

ADIRONDACK  
FORTY-SIXERS

TRAILHEAD  
STEWARD  
PROGRAM

Established 2017

## Table of Contents

The Adirondack 46er By Laws .....	3
The Adirondack 46er Mission Statement.....	3
Your Responsibilities .....	4
Personal Safety: .....	5
Educate and Engage the Public.....	5
Share objective information, not subjective.....	6
Offer materials provided in bins .....	7
Communication with the volunteer coordinator .....	7
Stay within the guidelines of the VSA.....	7
Handling Emergencies .....	8
Protect the Resource.....	9
Share the Regulations: Some common regulatory violations .....	10
HikeSafe.....	11
Ten Essentials.....	11

## **The Adirondack 46er By Laws**

The Purpose of the Organization shall be to protect and foster the natural resources within the Forest Preserve located in the Adirondack Park of the State of New York and to preserve the wilderness character of the region.

In furtherance of such purpose, the Organization will seek to recognize those climbing the forty-six Adirondack major peaks; to foster appreciation of the Adirondack wilderness and the climbing experience; to educate its members and the public to become users who are safe, well-informed, and prepared; to encourage enjoyment of the Forest Preserve in a manner consistent with preservation of the wilderness; to protect the wilderness through its programs in trail maintenance, education, and conservation, and to support projects of other organizations and communities which further the goals of the Organization.

### **Section 3: Responsibilities of Membership**

Members are expected to:

- Place safety first and foremost. This includes your own safety, that of members in a hiking party, and especially that of children and others dependent upon them, and that of other hikers on the trail.
- Obey official rules and laws, comply with DEC regulations and announcements, and respect the rights of private property owners.
- Follow the principles of Carry In/Carry Out, HikeSafe, and Leave No Trace.
- Neither damage nor deface the natural environment or objects of historical importance.

### **The Adirondack 46er Mission Statement**

A non-profit organization whose members have climbed the 46 major peaks of New York's Adirondack Mountains. As volunteers we are dedicated to environmental protection, to education for proper usage of wilderness areas, to participation in New York State Department of Environmental Conservation-approved trail projects, and to the support of initiatives within the Adirondack High Peaks region by organizations with similar goals that enhance our objectives.

To further the mission of the Adirondack 46ers and to address the significant increase in usage in the high peaks (up 64% since 2011), the Trailhead Steward Program was developed. We hope you will utilize this handbook and the training you were provided to enhance these goals. We thank you for your participation in this program. We welcome your feedback as this program continues to develop and grow.

## **Your Responsibilities**

**Attend required training and recertification training.**

**Complete Individual VSA and contact information forms and return to Volunteer Coordinator.**

**Sign volunteer liability form and return it to the Volunteer Coordinator.**

**Be a registered 46er who is at least 16 years of age.**

**Scheduling:** It is hoped that you will be able to be at the trailhead from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm and can volunteer 2 days per season, though those two days need not be the same weekend. You will always work with a partner. If you are unable to attend your regularly scheduled work day for any reason, please let the volunteer scheduler know as soon as possible so that we can schedule someone else.

**Obtain Supplies from Secure Storage Facilities Prior to Scheduled Shift:** The Town of Keene has generously provided the Trailhead Steward Program with storage at Marcy Field at no cost. A folding table, supply bins, table banner and canopy are in the storage locker. To access:

- (1) Turn in the main entrance to Marcy Field (NOT Holt House).
- (2) Drive directly across Marcy Field. (The airplane hangar will be on your left.)
- (3) You will notice an opening in the trees as you approach the back of Marcy Field. Drive in this opening and turn left.
- (4) The Town of Keene shed will be directly in front of you. You can drive right up to the shed.
- (5) Our locker is inside the barn and to the right.
- (6) The lock (which can be reprogrammed, as needed) has a combo on the bottom. You may need a headlamp or flashlight to see this well. **The combo is "4646"**. The numbers must be exactly in place and one may have to push in slightly to get the lock to open.
- (7) Our supplies are in the locker: folding table, table drape (in cardboard tube), pop up shelter (in bag), 2 bins with green lids, and the "Dig it" demo tub.

