

CONSERVATION CORNER

Conservation News & Local Events

By Skip Doyle, Conservation Chair

This summer, I had the pleasure of a combined hiking-biking-kayaking trip in the Lake George region of the Adirondacks. Whenever I enjoy a trek, I take note of the organization sponsoring and maintaining the trail. What I noted about the historic and natural Warren County Bike Trail is that it is the creation of many preservation organizations. That is true, too, of many AMC conservation activities: they are in partnership with other preservationists.

Below are many of the conservation organizations we have partnered with recently. If you would like to volunteer for an activity with one, or have an event that you would like to sponsor under the Conservation Committee umbrella, please contact me (conservation@amc-ny.org).

AMC NY-NoJ Chapter Committees. Committees within our chapter sponsor conservation activities: trail maintenance, hikes that include a lunch-time lecture, river clean-ups, and nature weekends at the Fire Island Cabin to name a few. Consider adding a conservation component to your activities.

AMC – Headquarters and regional offices. The mid-Atlantic office and Boston headquarters coordinate conservation programs across the entire AMC. Examples are the Highlands program and the Mountain Watch program.

Highlands Coalition. The Highlands Conservation Act authorized Congress to put up to \$110 million over 10 years towards land conservation and technical assistance in the Highlands – a region consisting of 3.5 million acres spanning from PA, NJ, NY to CT.

NY-NJ Trail Conference. Maintains over 1,600 miles of trails between the Delaware Water Gap and the Catskills. Participates in land acquisition, and trail planning and trail building.

Scenic Hudson. Involved in land acquisition throughout the Hudson Valley for natural access. Participates in community planning affecting the Hudson River shoreline.

Clearwater. Sponsors Hudson River environmental education, conservation, and celebration – particularly the Clearwater Festival. Offers water-based programs on the sloop Clearwater, and land-based programs through its Tideline Discovery program.

Friends of Old Croton Aqueduct. The OCA is the long, brown path that courses 26 miles from the Croton Dam to NYC.

Walkill Valley Rail Trail Assoc. and Harlem Valley Rail Trail Assoc. These organizations sponsor lengthy rail trails for walking and bicycling.

Esopus Meadows Lighthouse Commission. Currently closed to the public, the Esopus Lighthouse needs skilled and unskilled volunteers to assist with the restoration.

John Burroughs Association. Volunteers are needed both for the semi-annual Slabsides Day and for planning and building a trail on newly acquired property contiguous with the Burroughs Nature Sanctuary.

Open Space Institute. Involved in land acquisition for natural access, and participates in community planning.

Fire Island Wilderness Coalition. Assistance is needed to preserve this officially designed wilderness area.

Conservation work is undertaken by 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; Central Park Conservancy; Westchester Parks Department,** and many more – you will see their credits at the trail heads and park entrances.