

## 2007

### **Conservation Committee NY-NoJ Chapter Annual Report 2007 Submitted by: Skip Doyle**

The purpose of the Conservation committee is to foster the preservation of land and waterways for their natural use and to promote a healthy environment. This is done through raising awareness of preservation, natural use, and the environment; through involvement in conservation issues; and by sponsoring events.

In 2007, we increased awareness by sponsoring weekend-long conservation events on Fire Island and in Esopus, New York. The hallmark of these *Nature Conservation- Recreation - Education Weekends* is our partnership with other conservation organizations – each contributing their particular skill and mission. We have raised our AMC organization to prominence by holding annual lectures at The Princeton Club – the first of which was a Bard College professor of environmental history and biographer of Rachel Carson. We have partnered with many conservation organizations (such as Friends of Old Croton Aqueduct and the AMC Mid-Atlantic office) to embed a conservation component within bike rides and hikes. In each issue of *Trails and Waves* I have written a conservation article highlighting preservation victories, and in the three Open House sessions I co-led, the sign up rate of new members was 100%.

To deliver conservation events during 2007, we partnered with many conservation groups: Audubon, Broderhof, Clearwater, Esopus Lighthouse Commission, Fire Island Wilderness Committee, Friars of the Atonement, Friends of Old Croton Aqueduct, John Burroughs Society, Highlands Coalition, National Park Service, Scenic Hudson, North Jersey Highlands Historical Society, NY-NJ Trail Conference, and many NY-NoJ Chapter committees and AMC organizations.

In the spring of 2006, the Conservation Committee was in jeopardy of being disbanded. After I was installed as Conservation Chair in June 2006, through the efforts of a two-person committee we delivered 11 conservation activities in 2006, and I participated in many working sessions laying the groundwork for 2007 events. In 2007, the number of activities has more than doubled, the caliber of the activities has increased, and the conservation leadership has now been enhanced with a Vice-Chair for Media Relations, and a Vice-Chair of Conservation Liaisons. The list of our many accomplishments this year are itemized below.

For 2008, we now have a colossal five nature weekends scheduled. The lecture booked for the Princeton Club in April shall be on The Hudson River School painters. I shall be developing a host of conservation activities – again in partnership with other organizations. And the vice-chairs shall continue their work in developing and publicizing our conservation events.

**Conservation Committee  
NY-NoJ Chapter  
Annual Report 2007  
Submitted by: Skip Doyle**

- January 13**      **Adventures In Travel Expo**  
Represent the Conservation Committee, and as a leader on the hiking, biking and climbing committees, solicit new members at the convention.
- January 20**      **Annual Dinner – NY/NoJ Chapter**  
Represented the Conservation Committee at this convocation.
- January 25**      **Trails & Waves – Spring Issue**  
*Conservation Corner*. Sterling Forest “doughnut”, Rachel Carson.
- February 24**      **Outdoors Leadership – Canoe & Kayak Committee**  
Attend all-day leadership program in order to lead Conservation-CKC trip to Esopus lighthouse renovation and Esopus Island state park.
- April 9, 10**      **Clearwater – Tideline Discovery program**  
Training program for educators at Esopus Meadows Preserve.
- April 14**      **Spring Clean the Bronx River**  
A river-sweep activity in conjunction with the Junior League of The Bronx, to clean a 7-mile stretch of the Bronx River.
- April 18**      **AMC Conservation lecture at the Princeton Club**  
Mark Lytle, professor of Environmental History at Bard College, speaking about the life of Rachel Carson (author of *Silent Spring*) with parallels to contemporary environmental concerns. Includes book signing – Rachel Carson biography.
- April 20-22**      **AMC Chapter weekend (and Earth Day)**  
Presentation of activities of the NY-NoJ Conservation Committee, and joint-presentation on the Highlands with Kristen Sykes (AMC Mid-Atlantic office, Project Manager).
- April 23**      **AMC New Member – Open House**  
Speak about conservation, hiking, biking, climbing, kayaking, White Mountains huts, Fire Island, introductory weekend backpacking, softball.
- April 25**      **Trails & Waves – Summer Issue**  
*Conservation Corner*. Vice-chairs volunteers needed, Esopus, major Conservation events, special conservation observances.
- May 19**      **John Burroughs Society – Slabsides**  
Conservation committee representative to semi-annual open house at Slabsides.
- May 27**      **Conservation Bike – Old Croton Aqueduct**  
Lead OCA bike ride from Yonkers to Croton visiting the Highland “critical treasure” watershed area, noting the restoration of the High Bridge, and commentary by a Friends of Old Croton Aqueduct conservationist and president – Mavis Cain.

- June 22-24 Nature Conservation-Recreation-Education Weekend – Fire Island**  
Friday evening lecture on the Fire Island Wilderness Area (by FIWC), Saturday nature conservancy hike to Sunken Forest (by NPS), Sunday historic conservancy hike to Fire Island Lighthouse (by FILPS), inaugural clam toss championship.
- June 30 Conservation Hike – Breakneck Traverse**  
Traverse Breakneck Ridge to visit the Highland “critical treasure” at Beacon-Fishkill.
- July 17 Clearwater Festival**  
Attended only as a guest this year.
- July 21 Conservation Bike – Wallkill Valley**  
Ride the Wallkill Valley Rail Trail end-to-end to visit the Highland “critical treasure” in the Wallkill Valley.
- July 25 Trails & Waves – Fall Issue**  
*Conservation Corner*. Conservation organization that we partner with, and volunteer opportunities.
- July 29 Esopus Lighthouse Tour and Esopus Island Paddle**  
Private tour of Esopus Lighthouse – under restoration – closed to the public, with our liaison with the Esopus Lighthouse Commission. Open-river paddle to Esopus Island.
- August 19 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge**  
Conservationist-led walk through the bird and wildlife sanctuary by Laurie Hewie (AMC Conservation leader).
- September 28-30 Nature Conservation-Recreation-Education Weekend – Graymoor**  
Friday evening lecture on Saint Francis and nature (by Friars of the Atonement), Saturday hike of AT and Camp Smith Trail (by AMC Hike leader), Sunday canoe trip Constitution Marsh (by Audubon guide).
- September 30 Audubon Canoe Tour of Constitution Marsh - Cold Spring**  
Visit the Audubon center at Constitution Marsh and explore habitat by canoe with an Audubon guide.
- October 6-8 Nature Conservation-Recreation-Education Weekend – Esopus**  
Saturday lecture at Slabsides (by JBA) and hike of Shaupeneak Ridge (by AMC Hike leader), Sunday bike ride of Wallkill Valley Rail Trail (by AMC Bike leader), Monday conservation talk at Esopus Meadows Environmental Center (by Clearwater), and tour of Esopus Lighthouse.
- October 20 Conservation Hike – Torne Valley**  
Climb the Ramapo Torne as part of a tour of the Highland “critical treasure” Torne Valley with narrations by conservationists Geoff Walsh (North Jersey Highlands Historical Society) and Jennifer Heisey (AMC Mid-Atlantic Recreation Planner).
- October 25 Trails & Waves – Winter Issue**  
Conservation Corner: Shirazi Land Deal, Nature C-R-E Weekends 2008 schedule.
- October 25 Trails & Waves – Winter Issue**  
Published an article “The Long Brown Path – The Old Croton Aqueduct” – researched the OCA history, engineering, and its use today as a pedestrian path.
- December 1 Conservation Challenge – Hardscrabble Wilderness Area**  
Hike the HWA mapping the trails as an orienteering game, and brief lecture on the Nature Conservancy which worked to preserve this area.