

NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 129
Confluence, PA 15424
www.kta-hike.org



Serving Pennsylvania's Hikers Since 1956

Winter 2007

Keystone Trails Association Preserving Pennsylvania's Footpaths

ATV Proposals Threaten Hiking Trails

By Paul Shaw

In recent months, two proposals were made that, combined, would create more than 100 miles of ATV corridor trails in Pennsylvania state forest lands.

North Central Regional Planning and Development Commission Proposal

One, a feasibility study presented at a public meeting in Ridgway, Elk County on December 5, would create a 792-mile spider web network of ATV trails in Cameron, Clearfield, Elk, Jefferson, McKean and Potter counties using a combination of private and public lands and township roads. Over half of the trail network would consist of trails that are currently illegal.

Approximately 14% of the network, or roughly 110 miles, would be located on state forest lands, and would cross the Quehanna and Susquehannock Trails, and the Bucktail Path. Affected state forests include the Susquehannock, Elk, and Moshannon. Success for the project depends on the cooperative support of dozens of private landowners whose property would be accessed by ATVs, and on the state changing its policies concerning ATV access

to state forest roads and lands. The study recommends focusing on private lands to start, recognizing the difficulty in changing DCNR policy.

The \$60,000 study, prepared for the North Central Regional Planning and Development Commission in Ridgway, was funded in part by DCNR through monies received from ATV registrations.

"Renovo Connection" Plan

The other proposal was made to DCNR by the Central PA ATV Association on November 6. This so-called "Renovo Connection" has not been made public, but is believed to be a 24-mile connector trail that would run from the Bloody Skillet ATV site near Orviston, Centre County to the Whiskey Springs ATV site west of Renovo, Clinton County. Except for a short stretch through the boroughs of Renovo and South Renovo, the route would extend entirely through Sproul State Forest. This proposal would impact the Chuck Keiper and Donut Hole trails. DCNR is expected to respond to the proposal sometime in January or February.

KTA's Position

At its meeting on January 6, the KTA Board of Directors approved and sent a letter to DCNR Secretary DiBerardinis urg-

(Continued on page 4)



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NEWSLETTER EDITORS

Barbara & Al Wiemann
4782 Sylvan Dr., Northampton, PA 18067
610-262-6977
Bwiemann@verizon.net

This newsletter is published four times a year as a service to its members by Keystone Trails Association. Deadlines for submitting material are 1/1, 4/1, 7/1 and 10/1. Opinions expressed are those of the listed authors. The Editors encourage submissions reflecting all viewpoints for publication, but reserve the right to edit for reasons of space or to prevent violent confrontation. You are encouraged to submit your material on disc or via e-mail.

New members are always welcome. A membership application is located on the back page of this newsletter.

KEYSTONE TRAILS ASSOCIATION

Paul Shaw, Executive Director
107 North Front St.
Harrisburg, PA 17101
717-215-8339
ktahike@verizon.net

Pamela Metzger, Administrator
P. O. Box 129
Confluence, PA 15424-0129
814-395-9696
info@kta-hike.org

www.kta-hike.org

2007 Trail Care Schedule

Trail Care weekends begin Friday evening at the designated campsite. A full day of trail work on Saturday is followed by an evening of campfire sociability and possibly a meal out at a local restaurant (Dutch treat). After a morning of additional trail work, the weekend concludes about noon on Sunday. If you can't spare an entire weekend, you can join the group for whatever portion is convenient. No experience or special skills are required. Tools and work gloves will be provided.

Contact the trip leader to register for Trail Care weekends.

March 23-25 — Keystone State Park

Stay in cabins at the park.
Leader: Jack Leashor, 724-744-0675

May 18-20 — Donut Hole Trail

Camp at Hyner Run State Park.
Leader: Joe Healey, 570-655-4979

April 13-15 — Erosion Control Seminar and Training

Camp at Getty Ridge Camp, McAlvey's Fort, PA.
See page 8 for details.
Leaders: Joe Healey, 570-655-4979, jnlhealey@aol.com or Carl Lorence, 717-234-1524, pastumbler@aol.com

July 27-29 — Mid State Trail, State College Region

Camp at Poe Paddy State Park
Leader: Tom Thwaites, 814-237-7703

August 10-12 — Quehanna Trail

Camp at Parker Dam State Park
Leader: Ralph Seeley, 814-355-2933

April 27-29 — Link Trail

Camp at Cowans Gap State Park Group Campground.
Leader: Mel Cooper, 814-643-2641 or lunchtime@pennswoods.net

September 14-16 — Salt Springs State Park

Camp at Salt Springs State Park
Leader: Joe Healey, 570-655-4979

May 12 — Basic Wilderness First Aid Training

Held at ATC Scott Farm near Carlisle.
See page 8 for details.
Leaders: Joe Healey, 570-655-4979, jnlhealey@aol.com or Carl Lorence, 717-234-1524, pastumbler@aol.com

October 5-7 — Delaware State Forest

Camp at Promised Land State Park
Leader: John Motz, 570-236-1462

November 2-4 — Mid State Trail, Everett Region

Camp at Woy Bridge Campground
Leader: John Stein, 717-533-3679

2007 Summer Trail Crew

Crews assemble on Tuesday evening for dinner and orientation and work full days Wednesday thru Saturday, and a half-day on Sunday. KTA provides a place to camp, meals, tools, work gloves, safety equipment, and instruction by crew leaders. Volunteers are accepted for one day, a weekend, all week, or the entire crew season. There are tasks for everyone.

For an application, contact Joe Healey, 93 Cedarwood Drive, Laflin, PA 18702, phone 570-655-4979, or email jnlhealey@aol.com.

June 5-10 — Chuck Keiper Trail

Leader: Rich Scanlon, 717 242-1644
Build two bridges, one over Middle Branch on the Cross Connector on the Chuck Keiper Trail and one bridge over Huff Run on the Garby Trail which connects the Donut Hole Trail to the Chuck Keiper.
Camp at a private camp off Coon Road in Sproul State Forest

Build a new seven mile section of the Pinchot Trail on recently acquired land in the Watres Water Shed.
Camp at the Manny Gordon Picnic Area

June 12-17 — Pinchot Trail

Leader: Joe Healey, 570 655-4979

June 19-24 — Mid State Trail Tioga Region

Leader: Pete Fleszar, 717-583-2093
Crew will be working their way toward the New York boarder building new trail.
Camp at Twin Streams Campground, Morris, PA

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Connecting With Nature — On The Hiking Trail with Thyra Sperry

As we begin the New Year, I want to thank you for your support, and note some recent news and highlights since our last newsletter. While we like to think of the simplicity of “getting away from it all” on a hiking trail, things are not that simple these days. We are in competition for trails.

Economic development is now the driving factor with our legislators and DCNR in determining the public use of trails in rural Pennsylvania.

Just as the Link Trail and Mid-State Trail each seek support from local municipalities, this is also the goal of the motorized recreationers. ATV groups are working hard to get money and support for their long distance ATV trail projects. They are touting ATVs as the economic salvation for rural Pennsylvania.

A proposed 24-mile ATV connector trail in Sproul State Forest is being touted as economic development for Renovo; it would cut across the Chuck Keiper Trail, endangers two wild areas, two natural areas and a gas pipeline. (See page 1)

Grants and Trail Volunteer Hours Bank

As part of our grant application to the Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), we are setting up a Trail Volunteer Hours Bank.

Trail maintenance hours are especially important as we set up the trail volunteer hours bank. The documented volunteer hours are our local match for our trails maintenance grant request recently submitted to DCNR on behalf of nine KTA member clubs. These volunteer hours are worth many thousands of dollars in the local match to the hiking trails community. Time is money; don't forget to submit your hours to Lorraine Healey, Trail Care Committee.

Membership

As we seek to increase our membership, we seek your support. One of the most effective methods used to increase membership is to solicit names and addresses from other hiking organizations. Exchanging membership lists with other like organizations can greatly increase our numbers.

Western Trail Symposium, Outdoor Conference, and Greenway and Trails Summit

At the **Western Trail Symposium** in Butler and Mercer County, someone commented to me “What are you doing out here so far from Harrisburg?”

Many of our hiking friends from the western part of the state participated in the Western PA Trails Symposium, presented by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council and PA Recreation and Park Society. Topics of great interest were the impact that hiking can make in bringing economic development to communities, the connection between health and hiking, marketing hiking trails, protecting viewsheds and information about signage standards.