**One final caution:** When you slide open the locker door, please be cautious. It can easily come off the track.

## Personal Safety

All wilderness safety begins with your personal safety, then your partner's personal safety, then the public's, and then the patient's. Your personal safety is the first item of concern. Begin the day with a fully charged cell phone. Check for any possible reception where you are. Then place your phone in airplane mode. Be aware of the weather and dress appropriately for sedentary work. Bring water and snacks. You are likely to eat more than you expected. If it is a chilly day, a thermos of hot beverage is helpful. Be prepared with water, winter hat and gloves, windbreaker, insect repellent and sunscreen. Reapply the insect repellent and sunscreen often. Be aware of dogs not on leash. Do not be confrontational. Do not lend your personal gear to others.

**Educate and Engage the Public:** Use the information in this handbook and learned from your training. In your uniform you will be perceived as an expert on back-country information. Therefore, the information you give will be trusted and expected to be accurate. Use the right approach for your audience. (Example: You may connect differently with a child versus a senior). Suggest behavior changes, don't demand them. Be aware that not everyone will respond positively to your presence. Remain polite at all times. If possible, speaking side to side rather than face to face while focusing on a third object, you may appear less authoritative to a visitor. Remember you are representing the Adirondack 46ers. Points to consider:

- Initiate conversation that allows you to connect with the individual you are speaking with (example – are you working on climbing the 46? If the answer is yes, you could ask how many they have done. If they say this is their first one you can say they have picked an awesome one.) Forging either an emotional or intellectual bond will make the visitor more open to your conversation and education.
- If your initial conversation leads you to believe someone is going to be attempting a hike that is beyond their means or the trail is very busy, offer alternative hikes nearby (Examples: Mt VanHovenberg or Pitchoff) See list/display card in bin for more info.
- Ask if you could see the person's map so you can show them an item, such as the steepness of the trail by looking at contour lines. Often, they do not have a map and this gives you an opportunity to encourage the purchase of a map. If you show them that item on your own map, be sure and retain your own map. If they are hiking with information gained solely from an internet source that may be inaccurate, offer an internet source that is accurate.

- Mention the weather. Check the high peaks summit forecast on NOAA prior to coming to the trailhead. Give that high peak forecast to visitors with temperature, precipitation and wind. Remind visitors that the trailhead weather and the summit weather are often very, very different. For every 1000 feet of elevation that you gain, you lose 5 degrees in temperature and you often experience higher winds.
- Mention what time sunset is if the visitor is starting later in the day. Having a turn-around time to avoid darkness and/or a headlamp would be a great suggestion.
- Recommend wicking fabrics for clothing rather than cotton. You could have a demonstration set up with 2 bowls of water and like sizes of cotton fabric and synthetic fabric. You can dip both in the bowls of water and illustrate that cotton absorbs more, thus making you wet and cold. Cotton fibers take longer to dry too.
- Remind hikers that our trails are deceptively rugged and often eroded. They should have adequate footwear, walk on boulders whenever possible, and through mud down the center of the trail for their safety and to protect the resource from further erosion.
- Group separation is the number one cause of search and rescue. If you come as a group, stay together as a group. Sign in and out of the trailhead register. Travel at the pace of the slowest hiker in the group and adjust as needed.
- Whenever possible, utilize the authority of the resource in your conversations. See attached document by Dr. George N Wallace. See other attached documents – principles of interpretation, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and learning styles.

**Share objective information, not subjective.** Example: The length of the trail from Route 73 to the summit of Cascade is always the same for every person. It is a red marked trail that is 2.4 miles long. The elevation gain is 1940 feet. The summit elevation is 4098 feet. When asked “how long will it take me to reach the top” you are being asked a subjective question. You do not know the person’s abilities and how long it will take them. If you guessed one hour you would be sharing subjective information about how long it would take you.

**Always be in uniform.** Remember you represent the Adirondack 46ers and are assisting the organization in carrying out its mission. You are not a person authorized to enforce rules and regulations. You can only encourage persons to follow them. By wearing a uniform, persons may feel you have some authority and will give you respect.

