

January 2008



Tie Up Your Laces  
And...Work!

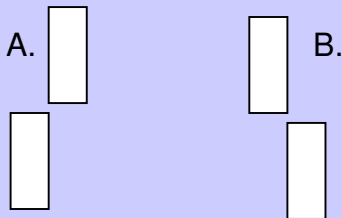
# TRAIL TENDERS' NEWS

A publication from the Trail Management Committee's Training Team

## Finger Lakes Trail Conference

### Points to ponder:

- If you put yourself in the boots of a newbie hiking your section of trail, can your blazes be seen and your trail followed in all seasons of the year?
- Know what A. & B. (below) mean?



To get the answer, please read the article directly below!

### New Style of Turn Indicator Blazes Adopted

The Trail Management Committee has approved the adoption of a new style of turn blazes, to replace (*gradually!*) the several other styles used in the past. In the past, most turns were indicated by two 2"x6" blazes stacked vertically; or two blazes stacked vertically with an arrowhead above or below pointing in the direction of the turn; or two blazes stacked vertically, with a "pointer" tab extending off the top right or left corner of the top blaze in the direction of the turn. The NEW standard specifies that the top blaze shall be offset in the direction of the turn, as shown in the box above. Maintainers are asked to replace old-style blazes when the old blazes are in need of repainting.

### Important News from the Fall Area Meetings

At the regional meetings for trail maintainers that were held at Mt. Morris and Cortland last October, several important news items were covered:

- The FLTC has identified **trail preservation as a top concern**.
- Towards that goal, the FLTC has established a new position within the organization that is dedicated to *securing* the trail for the future. Genesee Valley Hiking Club member, Ron Navik, who has successfully negotiated several trail easements recently, has been appointed Vice President for Trail Preservation. Contact Ron at [ron.navik@frontiernet.net](mailto:ron.navik@frontiernet.net) for information about trail easements and how stewards can help preserve the trail for generations to come.
- Also towards that goal, the need for active, positive relationships between sponsors and landowners has been recognized as vitally important. All trail maintainers are asked to maintain regular contact with their landowners. Neighborly visits are recommended, when possible; but notes, cards, letters and phone calls are also acceptable.
- Landowners who grant permission for the trail to be on their property rarely rescind permission. *Property subdivision, changes in ownership, and failure to contact and inform new owners about the trail were recognized as top factors contributing to loss of permissions.*
- Only a few landowners are closing their trail segment during spring hunting season; but this is an emerging concern.
- Trail maintainers and sponsors are asked to discuss the following three points with landowners who are thinking of closing their trail segment completely during a hunting season: (1) Consider closing their segment *just to hunting*, while still allowing hikers to cross their land on the trail. Hikers will stay on the trail, so landowners will know where they are at all times; and landowners and their guests can still hunt the land. (2) Carrying a hunting weapon on the trail (during hunting season) is considered hunting and violators can be ticketed for trespassing. If the trail and land is posted 'No Hunting,' the landowner can report violators to the Sheriff or a DEC ECO or Forest Ranger, all of whom can enforce the landowner's 'No Hunting' ban. (3) Landowners have the right to prohibit specific persons from using the trail or hunting on their land (or otherwise being on their land), while still keeping the trail open to the general public for hiking. All that is required is that the landowner send a letter to the specific person(s) in which the landowner states explicitly that the person(s) is/are not to come onto the landowner's property (or particular part of the property, such as the trail).
- We have developed model signage for hunting closures that you can modify to meet specific situations. Contact Lynda Rummel at [ljrassoc@roadrunner.com](mailto:ljrassoc@roadrunner.com) for e-copies. You can edit all of the text and adapt the signs to trail closures as well as hunting closures; the faded FLT sign in the background cannot be changed. **Please see page 4 for examples and further info.**

**Please turn in your year-end "trail census" reports to Howard Beye ASAP. These have been sent to you by e- or USPS-mail. Be sure to fill out both sides of the Trail Mgt. Form(s). Return completed forms to Howard at the Trail Operations Office, 648 Helendale Road, Rochester, NY 14609. Need forms or have questions? E-mail Howard at [fltc@frontiernet.net](mailto:fltc@frontiernet.net) or call him at (585) 288-7191.**

