

December 2020



**Tie Up  
Your  
Laces**

## **And Work!**

### Points to ponder:

- What are the new course standards for swampers?
- How do swampers and sawyers request reimbursement for CPR and First Aid courses?
- Has there been any progress on installing bootbrush stations along the trail?

### Upcoming Trail Council Meeting

The FLTC's annual Trail Council meeting will be held again this coming spring, probably in late April or early May. Thanks to many of you, last year's meeting resulted in a number of excellent reports that were then circulated to invitees, so this year's meeting will likely be a combination of mailed-in reports sent out to invitees and a Zoom or similar discussion session. This year, the meeting will be organized and led by Jon Bowen, VP-Trail Maintenance, with support from Lynda Rummel, retiring VP-Trail Quality.

Primarily for our volunteers and partners who play leadership roles in managing trails in the a FLT System – e.g., Trail Club Chairs, Regional Trail Coordinators, Trail Mgt. Team members, NCTA HQ staff or volunteers, and public agency central and regional reps -- this meeting will be an opportunity to introduce the FLTC's new staff Director of Trail Development. The agenda has not been set yet, so **contact Jon at [jkbowen@gmail.com](mailto:jkbowen@gmail.com) if you have suggestions or requests.**

# TRAIL TENDERS' NEWS

*A publication from the Trail Quality Training Team*

## Finger Lakes Trail Conference

To: All Trail Workers, Maintainers, Sponsors, and Sawyers

From: Lynda Rummel, VP-Trail Quality, & Marty Howden, Chainsaw Training Coordinator

**Subjects: New Training Standard for Chainsaw Helpers (Swampers); and Reimbursement for Basic First Aid and CPR Courses for Swampers and Sawyers**

**What's the New Training Standard?** The North Country National Scenic Trail (NCNST) runs on the FLT for 422 miles, from the PA border in Allegany State Park easterly and then north-easterly to the terminus of the Onondaga Branch in the Tioughnioga WMA (M01-M2X, O1-O2). The National Park Service (NPS) administers the NCNST nationally. The FLTC attempts to apply NPS standards and requirements *across the whole FLT System as much as is practical and possible*. Fall 2020, the NPS announced new training standards for those who help sawyers (i.e., swampers) that include becoming certified in Basic First Aid and CPR, and taking a Blood Borne Pathogens course. These same courses are required for chainsaw certification.

**What Courses Do I Have to Take?** Like our sawyers, sawyer swampers are dispersed across the state, living in both rural and urban areas and helping out as members of sponsoring clubs or as family or friends of individual trail sponsors. To encourage sawyer helpers to take these courses and to make it as easy and palatable as possible, we have determined that an appropriate way to satisfy this standard is to ask *all folks* who work with chainsaw sawyers to take Basic First Aid and CPR courses *of their choosing*. (A free power point presentation for Blood Borne Pathogens is available on the FLTC website.)

The NPS recommends hands-on or blended (online with hand-on component) courses. While we appreciate the importance of a hands-on component, especially if it's the first course ever taken, we will accept certificates or cards from fully (completely) online courses as satisfying the standard. In our personal experience, some online courses are as good or better than some face-to-face courses, and having the opportunity to take these at your own pace and in a covid-safe, comfortable environment seems especially important now.

We recommend courses from the International CPR Institute (ICPRI), the American or Canadian Red Cross, and the American Heart Association. Please let us know if you find a particularly good completely online course.

**Can I Get Reimbursed?** After submitting copies of their certificates or cards to the FLTC Office (just the receipt won't do!), swampers may then be reimbursed up to \$35 for a combined Basic First Aid/CPR course or up to \$25 for each individual course. And *of course* we will now offer these same opportunities to certifying or recertifying sawyers – going forward, just submit your certificates or cards to the FLTC Office for reimbursement!

To request reimbursement, mail copies of your certificates of completion or cards to Debbie Hunt, FLTC Director of Operations, 6111 Visitor Center Rd., Mt. Morris, NY 14520, or email copies to [debbieh@fingerlaketrail.org](mailto:debbieh@fingerlaketrail.org) and ask to be reimbursed for the cost of the courses. Please email copies to Marty, as well, at [howser51@yahoo.com](mailto:howser51@yahoo.com).

**Attention Sawyers – Yes, finally,** you, too, may be reimbursed for the Basic First Aid and CPR courses associated with your chainsaw sawyer certification. A BIG thanks to all of you who personally paid for these courses in the past.

**ATTENTION Section Sponsors and Maintainers! Please tend to your trail section early in the season. Several solo challenges or events will be on the trail as soon as trail conditions allow.**



### **Above: Revised Sign Now Available**

Measuring 11" x 11" and printed on heavy plastic, this sign usually needs a backing board. But it can be stapled to the backing board using 3/8" stain-less steel staples in a carpenter's stapler. Post this sign when and where it's warranted – either the landowner asks for it or you discover there's been camping, picnicking, or partying on a non-permitted stretch of trail on private land or you anticipate that these actions could take place. **Think about managing trail behavior from the landowner's perspective**, and think ahead, to pre-empt the behavior before it happens.