**Offer materials provided:** Do not insist anyone take them. Suggest taking them both before and/or after the hike.

**Talking With the Press:** On a few occasions the press has approached the trailhead stewards during their work to discuss the program. In an effort to standardize our response, please provide the press with the “About TSP” document found in the lime green notebook in the supply bin. You may wish to review this with them.

**Two Way Radio Use:** A radio is provided in the supply bin for your use in the event of an emergency. Please follow the radio protocol provided in your training. Remember that the radios are only to be use if your cell phone does not work.

**Social Media:** For the benefit of Trailhead Steward communication, a Facebook page has been created entitled ADK 46er’s Trailhead Stewards. This is a closed group for the use of Trailhead Stewards only. Please feel free to communicate within this group with one another. However, you must still communicate with the Volunteer Coordinator and Scheduler as noted below and in other areas of this manual (such as in the event of an emergency). \*Please be thoughtful regarding use of your own personal social media when sharing information regarding the Trailhead Steward Program. Any items posted should be in keeping with the 46ers’ mission, the VSA, and this manual.

**Communication with the volunteer coordinator:** In the supply bin, you will find a notebook, in which you may record information to be shared with the volunteer coordinator. At minimum, this should include the number of hikers, and the number of dogs for each day. (Please note that DEC may ask us to also count the number of parked cars we see at a given point in the day. More on this as details become available.)

If you see regulatory violations, document them and the number of them. For example – dogs off leash there were 7 today, over size groups there were 3 of them today. Include the name of large groups if they do not have a permit and you can see their logo so that the volunteer coordinator can share the violations with the DEC. Make note of area venues that recommend Cascade as a first-time hike such as hotels or restaurants. An e-mail to the volunteer coordinator with the visitor count and any other concerns following your shift is greatly appreciated.

Volunteer Coordinator Phone (Home): [518-647-5296](tel:518-647-5296).

Volunteer Coordinator E-Mail: [trailstewards@adk46er.org](mailto:trailstewards@adk46er.org)

**Stay within the guidelines of the VSA at all times. Copy with handbook.**

## **Handling Emergencies**

### **NYS DEC Emergency Contact Numbers**

Emergency DEC Dispatch  
518-891-0235

Non-Emergency DEC Dispatch  
(518) 897-1300

NYSDEC Forest Ranger Rob Praczkajlo  
Phone: 518-335-3175

For a major medical emergency at the trailhead or roadside, you may contact 911. If the emergency involves a lost individual or a medical emergency on the trail that may require carry out contact the DEC Emergency Dispatch number.

Remember you are not a rescuer – your role in an emergency of any type will be to be a conduit of information. To be the most effective reporter possible, gather as much information as possible prior to making your call. When reporting an emergency, you will be asked the who, what, where, and when of the emergency. Write these items down so that you report the information as accurately as possible. If you are reporting information as a third party, keep the other reporter with you, if possible. Remain calm. Please utilize the ADK Incident report form in the supply bin to assist you with this.

# Protect the Resource

## LNT Principles

1 – Plan ahead and prepare: What route are you taking today? How long is it? How much elevation gain is there? What is today's weather forecast? Understand the regulations. Follow LNT Principles.

2 – Travel and camp on durable surfaces: Trails are built with switchbacks to prevent erosion. Stay on trails rather than take the shortest route. Walk through mud in the center of the trail or step on rocks. Do the Rock Walk.

3 – Dispose of Waste Properly: Port-a-Potties are located at the upper Route 73 parking lot. Privies are located at the trailhead near the sign in register, near the trail junction with Porter, and just below the tree line. If you travel with a canine companion, please be sure to clean up after your pet and dispose of that waste properly as well.

4 – Leave what you find: Take photographs of wildflowers and rocks.

5 – Minimize campfire impacts (Prohibited in the Eastern High Peaks)

6 – Respect wildlife: The rule of thumb is to extend your arm and then cover the animal with your thumb. If you cannot cover the entire animal, then you are too close. Mothers protect their young; animals lose their fear of humans. You are entering the largest wilderness in the State of New York. Please keep your passage as a human temporary.

7 – Be considerate of other visitors: Photographers, birders, hunters, boaters, and others may also be using the forest preserve lands. Be considerate of their visit as well as yours.