## Handicapped Accessible Trail Toilet “Problem” Solved!



Trail maintainers and Alley Cat crew volunteers will remember the problems encountered when building handicapped accessible outhouses following plans provided to us by the DEC. Several FLTC-ers reported seeing interesting alternative designs in the Adirondacks and elsewhere; Ted Anderson, Joe Dabes, Ray Kuzia, Bob Emerson and others designed customized plans; and the pros and cons of the various designs were hotly debated in emails, while we waited for new plans to come from the DEC. Then Lynda Rummel found out (from the DEC’s designated ADA specialist in Albany) that an “open aire” toilet is acceptable as far as ADA standards are concerned and the grab bar that we all thought was necessary isn’t! So, Howard Beye went hunting for suitable toilets and discovered that Carstens Industries, a Minnesota manufacturer, makes wall-less, roof-less “wilderness toilets” that are approved by the National Forest Service; and he promptly ordered two of

them. The toilets are made of molded fiberglass and consist of a bottom unit with molded seat over the chute and a contoured cover that provides some visual shelter and back support for the seated user. A dug pit is still necessary, and we expect that some “privacy screening” may be required, depending on the toilet’s location – but a privacy screen can be constructed of almost anything (bushes, woven sticks and vegetation, ACQ treated lumber, etc.), as long as it doesn’t interfere with access to the toilet. We’re not sure, yet, whether the toilet unit can be tipped and so would need to be secured to the ground. Both toilets are already spoken for (one goes to the Woodchuck Hollow Lean-to; the other goes to the Burt Hill Lean-to); but now we know where to get them and how much they will cost (at \$183.50 a piece, they are a *lot* cheaper than the wood, materials and labor required to build an accessible shed surrounding an accessible toilet). Contact Howard at [fltcf@frontiernet.net](mailto:fltcf@frontiernet.net) if you want one for a lean-to on trail you sponsor. (P.S. Don’t you just think this picture would win “Dullest Photo of the Year” honors in some outdoor photography contest?)



**ATTENTION SAWYERS:** Please remember that your certifications in Adult CPR and Basic First Aid must be up-to-date in order to maintain your status as a Certified Sawyer; and you must be a Certified Sawyer in order to be covered by Workman’s Compensation when using a chainsaw on the North Country Trail or on state land. The TMC’s Training, Safety & Manuals Subcommittee (John Skawski [chair]; Roger Hopkins; and Steph Spittal) and volunteers from the Cayuga Trails Club are attempting to set up annual offerings of both courses (to be held somewhere mid-state); however, arrangements have not been finalized yet, so **those who need to renew now** will have to find courses at their nearest American Red Cross, fire hall, or other pro-

vider. They are also trying to arrange new offerings of the chainsaw training course that’s based on “The Game of Logging.” This 2-day course satisfies **all** of the many different requirements that exist across the state. Please watch for further information in upcoming issues of *The Trail Tenders’ News* or *The Finger Lakes Trail News* magazine; and please contact John at [jskawski@twcny.rr.com](mailto:jskawski@twcny.rr.com) (607-275-9540) to let him know you’re interested in taking the chainsaw training and/or Adult CPR or Basic First Aid courses.

## New Training Team Established

**If** you would like some help learning the basics of trail maintenance or trail building, *or* teaching the responsibilities of being a trail steward and sponsor to one or more new maintainers, you’ll want to know that Howard Beye, Bill Coffin, Mary Coffin, Lynda Rummel, and Irene Szabo have joined forces to volunteer their services to provide you with the help you need.

Upon request, one or more of the team members will train any number of volunteers and, most importantly, a team member or two **will travel to your area** to do the training (you don’t have to come to them!). If 1-5 folks need instruction, the training can be done on the trail (actually improving the trail!) and/or in someone’s living room (veerly carefully!); for larger numbers, the

team may need help making arrangements.

The idea for the “traveling training team” grew out of two observations: (1) The special Western NY Trail Building Workshop put on last June by Howard Beye, Mary and Bill Coffin, and Lynda Rummel was a smashing success and showed clearly that many good maintainers never learned some of the basics, and training needs to be taken **to** our volunteers. (2) Many maintainers are unable to attend the Fall workshops that are held in their region every other year, or they must begin maintaining trail before a workshop rolls around, or no experienced club members are available to mentor them.

**Interested?** Contact Lynda Rummel at (315) 536-9484 or [ljrassoc@roadrunner.com](mailto:ljrassoc@roadrunner.com).

# Finger Lakes Trail Steward/Sponsor Guidelines

January, 2008

## Tools needed:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Small pruning shears      \_\_\_\_\_ Weed whip (with supported blade) or gas powered weed whacker
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hand bow saw (or other saw capable of cutting a 6" log)      \_\_\_\_\_ Access to a certified chainsaw operator
- \_\_\_\_\_ Paint kit for trail blazes (latex paint of correct color; 1" brush; small paint scraper; cut-away jug or other container in which to carry paint can & brush, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Small notebook for recording notes, observations and data

## First maintenance visit: Mid-April to mid-May, after the snow has melted:

- Remove winter blowdown
- Weedwhack and side cut trail to usually 3-4 ft. wide. Width may differ depending on terrain conditions or landowner specifications; e.g., DEC Region 8 acceptable minimum width is 3 ft.; so check local requirements, if applicable.
- Clear overhead high enough so backpacker can pass underneath (usually to 8 ft.)
- Clean out water bars and drainage ditches
- Check blazes and signs
- Check for any logging activity near trail – notify Coordinator or Trail Chair if found
- Check trail register and box – notify Coordinator or Trail Chair if repairs or replacements are needed
- Check trail, bridges, and shelters for winter damage – report uncorrected damage to Coordinator or Trail Chair