We will be attending the **Governor's Outdoor Conference** in March at State College. Critical issues will be explored surrounding people's connection to the outdoors. Our youngsters are growing up with little appreciation of the wonderful experiences available to them in the outdoors.

We have been invited to co-sponsor the **3rd Annual Greenways and Trails Summit** to be held in Latrobe in May. Our presentation for this event includes an outdoors program and programs on hiking topics.

Statewide Hiking Schedule

Available on our website. If you are traveling and seeking hiking companions, or you would like to plan a vacation in another part of the state, check out the hike schedule before you leave home.

Keep on Hiking,
Thyra Sperry,
President

Trail Views from the Executive Director

The Economic Impact of Hikers

How many times have you heard that hikers and backpackers don't spend as much money as other outdoor enthusiasts, and therefore have less economic clout than ATV riders, hunters and fishermen, among others? Two studies recently released by the Outdoor Industry Foundation (OIF) challenge that assertion, and indicate a sustained public interest in hiking and backpacking.



In one study, 4000 Americans age 16 and over were interviewed in 2005 about their outdoor recreation pursuits. According to the survey:

- The U.S. has 76.7 million hikers, defined as people who have hiked on an unpaved trail at least once in the past year. There are also 13.5 million backpackers, people who, in the last 12 months, have gone on an overnight backpacking trip more than ¼ mile from their vehicle.
- In the northeast U.S., 33% of the population are hikers and 5% are backpackers. For Pennsylvania, this converts to more than three million hikers and 621,000 backpackers.
- The mean annual number of hikes per hiker is five and the mean annual number of trips per backpacker is two. However, some devoted hikers and backpackers go far more often, skewing the averages to 11 hikes and 6 backpack trips per year.
- The average age of hikers is 38; the mean age of backpackers is 31.
- 56% of hikers are male and 44% are female; backpackers are 74% male.

In a separate 2005 survey, 14,000 on-line interviews were conducted to determine the economic impacts of various non-motorized outdoor recreation categories. Extrapolated data reveals:

- Pennsylvania's hikers spent \$955 million in 2005 including \$864 million for trip-related costs and \$91 million for equipment and services.
- Pennsylvania's backpackers spent \$122 million including \$111 million for trip-related costs and \$11 million for equipment and services.
- Pennsylvania's hikers and backpackers support 12,500 jobs and paid \$176.9 million in taxes related to their activities in 2005.
- The economic impact of hikers and backpackers in Pennsylvania exceeds all other non-motorized outdoor recreation categories except camping. Hiking and backpacking combined exceed categories such as bicycling, hunting, fishing and snow sports.

We've got more clout than we realized! Both studies can be downloaded at www.outdoorindustryfoundation.org.

See you on the trail!

Paul

Consolidated KTA Grant Proposal Under Review

By Paul Shaw

Last fall, KTA submitted a consolidated grant proposal to DCNR on behalf of 9 member clubs to fund the purchase of trail building and maintenance equipment, shelter construction, and signs. A decision on this proposal is expected in early spring. If the proposal is funded, disbursements are likely this summer.

Clubs Should Plan Now for Next Grant

KTA intends to submit another proposal to DCNR in September that would help clubs fund additional purchases of equipment and materials.

Clubs that are part of the current proposal and clubs interested in the next round should plan to attend the Spring Council Meeting at King's Gap on Saturday March 31 (see page 5 for details). KTA is scheduling a brief workshop after the meeting to review grant requirements, and to get clubs thinking about next September's application

ATV Proposals

(Continued from page 1)

ing DCNR to maintain its moratorium on new ATV trails on existing state forest lands and to maintain its ban of ATVs on state forest roads. In its letter, KTA maintains that creating corridor trails on public lands provides riders with more opportunities to "jump off trail" and ride illegally.

Some riders refuse to stay on approved trails because they claim the trails are too boring, and instead seek out places like wetlands, streams and vernal ponds where they cause the most environmental damage. ATV mufflers and exhaust systems cause noise that can frighten viewable wildlife and degrade the wilderness experience for others. KTA urges DCNR to continue to focus on facilitating purchase and development of private lands for ATV use.

Voice Your Concern

With more than 250,000 registered ATVs in Pennsylvania and double-digit growth in sales each year, there is ongoing and increasing pressure to provide ATV access to public lands. Non-motorized recreational users of the state forests (including hikers and backpackers!) are urged to share their opinions with Secretary DiBerardinis (DCNR, 7th Floor, Rachel Carson State Office Building, P.O. Box 8767, Harrisburg PA 17105-8767) and with their local legislators. Residents of Clinton and Centre counties near the Sproul State Forest can forward their comments on the Renovo Connection to the area's legislators, Rep. Hanna and Senators Wozniak and Corman.

New KTA Hiking Events and Revamped Spring Meeting

By Pam Metzger

What better time than a 50th anniversary to implement changes? With the new strategic plan firmly in mind, the KTA Board is looking to our hike weekends as a way to reach out to new hikers (and, we hope, new members) all across the Commonwealth.

Board Revamps Spring Meeting

One big change for KTA will be what many will see as a return to ‘The Way Things Used to Be.’ Once, KTA Spring Council meetings were just that—Council meetings. Then a hike weekend for the membership was added. After some ten years of alternating between Renovo and Wellsboro each spring, the decision has been made to go back to meetings only in the spring. The demands on our council members’ time are ever-increasing and it is hoped that by reducing their obligation to us to a one-day meeting, we will draw more participation from our clubs and give KTA the kind of leadership it needs from its club representatives. Many members have expressed how grateful they are for the opportunity to hike with the club’s Board and Council members at our summer weekends and all council members are encouraged to participate in at least one of our summer excursions.

Council to Meet at Kings Gap

On March 31, Council will meet at King’s Gap Environmental Education & Training Center near Mt. Holly Springs. The William C. Forrey Training Center, housed in a beautiful stone mansion once owned by the Masland family of Carlisle, is perfectly suited to lure the members of our governing body indoors for a few hours. Following a morning meeting, a brief workshop explaining KTA’s application to DCNR for a consolidated grant to benefit member clubs will be presented by board member Norm Lacasse, along with information on the new round of grant funding. After lunch, Council members will clear the cobwebs with a short hike on the grounds of the Center before heading for home.

Don’t worry—we’re still going back to Wellsboro in even-numbered years, although we’re going to look at ways to restructure the weekend so that Council members get to hike. Suggestions to accomplish this are welcome!

Two Hiking Weekends

Arising from the ever-growing Prowl the Sproul event held each July in the Sproul State Forest and last year’s inaugural Absorb the Forbes in Forbes State Forest, KTA has joined forces with the Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation to offer four events this year. Both the Prowl and ATF make a return appearance on the calendar on July 20-22 and September 14-16 respectively. They’ll follow the traditional weekend format, with a full array of hikes on both Saturday and Sunday, lots of food, and a few surprises as well.

Two New Hiking Days

Two new locations are also on the roster, each event offering something a little different to KTA and PPF members and, we hope, a new audience. On Saturday, June 2, we’ll offer our contribution to PA Hiking Week and National Trails Day by sponsoring a day of hiking at Hickory Run State Park near White Haven and the Lehigh Gorge. Our friends at the Pocono Outdoor Club have graciously accepted the invitation to plan some great hiking, so hikes of all kinds will be offered—short strolls suitable for families with young children to longer, more challenging all-day excursions. If you’ve never seen Hickory Run’s Boulder Field, one of America’s National Natural Landmarks, you must make plans to join us for the day.

Oil Creek Outdoors

On Saturday, June 9, meet us in Oil Creek State Park in Venango County for Oil Creek Outdoors, a multi-disciplinary affair. That’s just a fancy way of saying there will be a little bit of everything! Since Oil Creek is home to a 10-mile paved bike trail as well as the 36-mile long Girard Hiking

Trail, a calm stream for pleasant paddling, and a unique place in the state’s history, the focus for OCO is “Try Something New!” We’ll offer contests and games for kids of all ages, and plenty of opportunity to get your feet wet (maybe literally) with something other than hiking. There’ll be hiking, though, never fear! With Allegheny Outdoor Club putting their expert touch on the biking aspects and Shenango Outing Club on deck to handle hiking, we’re in good hands.

2007 KTA Meetings & Hiking Events

March 31 — Spring Council & Board Meetings

May 25-June 3 — PA Hiking Week

June 2 — Hickory Run State Park Hiking Day

June 9 — Oil Creek State Park Outdoors Day

July 7 — Board of Directors Meeting

July 20-22 — Prowl the Sproul Hiking Weekend

Sept. 14-16 — Absorb the Forbes Hiking Weekend

Sept. 28-30 — Annual Meeting & Hiking Weekend

Watch your mailbox in early spring for a catalog of all our hiking events, including the annual meeting at Blue Knob Ski Resort.

