



Tie Up Your Laces
And...Work!

TRAIL TENDERS' NEWS

A publication from the Trail Quality Training Team

Finger Lakes Trail Conference

In-Person FLTC Trail Maintainer Meetings Cancelled for This Year

If this were a normal year, we'd be holding in-person meetings for trail maintainers, Regional Trail Coordinators, and interested land agency reps and landowners at Virgil and Bainbridge. But of course, this year is anything but "normal." Our usual facilities are too small to allow adequate physical distancing or demos of tools or techniques. So, we're finding other ways to help you improve your trail maintenance knowledge and skills.

- We're improving and enlarging our online library of resources related to trail maintenance. *E.g.*, The FLTC *Safety Handbook*, which has been a model for the NCTA and others, and the FLTC *Field Maintenance Manual* are being updated by a new volunteer, an RIT graduate with solid knowledge of OSHA and PESH regulations and best practices for handling trail maintenance In The Time of COVID. The *Field Maintenance Manual* includes FLTC guidelines for blazing, tread and corridor width, etc.
- The Trails Coordinator for OPRHP's Finger Lakes Region is preparing instructional materials about the hand tools to maintain and repair damaged trail for us. These should be videographed and posted on our website or used in a Zoom meeting which he hosts.
- The "usual suspect trainers" will be enhancing and updating power point presentations to post (or mail out to the few maintainers who need hard copies) and searching for useful materials from other sources to which we'll link.
- More issues related to trail maintenance will be covered in the *FLTNews* magazine, which all members receive.
- Some trail management topics will be discussed in the new FLTC publication, *FLT FootNotes*, published on our website by our Director of Marketing and Communication.

And there will be more. But we'll sure miss the comradery of our in-person meetings, as well as the coffee, donuts, and cider-mill cider.

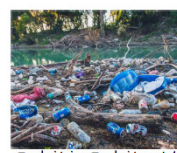
THIS IS THE SIGN ISSUE!

Signage has become vitally important to our landowners, especially as more casual and first-time hikers have taken to the trail and as more sections of trail are closed for longer hunting seasons. Unfortunately, **this summer we saw a significant increase in people leaving trash at trail heads and lean-to's, especially in fire pits, and reports of people, caught on camera, wandering from the trail to visit off-trail creeks or ponds.** There has also been a small but disturbing increase in use of the trail by ATV and mountain bike riders.

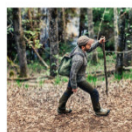
These abuses of our footpath are especially egregious when they occur on private lands and could lead to loss of permissions, so when they are reported, we try to take mitigating action as quickly as we can. But it's better to think and plan ahead with signage that anticipates and, we hope, pre-empts problems.

For Starters: The poster at right has been printed onto Rite-in-the-Rain paper and copies have been mailed to all our Regional Trail Coordinators for posting in lean-to's or kiosks or at trail heads. The poster correctly shows the Leave No Trace logo, as well as the FLTC's. Please contact your RTC if you know of a location where this poster should be put up. This is a nice way to try to educate new folks to good general trail behavior and maybe reduce wandering off the trail and leaving trash.

LEAVE NO TRACE



Pack it in, Pack it out!



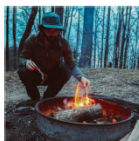
Stay on the Trail



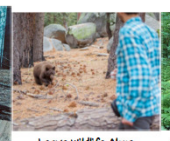
Be Prepared...Plan Ahead



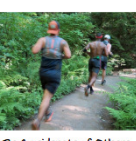
Leave What You Find



Minimize Campfire Impacts



Leave Wildlife Alone



Be Considerate of Others

FINGER LAKES TRAIL CONFERENCE 2020 11

The 7 LNT Principles: Pack It In, Pack It Out; Stay on the Trail; Be Prepared; Plan Ahead; Leave What You Find; Minimize Campfire Impacts; Leave Wildlife Alone; Be Considerate of Others

TRAIL CONTROL SIGNS FOR PRIVATE LANDS

The signs and disks that are appropriate at a road or trail crossing or trail head or parcel boundary 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, so **we will just focus on "trail control" signs for private lands.**

Note: All posters and signs except the faded FLT template are available from the FLTC Office. Get examples of wording and the faded FLT template from ljrassoc@roadrunner.com.

