



## On the Western Slope

### Chapter Summer Picnic & Potluck

Join us for the Chapter Summer Picnic at Thacher Park on Thursday, August 9<sup>th</sup>. The day will begin with a hike along the Fred Schroeder Trail with side trips over connecting trails to views along the Long Path North, a total of about 5 miles. See [Fred Schroeder Trail plus Long Path](#) event listing for details.

We have the Hailes Cave Picnic Area near the Thacher Park office for the whole day, so come for the FS hike (meet at 11:30 a.m.) or take the opportunity to visit the capital district's favorite state park for yourself. Take in the delights of the escarpment trail, explore the Thompson Lake Nature Center and trails with children; maybe take a swim in the lake. Stay for the picnic to catch up with chapter members and meet new friends. There is no entrance/parking fee during the week.

The club will provide picnic basics: hotdogs, hamburgers, grilling needs, plates, cups, napkins, and soda/lemonade. We depend on you for another memorable potluck supper which will be served at 5:00/5:30 p.m.: Names beginning with A-H, please bring a salad/cold dish; I-P, hot dish/appetizer; R-Z: dessert. See [Chapter Summer Picnic](#) event listing for details. *See you there!*

### Fall Chapter Trip to N.H.

It's time to sign up for our annual New Hampshire hiking weekend, September 21-23. By popular request, this year we will be staying at Joe Dodge Lodge in Pinkham Notch.

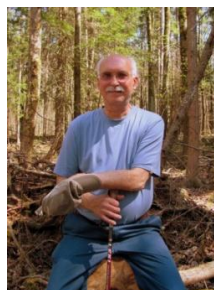
The rate of \$134 per person (shared bunkroom) includes dinners on Friday and Saturday, and breakfasts on Saturday and Sunday. Trail lunches available to order. Hiking options include A, B, and C level hikes.

For more details and to make reservations, contact Stacey Michon at [smichon125@gmail.com](mailto:smichon125@gmail.com), (518) 269-1858. Final payment is due by August 9<sup>th</sup>. Please make checks payable to Stacey Michon.

### Rensselaer Plateau Traverse Hike

The third annual Plateau Traverse Hike will be held on September 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. This is your chance to see some beautiful areas of the Rensselaer Plateau that are not open to the public. (Last year we received permission from 21 private landowners.) Become a Plateau End to Ender or join us for just one day. Please see [Plateau Traverse Hike](#) to continue.

### An Invitation to New or Experienced Hike Leaders



Wally Herrod, past chapter chair and long-time hike leader, is moving out to Wisconsin soon. He has submitted the following list of hikes which he had hoped to lead. Wally hopes that others will see the list, and be *inspired* to lead many of them for the chapter in his absence.

**Catskills:** West Kill Mt., Acra Point

#### Adirondacks:

Deer Brook Gorge and Snow Mt., Fifth Peak, Hurricane from Crow Clearing, Owl's Head (NE of Giant Mt.), Goodnow Mt., Shelving Rock Mt. with a Lake George swim, Baxter Mt. through trip, Blue Ledges, Hanging Spear Falls, Blue Mt., Treadway Mt., Pillsbury Mt. fire tower, Bear Run and Cathedral Ledges, Porter Mt over Blueberry, Spread Eagle and Hopkins.

#### Berkshires and Taconics:

Mt. Tom and Jug End, Snow Hole, Monroe St. Forest-Spruce Mt.-Deerfield River lookout, October Mt. St. Forest (A.T.), Ice Glen and Laura's Tower, Monument Mt., Alander Mt., East Mt. (Gt. Barrington), Lenox Mt.

#### Other areas:

Christman Sanctuary, [Wilton Wildlife Preserve](#), Bennet Hill Preserve near Clarksville, Storm King Mt., Deer Mt. Nature Preserve (Ravena).

Wally is available for now to consult about these hikes or for help with writing up the trips. Contact him at (518) 758-9463, or [wher48@gmail.com](mailto:wher48@gmail.com).

#### Tell Us About Your Favorite Hike & Win!

Now that you've read Wally's list of hikes, tell us about your favorite outdoor location in our area by taking our survey, <http://www.amcmohawkhudson.org/survey2/survey.asp>

Everyone participating will be eligible to win a copy of the new AMC publication, [Discover the Adirondacks](#). A drawing will be held at the summer picnic on August 9<sup>th</sup>, so be sure to fill out the survey before then.