## Second maintenance visit: June

- Remove blowdown
- Weed whack and side cut trail to widths per above
- Weed whack trailhead parking areas as needed
- Replace blazes and signs as needed
- Do minor bridge and shelter repair as needed
- Check for any logging activity near the trail – notify the Coordinator or Trail Chair if found
- Check trail register and box – notify Coordinator or Trail Chair if repairs or replacements are needed
- Assess trail conditions to see how quickly grass and weeds are growing; estimate what additional maintenance will be needed during the year

## Subsequent maintenance visits, as needed:

- (same as above)

## Landowner Relations Responsibilities:

- Personally meet your landowners and develop positive, friendly relationships with them. If you are not able to do this, please find someone who can and will.
- Carry copies of "Three Types of Permissions" to leave with landowners. Know NY's General Obligations Law.
- Watch for clues that they may have plans to sell or leave the land to offspring. If the opportunity arises, ask them to consider a trail easement, to keep the trail corridor beautiful and ensure the continuity of the trail. If a landowner is at least willing to *learn* about trail easements, contact the VP for Trail Preservation.

## General Notes:

- No trail maintenance during big game hunting season!
- Respect landowner wishes and concerns.
- No motor vehicles on State land. With rare exceptions, the public is not allowed to ride bicycles, motorized bikes, horses, ATVs or snowmobiles on the trail, on private or public land. Be sure to learn the specific rules that apply to the trail section that you maintain; and remember, private landowners and their guests may ride bikes, ATVs or horses on the trail on their land (but try to discourage this, diplomatically of course!).
- Look for ways to improve the trail: Reroutes, corrections for wet areas, improvements to grade and outslope, etc.
- Do not cut fallen trees on State DEC land larger than 10" in diameter without DEC Forester's approval.

First draft: Jim DeWan; approved 02-25-06 by the Trail Management Committee, FLTC. Revisions submitted for approval, 02-24-08.

**NOTICE:**

**Trail Closed for Hunting  
by Landowner**

**On Private Land Ahead**

**NO HUNTING**

DEC REGION 8 LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER, FOREST RANGER WILLIAM MEEHAN, AT (607) 292-6822.

**Hunters:** Carrying a hunting weapon on the trail is considered hunting, for which you may be arrested. **Hikers:** Wear high-visibility clothing, do not stray from the trail, and proceed with caution -- the landowner may be hunting this land.

Please report violations to DEC Region 8 law enforcement officer, Forest Ranger William Meehan, at (607) 292-6822.

**NOTICE:**

**Trail Closed for Hunting  
by Landowner**

**On This Private Land**

**NO HUNTING**

DEC REGION 8 LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER, FOREST RANGER WILLIAM MEEHAN, AT (607) 776-2165.

**Hunters:** Carrying a hunting weapon on the trail is considered hunting, for which you may be arrested. **Hikers:** Wear high-visibility clothing, do not stray from the trail, and proceed with caution -- the landowner may be hunting this land.

Please report violations to DEC Region 8 law enforcement officer, Forest Ranger William Meehan, at (607) 776-2165.

**Far left:** Post this sign -- modified according to your particular situation -- at the trailhead, so hunters will know they cannot proceed past a certain point but hikers will know they can. **Near left:** Post this sign where the trail enters the posted land. Signs intentionally require careful reading and reinforce the definition of hunting, the behavior expected of hikers, and the likelihood that any hunter(s) hikers see may be the landowner (or his guests) who have the right to hunt the property. Laminate signs and staple or pin each to a board by putting the fastener through the clear outer margins of the laminate. Life expectancy: 1.5 years in direct sunlight; 3+ years in shade. (UV-resistant laminate is available, tho' it's more costly.)

Please send questions, comments, complaints, corrections, suggestions, new info or tips about trail building or trail maintenance, plus the kitchen sink, to any member of the "Traveling Training Team": Editor/writer (this issue) -- Lynda "The Typo Queen" Rummel ([ljrassoc@roadrunner.com](mailto:ljrassoc@roadrunner.com)). Volunteer senior contributors -- Howard Beye ([fltc@frontiernet.net](mailto:fltc@frontiernet.net)); Bill Coffin ([wmscoffin@twcny.rr.com](mailto:wmscoffin@twcny.rr.com)); Mary Coffin ([mcoffin1@twcny.rr.com](mailto:mcoffin1@twcny.rr.com)) and Irene Szabo ([Treeweenie@aol.com](mailto:Treeweenie@aol.com)).

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**WOW! 1st revamped issue of**  
**The Trail Tenders' News**