorkers voted to approve a “green amendment” to the state's constitution. This is a constitutional provision located under the state bill of rights that grants residents an affirmative right to clean air and water and a healthful environment.

### 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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[shopthruway.com/sporting-goods](http://shopthruway.com/sporting-goods)



#### Rock and Snow

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New Paltz, NY  
845.255.1311  
[rockandsnow.com/store](http://rockandsnow.com/store)



#### The Gravity Vault

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Chatham, NJ  
Middletown, NJ  
[gravityvault.com](http://gravityvault.com)



#### Hatchet Outdoor Supply Co.

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# Crowdsourced Maps: How and When to Use Them



**PETER DOLAN  
AND PHIL  
HEIDELBERGER**

The most important part of having a safe, enjoyable trail experience is being prepared. When you're heading into the woods, that means having reliable navigation. These days, we are blessed with an abundance of navigation resources: In addition to traditional paper maps, there are online hike descriptions, guide books, trailhead kiosks, downloadable park maps, interactive Avenza Maps app maps, and a multitude of outdoor recreation apps. With all these options, it can be hard to know which ones to use or trust.

Some of these resources are curated, meaning that they are created by an authority or expert organization. Others are crowdsourced, meaning that anybody—regardless of their experience or expertise—can contribute information about an experience. Both types of resources are valuable, but it's important to know when and how to use each one. Especially in the New York-New Jersey area, where trail networks are sometimes quite complex, curated information is an especially important resource. The table shown here can help you decide which resource to use and when to use it.

To elaborate on the discussion surrounding crowdsourced trail information, we're sharing the advice of Scott Fitterman. Scott is an experienced outdoorsman and a Search and Rescue (SAR) team member, which has given him both personal and professional experience with different navigation resources. Below Scott talks about his personal experiences with the relative benefits and challenges of crowdsourced trail information.

Since I wear a uniform, I'm often approached by hikers asking me for directions during our search and rescue drills. The first thing I always ask is what they're using to navigate. More often than not they are solely relying on a crowdsourced hiking app on their phone such as AllTrails or Hiking Project.

Don't get me wrong, I think crowdsourced hiking apps are an excellent resource. I use them all the time as a launchpad for route planning. I can search for the highest-rated hikes in an area that I've never been to, read trail reviews, find routes that are a certain length or have a certain elevation change, read about common errors people make on the trail so I can avoid them, and take note of

	CURATED INFORMATION	CROWDSOURCED INFORMATION
<b>Examples</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Published maps and books from organizations like the Trail Conference</li> <li>▶ Official park maps</li> <li>▶ Trailhead kiosks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Apps like AllTrails or Hiking Project</li> <li>▶ Website forums or comment sections</li> <li>▶ Social media</li> </ul>
<b>Pros</b>	Highlight official and maintained routes. Reliable and authoritative sources of objective information.	Allow for discussion, commentary, and an understanding of different experiences. Good sources of subjective information or "breaking news."
<b>Cons</b>	May not always include subjective information about specific experiences. While regularly updated, they may not always have information on "breaking news" like trail hazards or recent relocations.	May have inaccurate, incomplete, or outdated information. User-submitted data can sometimes lead people to dangerous, non-existent, or illegal trail routes. May include confusing information, such as calling a loop hike made up of different trails and blaze colors a single "trail."
<b>Map Detail</b>	Curated maps, such as the Trail Conference's maps, typically show the entire network of trails within a park, complete with trail names, blaze colors, points of interest, and often distances.	In AllTrails, for example, the hike of interest is highlighted and the map may include other trails in a park; however, they are not typically labeled with trail names, blaze colors, or distances.

all the cool viewpoints and points of interest.

However, as beneficial as crowdsourced hiking apps are, people seem unaware of the potential for getting lost or injured when using them as their only means of navigating. Crowdsourced hiking data is just that—unvetted tracks from anonymous hikers. [See sidebar below for more information.]

What people call a "trail" might be a combination of established blazed trails and unmarked trails or herd paths. Those unmarked trails that were easy to

follow during the summer might be impossible to follow after the leaves fall in autumn. Tracks recorded on phones and watches can also be wildly inaccurate depending on signal strength, weather, where the device was kept while hiking, and app settings. Higher skill-level hikers might traverse dangerously steep terrain, putting you at risk for injury. Another hiker's easy hike might be much more difficult to you. Hikers may even unwittingly cut across private property, putting you at risk as well. Luckily,

there are ways to mitigate these risks to avoid a call to SAR for a rescue.