### Dates to note:

- Jul 6-8 Flat Water Kayak Weekend, W. Brookfield, MA
- Jul 9 Exec Committee Meeting, EGTL
- Aug 9 Chapter Summer Picnic, Thacher Park
- Aug 10-12 Flat Water Kayak Weekend, Lake Clear, NY
- Aug 15 A Midsummer's Night, Maybee Historic Farm, Rotterdam Junction, NY
- Sept 10 Exec Committee Meeting, EGTL
- Sept 21-23 Mohawk-Hudson Fall Chapter Trip, Joe Dodge Lodge at Pinkham Notch, NH
- 100 YEARS!** Oct 19-21 NYNJ Fall Chapter Trip, Port Jervis, NY
- \*SAVE\*** Nov 10 Fall Leadership Workshop
- \*SAVE\*** Nov 15 Annual Chapter Mtg, Century House

## Mohawk Hudson Chapter

### Executive Committee

#### Stacey Michon, Chair

(518) 269-1858; [smichon125@gmail.com](mailto:smichon125@gmail.com)

#### Arthur Fontijn, Vice Chair

(518) 477-7992; [fontia@verizon.net](mailto:fontia@verizon.net)

#### Cliff Prewencki, Secretary

(518) 768-2907; [cprewencki@aol.com](mailto:cprewencki@aol.com)

#### Sharon Bonk, Treasurer

(518) 674-0042; [sboqc@mindspring.com](mailto:sboqc@mindspring.com)

#### Jeff Carden, Webmaster

(518) 328-7967;  
[webmaster@amcmohawkudson.org](mailto:webmaster@amcmohawkudson.org)

#### Kevin Cox, Outings Chair

(518) 275-4839; [mmcloug1@nycap.rr.com](mailto:mmcloug1@nycap.rr.com)

#### Mary Folsom, Conservation Chair

(518) 465-5425; [mfolsom@aol.com](mailto:mfolsom@aol.com)

#### Henry Schreiber, AMC Mid-Atlantic

Regional Director  
(212) 945-2916; [hfschreiber@pobox.com](mailto:hfschreiber@pobox.com)

#### John Tiff, Trails Chair

(518) 439-5686; [jtiff2@nycap.rr.com](mailto:jtiff2@nycap.rr.com)

#### Martha Waldman, Membership Chair

(518) 869-5109; [martha829@aol.com](mailto:martha829@aol.com)

#### Christine Simson, Newsletter Editor

(518) 322-0296; [csimson@hotmail.com](mailto:csimson@hotmail.com)

#### Sandy Andersen, Communications &

Publicity Chair  
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<http://www.amcmohawkudson.org>

### Save paper and ink!

- Print only the **Dates to note** and **Chapter Outings** on pages 2 and 3
- Under Print Properties, use print quality of "Draft"

## Mohawk Hudson Chapter Outings

### July— August— September 2012

#### All activities require advance registration:

Please contact the Leader for information about hike difficulty, meeting time and place, carpooling, and hike updates due to weather or trail conditions.

Check out our chapter web site at [www.amcmohawkudson.org](http://www.amcmohawkudson.org) for detailed descriptions and updates of outings. There, join our Yahoo group for e-mail updates on outings, and 'like us' on Facebook.

### July 2012

#### 7/6-7/8 Flat Water Kayak Weekend

(Paddling - Flatwater), West Brookfield Massachusetts. We will be staying on the river at the Copper Lantern Motor Lodge. Friday Afternoon Paddle at Brooks Pond. Dinner at Ye Olde Tavern. Saturday Paddle 8.5 miles on the Quaboag River. Dinner at the Salem Cross Inn. Breakfast and packed lunches at EB Flatts both days. Sunday Paddle 7 miles on the Swift River. Weekend lodging \$140. to \$150. + tax double. Leader: Randy MacDonald (518) 766-7675 (before 9 p.m.) [randy04415@yahoo.com](mailto:randy04415@yahoo.com)

#### Fri 7/13 Ashuwillticook Rail Trail Cycle

(Bicycling) Twenty two miles of essentially flat cycling from Pittsfield to Adams Mass and return. Leader: Sharon Bonk (518) 674-0042 [sboqc@mindspring.com](mailto:sboqc@mindspring.com)

