



On the Western Slope

Chapter Chair



Greetings, I hope that everyone is well and staying safe. I have been hiking recently in the Adirondacks and observed that everyone was using social distancing on the trails. It was great to see how happy hikers were just being outdoors.

In our March newsletter, we announced AMC's temporary closing of all lodging and foodservice facilities and suspension of all in-person staff and volunteer led programming to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Since then, AMC has been working diligently toward the day when properties and programs could reopen/restart. Let me bring you up to date.

To focus the effort, AMC set guiding principles of safety, mission, and transparency and embraced state and federal requirements and public health guidelines in terms of social distancing, access to public places, group size, and face coverings. AMC also defined procedures and expectations for how volunteers could manage hygiene for trips/programs with different durations, equipment, tools, and levels of necessary human contact.

In May, AMC finalized the difficult decisions about which AMC places and programs could safely open and when and sent a survey to volunteers for their input on restarting. AMC also defined 2 restart phases and set minimal requirements for volunteer activities to take place, including the lifting of states' movement restrictions and setting expectations that volunteers will: follow the COVID-19 rules of the recreational resource/area where the chapter activity takes place; and take online training before resuming AMC activities.

In June, AMC announced pre-requisite leader training for the 2 phases of volunteer-led activities, after which leaders will be able to model safe participation in AMC activities under the new guidelines for COVID-19. For a sampling of topics, see the article on page 3, *New COVID-19 Guidelines for AMC Activities*.

On June 30th, John Judge announced that many AMC properties and programs were opening on July 1 with strict adherence to public health and safety guidelines by state and as they continue to evolve.

Knowing that over 80+ volunteers from across AMC contributed their time and effort to review and assess the proposed requirements and guidance to help AMC reopen safely, I am confident that we will persevere during these challenging times.

Check out our hike listings for the summer season and participate as you feel comfortable; we will be here when you are ready. Be safe on the trails and enjoy the summer.

Kevin Cox

As of July 1 – What's On and What's Off?

For AMC lodging availability and closings through 2020, click: <https://www.outdoors.org/articles/newsroom/amc-preparations-for-covid-19>.

Take note that 2020 Fall Gathering events that had been planned by the AMC Delaware Valley chapter have been moved to 2021.

Dates to note:

July 13 EComm Meeting, 6:45 p.m.

Save the date:

Sept 14 EComm Meeting, 6:45 p.m.

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Mt. Greylock, Rounds Rock in 2018

Chapter Outings

July / August / September 2020

Listings below are as of the July 5th newsletter distribution date. Leaders may post e-mail updates for trips (published or not in the newsletter) via the AMC calendar of events which is available via the [chapter website](#). Leaders may also post updates via the chapter Yahoo group; use the [Yahoo group](#) to see updates and connect to others.

All AMC activities require advance registration:

- Contact the Leader for information about hike difficulty, meeting time and place, and updates due to weather or trail conditions. If you leave a message, please include your phone number in case hike plans must be changed.
- Or register online: Go to outdoors.org, click *ADVENTURES*, then search *BY ACTIVITY* or *VOLUNTEER LED TRIPS* or *AMC GUIDED ADVENTURES*. Click the activity for details, then click *REGISTER NOW* and log in with your username and password (create an account if necessary) to view/complete the electronic waiver.

July

Fri 7/10 Hudson River Skywalk-Easy (Hiking) We will start from Thomas Cole Home and follow the trail to Olana across the Rip Van Winkle Bridge. Hopefully, it will be a clear day. The distance is 6 miles round trip with an ascent of 300 feet. The threat of thunderstorms will cancel this hike. Leader: Kevin Cox 518-279-4839 (NCA 9 p.m.) mmcloug1@nycap.rr.com.