PA Hiking Week, May 25-June 3

By Paul Shaw

Pennsylvania Hiking Week is a great opportunity for clubs to promote themselves and hiking by taking advantage of several promotional opportunities. KTA is jointly promoting this week of hiking activities with DCNR. KTA is compiling a list of hikes on its website and will be sending press releases to media throughout the state. KTA, assisted by Pocono Outdoor Club, is co-sponsoring with Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation a variety of hikes at Hickory Run State Park on Saturday, June 2. Check out the KTA website for details.

All clubs are urged to schedule hikes in support of Pennsylvania Hiking Week and to forward details to info@kta-hike.org.

Along Our Trails

Allegheny Front Trail

If the proposed Resource Recovery LLC landfill permit is approved, the AFT could lose the I-80 Bridge Vista, and 5,800 acres of forest land and eleven acres of wetlands would be destroyed and fragmented. The development would be north of I-80 in Rush and Snow Shoe Townships, Centre County.

Currently RRLLC is only moving forward in Rush Township, which has no zoning ordinances. The portion of the land that sits in Snow Shoe Township is zoned forest/open space. Due to strong opposition from Snow Shoe Township, RRLLC withdrew their request to supervisors to rezone the area. The original project proposed 2,300 acres of landfill footprint with mountains of garbage 250-280 feet high and the capacity to receive 9,000 tons of garbage daily. A dedicated I-80 interchange would serve the project, which would also include an incinerator and industrial park.

For more information, see www.stoplandfill.com, the web site of People Protecting Communities, a citizens' group that is opposing the development.



The I-80 Vista on the Allegheny Front Trail, looking north. The proposed landfill would be beyond the interstate bridge, initially covering 350 acres with refuse piles hundreds of feet high. Will the view have to be renamed Landfill Mountain Vista? Photo by Mary Ann Williams.

Appalachian Trail

Scott Farm Caretaker

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy is seeking a caretaker for the ATC Volunteer Trail Crew and Training Facility (Scott Farm), located along the AT near Carlisle. The caretaker lives in the four-bedroom farmhouse and is responsible for paying utilities, house and grounds keeping, public contact, and minor improvements to the facility in exchange for lodging. Contact Michele Miller, PO Box 625, Boiling Springs, PA 17007, 717-258-5771, mmil-ler@atconf.org.

New 501 Shelter Caretaker

Army retiree Ron Heimbach, currently employed by DCNR as a ranger for the Weiser Conservation District, is the new 501 Shelter caretaker. A Pine Grove native, he is familiar with the area and looking forward to a long-term residency.

Biennial Conference

The 2007 ATC Biennial Conference, featuring hikes, workshops, excursions, entertainment, and fellowship, will be held July

13-20 at Ramapo College, Mahwah, NJ.

Go to www.ramapo2007.org for information and online registration, which will begin about March 1.



Darlington Trail

Lower Paxton Township in Dauphin County is interested in obtaining easements from property owners along the now abandoned section of the Darlington Trail east of the Susquehanna River. Once easements are obtained, the Susquehanna Appalachian Trail Club is willing to assist with trail work.

The old trail route from Hocker Park on top of Blue Mountain through a portion of the Boyd Big Tree Conservation Area (red trail) is hikeable (but not marked as the Darlington Trail). From about the middle of Boyd, the old trail veers off the top of the ridge onto private land. Some of the old orange blazes are still visible.

Great Allegheny Passage

The GAP recreation trail, which utilizes abandoned rail corridors from McKeesport to Washington DC, is now complete. Total distance is 316 miles, with more to come. The next step is a nine-mile stretch between McKeesport and the Pittsburgh city limits. This section is through private property and will require extensive negotiations. The trail has already been built through the Waterfront in Homestead. The goal is a 2008 completion for Pittsburgh's 250th anniversary.

Mid State Trail

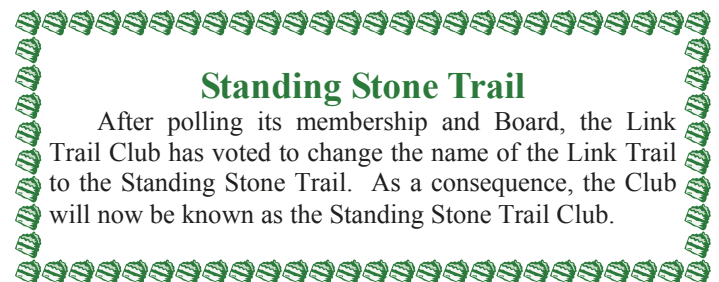
John Stein, Everett Region Trail Manager, has prepared a 30-minute computer slide program about the Mid State Trail. He is willing to present it to groups. Contact him at steinhike@cs.com or PO Box 9, Hershey, PA 17033-0009.

North Country Trail

The Butler Chapter of the North Country National Scenic Trail is planning to replace the Bear's Mouth Bridge in Game Lands 95 near Parker.

The Wampum Chapter of the NCNST ended a busy trail building season by obtaining permission to rebuild a half-mile of trail on a new landowner's property.

The Allegheny National Forest Chapter has constructed a bridge that they planned to install on the NC/Baker Trail north of Vowinckel in January. The ANF Chapter contributed over 2000 hours of trail maintenance to ANF.



Standing Stone Trail

After polling its membership and Board, the Link Trail Club has voted to change the name of the Link Trail to the Standing Stone Trail. As a consequence, the Club will now be known as the Standing Stone Trail Club.

My Favorite Trail Is...

The Hawkeye Trail

by Ed Lawrence

In his knotty little tale, *The Purloined Letter*, Edgar Allan Poe's narrator praises the 'twofold luxury' of meditation and meerschau. Hikers are more apt to be drawn to the dual pleasures of unhurried companionship and unhurried contemplation found along the trail, and so I was reminded of the story recently, while taking an entirely pleasant walk along the 7.2 mile Hawkeye loop in the north east corner of Lycoming County, just up the road from Shunk.

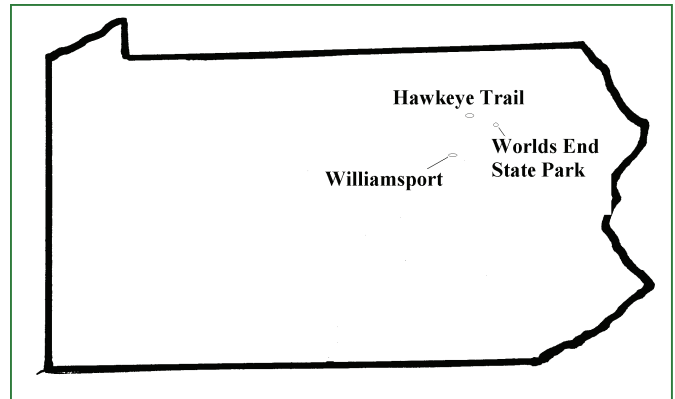
In his tale, Poe explores the psychological blind alleys that allow a thing to be hidden in plain sight, or overlooked because of being excessively obvious. Thus the fate of the Hawkeye Trail, which, despite its double billing with the Old Loggers Path on the DCNR trail map, eludes mention in any of the Pennsylvania hiking guides, including KTA's own *Pennsylvania Hiking Trails* compendium. There are two probable explanations for this oversight. First, the Hawkeye is officially designated as a cross country ski trail, a kind of titular camouflage, and second, it is undoubtedly overshadowed by the Old Loggers Path, much as Sherlock Holmes has eclipsed the originality of Poe's marvelous Dupin.

Its status as a x-country ski trail may have consigned it to conceptual limbo but, to a hiker's advantage, on the ground it means that its 500 ft. loss in elevation is inclined to be gradual, bottoming out near Rock Run within the first mile and a half, with the climb out encompassing much of the remainder of the hike. Also, a pair of beneficial features are the two cross connectors that permit a shortened loop, as well as two attached smaller loop trails, the

Sand Spring Trail (2.96 miles) in the Devils Elbow Natural Area and the Sharp Shinned trail (2.39 miles) which can be interlaced to add mileage to a day-hike.

The parking area for the Hawkeye trail is located at the hairpin turn off Ellenton Mountain Road (SR 1013) three miles north of Ellenton in the newly configured Loyalsock State Forest. Honestly, it doesn't take a sleuth to find it.