1. The Universal FLT Trail Head Sign

The very first sign that should be posted on private (or public) lands is our familiar 11x11 yellow-and-green FLT trailhead sign (**below**). This sign now comes in metal, but still should be affixed (with stainless steel staples or tacks) to a backing board if possible. At the lower left of the sign, the list of Trail Use Regulations includes "No Motorized Vehicles," and "No Bicycles or Horses Unless Authorized by...[the] Private Landowner." (The two hiker icons are intended to help make the point that the FLT is just **foot trail**.) **The list of regs also includes, "Take Your Litter Back Home," and when on private lands, "Do Not Stray from the Trail" and "Camp Only at Designated Sites."** Please replace old and faded plastic trailhead signs with metal ones, available from the FLTC Office.

Signs with branch trail names are available. However, because some new and uninformed hikers have thought that a sign that says, "Conservation Trail" means that it's a *DEC trail* (yes, even when it also says, "A Part of the Finger Lakes Trail System") and have gone off the track and even fished in the landowner's pond(!), feel free to **use the universal FLT sign and write in the name of the branch trail using a paint pen. 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 machine screw); *then* pound in the post, *then* attach the sign with backing board to the post. The FLTC tool shed includes a post pounder.



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

continued at right

Trail Control Signs for Private Lands, *con't* Early Autumn, 2020

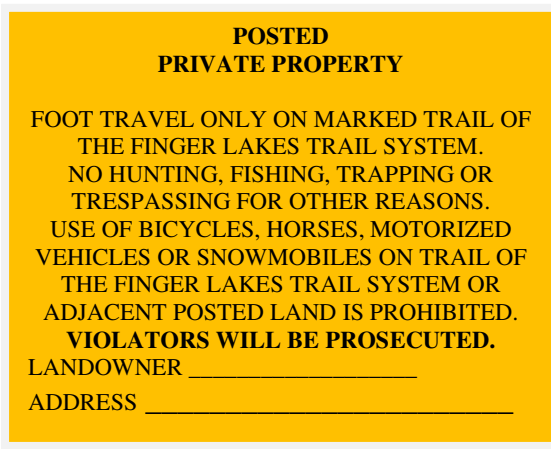
2. The Respect Landowner Private Property Sign

The second sign that **should be posted on all private lands** over which the trail crosses, regardless of whether we have a Trail Access Easement or not, is the half-size metal sign that says, "You Are On Private Property" (**below**). Post this sign *just inside* the boundary lines, facing out.



3. The FLT POSTED Signs

Post this sign (**below**) at both boundary lines, facing out. This sign meets all legal requirements and *augments* the landowner's POSTED signs by saying that only hiking on the defined FLT is allowed.



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6111 Visitor Center Rd.
Mt. Morris, NY 14510

Important Note: 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.

4. **NEW ! Signs for Trail Closures**

Seasonal closures are noted on our interactive and paper maps and on the trail conditions section of the FLT website (under the appropriate map number) at www.fingerlakestrail.org. **Seasonal closures must be signed on the ground, too, at the access points closest to the closure parcel (both directions) and at the property boundaries (both directions).** The two signs below, in plastic or metal, should be available soon from the FLTC Office. Using a paint pen (like a felt tipped ink pen but with paint, usually found at hardware stores or Michael's) **write in the closure period dates on the two lines, and write in the bypass information where it says, "To continue hiking."** These signs are intended to replace the earlier signs that had to be laminated (example at right).

