

Early Autumn 2016



Tie Up Your Laces
And...Work!

TRAIL TENDERS' NEWS

A publication from the Trail Quality Training Team

Finger Lakes Trail Conference

Please Mark Your Calendars! 

Points to ponder:

- I just hike. Am I invited to the Trail Management meeting?
- On the 423 miles of NCNST hosted by the FLT, which NCNST "disks" can be used in what situations?
- What does a landowner No Trespassing sign posted at a trail head mean for hikers? [Come to the Trl Mgt meeting & find out!]

Be Sure to Tell the FLTC Office about Landowner Changes

When property changes hands, please tell the office – be sure to include the old owner's name, the complete parcel number, the parcel address, the FLTC Map number, and the new owner's email and USPS mailing addresses, and phone number, if possible. *Please* pay attention if there's a For Sale sign or a bunch of different cars in the driveway, or the property looks much less used. If we don't know a new owner's interests or concerns, we can't address them; and issues of the *FLT News* magazine that are returned because of a "bad" address cost us over \$4 a mag! Send report to: trailreport@flconference.org and info@flconference.org. Please help!

Rustle Up Those Registers!

Using Quinn's simple summary sheet, please put in the numbers of trail users from as many of the trail registers from your section as you can. Quinn's mission is to gather real data about trail use and then adjust it by using standard multipliers that take into account the number of folks who don't sign in. Get the summary sheet from Quinn (qwright@fingerlakestrail.org) or your RTC, PLZ.

YOU Are Invited to This Year's Trail Management Meetings at Bainbridge (10/22) and Virgil (11/12)

If you're a FLT trail maintainer or are interested in becoming one, or you own or manage land that hosts the Trail, please join us at one of this year's informational/training meetings!

The meetings *this fall* will be held:

- **October 22, 10-3, at the Scout House in Bainbridge**, especially for those who work or host trail on FLTC Maps M23 – M33. (From I-88, head NW on NYS 206, then left (SW) on Rt. 7 So. Main St., then right on Walnut St., cross Pearl and Juliand, pass school on right, turn left on Prospect, parking & scout house will be on your left.)
- **November 12, 10-3, at the Virgil Town Hall, 1176 Church St., Cortland**, especially for those who work or host trail on FLTC Maps M15 to M22, plus O1, O2, I1, QC, MF

Included in the agenda for this fall:

- **Paul Warrender**, our new VP for Trail Maintenance, will talk about trail upkeep and improvement;
- **Dave Newman**, VP for Trail Preservation, will discuss the future of the trail,
- **Marty Howden**, Chainsaw Training Coordinator, will discuss chainsaw certification and cross-cut saw training, as well as trail maintainer safety; **AND**
- **Annette Toasperm**, a "retired" trail sponsor and environmental educator (trained by Cornell Co-operative Extension) will reprise the fine presentation she gave last fall about invasive species and the effects they have on the trail (this was *extremely* well received last year).
- Plus the basics from **Irene Szabo** and **Lynda Rummel** about landowner liability, anti-trespassing laws, blazing colors...and any questions you may have, plus info from other FLTC leaders.

Who should attend? Section maintainers, potential club and "alley cat" crew members, hiking club members and hike leaders, casual hikers and friends, geo- and- avi-cachers, landowners, and land managers, *from anywhere across the state*, but especially if you live in the eastern or east/central part of the state! **Bring your friends!**

10 a.m. sharp. BRING YOUR LUNCH.

Free coffee, apple cider, and breakfast goodies.

Tool "raffle" and Muck Truck demonstration, too!

If you missed last year's meetings, *be sure* to make one of these.

SIGNS, SIGNS, AND MORE SIGNS

The signs and disks that are appropriate at a road or trail crossing or trail head depend on whether the trail is the main trail or a branch of it, the land is private or public, and if public, which agency manages it, and whether the NCNST or GET also runs on it. Confusing? A bit, but I'll try to make it as easy as I can.

[Note: The following is reprinted from the December 2009 issue of the TTN, with modest additions and some rearrangement.]