The DCNR map of the Old Loggers Path and Hawkeye Cross County Ski Trails is available on the web at www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/hiking/loggermap.aspx or from the Bureau of Forestry, Forest District #20, 274 Arbutus Park Rd., Bloomsburg, PA 17815, 570 387-4255.



[Editor's Note: Do you have a favorite trail that other hikers should explore? Tell us why. We plan to feature a trail in each issue. See page 2 for editor contact information.]

Hiker Alerts

Appalachian Trail

In Maryland, the Hagerstown Watershed property has been posted with "Closed to the Public" signs. This closure does not apply to AT hikers as long as they stay on the trail and blue blazed side trails.

Horse-Shoe Trail

The Horse-Shoe relocation in the Stony Valley area of Game Land #211 in Dauphin County (reported in the Fall newsletter) is 6.2 miles long. The former route was about 9 miles. The trail route shown on KTA AT map 7 & 8 is now obsolete. See the Horse-Shoe guide and map, 23rd ed., 2006, available from the HSTC, PO Box 182, Birchrunville, PA 19421.

Mid State Trail

After more than two years of closure, the salvage logging at Beaver Pond has been completed. The Mid State Trail is now open and can be hiked from PA 26 down through Shavers Greek Valley and up to the end of Jackson Trail. The Ironstone loop is also open from Pine Swamp Road to Pine Grove Trail but needs some reblazing near Beaver Pond.

Tuscarora Trail

The Wech's Hill section of trail is closed from the border of the Tuscarora State Forest at mile 5.1 to mile 12.4 at Rt. 74 (Section 2, south to north mileage).

Hiker Health

Cold Feet

Are you bothered by cold feet when hiking in below freezing temperatures? Moisture (sweat) is probably the culprit. Your feet can produce up to a cup of water per day, and if it is trapped in your socks and boot linings, your feet will suffer. Wearing vapor barrier socks, thin non-breathable layers which trap moisture next to your feet, can help. Put them on over thin polyester liners and under your outer socks. Outer socks and boots will stay dry and warm. Use vapor barriers only when the temperature is below freezing. Durable commercial socks are available, but plastic grocery bags provide (cheap) short-term protection.

Lyme Disease Booklet

The Lyme Disease Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania, Inc., an all-volunteer Pennsylvania non-profit organization, offers a booklet entitled *Lyme Disease and Associated Tick-Borne Diseases: The Basics*, 4th edition, 2004, by Douglas W. Fearn. There is no charge for the booklets, but the group hopes that anyone who requests copies will make a donation to cover the cost of printing (35 cents each). To order copies, contact the Lyme Disease Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania, Inc., PO Box 944, Chadds Ford, PA 19317, 610-388-7333. Or you can print your own copy from the organization's web site www.Lymepa.org which contains information about Lyme disease, chapter programs, support groups, and links.

Maintainers Corner

Invasive Species

Invasive species that can overrun a trail are a concern for most maintainers. But how can you recognize these troublemakers? Visit www.invasive.org/eastern/midatlantic for a pictorial guide to your enemies. The site also provides suggestions for prevention and control of each plant. Information on the web site is based on the 82- page publication *Plant Invaders of Mid-Atlantic Natural Areas*, published by the National Park Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Water Management and Erosion Control Workshop

KTA and the Standing Stone Trail Club are sponsoring an Erosion Control Training Weekend April 13-15, 2007 at Getty Ridge Camp near McAlvey's Fort. Learn the ins and outs of E&S (erosion and sediment) and water management from a conservation district erosion control technician and long time trail maintainer.

For natural surface trails, water is the enemy. Learn the ways of the enemy and common techniques for protecting your trail from attack. The course includes basic concepts for water management, erosion assessment, and typical treadway structures used to manage the enemy. Food, fun, and hard physical labor opportunities provided. This will be hands-on training, so bring your gloves. For questions about the course, contact instructor John Motz at 570-236-1462.

Pre-registration is required and limited to 25 people. See page 2.

Basic Wilderness First Aid Course

KTA and the Standing Stone Trail Club will conduct a Basic Wilderness First Aid Course on May 12 at the Appalachian Trail Conservancy Scott Farm near Carlisle. The eight-hour course will be taught by John Buburchuck from Windbar under the auspices of the Bucks County Community College. The course is free, thanks to DCNR's Matt Beaver, who provided funding for the course. Pre-registration is required and the group is limited to 25 students. See page 2 for registration information.

Trail Care Reports

By Joe Healey

In October, the Trail Care bunch worked in the Delaware State Forest on the Bruce Lake Trail System cutting blowdowns and brushing the trails. Also, a crew was busy painting blazes. We camped at Promised Land State Park. The volunteers were **John Motz (leader), Tom Bastian, Chris Dunlap, Carl Gamang, Ann and Carl Griffin, Pat Gwin, Joe and Lorraine Healey, Elwood Loudenslager,**



John Motz and Susan Prendergast

Sue Prendergast, Kathy Sieminski, Gordon Slaugh, and Barb Wiemann. Between the work and travel time, a total of 194 volunteer hours was tallied.

Trail Care for November was at the Quehanna Trail with camping at Parker Dam State Park. Ralph Seeley kept the volunteers busy doing sidehill and general trail maintenance. The work crew consisted of **Ralph Seeley (leader), Tom Bastian, Leo Boyer, Joe Clark, Pete Fleszar, Curt Henry, Elwood Loudenslager, Ginny and Jim Owen, Mary Pitzer, Ed Rakowsky, Louis Sabo, Rich Scanlon, Mary Beth Sellers, Louise Sis, John Stein, Tom Thwaites, Neal Watson, and Pat Yale.** 355 volunteer hours were contributed during the weekend.

Volunteer Opportunities

GPS Help Needed

By Pete Fleszar

The Mid State Trail Association needs improved track location data for both Mid State Trail and other trails/paths nearby in order to communicate better both with hikers through improved maps, and land managers who allow the footpath on their land. The MSTA can't just digitize off air photos because the trail is usually well hidden by trees, and is very narrow and often rocky.



Ideally, the MSTA would like at least two volunteers independently to walk each trail area, hopefully covering both a part of the MST itself, and a loop on a fire road or other feature visible on air photos as a check. When making maps, the MSTA GIS person would compare your tracks to the existing map and take the best average.

MSTA prefers to receive electronic track files, and waypoint files of notable features along the path (such as parking lots, benchmarks, view points, waterfalls, marked surveyed boundaries, etc.), and any notes of trail conditions.

Although volunteers do not need anywhere near this degree of elaboration, you can check www.pahikes.com for "hike reports" to see the types of information that the MSTA would find of interest. Volunteers are welcome to share the information they collect with this or another forum as well.

The areas where coverage is most needed are State Game Lands in Blair and Bedford counties in south central PA, with some data needs in north central Pennsylvania, too. The ideal time to perform this work is when the leaves are off the trees.

Upon signing up, MSTA will supply volunteers with two copies of an existing trail map for the area, so you can return one with your notes, and keep one. MSTA would also be interested in knowing how many hours volunteers put in both on the trail and driving. If you are interested, contact Pete Fleszar at footpaths@fleszar.org for further details.

MST Maintainers Needed

John Stein has openings for two trail overseers on the Mid State Trail in Bedford County. Tools, training, and advice provided. Contact him at steinhike@cs.com or Box 9, Hershey, PA 17033.

2006 Annual Appeal Contributors

KTA members and friends have contributed more than \$3,400 to the 2006 Annual Appeal as of January 6.

Individuals: Jean Aron; Derry Bernath; Michael H. Borovicka; Gary E. Bortner; Melvin H. Bowman; Jeffrey R. Buehler; Paul A. Burns; Mark H. Christy; Shirley B. Clark; William C. Close; Charles D. Connor, MD; Cecil L. Dobbins; Hugh S. Downing; Chris Dunlap; Frank T. Edwards; Paul Feighner; Michael C. Finn; Christopher & Beth Firme; Henry Frank; Charles A. Glanville; Jeffrey B. Goldman; William P. Gray; Keith B. Groff; Frederick L. Haack; Mary M. Heinlein; Cass Janco; Jon A. Kapecki; Edward F. Kenna; Donald H. Kirkland; Ellen W. Konecny; Norman Lacasse, Edward Lawrence & Catherine McLaughlin; Carl E. Lorence; Shawna M. Marshall; Michael D. Pavelek, II; Mary E. Pitzer; Martha B. Quigley; Edward D. Rakowsky; Daryl W. Rice; Richard & Candy Scanlon; John Schieber; Catherine Shade; William D. Shaffer; Edward L. Shaffner; John H. Shissler; David R. Singer; Harry J. Smith; Thyra Sperry & Dick Martin; David B. Sprigle; John E. Springman; Ronald A. Stanley; Richard Steinhauser; Thomas R. Stott; Irene Szabo; Thomas T. Thwaites; George D. Van Rossum; Carol A. Witzeman; Daniel Wolfe; Mary Young
Clubs: Chester County Trail Club; Cumberland Valley AT Club

Contributions are still welcome and may be sent to PO Box 129, Confluence, PA 15424-0129.