#### Sat 7/14 Trail Work on Section 33 of the Long Path (Trail Work)

This half mile section of the Long Path was relocated last Fall and has since become almost indistinguishable from the surrounding vegetation except by following the blazes. Work needs to be done with weed whackers (allowed by the Trail Conference) to clear the trail itself and any encroaching vegetation. We'll meet where Stage Rd. intersects with Rte. 443 at 8:30 a.m. This work should take no longer than a morning, particularly if using a weed whacker; of course we'll also welcome those people using hand scythes. Safety glasses and gloves are also important items to bring. Leader: John Tiff (518) 439-5686 [jtiff2@nycap.rr.com](mailto:jtiff2@nycap.rr.com)

#### Fri 7/28 West Branch Sacandaga River

(Paddling) Flat water kayak West Branch Sacandaga River. Nine miles. We will spot cars. Contact Leader: Randy MacDonald (518) 766-7675 (before 9 p.m.), or [randy04415@yahoo.com](mailto:randy04415@yahoo.com)

**Sat 7/29 07/29 Kayak Goose Pond near Lee, MA (Paddling)** Kayak Goose Pond near Lee Mass. Lunch at AMC's Goose Pond cabin. Contact Leader: Randy MacDonald, (518) 766-7675 (before 9 p.m.), or [randy04415@yahoo.com](mailto:randy04415@yahoo.com)

### August 2012

**Wed 8/1 Greenport Conservation Area, Columbia County C-3-C (Hiking)** Five miles of easy and moderate trails via a series of loops in woodlands and meadows with views of the Hudson and the Catskills from this Columbia Land Conservancy property.

Leader: Sharon Bonk (518) 674-0042 [sboqc@mindspring.com](mailto:sboqc@mindspring.com)

#### Thurs 8/9 Fred Schroeder Trail plus Long Path C-3-C (Hiking)

Come for the hike and stay for the Mohawk- Hudson Chapter Picnic later in the day. The FS trail is a 3-mile loop trail with connectors and extensions to viewpoints along the Long Path North which will give us about 5 miles of hiking. Co-Leaders will meet you at Thacher Park office on Rte 157 at the Horseshoe Lot at 11:30 a.m. for carpool to trail head. There's no entrance/ parking fee during the week. We'll have lunch along the way and get back to Hailes Cave around 3:30 p.m. Leader: Sharon Bonk (518) 674-0042 [sboqc@mindspring.com](mailto:sboqc@mindspring.com) Co-Leader: John Tiff (518) 439-5686, [jtiff2@nycap.rr.com](mailto:jtiff2@nycap.rr.com)

#### Thurs 8/9 Chapter Summer Picnic, Hailes Cave Picnic Area, Thacher State Park

(Social Events) This is a good opportunity to visit the capital district's favorite state park to take in the delights of the escarpment trail, explore the Thompson Lake Nature Center and trails with children, hike the Fred Schroeder Memorial Trail and the Long Path, catch up with other chapter members, and meet new friends in an amiable setting. \$6 Day entrance/parking fee; seniors park free. Picnic will run rain or shine. Leader: John Tiff (518) 439-5686, [jtiff2@nycap.rr.com](mailto:jtiff2@nycap.rr.com)

#### Fri-Sun 8/10 - 8/12 Adirondack Flat Water Kayak Weekend (Paddling)

We've reserved a group campsite at [Charlie's Inn Junction Campground](#) at Lake Clear NY. See [August Flat Water Paddle](#) for more information. Contact Leader: Randy MacDonald (518) 766-7675 (before 9 p.m.), or [randy04415@yahoo.com](mailto:randy04415@yahoo.com)

#### Wed 8/15 Mohawk River Bike Path Cycle

(Bicycling) Niskayuna RR station park to Cohoes and return. Lunch at Cohoes Falls. About 15 miles. Leader: Sharon Bonk (518) 674-0042 [sboqc@mindspring.com](mailto:sboqc@mindspring.com)

**Wed 8/22 Alander Mountain, Southern Taconics, B-3-B (Hiking)** For such a moderate rise in elevation, you as the hiker will be pleasantly surprised at the wonderful views one can look forward to.