The Universal FLT Trail Head Sign

The very first sign that should be posted on public or private land (and most likely is already there) is our familiar 11x11 yellow-and-green FLT trailhead sign (*at right*). This sign now comes in metal, but still should be affixed (with stainless steel staples or nails) to a backing board. In addition to listing the Trail Use Regulations (lower left), which include "No Motorized Vehicles," "No Bicycles or Horses Unless Authorized by...[the] Private Landowner" (note: this will be simplified when re-ordered), the metal trailhead sign includes two hiker icons intended to make the point that the FLT is just a **hiking trail**. When you have the chance, please replace old and faded plastic trailhead signs with metal ones. Signs with branch trail names are available.

Write in the road names where the sign says "Access." Bolt the sign (on a backing board) to a green metal fence post (available at most hardware stores), if no tree or wooden fence post is available. First, fit the sign to the post (it may require breaking off the little green wire holders in order to create a suitable hole for a bolt); then pound in the post, then attach the sign with backing board to the post. The FLTC tool shed includes a post pounder.

Signs for Trail Heads on Private Lands

We have asked our generous private landowners for permission for a footpath – a **hiking trail** – to cross their lands. That's all they give us permission for; and that's all **the public** may use our trail for.

Landowners, their families, and friends (with their permission) may continue to use the trail on their lands as they wish, of course. However, for the sake of the trail bed and the continuity of the trail as a hiking trail, we hope they would use the trail only for hiking.

Typically, private landowners who have given permission for the FLT to cross their lands are strongly opposed to other kinds of users – especially snowmobile, ATV, horseback, motorized bike, and mountain bike riders – coming onto their properties on the FLT. In addition, many private property owners do not want hunters to access their lands or adjacent properties from the trail.

To help assure that the FLT is kept as just a footpath and other kinds of users do not come onto private lands via the trail, the FLTC has created a number of signs that trail maintainers can post where the trail enters and exits the private properties or along the trail corridor. Signs will not prevent every problem, of course, but they are an absolutely essential first step, so we urge you to post signs especially at the boundaries between public and private lands and wherever else you think there is the potential for others to misuse the trail. Note that **if there is a Trail Easement on the section, only FLTC-approved signage may be posted on the Trail.**

continued at right

Signs on Private Lands, continued

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Before posting any *new* signs on a parcel, however, be sure that everyone understands that the signs apply to the public, not to the landowner's family or permitted friends.



The FLT Trail Head sign, *at left*, should be posted wherever the trail crosses a road. Attach two signs on backing boards on each side of a post, back to back so the signs face both directions of traffic, using 1/8" diam machine screws and a lock nut.

Please ask the landowner if he/she would permit you to post the FLTC's Posted sign where the trail crosses into and out of his/her property. The FLTC's **POSTED** sign (*below*) meets legal requirements, so is a good choice for landowners. This black-on-gold sign makes it clear that the trail is for foot travel only; bicycles, horses, motorized vehicles are prohibited; and no hunting is permitted from the trail or on adjacent lands. Post this sign (*below*) only with the landowner's permission, of course, and use a backing board.



Bottom Right: Some hikers have misinterpreted the FLTC POSTED sign as applying to them; hence, we highly recommend also posting the b&w sign that is shown below it.)

Signs on Private Lands *continued*

Signs for Special Circumstances

If you need a **special informational sign**, such as one that says the trail is temporarily closed due to logging or the trail section has been re-opened, we've got just the "template" you need. Although the sign below is shown with content, you can modify the content to suit your needs as long as you can edit a text box in a Word document. This 8.5 x 11" "template" comes with a permanent faded old-style FLT sign as the background image and two Word text boxes. **Simply replace the words on the sign with the words you want.** Then laminate the sign (leave 1/2" of clear laminate around the edges) and staple it to a backing board, making sure the staples go through the clear perimeter rather than the sign itself.



Hunters: Carrying a hunting weapon on the trail is considered hunting, for which you may be arrested.
Hikers: Wear blaze orange, do NOT stray from trail, and proceed quietly with caution – the landowner may be hunting this land.

Report violations to DEC Reg. X law enforcement officer via the XXXXXXX Office: 607-XXX-XXXX.

At left: Note the faded blue North Star image on the FLT sign. This means the sign is most appropriate when on a certified section of the NCNST hosted on the FLT main trail or Onondaga Branch; but since this is a permanent background image, feel free to use it on the rest of the FLT and the other branch trails. The image depicts one way in which the presence of the NCNST can be shown at a trailhead.