Trail Care Volunteers Move a Bridge Girder to the Work Site. See page 12 for the completed bridge. Photo by Mary Pitzer.

KTA Board Actions

At its January, 2007 meeting, the Board of Directors took the following actions:

- **Grants and Loans to Member Clubs** – In future budgets, KTA will include a line item for grants/loans. Clubs requesting a grant/loan will submit a written application by an annually announced deadline. The Board will prioritize the requests and award grants/loans as funds allow and projects meet criteria. This year KTA did not include a grants/loans amount in its budget because clubs had an opportunity to meet this need through the DCNR grant.
 - **ATV Proposals for Public Land** – Approved a letter to be sent to DCNR Secretary DiBerardinis. See page 1.
 - **Increase number of members on Board** – The Board voted unanimously to propose a change to Bylaws Article 4.3, changing the number of Directors to at least nine and not more than fifteen Directors. At least three and not more than five Directors shall be elected each year to three year terms. Council will vote on this at its meeting in March.
 - **Trail Club Services Committee** - The Board voted to propose a Bylaws change to Article 9, changing the name Trail Policies Committee to the Trail Club Services Committee, since the former name does not convey the true mission of the Committee. Council will vote on this at its March meeting.
 - **Representative-At-Large Vacancies** – The Board voted that RAL vacancies be filled by Council in a special election at the next Council meeting after the vacancy occurs, with the vote by Council either in person, by mail, or email.
 - **KTA Name Change** – The Board voted unanimously that KTA can better fulfill its mission with a different name and authorized the President to appoint an ad hoc committee of at least three Directors and as many others as she wishes to name to gather organizational names, rank them, and present these names to the Board and then Council for consideration and action.
- In other business, the Board discussed:
- **“Green Fund” Investments** - The Executive Director will investigate funds that might meet KTA needs.
 - **Trail Volunteers Hours Bank** – The Board discussed the procedures needed to set up the Bank, which will be used as a match for grant funds.
 - **Strategic Plan** – Of the 33 items in the plan adopted last year, 11 have been accomplished, 11 are underway, and 11 await action.

Keystone Trails Association Statement of Assets, Liabilities, and Net Income September 30, 2006 and 2005

ASSETS	2006	2005
Current assets		
Cash	\$151,335	\$162,231
Investments	32,559	28,572
Accounts receivable	3,722	1,307
Inventory	30,558	18,643
Total current assets	218,174	210,753
Property and equipment	14,093	18,405
TOTAL ASSETS	232,267	229,158
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current liabilities		
Sales tax payable	--	21
Net assets Temporarily Restricted	2,515	225
Unrestricted	229,752	228,912
Total	232,267	229,137
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	232,267	229,158

Allegheny National Forest Forest Plan to be Released in March

The final revised Forest Plan and environmental impact statement should be available to the public during the third week of March. The documents will be available on the web at www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/allegheny/projects/forest_plan_revision.

The public comment period for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement of the ANF's Forest Plan revision drew 8,277 official comments. Eighty percent supported the Friends of Allegheny Wilderness (FAW) proposal to include eight wilderness areas in the Forest.

By law, wilderness does not have to be virgin land. Wilderness designation allows uses such as hunting, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, but protects land from logging, oil and gas drilling, and off-road recreation.

With the completion of the Forest Plan, FAW is now turning its attention to educating the Commonwealth's Congressional delegation about the importance of wilderness, since ultimately it requires an act of Congress to designate wilderness.

Some ANF Statistics

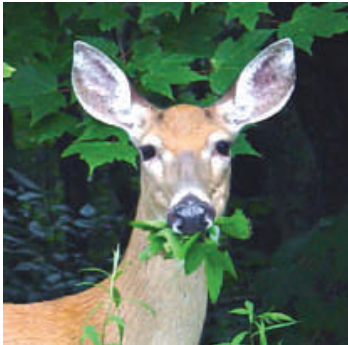
Since 1987, 99 percent of all monies generated by the Allegheny National Forest came from harvesting trees. About 5,500 acres have been logged each year (the Forest contains about 513,000 acres). There are about 7,000 acres of producing oil and gas wells. 688 new wells were drilled in 2005, while 15 wells were plugged. There are 219 miles of hiking trails and 53 miles of cross-country ski trails in the Forest.

Court Upholds PGC Deer Management Plan

On January 10, Commonwealth Court dismissed, with prejudice, the Unified Sportsmen of Pennsylvania's challenge to the Pennsylvania Game Commission's deer management program. The decision to throw out the case was made "with prejudice," meaning that the lawsuit may not be re-filed.

"Today's court ruling is a strong statement that the Game Commission's deer management program is being conducted in a sound, methodical and scientific manner," according to PGC Executive Director Carl G. Roe. "We believe that most hunters and the general public recognize that the need to reduce and stabilize our state's deer herd is a short-term pain that we must endure in order to achieve long-term gains."

Since 2000, the Game Commission has worked to implement a deer management program that takes into account the concerns of all Pennsylvanians, and aims to improve the health of the state's deer herd; to encourage healthy habitat, which deer and all other wildlife depend on; and to reduce deer-human conflicts. The plan is available on the PGC web site at www.pgc.state.pa.us.



PPFF Announces Awards Program 1st Year to Honor CCC Veterans

The Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation has established an awards program to recognize government individuals or agencies, parks, forests, and friends groups who make outstanding contributions to the protection and enhancement of state parks and forests.



This year's highest honor, the PPFF Keystone Legacy Award, will honor the living Civilian Conservation Corps members who served in Pennsylvania during the 1930s and 40s.

"We would like all Civilian Conservation Corps members to contact us, so that we can honor their service to the state that helped fight forest fires, plant trees, build roads, buildings, picnic areas, swimming areas,

campgrounds and create many state parks," PPFF President Marci Mowery said.

PPFF is the statewide nonprofit organization that supports Pennsylvania's 117 state parks and 2.1 million acres of forest.

D&LNHC Relocates Offices

The Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor has moved to 2750 High Moore Park Road, Easton, PA 18042, 610-923-3548. The office formerly located in Slatington is now in Lehigh at the Lehigh Borough Annex, 110 North Third St., 2nd Floor, Room 220, Lehigh, PA 18235, 610-377-4063.

The D&LNHC is developing the 160-mile long D & L Trail, which will extend from Bristol to Wilkes-Barre. Open segments include the Delaware Canal, Lehigh Canal, and Lehigh Gorge State Park

"PA Wilds" Cooperative Agreement

Twelve counties in north central Pennsylvania have agreed to an Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreement, establishing a Pennsylvania Wilds Planning Team. This advisory group will help communities capitalize on the region's economic potential, while keeping the region unique and attractive.

For more information on the Pennsylvania Wilds, visit www.dcnr.state.pa.us and select PA Wilds under "Hot Topics."

AMC Highlands

Jennifer Heisey, AMC Recreation Planner in the Mid Atlantic Region, held two stakeholder meetings at Nolde Forest and Kings Gap Environmental Education Centers in November to engage local governments, state agencies, conservation groups, and hikers in the initial planning for the Highlands Trail in 13 counties in southeastern Pennsylvania.

AMC has hired John Storelli as a GIS Staff Scientist in its Bethlehem office. Storelli handles all of AMC's and the Highlands Coalition's mapping needs.

In the works is the development of wind power siting guidelines for Pennsylvania.

My Favorite Outdoor Spot Is ...