Even if you use a crowdsourced hiking app, we advise also using at least one navigation app with maps created by GIS professionals whose primary concern is accuracy. Apps like Avenza, which give you access to both free and paid accurate maps with blazed trails, such as those from the Trail Conference, are a no-brainer. Apps like Gaia can bring all the functionality of a dedicated GPS device right to your phone. Keep in mind that if you look at

your screen often during your hike it could kill your battery. Charge your phone before you hike and always carry a charged portable battery charger as well. [Editor's note: Some apps, such as Avenza and AllTrails, do not require cell service for GPS navigation. Check the app to see if you can use it in Airplane Mode to further save battery life.]

Learn how to use a hardcopy map and compass to navigate and carry them as a backup. It is a tried and true method of navigating that you can count on when you lose your phone or GPS device or your batteries die. There are many books and online videos to learn on your own, or you can take an in-person class.

Hike established blazed loop trails with the confidence that the trail is well-marked and will both start and end at the same location. This will help you avoid getting stranded in the dark by underestimating when to turn back and then having to navigate turns at trail intersections. Your worst case is to slowly continue on the same trail until you arrive back at the start.

Crowdsourced hiking apps can help make the most of the time you spend enjoying the outdoors hiking. They are an excellent tool but should always be used in conjunction with professionally accurate maps and trail data to reduce the chances of getting lost or hurt so you can hike another day.

## A Further Note About AllTrails

When researching this article, volunteer Phil Heidelberg reached out to AllTrails for clarification on two topics that have led to confusion for hikers: inaccuracies in trail data, and the app's offline capabilities.

### Inaccurate Information

When asked about incorrect trail information appearing on AllTrails, a customer service representative for AllTrails said that all "trails" that you see in AllTrails are considered "verified routes" that are hand-curated. These appear as the thick red lines on trail pages, which sometimes contributes to the confusion—the route may be mistaken for one trail when in reality it is several individually named and blazed

trails. The representative stated that the company's goal "is that every trail on AllTrails has an accurate, hand-curated verified route." When asked for clarification regarding their verification process, an AllTrails representative stated that their "team uses official maps, movement data, reviews, trail resources on the internet, other mapping apps to compare, and a few other methods to verify trails." Inaccurate information can be reported to AllTrails via the Suggest Edit button found on trail pages.

Meanwhile, "the black and blue dashed lines that you see on the AllTrails map type come directly from OpenStreetMap—a collaborative mapping project which offers a free editable map of the world," the representative said. If you see inaccuracies on these trails, AllTrails recommends using OSM's

online platform to edit these trail segments so that the changes will be reflected in their database as well.

For these reasons, we recommend that you always compare crowdsourced information with curated, official trail information. For example, Trail Conference maps are built on more than 85 years of mapping experience and are prepared by a professional cartographer with a team of trusted volunteers and staff. These researchers walk the trails tracking where a new trail was added and where significant trail relocations took place. Maps are also reviewed by park managers before publication to ensure accuracy.

### Offline Capabilities

AllTrails has a "pro" version, which currently costs about \$30 per year, as well as a free version. With the Pro

version, you can download any AllTrails map onto the AllTrails app on your phone for no additional charge. Then when you are on the trail, your exact location on the map is shown using the phone's GPS capabilities (cellular service is not required). This is similar to downloading and then using a Trail Conference app map on Avenza Maps.

With the free version of AllTrails, you can view maps on the AllTrails website and app, but the AllTrails representative confirmed that "free users are unable to download maps for offline use. Therefore if they lose service they will likely be unable to see the map layers on AllTrails once they do. They would continue to see their GPS location, and can still record their activity in Navigator, but the maps themselves may become blurry or not load at all."