Wed 7/29 Hike in Schenectady County Forest Easy (Hiking) An easy, level, woodsy walk, about 2 or 3 miles, with the possibility of another loop, put in by a boy scout for his Eagle Scout project. The forest is 102 acres and is one of James Duane's original Great Lots. The trail, through hardwood and coniferous forest, passes by a pond. There are several boardwalks in place over wet/ muddy areas. Number of hikers limited due to COVID-19. Leader: Nancy Crowther 518-698-0531 nancy@crowther.org.

August

Sat 8/8 Taconic Crest Trail- Snow Hole Moderate (Hiking) We will start at Petersburg Pass and follow the Taconic Crest Trail to the Snow Hole. The distance is 6 miles with ascent of 500 feet. Leader: Kevin Cox 518-279-4839(NCA 9 p.m.) mmcloug1@nycap.rr.com.

Wed 8/12 Hike in Christman's Sanctuary Easy (Hiking)

This is an easy hike in lovely Christman's Sanctuary (Nature Conservancy property) in Delanson. We will go along the Bozenkill, a beautiful stream of rocky sandstone and shale, to see a thirty-foot waterfall and numerous lesser cascades, on woody trails. Bring snack and water. We will go three or four miles. There is a shelter near the waterfall where we can have our snack. Group will be limited due to social distancing. Leader: Will Crowther 518-698-0531 nancy@crowther.org.

Sat 8/22 Black Mountain Loop Moderate (Hiking)

We will follow the red marked trail to the summit and make the loop. We will pass by 2 ponds. This trail is quite scenic. The distance is 6.6 miles with an ascent of 1046 feet. Leader: Kevin Cox 518-279-4839 (NCA 9 p.m.) mmcloug1@nycap.rr.com.

September

Sat 9/12 Peaked Pond Mountain – Moderate (Hiking)

We will follow the red markers to Peaked Pond and then head up to the summit. Trail becomes quite steep to the summit. It has great views on top. The distance is 7.2 miles with an ascent of 1245 feet. Leader: Kevin Cox 518-279-4839 (NCA 9 p.m.) mmcloug1@nycap.rr.com.

Sat 9/26 Gore Mountain via the Schaefer Trail-Vigorous (Hiking)

We will start from the North Creek Ski Bowl area and following blue marked trail to the summit. The distance is 9.4 miles round trip and an ascent of 2560 feet. Leader: Kevin Cox 518-279-4839 (NCA 9 p.m.) mmcloug1@nycap.rr.com.



Harriman Jackie Jones Fire Tower in 2017

New COVID-19 Guidelines for AMC Activities

Chapter activity leaders are now reviewing the COVID-19 training materials and preparing for the July restart of volunteer-led hiking, cycling and paddling activities. Some topic areas of change under the new guidelines are listed here.

- Phase 1 – Guidelines for trail maintenance individuals and/or small groups of less than or equal to 4 people; effective June 15.
- Phase 2 – Guidelines for volunteer-led public events of less than or equal to 10 people; effective June 22; leader discretion to limit group.
- Using AMC's online registration for activity sign-ups and acknowledging risk by accepting the required electronic waiver for COVID prior to participation. Try it! For instructions, see page 2.
- Volunteers and participants must be well for 14 days prior to the activity.
- Staying at home/skipping the activity when you are sick with cough, fever or chills, muscle or body aches, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell.
- Contacting AMC leadership with positive COVID test results after participating in an activity to facilitate contact tracing.
- Discouraging carpools.
- Following state and local land management rules.
- Practicing social distancing (6 foot spacing between participants and avoiding crowds).
- Bringing/wearing a face covering for when social distancing is not possible.
- Putting on/wearing and safely removing face coverings and gloves.
- Carrying your own water, food/snacks, utensils, and hand sanitizer (with 60% or greater alcohol content) for your use during the activity.
- Washing and/or sanitizing your hands.
- Updating your first aid kit for COVID.
- Sharing and sanitizing tools and gear.
- Planning activities with group needs and safety in mind, e.g., check on parking and restrooms, have a backup plan and encourage flexibility.
- Listening to the guidance of the activity leader.
- Handling non-compliance with COVID-19 rules during an activity.