

December 2015



Tie Up Your Laces
And...Work!

TRAIL TENDERS' NEWS

A publication from the Trail Quality Training Team

Finger Lakes Trail Conference

Time to submit those volunteer hours for 2015! No Major Changes this year (whew)!!!

Season's Greetings! It's that time of year again to submit our volunteer hours for the annual census. We are using the same on-line form that was well-received last year. The submission of our time is **very** important. It documents to federal, state, and county officials, NYS public land managers, the North Country Trail Association, the National Park Service, our members, donors, auditors and potential funders, and the public, the volunteer time and effort we have expended to maintain this foot trail across New York State. The total is an impressive number! **Please do not under-report your hours!** **Thank you** in advance for submitting your volunteer hours by **January 31, 2016** using the census form that can be accessed on the **FLTC website at: Home>Members>Volunteer Trail Workers**, or at:

<http://www.flconference.org/trail/members1/volunteer-trail-workers/trail-council/census/>

Points to ponder:

- "Succession Planning" – Please volunteer to help with training and ensuring trail quality. Contact Lynda at: ljrassoc@roadrunner.com.
- Steve is looking for a "permanent" RTC for M 7 – M 11. It's a great volunteer job! Interested? Contact: stevec@roadrunner.com.

News Items

► The FLTC's Trail Management Team will hold its annual **Trail Council** meeting on **April 9, 2016**, from **10 – 3** at the First Congregational–United Church of Christ, 58 North Main Street (NY 332) in Canandaigua. This meeting is primarily for our Regional Trail Coordinators, Trail Club Chairs, and other volunteers who play leadership roles in managing trails in the FLT System; but any volunteer, landowner, or public agency rep is welcome to attend. Agenda items this meeting will include: dealing with hunting closures; asking for easements and handling easements when lands change hands; inventorying facilities; training and information needed by our maintainers; plus issues raised at our fall Trail Management training sessions See you there!

► The NCTA Field Grant money pot has some bucks in it this year. Check out the **application** at: www.northcountrytrail.org → Members → Volunteer Resources → Grant Applications. Grants up to \$1000 may be applied to Trail or Facility Construction, Promotion or Recruitment, Volunteer Training, Trail Maintenance, and Public Events associated with the 430 mi of NCNST coincident with the main FLT and the Onondaga Br. Email Lynda (ljrassoc@roadrunner.com) before submitting an application and for help preparing your brief case statement. 1st round apps due before March 1, 2016.

Entries on the Form:

- **First Name, Last Name, E-mail address** and **Organization** (with a drop down menu listing various Trail Clubs, Scout Troops, etc.)
- **Position** (with a drop down menu listing various roles such as Sponsor, Trail Club Chair, Regional Trail Coordinator, FLTC Board Member, FLTC Officer, Alley-Cat, Trail Management Team, Other, etc.)
- **Map** (with a drop down menu listing individual maps for Sponsors; groups of maps for Trail Clubs and Regional Trail Coordinators; and an FLT System-wide entry for others performing broad-based work for the entire organization)
- **Hours - five categories**, each to include both travel time and work time spent on both private and public land:
 1. **Trail Work** (maintenance and construction)
 2. **Administration** (meetings, office work, writing, editing, accounting, etc)
 3. **Interpretation & Outreach** (promotion, education, leading hikes, brochure development, car shuttling, etc.)
 4. **General Resource Work** (GIS/GPS work, mapping, planning, land protection/acquisition)
 5. **Training** (construction, maintenance, safety, sawyer, etc.)
- **Public Land** (with a drop down menu listing various State Forests, Parks, etc.)
- **Hours for Public Land** - to include that portion of the total hours entered above that were spent on various public lands
- **Comments** - to note work accomplished, problems encountered, and proposed future projects; and to request mileage funds and permanent facilities funds for miscellaneous trail maintenance supplies.