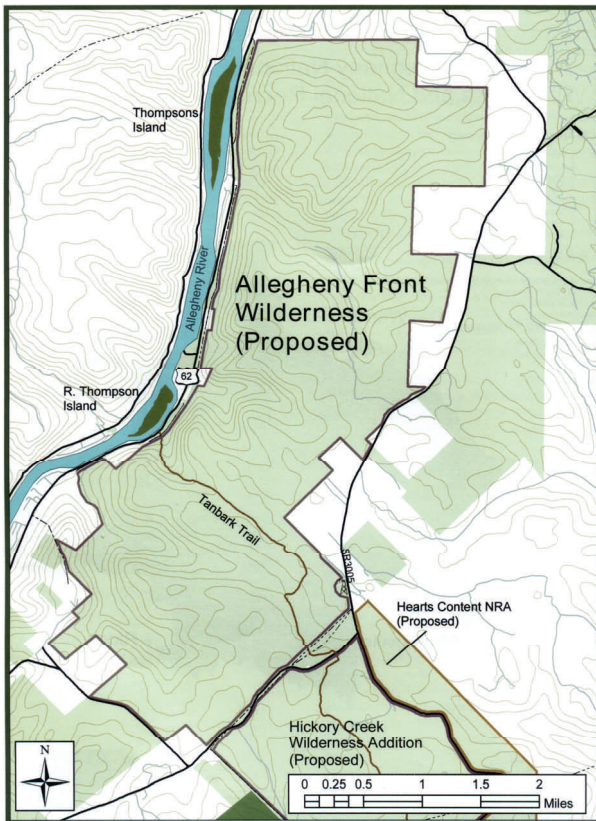
The Allegheny Front

By Jim DeLong

Somewhere around 1956 our family began building a hunting camp along the Warren - Tidioute Road, Route 337. Directly across the road was Camp Grandview, an exceptionally nice camp with a sizable orchard and, believe it or not, a large brick dome housing a telescope. Old Harry Grandquist would take us into this observatory occasionally and point the telescope skyward - sharing the mysteries of the night sky with three young boys eager to see what the moon looked like, close up.

Over the years I have maintained a connection with that general area and have spent many days both on the east side of the road, down Wildcat Run to Chapman State Park, and the west side, the Allegheny Front, an area proposed for and eminently deserving of wilderness designation. If the assumption is correct that this was one of the earliest areas to be timbered -- due to the ease of sending the logs downhill to the Allegheny River -- then it has likely been well over 100 years since there was any commercial logging on the Allegheny Front.

The mature trees, massive rock outcroppings and pure, unspoiled streams come together to make this area well worth an extended visit, despite the steep gradient on the west half of the tract, as the land slopes sharply to the river. Of course, the Tanbark Trail bisects this piece and, for those who prefer to follow paths, provides an unobstructed, well-marked passage from Route 62 to Sandstone Spring and beyond. But, as I have always been irresistibly drawn to water and prefer to neither follow nor leave a trail, my meanderings through the area have generally followed the streams -- Lenhart Run, Charlie Run, Hedgehog, Clark, Slater -- that run down the hillside, bound for the Allegheny. Certainly each stream has a bit of its own character, but most splash through tumblers of boulders, plunging into deep green pools scattered with quartz pebbles, and pour over tree trunks, fallen long ago forming small dams and spillways.



Looking northwest into the broad roadless expanse of the proposed Allegheny Front Wilderness Area down Hedgehog Run valley, November 1, 2004. Photo by Kirk Johnson.

On a warm spring day the cool air, heavy with the moist smell of hemlock shade and leaf mould, drifting gently over moss-shrouded rocks is the very signature of Pennsylvania wilderness. Here, sitting on a laurel-draped boulder, an awareness creeps over you of the incredible vitality of an old forest, the collage of new life and old -- fresh wood sorrel at the base of a 120-year-old hemlock whose roots wrap around ancient boulders shading pristine streams where spawning brook trout create new generations.

Take time to get lost in the rock cities of the northernmost branch of Slater Run or in the boulder-strewn upper end of Clark Run, where the laurel gathers close around your ankles. Make your way down Hedgehog Run near where the two branches meet and where a decade or two ago a windstorm laid down hundreds of trees, small hemlocks and mountain laurel growing up through the branches of the prostrate trunks. Find yourself on the "hogback" separating the two branches -- now there is an intriguing tangle of vegetation -- and, from just the right spot, a stunning view of the downhill slope.

This is one of those places you might hesitate to tell people about because you don't want to find anyone else there. It is a private, quiet place where the sound of a voice would be a violation and where a reverent solitary traveler, just passin' through, is humbled by the power of a Pennsylvania wilderness.

[Reprinted with the permission of Jim DeLong and Friends of Allegheny Wilderness.]

[Editors' Note: Do you have a special place to share with KTA members. Tell us about it! Contact information on page 2.]

Environmental News

Drop in Acid Rain May Alter Pennsylvania's Streams

Since 1990, David DeWalle, professor of forest hydrology at Penn State, and his colleagues have been monitoring the effect of reduced sulfur emissions – required under the Clean Air Act – on the water quality of five streams in Pennsylvania.

Their findings indicate that Appalachian hardwood forests may be getting a respite from acid rain, but the drop in acid rain may be changing biological activity in the ecosystem and hiking dissolved carbon dioxide in forest streams. Rising amounts of carbon dioxide in streams and soil could have implications for the forest ecosystem, and the carbon balance in general.



Promised Land State Park

Some expected changes in stream chemistry are already showing. Water quality in the streams is gradually improving from the reduced sulfur emissions, and researchers are also seeing less nitrogen from the atmosphere and in the streams. But the rising amount of dissolved carbon dioxide in all five streams is unexpected.

DeWalle, whose work is funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, thinks that by reducing pollutants emitted to the atmosphere, we are creating a different set of conditions for organisms in the soil. The rising dissolved carbon dioxide in the streams, he suggests, might be traced to increased respiration by these organisms.

Organic matter broken down by these organisms generates by-products such as carbon dioxide, water and residual dissolved organic matter. The increased respiration may be gradually increasing soil carbon dioxide and reducing the amount of residual organic matter. As the organisms break down more of the organic matter, there is less of it leaving as dissolved organic matter in stream water.

Though the stream chemistry data suggests increased respiration in the soil, the hypothesis needs to be tested with experiments that mimic reduced amounts of nitrogen in the atmosphere. Penn State researchers are already seeing increasing amounts of silica and sodium in streams, which may be from the weathering of minerals and sandstone bedrock, caused presumably by the increased carbonic acid in soil and groundwater.

Higher amounts of carbon dioxide in the soil means more of it ultimately may be emitted back to the atmosphere as a greenhouse gas.

Northeast Climate Change Be Prepared to Sweat

The Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) and a team of independent experts have joined forces to form The Northeast Climate Impacts Assessment (NECIA), a group dedicated to developing a new assessment of climate change and its impacts on the northeastern United States. The group's research and findings are presented in a report *Climate Change in the U.S. Northeast* available at www.northeastclimateimpacts.org

For those who would prefer a less technical presentation, the UCS offers a user friendly animated presentation of its findings at www.climatechoices.org.

The report projects climate changes using two scenarios for greenhouse emissions. In the higher emissions model, emissions continue to increase at the current rate. With the lower emissions model, emissions are reduced 75 percent from current levels.

For example, Philadelphia currently averages 2 days with 100 degree plus temperatures each year. Under the lower emission model, this would rise to 9 days per year by 2070, but soar to 28 days per year with higher emissions. Summer in eastern Pennsylvania could feel like the typical summer in southern Georgia under the higher emissions scenario.



Wind Power on the AT

The Harrisburg Authority, which owns approximately 10,000 acres in the Clark's Valley, Peter's Mountain and Stony Mountain area, is studying the feasibility of siting wind towers on its land.

The Stony Mountain site has been eliminated due to lack of space for the towers. The Peters Mountain study is underway (Peters Mountain is home to the Appalachian Trail).

If built, the wind farm would have 12 towers, each 400 feet tall.



Trail Care bridge on the Chuck Keiper Trail awaits its finishing touches. To see how those girders were transported to the trail site, see page 9. Photo by Mary Pitzer.

Plants and Animals

Mapping the State's Herp Population

A new effort is under way to put Pennsylvania's reptiles and amphibians on the map – literally.

The Pennsylvania Online Herpetological Atlas is enlisting volunteers across the state to examine vernal ponds, flip rocks, wade streams, and search out other reptile and amphibian habitats, then photograph and report what they find.



Jefferson Salamander.

With only a handful of professional herpetologists in the state, the project draws on amateurs to help fill in the blank spots regarding the location of the three dozen reptile and amphibian populations that are of greatest interest. This is about half of all of the species found in the state; the most common species are not included in this atlas. For more information or to make a report, go to www.ship.edu/~timare/hepr.htm.