Leader: John Tiff (518) 439-5686

[jtiff2@nycap.rr.com](mailto:jtiff2@nycap.rr.com)

**Sat 8/25 Dial and Nippletop Mountains, Adirondacks, A-3-A (Hiking)** We will be hiking via the Leach trail and return by the Elk Pass trail. Both mountains have great views. The distance 11.9 miles and the ascent is 4000 feet. Leader: Kevin Cox (518) 279-4839 (before 9 p.m.) [mmcloug1@nycap.rr.com](mailto:mmcloug1@nycap.rr.com)

**Wed 8/29 Huyck Preserve, Rensselaerville, NY (Hiking)** We will hike in this beautiful area, which has some new trails since we've been there last, and the bridge which was washed away by Irene has been replaced. We will meet at the Preserve Office, circle Myosotis Lake and Lincoln Pond, and picnic. Total walking time about 3 hours, mostly level. Bring lunch and water. Leader: Nancy Crowther. Co-Leader: Will Crowther (518) 698-0531 [nancy@crowther.org](mailto:nancy@crowther.org)

## September 2012

**Sat 9/1 Southwest Hunter & Hunter, Catskills, A-3-B (Hiking)** Distance: 9 mi. Ascent 2225' Elevation: 3740' & 4040' Rain (or threat of) cancels. A moderately paced bushwack and trail hike. Leader: Ken Hubert (718) 463-5675 (After 3 PM), (518) 827-7327 (Fri. & Sat) [hikeleader3500@yahoo.com](mailto:hikeleader3500@yahoo.com)

**Sat 9/8 Algonquin Peak, Adirondacks, A-3-A (Hiking)** Climb the "most enticing of all the Adirondack high peaks" (Barbara McMartin), with spectacular views of Colden, Marcy and the northern and western Adirondacks. We will take the most direct trail, 8.5 miles round trip with an ascent of 2940 feet. Leader: Julian Hadley (518) 753-4898 [julianhd1@gmail.com](mailto:julianhd1@gmail.com)

**Fri-Sun 9/21 - 9/23 Fall Chapter Trip to Joe Dodge Lodge, Pinkham Notch, NH (Hiking)** We'll be offering hikes with a variety of length and elevation gain. Leader: Stacey Michon [smichon125@gmail.com](mailto:smichon125@gmail.com)

**Wed 9/26 Plotterkill Hike, Rotterdam C-3-B or B-3 B (Hiking)** This beautiful hike goes along a deep gorge with close views of three waterfalls, 60 feet high and 40 feet high. We will do a two mile loop which takes in all the waterfalls. Since we have two leaders, those who want to go longer can do an extended

loop of 6 or 7 miles altogether. There are some short steep hills on these hikes. Bring lunch and water. Leader: Nancy Crowther. Co-Leader: Will Crowther (518) 698-0531 [nancy@crowther.org](mailto:nancy@crowther.org)

**Sun 9/30 Dutchess Co. Railtrail to Walkway Over the Hudson & Hudson Valley Railtrail (Bicycling)** Helmet required. Rain (or threat of) cancels. Total of approx. 40 miles with 2 short road rides between sections. The trail is a paved, former railroad bed that is suitable for road, hybrid & mountain bikes. For details and meeting time, contact Leader Ken Hubert e-mail [amc.leader@yahoo.com](mailto:amc.leader@yahoo.com), or call (718) 463-5675 (after 3 p.m.) or (518) 827-7327 on weekends (Fri. & Sat.)

## Hike Ratings

### Distance

- AA = + 13 miles
- A = 9 to 13 miles
- B = 5 to 8 miles
- C = under 5 miles

### Leader's Pace

- 1 = very fast pace, 2.5 mph or faster
- 2 = fast pace, 2 to 2.5 mph
- 3 = moderate pace, 1.5 to 2 mph

### Terrain

- A = very strenuous
- B = strenuous
- C = average



To receive e-mail notification of updates to published trips, please join our [Yahoo group](#). When you access this link, enter your Email Address, and click the **Request Confirmation Email** button. You will receive confirmation of your request, and future e-mails of trip updates.

The chapter also offers weekday outings that do not appear in the schedule above.

- *The Midweek Hikers* invite you to hike with them on Wednesdays. For more information about this group and/or to join our e-mail list, contact Gerry Weber at (518) 758-7189 or [gww@fairpoint.net](mailto:gww@fairpoint.net)
- *The Hiking at a Relaxed Pace (HARP)* group hikes on Thursdays or Fridays. For more information and/or to join our e-mail list, please contact Frank or Dee Wind at (518) 458-1781 or [we\\_tell@verizon.net](mailto:we_tell@verizon.net)

For energy-saving tips we can all use, check out our Facebook page.