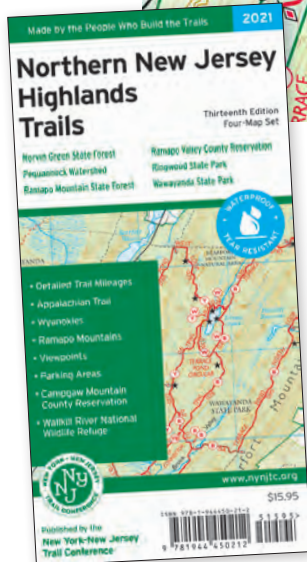
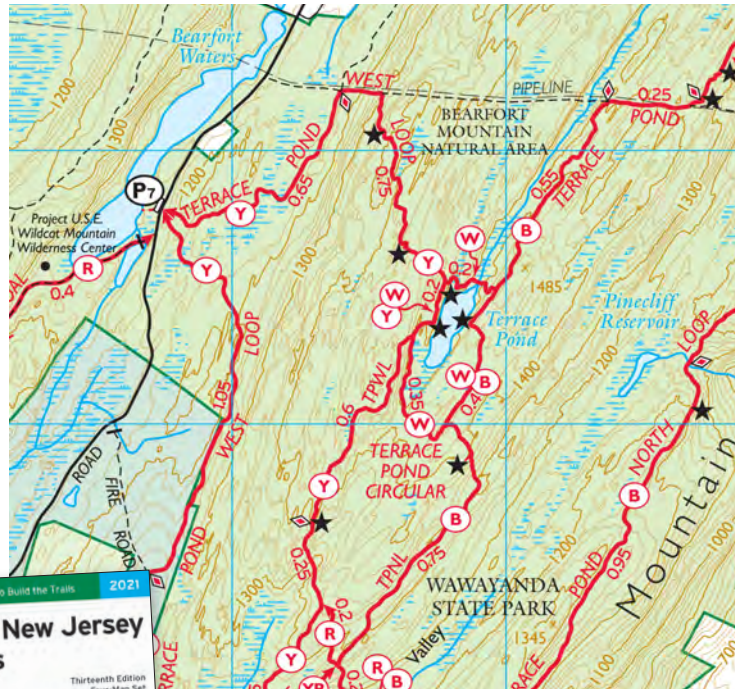
# Improved, Rebranded Northern New Jersey Highlands Trails Maps Are Here



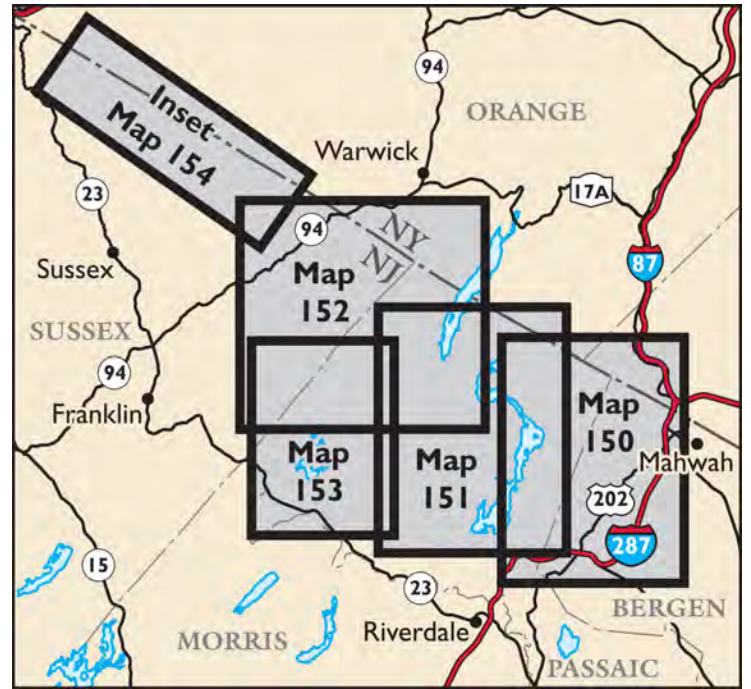
**JEREMY APGAR**  
CARTOGRAPHER

In 1974, the Trail Conference produced its second official map, covering the Wyanokies, which later was expanded into our popular North Jersey Trails map set. More than 45 years later, this map is now in its 13th edition, and it has been completely revised and rebranded as **Northern New Jersey Highlands Trails**. Rebuilt from the ground up, this map is basically a brand new map and the most significant update to these maps in nearly 15 years, with an expansion to a four-map set instead of just two maps, a major increase in scale, addition of trail mileage numbers, a new map showing more of the Appalachian Trail, and many more improvements.