For more information or to make a report, go to www.ship.edu/~timare/hepr.htm.

Deer Rampage Injures Couple

A November 15 unprovoked attack by a male white-tailed deer injured two Clinton County residents at their home. A woman planning to exit her home found her way blocked by a deer at her backdoor. Alerted to the situation, a man went out another door and attempted to chase the deer away. Without warning, the buck repeatedly charged and gored him. After calling for help, the woman went to the aid of the man and was also attacked. State Police ended the attack by killing the animal. The victims suffered two dislocated shoulders, numerous puncture wounds, lacerations, bruises, and serious eye damage.

The deer appeared healthy, and Game Commission personnel speculated that the deer might have been crazed by its mating instinct.

Rabies On Upswing in State

Through the first eleven months of 2006 in Pennsylvania, rabies cases increased almost 24 percent—from 379 to 469—over the 2005 totals. Raccoons are the animal most often infected (accounting for about half of all cases), while second place skunks account for about 14 percent of all cases. Afflicted animals included domesticated cows, goats, horses, and dogs, as well as deer, bobcats, foxes, ferrets, bats, groundhogs, coyotes, and fishers.

In late December, a coyote bit three people in Northampton County. Two men were attacked while walking dogs, and a woman was bitten on the finger in her yard. The animal was later shot by Game Commission officers.

Quick Squirrel Fact

A squirrel will eat about 825 acorns a year. However, they may miss up to 74 percent of the food that they've hidden, according to researchers at Wilkes University in Wilkes-Barre. The forgotten items are not wasted, however, since they can become new trees.

Canada Geese

A significant growth in the non-migratory Canada goose population has drawn complaints of crop damage and nuisance problems in residential neighborhoods. Many state parks also are seeing the effects of non-migratory geese overpopulation and have taken measures, including anti-geese fencing and the use of loud noisemakers, to scare geese away.

High concentrations of Canada geese and their droppings often are linked to high fecal coliform counts at Pennsylvania state park beaches, causing swimming restrictions during peak usage periods.

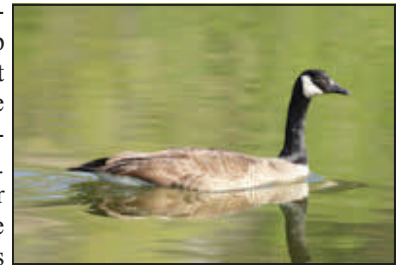
Thanks to steadily available food supplies, millions of pesky Canada geese are not migrating during the colder months. As much as two-thirds of the species population does not migrate.

In Pennsylvania, the current estimated population of resident Canada geese is 229,000. The 2005 estimated population was 282,000 and, in 2004, the estimated population was an all-time high of 299,000. The Pennsylvania Game Commission management goal for Pennsylvania's resident Canada goose population is 100,000.

To persuade a flock of resident Canada geese to stop using an area, one of the most effective ways is to encourage people to stop feeding or tossing handouts to the birds. Attempts to relocate or frighten geese away can be expensive and aren't always effective. If problem geese

are taken from a troubled urban/suburban area and released in a more rural setting, the birds are likely to return.

The most effective way to resolve any resident goose problem is through hunting. An extended resident Canada goose hunting season in January and February was authorized this year.



New Rattlesnake Hunting Regulations To Protect a Declining Population

To help meet its rattlesnake conservation mission, the Game Commission has approved several new regulations aimed at protecting mature females.

In addition to a minimum length of 42 inches (excluding the rattle), snakes must have 21 or more subcaudal scales to be legally harvested. Since these scales are located between the anal vent and rattles, the only way to determine a legal snake is to turn the snake upside down and look at it.

Data collected by Game Commission biologists has shown that 98 percent of all snakes that meet these criteria are male.

Female rattlesnakes reach sexual maturity at age seven or eight. The young are born live in late August or September, with an average litter size of five to nine. Females typically breed every two to three years and use the intervening time to rebuild their fat reserves.

Pennsylvania's rattlesnakes are faced with increasing habitat loss and forest fragmentation, and are a candidate for the state's threatened and endangered species list. The new regulations are an attempt to prevent the rattlesnake from reaching that status.

Around the Clubs



The **Allegheny Outdoor Club** recently received \$2,000 in Warren County funds to purchase trail maintenance tools and equipment. The County Commissioners approved the club's request in October and issued the funds in December after a 45-day public comment period during which the club received support from KTA and other organizations. The club maintains about 30 miles of trails, mostly in the Allegheny National Forest.

Allentown Hiking Club President Jim Gabovitz reports that after he wrote a presidential column entitled "Sometimes We Hike In the Rain", every hike that he scheduled from April to October was either cancelled due to rain or the hiking group slogged around in a downpour. He resisted the temptation to write a sequel about hiking in the snow, and the temperature on his first January hike topped 50 degrees.

60 years ago, **Batona Hiking Club** was memorialized in a song "One Batona Mile," composed and copyrighted by Warren E. Swank. The title refers to the composer's sentiment that if you ask a club members how far it is to the end of a Batona hike, the distance is always just one Batona mile.

At its annual holiday party in December, the **Mountain Club of Maryland** recognized eight individuals who have been members for 50 or more years. One is a charter member (1934), three have served as club president, and Charlie and Ella Clarke, who celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary last year, were the first MCM couple to marry.

MCM reports that their two Wednesday hikes have become so popular that they will be adding a third mid-week hike to reduce the size of hiking groups.

All **Potomac Appalachian Trail Club** trail shelters in Maryland now have Boy Scout constructed tent sites at each location. Scouts are building benches at some sites.

The **North Chapter** received a donation of \$500 from the Bank of Chambersburg specifically for trail maintenance by the Chapter. The contribution is in gratitude for the North Chapter's maintenance of the Appalachian Trail, which is used by the bank's Wellness Club.

The **Ridge & Valley Outings Club** conducted a hike in conjunction with the Centre County Reads program. By chance, RVOC chose the same date as the Tussey mOUTaiN BACK 50 mile running race, held on State Forest roads. The hike ended at one of race exchange points, and as the hikers emerged from woods, each was given a Power Bar.

The **Susquehanna Appalachian Trail Club** has donated \$1,000 to the Central Pennsylvania Conservancy, which is focused on conserving natural and cultural resources. This is SATC's third contribution to CPC in the last five years.

Club member Barbara Van Horn celebrated her 75th birthday by hiking 75 miles in Perry County as a benefit for Habitat for Humanity.

The **Susquehannock Trail Club** is celebrating its 40th anniversary (and the Susquehannock Trail System), in 2007. The club hopes to have its 1000th circuit hiker submit a log this year, and is promoting series hikes to encourage hikers to experience the STS (see the Multi-Club Events on next page).

Venture Outdoors participated in Pittsburgh's First Night, introducing almost 300 attendees to snowshoeing (in downtown Pittsburgh!) and serving cider to hundreds more.

The **Warrior Trail Association** has received notification from Harrisburg that its grant application has been processed and is ready for signing. The grant will be used to replace the roof at the WTA headquarters building.

Multi-Club Events Open to Everyone Getting to Know You

The **Blue Mountain Eagle Climbing Club** invites everyone to their Hike and Indoor Program series. A short hike on the Thun Trail at 1 PM is followed by a program in the UGI Flame Room, 225 Morgantown Rd. (Rt. 10), Reading, at 2 PM. Attend both or just come to the indoor event.

The subject on February 11 is *Get to Know Keystone Trails Association*, featuring a historical power point presentation, new KTA initiatives, a discussion of hiking in the Commonwealth and KTA's role and importance to hikers. Presenters are Paul Shaw, Thyra Sperry, and Barb Wiemann.



Get to Know the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, presented by ATC Mid Atlantic Regional Director Karen Lutz, is the topic for the March 11 program. She will discuss current issues, such as the Palmerton Superfund site revegetation effort, new ATC programs, and present a power point about AT shelters.

For more information, call 610-286-2889 or 610-775-3004.



Cherry Pie Hike

To celebrate George Washington's birthday, the **Butler and the Slippery Rock Chapters** of the **North Country Trail** are holding their annual five mile Cherry Pie Hike on Saturday, February 17 at the Old Stone House north of Butler at the intersection of Rt. 8 and 528 at 11 AM. The old Venango Trail that Washington used goes past the Old Stone House.

Cherry pie and coffee will be provided free of charge. Advance registration required so that organizers know how many pies to bake. Contact Ron Rice at rice1@nauticom.net or 724-538-8475.