## "Like Us" on Facebook

facebook



Like

Click the "Facebook" image at left to view the chapter Facebook page.

Once on our Facebook page, click the "Like" image (shown at left) to "like" our page: if you have a Facebook account, you'll be asked to log in. Else, you'll have to set one up in order to "like" our page.

## August 10-12 Flat Water Paddle Weekend in the Adirondacks

Join us for a weekend of flat water paddling in the Adirondacks. We've reserved a group campsite for Friday and Saturday nights at [Charlie's Inn Junction Campground](#); cost is \$10/night per person to pitch a tent. If you'd prefer to stay at the Inn, please call in advance to check availability and make a reservation. Friday dinner will be on your own; Saturday dinner will be at Charlie's Inn. Saturday and Sunday breakfasts will be at a nearby restaurant; please plan to bring or buy your own lunches.

On Saturday, we'll paddle the Lower Osgood River. On Sunday, we'll paddle Floodwood Pond, Little Square Pond, Fish Creek, Fish Creek Ponds and Follensby Clear Pond.

## A Midsummer's Night Celebration

For a fun-filled evening of family activities featuring authors, storytellers, music, nature programs, campfire tales, refreshments and more, plan to attend the [Schenectady County Public Library's "A Midsummer's Night Celebration"](#).

The *Celebration*, part of SCPL's Summer Reading Program for adults and children, will be held on Wednesday, August 15<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. at the [Mabee Farm Historic Site](#), site of the oldest house still standing in the Mohawk Valley.

## Announcing AMC's Fall Gathering 2012

AMC's 2012 Fall Gathering will be hosted by the New York-North Jersey Chapter (in honor of their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary) on October 19-21 at the [Greenkill YMCA Retreat Center](#) in Huguenot, N.Y. Everyone is invited to this club-wide event which will include hiking, biking, paddling and many more activities in the Catskill Mountains. Watch for details in the upcoming issues of AMC's *Outdoors* magazine or by visiting the NY-NoJ Chapter's website at <http://www.amc-ny.org>

**Plateau Traverse Hike, continued:** As part of the Hudson River Valley Ramble, we will meet at [Pineridge Cross Country Ski Area](#) and take shuttles to Garfield Road in Stephentown and will hike north back to Pineridge. Participants can then set up a tent to camp for the night and enjoy an evening cooking, eating and sitting around the campfire. On Sunday morning, we will continue our journey north to northern escarpment of the Plateau. At the end of the day we will be met by shuttles that will bring us back to Pineridge to pick up our cars.

Cost: \$10 suggested donation to offset fuel costs ; Preregistration is Required. Please e-mail [info@rensselaerplateau.org](mailto:info@rensselaerplateau.org) or call Jim at (518) 794-9160.

This will be a very strenuous hike with some off trail bushwhacking and significant elevation change. We will be traveling approximately 15 miles each day. Participants must be in excellent physical condition.

Participants are welcome to camp with a camper or tent on Friday and Saturday night at Pineridge. There will be a campfire each night, and we'll be cooking dinner on Saturday evening and breakfast on Sunday morning.

Co-sponsored by the Friends of Dyken Pond; the Dyken Pond Environmental Education Center; the Rensselaer Land Trust; Pineridge Cross Country Ski Area; and SKYHIGH Adventures.

## A Word from Our Chapter Chair

Happy Summer everyone! The days are longer and hopefully we are all getting out and enjoying them. We are pleased to offer a variety of activities this summer. Our hard-



working leaders are offering hiking, biking, kayaking, and trail work trips. Speaking of our leaders, we have a small dedicated group, and they keep our chapter running. We always need more leaders, and more variety of trip offerings, so I am encouraging those who have been thinking about

leading trips to talk to one of our leaders and get involved, maybe co-lead a trip. Our chapter will be offering formal leader training in the fall. Also, if you are already a leader but haven't led a trip in a while, I encourage you to do so.

Don't forget to note that our summer picnic has changed both date and location: this year it will be held in August instead of June at John Boyd Thatcher State Park. If you are free during the day, John and Sharon will be leading a hike and showing off "our" section of the Long Path. Also, it's time to sign up for our fall New Hampshire hiking weekend, to be held at Joe Dodge Lodge this year. For details about all upcoming events, check our website [www.amcmohawkhudson.org](http://www.amcmohawkhudson.org) as well as our Facebook page. See you out on the trails!