SIGN FOR CLOSEST ACCESS POINTS:

TRAIL CLOSED ON PRIVATE PROPERTY AHEAD

—

No Hiking on this trail segment during the closure period. This closure is imposed by the owner of this private property who has generously given permission for hikers to be on the trail at other times of the year. Failure to respect this closure could lead to losing permission for the trail to cross this land.

To continue hiking



For the latest information on known trail conditions, visit: www.fingerlakestrail.org
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**SIGN FOR PROPERTY BOUNDARIES:**

TRAIL CLOSED ON THIS PRIVATE PROPERTY

—

No Hiking on this trail segment during the closure period. This closure is imposed by the owner of this private property who has generously given permission for hikers to be on the trail at other times of the year. Failure to respect this closure could lead to losing permission for the trail to cross this land. Please turn around and retrace your steps.



For the latest information on known trail conditions, visit: www.fingerlakestrail.org
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If you want the earlier version (see sign at top right) but don't have an example to serve as the template, contact Lynda at ljrassoc@road-runner.com. She will help you with the wording and possibly even make and laminate the sign(s) for you.

5. Special Signs for Special Conditions

HIKERS !

This orange trail does **NOT** loop back to Ontario County Park. Following this orange trail will take you to Co. Rd. 33, ~ 3 mi. from the park. To return to the park, turn around **NOW**.

The orange blazes mark the Bristol Hills Branch of the Finger Lakes Trail, which runs ~55 miles south from Ontario County Park to its junction with the main trunk FLT, west of Hammondsport.

For hiking maps, trail conditions, & section closure dates, visit: www.fingerlakestrail.org
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The faded blue image of the North Star in the background means that this sign is most appropriate on a certified section of the NCNST. HOWEVER, feel free to use this anywhere on the FLT System where you need a background that looks nice and official.

The faded FLT sign image above a blank white space can be used to create all sorts of signs, from announcing the reopening of a section to admonishing hikers not to follow a particular farm road to warning about potentially high water at a creek crossing. (See 2nd example, p. 4). So, use the faded image and the white space below it as your canvas: **Replace the words in the text boxes in the example above with whatever you want to say.**

Laminate the sign, leaving a ~ 1/2" margin of clear lamination all around. Cut or buy a backing board that is slightly bigger than the laminated sign. Then staple or tack the laminated sign to the backing board (*put the fasteners through the clear margins*), drill holes in the center at the top and bottom, and then nail the sign either to an existing post or a usable tree trunk (use sturdy aluminum nails and leave 1/4" out so the tree can grow). Or, attach the sign to a sturdy green metal fence post (found at hardware stores) by using machine screws and lock nuts. (Enlarge the holes in the metal post by breaking off the nibs intended to hold wire; and be sure to pound in the post *before* you attach the sign to it.) The laminated sign should last ~ 3 years.

Single use signs (like below) for special circumstances can be made professionally, if requested through your RTC and approved by the Trail Management Team.

ATTENTION HIKERS

During hunting season, you may encounter authorized hunters on the trail ahead.
Wear high visibility clothing and do not stray from the trail.

ATTENTION HUNTERS

The trail ahead crosses private property that the owner has posted "No Hunting".
Hunting is allowed only with the specific permission of the landowner.
You may encounter hikers on the trail during hunting season.
Their safety is your responsibility.

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fingerlakestrail.org



HUNTERS: NO HUNTING FROM TRAIL.
JUST CARRYING A HUNTING WEAPON IS
CONSIDERED HUNTING, FOR WHICH YOU
MAY BE ARRESTED.

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For information about trail conditions, visit: www.fingerlakestrail.org



The *above* image is available as a small **poster** on RITR paper, especially for use in lean-to's, kiosks, or at trail heads or where abuse occurred.



The general sign *above* can be over-ridden at landowner-designated sites by posting signs that say, "Camping Permitted Here by Landowner."

The **sign template** *above* (also on p.3) can be used to convey information that targets (no pun intended) specific problems such as hunters using the trail to access and hunt posted land.

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.

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

**Upcoming Virtual Meetings and
Signs for Trail Control on Private Land**

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