Book Discussions for Hikers

BMECC is hosting a Winter Virtual Adventure Book Series. All participants read the chosen book and then meet for food and discussion. *Between A Rock and A Hard Place*, by Aron Ralston,

(Continued on page 15)

Multi Club Events

(Continued from page 14)

is the choice for February 24. March 31 will feature a battle of the Appalachian Trail adventures as hikers will compare and contrast *Walking with Spring* by Earl Shaffer and *A Walk In The Woods* by Bill Bryson. Reservations required; call 610-775-3004.

75 Mile Challenge Hike

Batona Hiking Club will host its annual 75 mile challenge hike from Wrightstown to Jim Thorpe on March 31-April 1. Pre-registration is required. Call 610-847-5709 or send a self addressed stamped envelope to Susan French, PO Box 1, Ottsville, PA 18942. Training hikes will be offered on March 3 and 17 to help hikers prepare for the event.

Seven Sallies on the STS

In an effort to aid hikers wishing to complete the entire 84 mile **Susquehannock Trail**, Wanda Shirk will lead a spring series of hikes, on the weekends of March 31/April 1, May 5-6, and June 2-3. A final day to finish the series will likely be on Monday, June 4, but a consensus of the group will be sought for the best time.

Overnight camp-outs are possible options for the May and June hikes, with a supply van allowing campers to travel without backpacks. Additionally, a Potter County cabin is available free on the Friday, Saturday, and/or Sunday nights of the hike weekends for up to nine participants.

Anyone is welcome to join the group for a single day, a single weekend, or the entire hike series. The advantages of the group hikes are the camaraderie and the transportation at the ends of segments for hikers who are not backpacking the whole loop at one time.

To register for "Walk it With Wanda Weekends," email wshirk@pennswoods.net, 814-848-7944, or drop a note to P.O. Box 400, Ulysses, PA 16948.

Brandywine Trail End-to-End Hike

The 36-mile Brandywine Trail End-to-End Hike will be held April 14. Registration information is on the Brandywine Trail section of the **Wilmington Trail Club** web site at www.wilmingtontrailclub.org.

Educational Opportunities

Digital Outdoor Photography

The Delaware Valley Chapter of AMC is offering a weekend course for the beginning digital photographer that includes using your camera, composition, using Adobe Photoshop and print making. The course will be held March 2-4 at the Mohican Outdoor Center; the fee of \$101 for members, \$111 non-members includes two nights lodging, two light breakfasts, Saturday dinner and happy hour, instruction and materials. Contact Wayne at WW48@aol.com or 732-854-1496 for more information or contact MOC at Mohican@mindspring.com or 908-362-5670 to register.

Yoga and Hiking

Enjoy yoga in the outdoors as you relax and renew at the Mohican Outdoor Center, March 2-4. Cost is \$185/M, \$205NM. Call 908-362-5670.

Wilderness First Aid

Wilderness Safety Council 18-hour courses in Wilderness First Aid will be offered in Harrisburg, PA, on March 17-18 or June 16-17 and in the Philadelphia area on June 9-10. The cost is \$160. For more information or to register, call 703-836-8905 or visit <http://wfa.net>.

The Mohican Outdoor Center near Delaware Water Gap will offer WFA training March 16-18; the cost is \$195 for AMC members, \$217 non-members. Optional CPR certification costs \$35. Call 908-362-5670.

Map & Compass Navigation

Learn navigation skills and build confidence through bushwhacking and triangulation exercises. No experience needed and compass provided. Course held at Mohican Outdoor Center on March 30-April 1. Cost is \$150M.\$165NM. Call 908-362-5670.

WCRP Festivals

The Wild Resource Conservation Program will offer two natural heritage events this year – May 12 at Moraine State Park and June 9 at French Creek State Park. Both festivals will be held from 9 AM to 4 PM.

The festivals will feature hands-on viewing and interaction with native wildlife, as well as an emphasis on invasive plants and the opportunity to sample edible invasive dishes. More information will be available on the festival web site www.dcnr.state.pa.us/wrcf/07fest/index.html.



Member Club Profile

KTA has more than 40 member clubs and we hope to profile each of them. If you would like to see your club featured, contact the Editors.

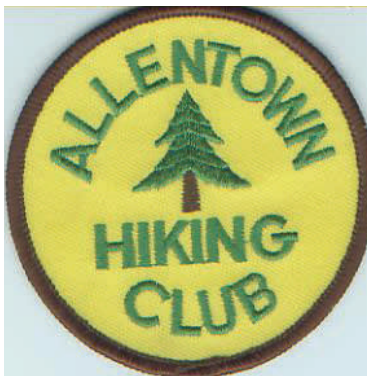
Allentown Hiking Club

The Allentown Hiking Club was organized in 1931 to offer city residents a chance to hike and escape the crowded city. The club currently has about 300 members and offers one or more hikes almost every weekend. Eight monthly meetings feature educational programs of interest to hikers. Membership is not required to participate in club activities.

AHC has been an Appalachian Trail maintaining club for 75 years, caring for 10 miles of trail and two shelters. In addition, the club is a Trail Tender for the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor and works with the Lehigh Gap Nature Center to construct and maintain hiking trails.

AHC became a KTA member club in 1959.

For more information, visit the AHC web site at www.allentownhikingclub.org

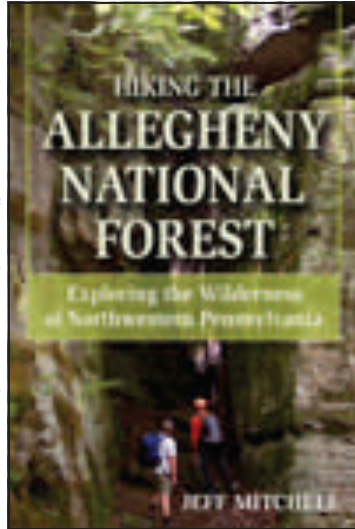


New Hiking Guide for ANF

Hiking the Allegheny National Forest: Exploring the Wilderness of Northwestern Pennsylvania, by Jeff Mitchell. Stackpole Books, January, 2007. 176 pages. ISBN: 9780811733724 , 5 x 8.2 inches, \$12.95.

Home to Pennsylvania's only federally designated wilderness areas and the North Country Trail, the Allegheny National Forest is a popular hiking and backpacking destination. This guide explores 60 day hikes and four backpacking trails throughout the national forest and surrounding state parks, forests, and game lands. Hikes vary greatly in length and difficulty; several are ideal for children.

Highlights in the forest include spectacular old growth forests, impressive rimrock cliffs and house-sized boulders, scenic streams, and even a few waterfalls. Popular trails such as Minister Creek, Tracy Ridge, Morrison and Hickory Creek are included, as well as lesser known gems like the Clarion River Rapids and Pigeon Run Falls.



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DON'T FORGET YOUR DUES!

This is just a friendly reminder that 2007 dues are now due (actually a little late if we're being technical). If you haven't yet renewed for the year, cut out this membership blank and send it in. We don't want to lose you!

Greenways and Trails Summit

KTA is a sponsor of the 3rd Annual *Greenways and Trails Summit*, organized by the PA Recreation & Park Society, to be held at the Mountain View Inn in Latrobe May 3-5. The target audience includes parks and recreation professionals and various trail user groups. In the past, the Summit has been heavily weighted towards rail trails, but the planning committee would like to broaden the program to give more time to other trails, including hiking trails.

KTA will present a 90-minute indoor program, as well as an outdoors program on Saturday the 5th. Registration information is available at www.prps.org



KTA Membership Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Club Affiliations (if any): _____

Organizational members are welcome and should forward the name and contact information for the group's designated KTA representative along with appropriate dues: \$50 per year for clubs; \$100 for commercial enterprises; \$10 per year or \$25 for three years for youth groups. All dues payments and correspondence should be mailed to: P.O. Box 129, Confluence, PA 15424.

*KTA is an Internal Revenue Service 501(c)(3) organization and contributions are deductible to the extent permitted by law.

Basic Membership (New Member Only) Individual—\$15 Family—\$20	
Basic Membership (Renewal) Individual—\$25 Family—\$30	\$
Brush Cutter Membership Individual—\$35 Family—\$45	\$
Blaze Painter Membership Individual—\$50 Family—\$75	\$
Trail Builder Membership Individual—\$100 Family—\$125	\$
Life Membership Individual—\$500 Family—\$750	\$
Youth Membership Individual—\$5.00	
Additional contribution In memory of/in honor of _____	\$
Total Enclosed	\$