Stacey Michon

## Welcome New Members

John Avitabile	Deane Cooke	Matthew DeJoy
Daniel Dolan	Thomas Dwyer	Ellen Elting
Mr. & Mrs. Fagan	Laura Frare	David Gaskell
Joseph Gerbino	Gretchen Geser	Thomas Gibney
Ellen Graf	Anthony Guzek	Richard Hart
Mr. Herman	Jill Howard	Kenneth Johnson
D. Jones	Mr. & Mrs. King	Abigail Krisniski
Diane Lindsay	Chuck Martin	Ashley Mayner
Helen Menz	Henry Neilley	Raymond O'conor
Alice Oldfather	Helga Prichard	Melissa Prout
Joanna Prouty	Timothy Ripp	Maureen Roeth
Peter Rogers	Ms. Rosenbaum	Peter Sage
Mr. & Mrs. Schottenfeld	Robert Schulerud	Mr. & Mrs. Selsley
Richard Sills	Linda Simkin	David Spingarn
Renney Stone	John Thompson	John Thompson IV
Mary Beth Thompson	Stephanie Towns	Alice Urbanski
Peter Valastro	Richard Vehlow	Ryan Wicks
Mr. & Mrs. Wickson	Patricia Zima	

## Take a Bow!

Congratulations to Cliff Prewencki, Secretary of the AMC Mohawk-Hudson Chapter, on completing the 29-mile Taconic Crest Trail End-to-End Hike on May 29, 2012!

## Tips for Hiking in the Grand Canyon

April's Mohawk-Hudson AMC potluck supper finished with an informative talk by Frank Reed on hiking in the Grand Canyon. Frank and his wife, Mary Sue, have made nearly 10 trips there to hike the trails, camp out under the stars, explore, and appreciate the beauty of the canyon. The informative, enjoyable talk covered planning the hike, differences between desert and Eastern/Adirondack hiking, additional equipment that's needed, and an overview of some of the canyon's trails.

Reed advises to plan well in advance for lodging (as much as 1 year for Phantom Ranch at canyon bottom), and National Park permits for backcountry hiking and overnight camping (at least 4 months prior to visit). Potable water and elevation changes require planning and additional equipment.

Reed was astonished by the 3-D aspect of the canyon (so different from the East), and recommended visiting the canyon in April for viewing flowers, and September through October for cooler daytime temperatures.

The most used trails are *Bright Angel Trail*, great for a day hike and featuring switchback trails, rest huts, water; *South Kaibab Trail*, a steeper, faster trail, but you must carry all the water you'll need for the round trip; and *North Kaibab Trail* featuring a side trail to Ribbon Falls, one of the loveliest spots in the Grand Canyon.



## Summer Flower to Watch For

The Labrador Tea, blooms in June and July in the alpine zone of northern New Hampshire.

## NYNJTC / Headwaters Trails Workshop

On May 20<sup>th</sup>, five members of the Mohawk-Hudson chapter attended a trail maintenance workshop presented by the NYNJ Trail Conference and Headwaters Trails organizations in an historic rail station in Stamford, N. Y. on the western side of the Catskill Mountains.

Topics covered in the course included: the role of a trail maintainer (vs. lean-to caretaker or trail supervisor/chair/co-chair/crew); the yearly maintenance cycle; tools and trail clearing techniques; working blowdowns – clear small trees (6-8" in diameter), leave large trees to trail crews trained to deal with trunk compression and tension; trail marking with blazes, cairns, posts and signs; solutions for bad trails such as stepping stones, water bars, switchbacks, relocation; safety practices for maintainers and hikers; animal and insect hazards; threatened, endangered, invasive and exotic plants species; unauthorized trail use; ranger notifications prior to trail work; reporting completed work.

Following the 2-hour classroom presentation and lunch, we hiked a nearby trail with our teachers and tools to gain some first-hand experience and tips. The instructors were very knowledgeable and the class was fun, informative, and well worth attending.

## AMC's Mountain Watch Program is Looking for Volunteers

AMC's Research Department is looking for volunteers to help track flower and fruit timing of mountain plants.

AMC depends on its volunteers because researchers can't collect all the information needed to answer science questions and since mountains have high variability as to the flowering and fruiting season.