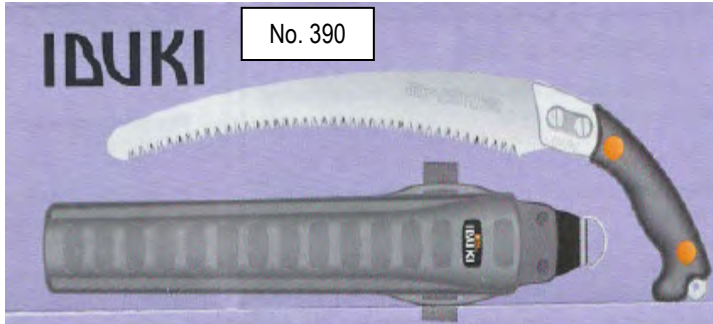
Important to Note:

- **Group projects** such as those performed by FLTC-organized work parties and Alley-Cat crews **will be reported by the VP of Crews & Construction or the Project Manager**.
- **Stewards (or "adopters") working for a Trail Club or affiliate organization should not use this form.** Stewards' hours should be reported by their Trail Club Chairs.
- The **Public Land Hours** in the lower section of the form **are part of the total hours** submitted in the first section of the form. **They are not additional hours.**

*Many thanks!
Steve*

ATTENTION Cattaraugus County Maintainers! Please tend to your trail section well in advance of this year's Cross County Hike Series. The series kicks off in April!

Holiday Hints



Above: Silky IBUKI 390 (XL teeth) plus sheath from www.silkysaws.com \$100.95.

Personal Hand Saws

Personal saws displayed at the Trail Management meetings in October included the Silky Ibuki and the Corona Pruning Saw. Both saws have been field tested and found to be exceptionally useful and durable. Their main advantage over the traditional bow saw is that they can be poked into narrow spaces and still cut. Many, such as these, cut only when you pull the saw towards you, which also seems to be an advantage when you're

continued at right



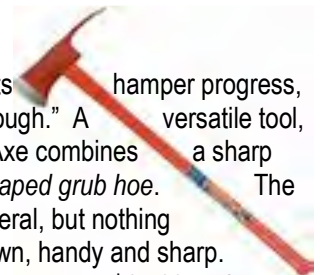
Above: Corona Professional Razor Tooth 21" Pruning Saw, plus 27" Scabbard # 81077, from Forestry Suppliers, \$98.50. (Artistic composition & photo: Irene Szabo)

Personal Hand Saws, continued

working in a tight place. The scabbards can be attached to a belt or tucked into or strapped onto your pack – either way, the teeth are not exposed. The Ibuki sports two rows of very sharp Japanese-style teeth; note the aggressive cross-cut saw raker teeth on the Corona.

Pulaski

"When heavy brush and roots hamper progress, this is the tool to get you through." A versatile tool, the classic Pulaski Axe combines a sharp axe with an adze-shaped grub hoe. The FLTC office has several, but nothing beats having your own, handy and sharp. From www.TheFireStore.com, \$65.99 and up.



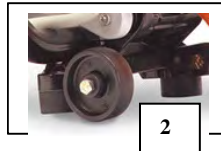
Clubs – Take Another Look at the Stihl Yard Boss!



Last December, we talked about the ease with which this multi-tool (1) with the weed whacker attachment (4) cuts on relatively level ground (not so well on rough terrain!). This year, we want to talk about using the Stihl Yard Boss with the tiller attachment (3) to help bench-in trail across the side of a hill. Trail workers in Ohio say the tiller even works well with rocks. Pretty easy to move over rough terrain or push up hills, too. The **Stihl YARD BOSS** MM 55 can also be fitted with a blade instead of string or tiller. The handles fold over the top of motor, so it can fit in the backseat of a car.



(5). Note: Both trimmer and tiller must be used with wheel kit (2). Yard Boss MM55 with wheels, tiller, & string head, from Twin Pines, Rt. 14 A, Penn Yan: \$489.83. With FLTC tax-exempt discount: **\$387.05**



Editor/Lead Writer – Lynda Rummel (lirassoc@roadrunner.com);
 Contributors/Trainers: Steve Catherman (stevec@roadrunner.com);
 Bill Coffin (wmscoffin@twcny.rr.com); Mary Coffin (maryccoffin@gmail.com); Marty Howden (howser51@yahoo.com);
 Irene Szabo (treeweenie@aol.com).

Regional Trail Coordinators, West to East

► Contact your RTC if you need the services of a certified sawyer. ► Coordinate your trail improvement ideas with your RTC. ► If you want reimbursement, obtain approval from your RTC and the FLTC VP-Trail Maintenance before you start.

