

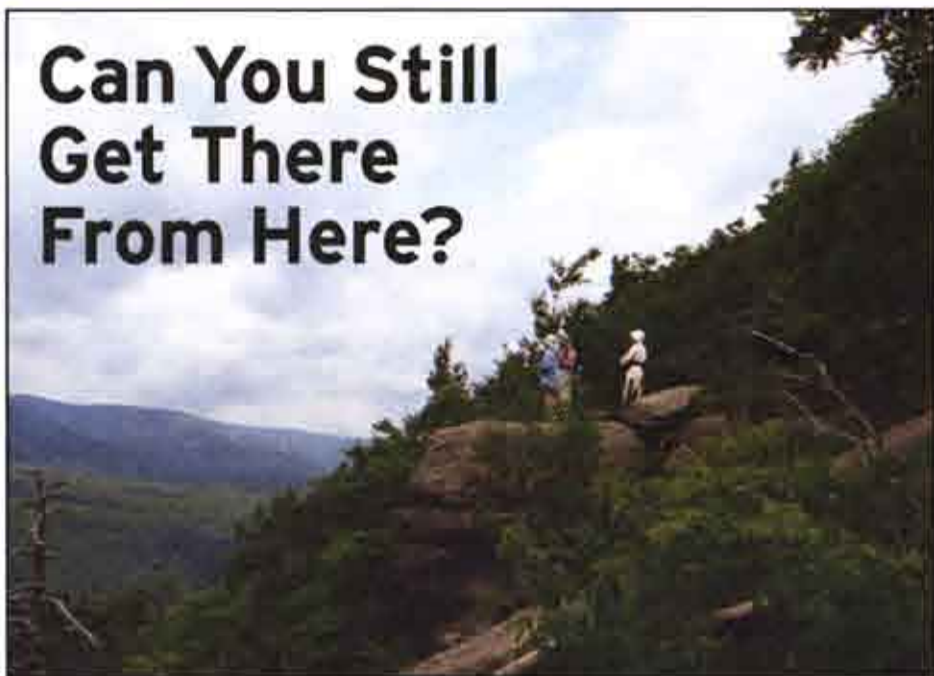


TRAIL WALKER

New York-New Jersey Trail Conference – Maintaining 1,675 Miles Of Foot Trails

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Can You Still Get There From Here?



GEORGETTE WEIR

Maintained footpaths connect people with nature, such as to this viewpoint in the Catskills known as Huckleberry Point. The Trail Conference seeks to fill 75 maintainer positions throughout our region, including 17 in the Catskills. Enjoy a public service experience in the great outdoors with your family, friends, colleagues, organization, or on your own by becoming a trail or shelter maintainer.

With 1,675 miles of trail to maintain and numerous shelters to watch over, the NY-NJ Trail Conference offers many opportunities for public service in the great outdoors. As we add new trails to our network and as volunteers cycle in and out of service, new maintainer positions are created and others open up. And there are *always* opportunities to join our regional trail crews. We now track more than 900 volunteer maintainers, who clip brush, clear blow-downs, pick up litter, and generally keep our region's footpaths and shelters open for public use.

As the new year begins, we seek to fill some 75 maintainer openings and add volunteers to our crews. Training is provided at our spring and fall maintainer workshops; our workshop this spring is set for April 21 and 22.

Our current vacancies are summarized here. Contact Heidi Adami or Larry Wheelock at the NY-NJ Trail Conference office (201-512-9348; adami@nynjtc.org, wheelock@nynjtc.org) to find the best match for your location and interests.

- Along the **Appalachian Trail (AT)**, in both New Jersey and New York's Dutchess and Putnam counties, there are 20 opportunities for both shelter caretakers, corridor monitors and AT maintainers.
- New maintainers are needed along the **Long Path** and **Shawangunk Ridge Trail** as new sections are opened and others become vacant.
- The **Highlands Trail** needs the help of two in New York and two in New Jersey to keep the trail clear and blazed.
- In the **Catskills**, 17 vacant positions are listed in our files, including several lean-to caretakers as well as trail maintainers.
- In the eastern New Jersey area from the **Fanny Highlands** to **Pyramid Mountain** to **Ringwood State Park** there are another 15 maintainer positions open.
- In **western New Jersey** about seven maintainers are needed.
- In the area including **Black Rock Forest**, **Storm King Mountain**, **Schunemunk Mountain** and

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2006 NY-NJ Trail Conference Awards

Dedicated service to the hiking community and to the Trail Conference was recognized and honored at the Annual Meeting with the presentation of Trail Conference awards for 2006. Those honored were nominated by Trail Conference members and approved by the Board of Directors.

