

2009

**Conservation Committee
NY-NoJ Chapter
Annual Report 2009
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.

Raising awareness

In 2009, we increased awareness by sponsoring five weekend-long conservation events: Hudson Highlands, Fire Island, Stowe VT, Esopus (Hudson River), and NY Appalachian Trail. 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; this year 120 AMC members attended to hear the curator of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and a noted artist, talk about the Catskills, the Hudson River Valley, and the Hudson River School of art. We have partnered with many conservation organizations to embed a conservation component within bike rides, hikes, and kayak trips. In each issue of *Trails and Waves* I have written a conservation article highlighting preservation initiatives and victories. And in the three Open House sessions I co-led the sign up rate of new members was 90%.

Involvement in conservation issues

As Conservation chair, I am called upon to weigh in on conservation issues. Most notable and time-consuming are master plans. Representing our chapter of the AMC, I have participated in plans for both the Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge and the Fire Island Wilderness. This year I have increased my personal participation in the Highlands Coalition.

Sponsoring events

To deliver conservation events during 2009, we partnered with many conservation groups: AMC NY-NoJ chapter committees, AMC – headquarters and regional offices, NY-NJ Trail Conference, Audubon, Scenic Hudson, Clearwater, Highlands Coalition, Open Space Institute, Fire Island Wilderness Coalition, Friars of the Atonement – Spiritual Life Center, Mount Saint Alphonsus Retreat Center, Broderhof, Esopus Meadows Lighthouse Commission, John Burroughs Association,

Friends of Old Croton Aqueduct, Walkill Valley Rail Trail Assoc., Harlem Valley Rail Trail Assoc., Central Park Conservancy, and numerous government agencies: Palisades Interstate Park Commission; NYS Department of Conservation; NYS Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation; National Park Service; NYC Parks and Recreation; Westchester Parks Department. Two conservation events were fundraisers yielding \$500 for the Audubon Society and the Esopus Lighthouse Restoration Commission.

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 more than doubled as well as the number of leaders; the caliber of the activities increased; and the conservation leadership was enhanced with a Vice-Chair for Media Relations, and a Vice-Chair of Conservation Liaisons. This year, 2008, the Conservation Committee delivered 26 events through the generosity of 11 leaders. The list of our many accomplishments this year are itemized below.

For 2010, we shall continue as an umbrella committee sponsoring conservation events initiated by our members; we shall utilize the many relationships we have built in partnering with other conservation organizations to develop a host of conservation activities; we shall continue to be involved in conservation issues; and we shall emphasize the nature weekend format to educate and bring people into nature.

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- January 7 Outdoors Article – Highlands Critical Treasures**
Leader: Skip Doyle
Provide Outdoors author, Fred Drusco background on the Highlands critical treasures: Torne Valley and Ramapo Torne, Graymoor and Anthony's Nose, Fahnestock State Park.
- January 10 Annual Dinner – NY/NoJ Chapter**
Leader: Skip Doyle
Represented the Conservation Committee at this convocation in Manhattan.
- January 13 Executive Committee Meeting – NY/NoJ Chapter**
Leader: Skip Doyle
Represented the Public Services committees; contributed topics: Meetup pollicy and procedures, CYP organization, Annual Conservation Lecture proposal.
- January 25 Trails & Waves – Spring Issue**
Leader: Skip Doyle
Public Service Press: composition and structure of the Public Service committees.
- February 26/27 AMC 132nd Annual Dinner – NY/NoJ Chapter**
Leader: Mary Lindberg
Represented the Conservation Committee at this convocation in Danvers, MA. Key topics: Maine Woods initiative; partnering with the AMC mid-Atlantic office to include a conservation talk component to chapter activities in the Highlands region; reducing AMC's carbon footprint; "No Child Left Inside" developed by CT DEP; AMC's Youth Opportunity Program.
- February 22-24 Nature Conservation-Education-Recreation Retreat Weekend – Graymoor.**
Leaders: Dick Wolfe, Skip Doyle
Weekend of cross-country skiing for both beginner and experienced skiers, ice skating, and nature presentations.
- March 24 AMC New Member – Open House**
Leader: Skip Doyle
Enrolled 100% of participants (10 new members).
Spoke about conservation, hiking, biking, climbing, kayaking, White Mountains huts, Fire Island, backpacking, softball.
- April 15 Chapter Chairs Meeting – Spring**
Leader: Skip Doyle
Represented the Conservation Committee at this convocation.