Genesee West (M1-M6, CT1-CT12)
Marty Howden
howser51@yahoo.com (585) 567-8589 H
(585) 330-1872 C

Letchworth Branch (L1 & L2)
Irene Szabo
treeweenie@aol.com (585) 658-4321

Genesee East (M7-M11)
Steve Catherman
stevec@roadrunner.com

Watkins Glen-West (M12-M14, QCM/MFHLT)
Lynda Rummel
ljrassoc@roadrunner.com (315) 536-9484 H
(315) 679 2906 C Jan thru Mar only

Watkins Glen-East (M15-M19, I1)
Paul Warrender
paul.warrender@yahoo.com (401) 439-8285

Chenango-West (M20-M22 NY26, O1 & O2)
Anthony Rodriguez
boricua1037@verizon.net (315) 446-3586

Chenango-East (M22 NY26-M26 Bainbridge)
NY 26 to Sherman Rd.:
Tom Bryden
snbododger@yahoo.com (607) 859-2225
Sherman Rd. to Bainbridge:
Roy Dando
rdando@verizon.net (607) 785-3141

Catskill-West (M26 Bainbridge-M27)
Don Sutherland
dsutherlandny@aim.com (607) 754-9573

Catskill-Central (M28-M30 NY206)
Rick Roberts
hikerrick_2000@yahoo.com (607) 746-9694
(note underscore between hikerrick and 2000)

Catskill East (M30 NY206-M33)
Rick Roberts
hikerrick_2000@yahoo.com (607) 746-9694
(note underscore between hikerrick and 2000)

Bristol Hills Branch (B1-B3)
Donna Noteware
noteware@empacc.net (607) 868-4616

Crystal Hills Branch (C1-C3)
Pat Monahan
pmonahan@stny.rr.com (607) 936-8312

Building Stone Steps

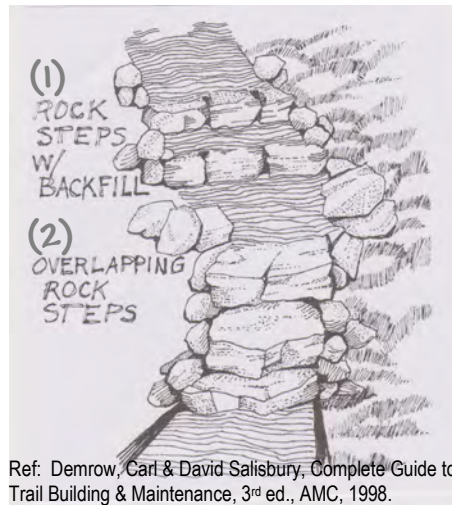
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Continuing from last issue our theme of using materials at hand:

Stone steps can be very helpful when you must make a sharp turn in a series of switch-backs or have no alternative but to climb a steep spot. On steep slopes, steps may be critical for retaining and stabilizing soil. Steps can also be placed above water bars (to prevent clogging) or built in a trail segment gullied out by water (if you are unable to move the trail to a better location).

Use hefty rocks, not wimpy ones – weak or small rocks will break, slide out, or otherwise fail to do the job. The size that works best may require two persons to carry or using that technique of lifting up one end of the rock and toppling it over in the direction of where you want it to go. Obviously, big stones (≥ 100 lbs.) with flat surfaces on both sides work best; but you really can use smaller rocks if they have at least one flat side and that's all that's available. If you are working on a hillside, take care not to slip and always wear a hard hat.

Really big rocks can be moved with the rigging that is housed in the FLTC's tool shed, which includes a GripHoist (winch), cable, straps (slings), etc. If you want help or advice, contact one of the following folks who were trained in 2014: Matt Branneman (mattbranneman@gmail.com), Kenny Fellers (fellersk@bluebottle.com), Mike Granger (mikegra@gmail.com), Marty Howden (howser51@yahoo.com), Dave Potzler (dpotz73@gmail.com), Don Sutherland (dsutherlandny@aim.com), Paul Warrender (607hikingtrails@gmail.com), or Jim White (jimbon.white@gmail.com).



Ref: Demrow, Carl & David Salisbury, Complete Guide to Trail Building & Maintenance, 3rd ed., AMC, 1998.