Demonstrate “Dig It” using a small clear plastic covered container about 2/3 filled with lightweight potting soil. Dig a hole using your plastic trowel. Demonstrate how to cover and bury material without having to “hit the hole” or touch anything by using a stick and trowel.

**Littering:** How long does it take for an orange peel to decompose – 6 months? A banana peel – 4 weeks? Pistachio shells? Egg shells? These last 2 do not really decompose, but rather just become smaller in size. Above tree line conditions are even more harsh and decomposition takes longer. Refer to “A Load of Rot” laminated poster on display.

## Share the Regulations: Some common regulatory violations

1 – Group Size: Group size for day use is 15, for overnight 8. Any groups over those numbers requires a permit which can be obtained from the NYSDEC. A permit is also required if camping for more than three days in one location.

2 -- Dogs must be on leash at all times in the high peaks. You can explain to the visitor that this is for the dog's own safety. You can explain that you are aware of incidents where dogs wandered off and were abandoned and also where dogs fought with other dogs and were injured by them or by encounters with wildlife. You can explain to the visitor that you are aware of tickets being issued for dogs off leash.

3 – Littering – Burial of human waste using Dig It! Carry out used toiled tissue and feminine hygiene products. Carry out all garbage, wrappers, leftover food.

4 – Fires are prohibited in the Eastern High Peaks. Stoves are recommended.

5 – Noise—Respect everyone’s right to hike with nature’s sounds; if you wish to listen to music, please use earbuds/headphones.

6 – Glass containers are prohibited in the High Peaks Wilderness Area.

7- Camping Regulations: Below 3500', at designated sites marked with a yellow disk, 150' from road, trail and water - this is about 70 adult paces. Bear Canisters required (may be available at The Mountaineer and the High Peaks Information Center). A permit is required if camping for more than three days in one location. No camping above 4000 feet. Camping between 3500 feet and 4000 feet is at designated sites only. There are no designated sites on Cascade and Porter.

Politely discourage illegal behavior with common sense and friendly persuasion. **Avoid confrontations.** Some examples may be: Illegal campers found at the trailhead; suggest the nearest lean-to or remind them that camping 150 feet from road, trail and water below 3500 feet is acceptable. You may also wish to let the visitors know that some hefty fines have been levied for these regulatory violations in the past such as “I recently heard \$250.00 for illegal camping”. Inform coordinator of and report any illegal behavior to NYS DEC Ranger.

## **Hike Safe--Hiker Responsibility Code**

**You are responsible for yourself, so be prepared:**

- 1 – With knowledge and gear.
- 2- Leave your plans with someone, and check in when you return.
- 3 – To stay together.\*\*
- 4 – To turn back.
- 5 – For emergencies.
- 6 – To Share the hiker code with others.

\*\*Group separation is responsible for over 80% of Search and Rescue. Please go as a group and stay together as a group.

## **Ten Essentials**

- \*\*Map
- \*\*Compass
- \*\*Warm clothing
- \*\*Extra food and water
- \*\*Flashlight or headlamp
- \*\*Matches/fire starters
- \*\*Whistle
- \*\*First Aid Kit/Repair Kit
- \*\*Rain/Wind Gear
- \*\*Pocket Knife

**Additional documents include:** \* also distributed to correspondents and on web site

- Rules and Practices for the High Peaks Wilderness Area+
- Law Enforcement and the “Authority of the Resource” by Dr. George N Wallace
- Interpretation Training Materials for Summit Steward Training
- LNT Outdoor Ethics
- Let's Get Personal Ladies
- Dig It
- A Load of Rot
- Climbing the Adirondacks+
- Authority of the Resource
- Hike Safe cards including the ten essentials
- Ever leave poop behind?
- Alternative Hikes List \* available in French
- ADK Incident Report Forms
- 46er Business Cards for our web site and the Correspondence Program

Demonstrations: Dig It, Cotton Kills

Materials: Litter bags, dog poop bags

Laminate Displays: Alternate Hikes, dog poop poster, a Load of Rot

*+ is on 46er web page*

ljr/fss-2020