Volunteers can sign-up for a one-time volunteer opportunity – a great way for families to be involved in trail activities or for someone who is looking for a local community conservation engagement – or for the Basic Plant Monitoring opportunity. Basic Plant Monitoring involves watching the plant before, during, and after flowering or fruiting, and detailing all stages between flower bud development to seed set. The volunteer can choose to Adopt-a-Peak/Trail Section and would perform repeat observations at the same location(s).

For more information on AMC's Mountain Watch Program, go to [www.outdoors.org/mountainwatch](http://www.outdoors.org/mountainwatch).

## Member Center Benefits

Don't forget to check out the [AMC Member Center](#) to find out about the latest AMC events, projects, and deals. Log in to see the newest member deal with Backcountry.com.

AMC members receive a discount on selected merchandise. Use code 6NT-1-GSDYA. Some exceptions apply.

## Springtime is Trail Work Time



April 2012 – Tomhannock Reservoir Cleanup



May 2012 – Thacher Park Trail Work



May 2012 – NYNJTC/Headwaters Trails Maintenance Workshop



June 2012 – Thacher Park Trail Work

## The Fracking Dilemma

By Cathy Frankenberg, Mid-Atlantic Policy Associate, AMC

Drilling for natural gas in the Marcellus shale formation is one of the most widely-discussed and hotly-debated energy issues today. If you live outside Pennsylvania or New York, you may wonder what the controversy is about, considering that oil and natural gas development has been taking place in the Mid-Atlantic region for over a hundred years.

There are a many factors driving the current shale boom, including new technology that has dramatically changed the scale of gas extraction. In only the last ten years or so, a technique known as high-volume, slick-water, horizontal hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking” has become cost-effective at retrieving natural gas from depths as far as 10,000 feet below the surface. Fracking is a part of the drilling process, whereby 5-7 million gallons of pressurized water combined with sand and chemicals is pumped into a well that has already been drilled. The fracking process breaks apart the shale, freeing gas from many tiny pockets deep underground.

Coupled with the increased costs of other energy sources and the conversion of many power plants to burn natural gas instead of coal, the extraction of natural gas from deep below the surface has been estimated to provide decades of supply. This change in market conditions and the introduction of new technology has driven the recent boom in gas drilling, especially in Pennsylvania, where less than one-hundred new wells were drilled in the Marcellus shale formation in 2007, compared with over 3,300 wells drilled in subsequent years.

Proponents say this development creates jobs and serves as a bridge to cleaner energy alternatives. The use of natural gas for home heating and commercial power generation does reduce local air quality impacts, compared to wood, oil or coal. However, hydraulic fracturing and other aspects of commercial drilling pose serious threats to our environment including air and water contamination, noise pollution, deforestation, and habitat fragmentation. Current regulations on natural gas drilling do not fully address these concerns, for example, the industry is exempted from the section of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act that would require them to report the chemicals used in fracking a well. And drilling regulations on the state level, which are based not on the traditional form of gas drilling, are too inadequate to address the unique problems associated with this relatively new technology.

AMC’s commitment to conservation includes an obligation to evaluate and address these concerns, especially where they affect public lands and waters. In Pennsylvania, over half of the state parks lie within the borders of the Marcellus Shale, and over one third of the state forest has been leased for drilling already. Our first priority is to protect these lands from adverse effects of natural gas development. These spectacular public places need our protection if they are to continue providing the beauty, respite and recreational opportunities that they provide today. One way that AMC is protecting these lands is by telling the stories of outdoor recreationists like you who value public parks in the

Marcellus Shale region of Pennsylvania. We need your stories so that we can show others what’s at risk and demonstrate the need to better protect public lands and waters. If you have a story you would like to contribute, please email Cathy Frankenberg, AMC’s Mid-Atlantic Policy Associate, at [cfrankenberg@outdoors.org](mailto:cfrankenberg@outdoors.org).

To learn more about our natural gas policy, go to <http://www.outdoors.org/conservation/issues/natural-gas.cfm>.

## AMC’s Full-Service Camps

Openings are still available at AMC’s full-service camps in Maine and New Hampshire. Whether you’re looking for a fun relaxing time on a lake, ocean or river, these AMC’s camps are sure to meet your needs. For details on these camps, go to <http://www.outdoors.org/lodging/camps/index.cfm>.



April 2012 – Yokun Ridge, W. Stockbridge Mountain



May 2012 – Tibbits State Forest Hike



June 2012 – Vermont Hiking Weekend, Colonial House Inn, Weston, VT