RAYMOND H. TORREY AWARD

TC's highest award, for significant/lasting contributions

Pete Heckler

Pete Heckler this year became only the seventh person to be honored with the Trail Conference's highest award. Pete's influence and dedication over the past few years has resulted in a much-changed organization. His ability to take on difficult tasks without hesitation has brought the Trail Conference from a NYC-centered organization to a regionally centered one, with a larger vision and greater influence. His chairmanship of the West Hudson Trails Committee and later the West Hudson South Trails Committee has been exemplary. His ability to work constructively with volunteers at all levels and with our agency

partners, particularly the Palisades Interstate Park Commission, has shown us a talent that can only inspire. He understands the delicate balance between the needs of the hikers in our parks and the bureaucratic structures set up to manage them. His civil and even-handed approach to getting a job done brings prompt response from all those who work with him. His clear understanding of agencies' management needs and requirements has resulted in doors being kept open to him that could easily have been slammed shut with a less diplomatic approach. Volunteers and hikers owe an immense thanks to Pete Heckler. His work and influence have resulted in significant improvements of our trail systems throughout the region.

KEN LLOYD CLUB AWARD

TC club member individual who has given exemplary service to club

Patty Lee Parmalee



HERB CHONG

Patty Lee Parmalee coordinated a five-year-long grassroots campaign on behalf of TC member club Save The Ridge (STR) that culminated with spectacular success in March with New York State's purchase of the 2,500-acre Awosting Reserve for inclusion into Minnewaska State Park Preserve. When a mega-development proposal in 2002 threatened the Reserve's natural beauty and the ecological integrity of the northern Shawangunks, local residents coalesced under STR to wage a spirited advocacy effort to preserve the property in league with a burgeoning band of like-minded organizations and individuals. STR's achievement is a paradigm for effective citizen action.

MAJOR WILLIAM A. WELCH TRAIL PARTNER AWARD

To a non-TC member partner who has given long/significant assistance

Jack Shuart

For the past decade Jack Shuart, Assistant Regional Forester in the Division of Parks and Forestry of the New Jersey Dept. of Environmental Protection, has volunteered hundreds of hours to train and certify scores of TC blow-down crew personnel in chainsaw safety. Trained to United States Forest Service guidelines, Jack has willingly and enthusiastically given his time to ensure that our chain sawyers meet essential safety standards in the performance of their demanding work. All who have attended the Chainsaw Safety Training Workshops (sponsored through the TC, under Appalachian Trail Conservancy aus-

pices) in which Jack serves as an instructor, have admired and greatly benefited from his dedication and thoroughness.

WILLIAM HOEFERLIN AWARD

For exemplary service to trail maintenance/management/protection

Jakob Franke

The 75th anniversary of the conception of the Long Path is a fitting time to honor Jakob Franke, Long Path South Trails Chair, who has demonstrated unremitting dedication to the growth



HERB CHONG

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Trail Conference Purchases Two Properties Along Highlands Trail in New Jersey

The Trail Conference recently purchased two properties in Washington Township in western Morris County, NJ, that will connect Stephens State Park in Mount Olive to Schooley's Mountain County Park via the Highlands Trail and Patriots' Path. These two ridge-top tracts are part of a complex three-owner, six-parcel project that totals 74 acres and a \$1.1 million purchase price.

This is the second New Jersey project for the Trail Conference, and is the result of

more than two years of work. The protected land is heavily forested and contains habitat for nine New Jersey threatened and endangered species, including barred owl, cooper's hawk, eastern box turtle, great blue heron, marbled salamander, red-shouldered hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, timber rattlesnake, and veery (a thrush that prefers damp deciduous forests).

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HERB CHONG

Pete Heckler, at right, is congratulated by Larry Wheelock and Jane Daniels.