Post a similar sign at the property boundary -- just replace <On Private Land Ahead> with <On This Private Property>. Contact Lynda at ljrassoc@road-runner.com for the template sign.

Advisory, cautionary, and informational signs, such as the one **below**, can be made professionally, if approved by the VP-Trail Quality, in consultation with the rest of the Trail Management Team. Discuss



Signs & Disks, *continued*

with your Regional Trail Coordinator (RTC) if you want a professionally-made sign for a special circumstance.

FLT Disks

"Reassurance" disks are now available for the main, branch, and side trails (**examples below**). These should be posted whenever it would seem that the hiker would need "reassurance" that he/she is on the right trail. The background color of the disk matches the blaze color for the trail; i.e., white for the main trail, blue for side trails and the Onondaga Branch, yellow for the Letchworth Branch, and orange for the rest of the branch trails. If there are several loop trails in a small area or spurs off a branch trail, these may have a unique color (e.g., the purple trail off the Bristol Hills Branch that goes through Naples to Grimes Glen). Post these disks about a half mile apart, unless conditions warrant a closer arrangement, using a 1" aluminum nail or screw that can be backed out as the tree grows. Note that each disk says the trail is part of the Finger Lakes Trail System.



NCNST Trail Disks

From Allegany SP to and up the Onondaga Branch, the NCNST runs on the FLT. NCNST disks that may be posted depend on whether the trail segment is certified; non-certified and unlikely to ever be, but off-road; or a temporary road walk. Almost all segments on NY State Forest and State Park lands (and in the Finger Lakes Nat'l Forest) have been certified (by the National Park Service) as official trail. Many segments of trail on private land have also been certified. **If you don't know whether your section is certified or not, check your FLTC map.** You can download the most recent iteration from fitconference.org. Certified segments are those that are between the letters NCT and arrows pointing at each other, like X: NCT → X ← NCT.

On road walks or pre-existing multiple-use sections, use the disk that's **below, left:**



Although it's not easy to read, the text along the bottom of the disk **above** says, **TEMPORARY CONNECTOR**

On sections that are unlikely to be certified ever (because, e.g., the hunting closure exceeds 3 weeks) but are likely to be the route of the trail for a long time, use the disk that says **ROUTE, below, right:**





NCNST TRAIL DISKS, continued

Available as a disk or decal (for brown, flat Carsonite posts), the brilliant "North Star" emblem **at left** is the official symbol of the North Country National Scenic Trail and may be used only on segments that have been certified, by the National Park Service, as officially the trail.

A large version of this disk can be posted at trail heads where certified trail begins. North Country National Scenic Trail disks are to be posted in addition to the primary Finger Lakes Trail signage where the NCNST is coincident with the FLT.

Note: Please contact Rick Roberts at hikerrick_2000@yahoo.com or Don Sutherland at dsutherlandny@aim.com to clarify which FLT disks or signs can be used in the Catskills.



At left, reflective metal sign and letters, plus 2" reflective FLT decals, for use in some park or multiple-use trail settings.

Sign **at right** can be posted near trail heads to apply to the entire trail segment.



Please make plans now to attend a trail management meeting Oct. 22 or Nov. 12. Details on page 1!

Please send questions, comments, complaints, corrections, suggestions, new information or tips about trail building or trail maintenance to: Editor/writer -- Lynda Rummel (ljrassoc@roadrunner.com); or the conscripted occasional contributors -- Steve Catherman (stevec@roadrunner.com); Bill Coffin (wmscoffin@twcny.rr.com); Mary Coffin (mcoffin1@twcny.rr.com); Marty Howden (howser51@yahoo.com); Irene Szabo (treeweenie@aol.com); Paul Warrander (607hikingtrails@gmail.com) Training (trail maintenance, design and construction) *on your section* available upon request. Want to join the "Travelin' Training Team" or contribute to the *Trail Tenders' News*? We need you! Please contact Lynda and volunteer!

Upcoming Area Meetings & Signs, Signs, Signs...& Disks!

Finger Lakes Trail Conference
FLTC Service Center
6111 Visitor Center Rd.
Mt. Morris, NY 14510