### **At Left Top: Critically Important Sign for Private Lands**

Measuring 5.5" tall x 8.5" wide, the yellow sign is on durable metal that can withstand being posted without a backing board. The colors match those used on our FLTC trail head sign.

Please **ADD this sign** to any and all of the private lands your stretch of trail crosses, just slightly within the boundary lines. Please be sure to post a sign at both ends of the stretch, so hikers coming from both directions will know they are on private lands. Post the sign facing outwards, of course.

By posting this sign just within the boundaries, going both directions, hikers are confronted with very important information that we have no other way of getting to them. This sign can save you, our landowners, and the rest of us in Trail Management from a lot of stress, so please figure out how many you need on your section(s) and ask Debbie Hunt at the FLTC office [debbieh@fingerlakestrail.org](mailto:debbieh@fingerlakestrail.org) to mail them to you. Then put them up *before* Spring.

### **Brief Lessons from the Pandemic**

There were many new people on the trail. Many did not seem to know that the trail is often on private land and is there just thanks to a handshake agreement with the landowner. Thus, they did not understand that they must demonstrate respect to the landowner by not wandering off the trail to fish in a landowner's pond, enjoy the view from a hilltop landowner's patio, or hike a closed section during hunting season.

Several permissions were lost and several more were in jeopardy and required the Regional Trail Coordinator and/or a Trail Management VP to take immediate action, which usually meant talking with the landowner, inspecting the trail across the property, and posting the two signs at left *and sometimes specially made signs* aimed at managing hiker behavior. So please save the Trail Mgt Team and your RTC some work by posting these signs NOW and by carefully but thoroughly clearing and (re)blazing your section early in the Spring. Blazes should be 2"x6", with crisp lines and square corners.

## Annual FLTC Trail Census Due

Report your hours by January 31. Do NOT under-report your hours! Read the 2020 Census Instructions!

If you work as a trail adopter, steward, maintainer, or work crew member for a trail club (e.g., Foothills) or an organization such as a scout troop that has responsibility for a stretch of trail, report your individual trail work hours to your Trails Chair or other designee who will then report the hours to us. Report your non-trail work hours (administrative, interpretive, etc.) to your Trails Chair or use the on-line Census form.

If you are working as an individual sponsor (i.e., not under the auspices of a club or organization), report all of your volunteer hours using the on-line Census form.

If you have hours on an organized work project, please do not include them in your individual report; the Project Manager will report those hours. However, check that your Project Manager is aware of your travel time.

If you have individual hours on behalf of the FLTC or the FLT system, report those hours using the on-line Census form.

The on-line Census form is at <https://fingerlakestrail.org>. From the Home page, go to the Members > Volunteer Trail Workers page and click on the 2020 Census link or go directly to the on-line form at [2020 Volunteer Hours Census - Fingerlakes Trail Conference](#).

## Updated Advice for Anti-Slip Treatments for Puncheon and Bridge Surfaces

Because it is extremely difficult if not impossible to tell where and when asphalt shingles were made, & because some shingles contain asbestos that can become dangerous if smashed or pulverized, **we are no longer recommending using asphalt shingles** to reduce surface slipperiness. Instead:

- Apply 2 coats of **marine epoxy paint** to the top dry surface of the tread boards at home and sprinkle on **man-made grit** between coats. **Or**
- Secure a wide strip of **1/2" galvanized hardware cloth** to the surface OR wrap a wider strip around the top and edges of the tread boards. Secure with roofing nails or heavy staples. Cut hardware cloth before going into the woods. **Or**
- Apply **truck bed liner** to top dry surface of the tread boards at home. (Not tested yet but looks very promising!)

Do NOT use metal lathe (too sharp) or just scuff the surface (doesn't work). Untreated black locust or white oak may also be used but may become slimy over time. An analysis of all the treatments *except* the truck bed liner is in the April 2018 issue of the *Trail Tenders' News*, at [www.fingerlakestrail.org](http://www.fingerlakestrail.org). And just leave already applied asphalt shingles alone!

## 2021 Chainsaw Certification Courses Scheduled for April 24 & 25 and May 15 & 16

By FLTC policy, sawyer certification is required for anyone who wants to use a chainsaw on **any part of the Finger Lakes Trail System**. Certification is also required by state and federal land managing agencies and the National Park Service. Recertification is required every three years. **We need more sawyers!**

The FLTC provides this 2-day course **FREE** to any current or aspiring FLT trail maintainer, sponsor, RTC or work crew member, or NCNST trail volunteer, or land trust or land-managing agency personnel. However, every participant **MUST** be an FLTC member or work for one of our land managing or agency partners. Please be current with your CPR/First Aid certifications. (Note [1]: You may update your certifications using convenient online courses. Note [2]: **If** you send copies of your certificates or cards to the FLTC Office, you may get reimbursed for your CPR/First Aid courses.) Also, please be sure to view the Blood Borne Pathogen slides on the FLTC website at <https://fingerlakestrail.org> → Members → Volunteers and Trail Workers → Reference Documents. Finally, please note that this year's chainsaw certification courses will be held a little earlier in the season than in previous years.