This four-map set now features more than 360 miles of marked trails in the northern Highlands region of New Jersey, including more than 30 miles of the Appalachian Trail and nearly 40 miles of the Highlands Trail. More than 40 parks and preserves are featured, including Abram S. Hewitt State Forest, Long Pond Ironworks State Park, Norvin Green State Forest, Pequannock Watershed,



The new Northern New Jersey Highlands Trails map set has been expanded to include four maps. It features significant updates to the trail networks it covers, making it essential for your N.J. adventures!



Ramapo Mountain State Forest, Ramapo Valley County Reservation, Ringwood State Park, Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge, and Wawayanda State Park.

Among the major improvements to this new map are:

- A brand new title replaces the former North Jersey Trails name to better highlight the actual coverage area.
- The scale is increased by 33% to improve the clarity of these popular trail networks, which

has also required expanding from a 2-map set to a 4-map set.

- Detailed junction-to-junction trail mileage numbers are on the map front (a very popular request!).
- A new inset map shows the Appalachian Trail between High Point State Park and Po-chuck Boardwalk.
- Trails have been completely redrawn with the latest data. The 360-plus miles of marked trails is an increase of more than 80 miles compared to the previous edition.
- Upwards of 75 miles of trail updates for trail additions and changes completed recently by Trail Conference volunteers are included.
- New 20-foot elevation contour lines and a completely revised basemap of up-to-date roads, lakes, streams, park boundaries, and other features were used.
- Enlarged inset maps of several popular areas are included.
- Orientation has been changed to put north straight up, consistent with our adjacent maps.
- The set features several additional parks and trails, including Highlands Preserve, Nancy Conger West Brook Preserve, Old Mill Woodlands, and Ramapo Mountain Preserve.
- Several birding hotspots were added with assistance from the Saw Mill River Audubon.

## Major improvements include:

- ▶ New title
- ▶ Expansion to 4 maps
- ▶ Major 33% increase in scale
- ▶ Detailed trail mileage numbers
- ▶ New A.T. Corridor map
- ▶ Completely redrawn trails
- ▶ 75 miles of trail updates
- ▶ New detailed contour lines
- ▶ Additional parks and trails
- ▶ Addition of birding hotspots
- ▶ More viewpoint stars

- More viewpoint stars, parking areas, and points of interest are now included.

All maps feature trail mileage numbers, 20-foot elevation contour lines, woods roads and unmaintained trails, parking areas and public transportation, viewpoints, waterfalls, shelters and campsites, mines and other points of interest, and UTM gridlines. The map backs include a complete trail index with blaze details and total trail mileage, as well as park contact information, history, and regulations.

This new **Northern New**

**Jersey Highlands Trails** map set is the most comprehensive and accurate map yet of this vast area of trails and parks in the northern Highlands of New Jersey. It is now available in print format in vibrant color on our popular waterproof, tear-resistant Tyvek by shopping online at [www.nynjtc.org](http://www.nynjtc.org). It is also available in digital format on Apple and Android devices through the Avenza Maps app, including as a comprehensive app map that combines the four primary section maps. Learn more about our popular GPS-enhanced maps at [www.nynjtc.org/pdfmaps](http://www.nynjtc.org/pdfmaps).

Built on more than 85 years of mapping experience, Trail Conference maps are your source for reliable trail information in the New York-New Jersey metropolitan region. These maps are Made by the People Who Build the Trails and are regularly updated with changes to the trails. Sales of these maps directly support our organization's efforts to keep the trails open and safe for all to enjoy.

*Special thanks to volunteer project manager Daniel Chazin and all the volunteers and park partners who helped produce this significant map revision! The map was also produced with support from Storm King Adventure Tours, a proud supporter of our volunteers.*

## HIKERS' MARKETPLACE

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OR CALL 201-512-9348

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## Reflections Now Available

As pre-announced in the previous Trail Walker, our new *Reflections* book in celebration of our Centennial arrived in October and is available to order at [nynjtc.org/shop](http://nynjtc.org/shop).

This new book documents a century of our volunteer-powered conservation and stewardship legacy. Printed in full color with photos



documenting the full history of the Trail Conference,

this is a must-have book for those who want to learn the story behind the Trail Conference and the people who have led our century of passion for the trails.

*We wish to thank volunteer book author Ron Dupont for his outstanding work, volunteer project manager Jane Daniels for her dedication, and so many other volunteers and contributors who helped to shape this special Centennial book.*