Building rock steps using a combination of rocks and dirt/backfill (1) is the easier to build of the kinds shown at left. As always, begin at the bottom and work up. Arrange several good sized rocks in a row across the tread. Follow the "ice cream cone" principle discussed in the Early Autumn 2015 TTN and dig a cone-shaped hole smaller than each rock and set the rock down into it, flat side up. Behind the rocks, add in enough dirt for one to two strides. (Note: You may need to bring in fill from a nearby "borrow pit.") Add more fill (bank gravel works really well) up to the top surface of the front rocks. One to two strides back from

the front edge of the rocks (depends on slope's steepness), put in another row of rocks, nested into holes like ice cream cones, back fill with dirt while adding rocks along the sides to keep the fill from spreading, and so forth. For (2), again starting at the bottom and working up, set the lowest row of rocks securely into the dirt and lap the next step of rocks over it. It helps if the rocks are flat and big enough to support a boot while overlapping at least a third of the step beneath. **continued on p. 4**

Hours reported for 2014: 21,761

Value: \$481,789

11,087 hours of trail work, 5,323 administrative hours, 3,250 interpretive hours, 1,259 training hours, and 843 hours of general resource work (primarily mapping and easements).

21,761 total hours x federal hourly labor rate of \$22.14 =

\$ 481,789 worth of labor donated to the FLT System. WOW!

5,097 hours more than 2013! Will we beat this in 2015?

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Building Stone Steps, continued from p. 3

It's very important that rock steps don't tip or wobble. Literally jump on them to test their stability and reposition any that move. Packing solid soil around the rocks may help. Do not "shim" the rocks with small stones – inevitably, these will work themselves loose and your larger rocks will become wobbly. Big, overlapped rocks work best; but thin, flat stones can be set on edge, buried deeply in the dirt and back-filled. (If you lean these stones back into the slope, pressure from footsteps will push the rocks into the slope rather than away from it.) Water will wash away soil and ice will move steps, so plan for drainage and build rock water bars above or in the middle of several steps. Helpful tools: 18-lb. rock bar, pick mattock or Pulaski, shovel, and the FLTC's new 28"-wide gas-powered wheel barrow, stored at Lynda's, ljrassoc@roadrunner.com.

**MECHANICAL
ADVANTAGE?**



The FLTC has added rock carrying slings and an additional GripHoist cable to its inventory of rigging tools. Several FLTC trail maintainers were trained to use the gear at a rigging workshop led by Lester Kenway, and can help you if you need to build big steps. See the list on p. 3 of this TTN. Or contact Matt Brannen, VP for Crews & Construction or your RTC for assistance.



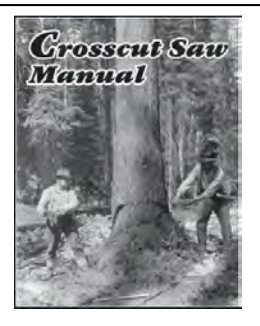
Sorry, we don't have a "Rent-A-Sawyer" program, yet, but all our chainsaw-certified sawyers have promised to help outside their home areas. If you need the services of a certified chainsaw operator, contact your RTC or Lynda at ljrassoc@roadrunner.com for a list of potential helpers. **OR,**

consider trying out a crosscut saw! For ease of access, the FLTC's crosscut saws have been sent to good temporary homes with Dave Potzler, Buffalo area, (dpotz73@gmail.com); Paul Good, Painted Post (pago547@aol.com); and Lynda Rummel, Penn Yan area (ljrassoc@roadrunner.com). If you are in the FLTC's west and west/central regions, please contact one of these folks to check out a cross-cut saw. If you are in Central NY, the Cayuga Trails Club *reputedly* has at least one cross-cut saw -- contact Paul Warrender at: 607hikingtrails@gmail.com. Missed Ed O'Shay's workshop at The Rendezvous and want to learn? It's easy and fun!

Go →

Home Study for Using the Crosscut Saw

This classic manual is still the bible. <http://www.fs.fed.us/eng/pubs/pdfpubs/pdf77712508/pdf77712508dpi72.pdf> Read it and then search for YouTube videos related to 2-person crosscut saw demonstrations, bucking with a crosscut saw, or the like. Remember: You don't push, you only have to pull! The Wranglestar series is done with humor; e.g., <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UEVvQVsxMGA>. ESF students: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0-BCR6FH-e8>. A young woman learning how to crosscut saw at a community fair: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7IFFbP4NkU>. Or a burly Sasquatch bucking up a hung-up tree: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o_Vkfn2EQb0.



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**For
How to Build Stone Steps
& Trail Census Info**

**Finger Lakes Trail Conference
6111 Visitor Center Road
Mt. Morris, NY 14510**