Regional Trail Coordinators, club trail chairs, and sponsors may contact any sawyer who is currently certified. 125 individuals have gone through this course thus far. Many are still working on the FLT System, but some have moved away or retired, so we welcome newbies, as well as recertifiers. Individuals who complete the course must promise to work outside their home area *if asked and when they can*. We hope sawyers will respond as often as they can; however, they can choose whether and when to do so.

Men and women, old and young, big and small, have become certified, so if you're reluctant to take this course, please think again. Or, if you just want to work as a sawyer "swamper" (helper), please consider taking this course. Our fantastic "Game of Logging" instructor (Bill Lindloff) tailors the course to our needs as trail workers who must deal more with blow downs and ice storm and micro-burst damage than with felling healthy trees, but you *will* learn how to fell a tree safely. And, there is something new every year! 8 a.m. – 4+ p.m. daily. Location: Birdseye Hollow SF/County Park (FLTC map M 12), 10 min. east of Hammondsport. We doubt the scout house will be available this year, so you may have to stay at a motel in Bath or Hammondsport or pitch your tent in Birdseye Hollow State Forest. Marty will let you know.

To sign up for the chainsaw certification course, you must contact Marty at [howser51@yahoo.com](mailto:howser51@yahoo.com) or 585-567-8589. Bring your own saw if you have one and personal protective equipment (PPE), including UL-certified chaps or pants, helmet and ear, eye and face protection, and protective foot wear. Tell Marty if you need PPE. Review the FLTC *Safety Handbook* on the FLTC website at <https://fingerlakestrail.org> → Members → Volunteers and Trail Workers → Reference Documents. See especially the diagram on p. 38. (FYI: The *Safety Handbook* is being updated.)



## Supplemental Accident Insurance/Workers' Comp

As reported in the April, 2020, issue of the *TTN* and elsewhere, until now, volunteer trail workers were eligible to apply for Workers' Comp only when the injury occurred where the North Country National Scenic Trail (NCNST) is hosted by the FLT or when the injury occurred on DEC- or- OPRHP-managed state land.

**Now**, if you are working anywhere on the Finger Lakes Trail system you are covered by the **Finger Lakes Trail Accident Insurance Policy**. **However**, this coverage applies **only if** you have filled out the **FLTC Trail Maintainer Registration Form** (available on the website) and, very importantly, **only if** you have notified the FLTC office by phone (leaving a voicemail message counts) or email on the day you plan to work and the location (e.g., map number and between which roads) of the work. When you have completed the work you also need to advise the office by phone or email.

While this may sound like a hassle, this is the only way for you to have coverage when you are working on **non**-NCNST trail on private land, so please just make a quick phone call before you head out and leave the necessary message.

To be eligible for federal and state Workers' Comp, additional paperwork is required, and other processes must be followed, so be sure to read and save p. 3 of the April, 2020, *Trail Tenders' News*, available at [www.fingerlakestrail.org](http://www.fingerlakestrail.org) → Members → Library.

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## Decorate Your Trail Section With a Bootbrush Station

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Marcus Paul is the grandson of Paul and Kathy Good who maintain a section of the main trail on map M14, in the vicinity of Goundry and Sugar Hills. Paul is an Eagle Scout, which I have to assume has something to do with Marcus's interest in earning his own Eagle. (One of their other grandsons already became an Eagle Scout by completing a puncheon project on the main trail in the Goundry Hill area, M14.) Marcus lives in Horseheads, but for his project, Marcus will be installing boot brush stations beside the parking lot where the main trail crosses CR 88 south of Hammondsport (M12) and in Birdseye Hollow Day Use Park, on the spur between the parking area and the main trail (M12/M13).

Hillary Moser, Finger Lakes-PRISM Coordinator, will supply the materials, including the signage that will highlight two species – Asian jumping worms and the Spotted Lantern Fly (SLF) -- whose eggs can be dispersed by car tires and hiking boots and which are potentially devastating to the Finger Lakes economy. The especially cool aspect of Marcus's project is that Marcus will have the additional responsibility (rare opportunity?) of writing the sign text for the Spotted Lantern Fly, since none currently exists.

Bill Meehan, RTC for Bath-Watkins Glen, will be the lead FLTC volunteer with whom Marcus can work. Donna Noteware, Bristol Hills Branch RTC, has already assisted by contacting the landowner on CR 88 about the feasibility of the project. Steve Catherman, Steuben Co. highway engineer (and former VP-Trail Maintenance) will assist by identifying the appropriate contact person for Birdseye Hollow Day Use Park. Hearty congratulations to Paul and Kathy's extended family ! and a big thanks to the FLTC volunteers helping on this project.

To:

New Swamper Training Standard,  
Reimbursement for BFA & CPR &  
Trail Census Info

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