

Spring, 2015

April Fools' Issue



Untangle Your Boots And...Work!

Special Points to Ponder:

- If cow eeta dip, what did the other party goers eat?
- The American Heart Association's National Walking Day is April 1st this year. Is this a joke? (The FLTC is providing Schuyler Co. Public Health with trail data so that the FLT can be included on a Schuyler Co. trails map aimed at getting pre-teens active out of doors. So whether you're ahead of the curve or over the hill, be sure to get out and hike on 4/1!)

! NO JOKE Notice ! Trail Council Meeting

► The FLTC's Trail Management Team will hold its annual **Trail Council** meeting on **April 11, 2015**, from 10 – 3 at the First Congregational-United Church of Christ, 58 North Main Street (NY 332) in Canandaigua. Tho' primarily for our Regional Trail Coordinators, Trail Club Chairs and others who play key roles in *managing* trails in the FLT System, **any volunteer, public agency, or landowner is welcome to attend.** Agenda will include issues raised at our fall training sessions; agreements with NYS & federal agencies; inventorying trail segments that need rebuilding or relocating; trail preservation; and your training and info needs. Coffee and donuts provided; but **bring your lunch!**

TRAIL TENDERS' NEWS

A publication from Trail Quality's Travelin' Training Team

Finger Lakes Trail Conference

Warning: This issue contains *some* stories that are written *as if* they are true. Although the stories themselves are not true, *some* of the information in them is. The questions raised by these jokes, fabrications, hoaxes and satirical stories are (sometimes) important; the points made are (usually) valid; and the standards and policies mentioned are (occasionally) legitimate. **See if you can sort the wheat from the chaff**, please allow yourself to laugh, or at least chuckle, once or twice; and, this issue especially, please forgive everything that's in questionable taste.

The Cow Eeta Dip

The Origin Myth for the Coweeta Dip, a great recipe for trail sustainability, goes like this:

Italian wine making families who immigrated to western NY in the 1860's settled in the Bristol Hills giving Italian names to places like Naples, Italy Hill, and Italy Valley, on the southern and western sides of Keuka Lake and the southern side of Canandaigua Lake. The Bristol Hills Branch runs through this area today. These industrious settlers planted their vineyards next to other settlers, including dairy farmers who produced milk and cheese, ranchers who raised prize-winning Merino sheep, and lumbermen who cut down the spectacularly tall white pines and sent them east by way of the Outlet Creek and Crooked Lake Canal.

One summer day, one Italian immigrant family was holding a party at their home overlooking Italy Valley when a thunder storm broke and one of their neighbors' bovine bolted from the barn. Blundering through the party tables and carrying a table cloth away with her, the cow abruptly stopped to dine on an elegant appetizer made from wild garlic, sour cream and water cress that was cooling in a bowl of ice-cold spring water. The Italian immigrant mother saw this and shrieked, "Cow eeta dip, cow eeta dip!" but the cow continued wildly down the hillside, following a narrow path.

As the cow approached a long depression on the outside of the trail, she suddenly caught one leg on the tablecloth she was wrapped in, tripped and slid to the outside and off down the hillside, along with all the storm water that was pouring off the trail. The young son saw this accident and began shouting, "Cow Eeta in dip, cow Eeta in dip," which mobilized the men to brave the storm and run down the trail to the elongated dip, to try to save the cow.

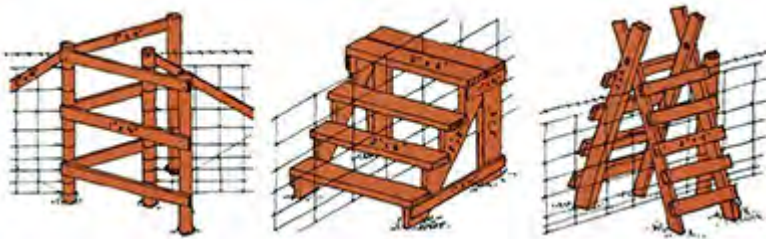
At this point, the winemaker's handyman, an immigrant from Spain named Manuel who was very strong, took charge. He tied a block-and-tackle to the tree, slid down the bank with the rope to the cow, wrapped a sling around the struggling animal, scrambled back up to the trail, and, with the help of the block-and-tackle, singlehandedly hauled the bovine back up. As the winemaker later said, when pounding Manuel on the shoulders and introducing him to a reporter who was following up on this story for the *Penn Yan Chronicle*, "This is Manuel, he is-a good at manual labor, he is-a man-you-will definitely like, he could-a write the manual on bovine extraction." It was later reported that Manuel had asked for a GripHoist but was told it had not been invented, yet.

An elongated, gently increasing outslope is today known as a "Coweeta Dip," which of course fails to acknowledge the historic story of a bovine named Eeta who bolted in a thunder storm. (Thanks to Groucho Marx for the exceptional four-part pun buried in this story.) And of course the rest of the party-goers ate bullonly.



Seriously. **Above:** A long, wide Coweeta Dip. Hikers follow along the pathway (dashed lines), *barely noticing* the increased outslope (straight arrows). Water runs down the outslope and the outside edge of the trail, combining at the outer edge to flow off the trail (curved line). Sharp rims, **circled in red**, should be shaved down, for walking comfort. Known also as a “rolling grade dip” (see Early Autumn, 2014, *TTN*, p 3, for technical details).

“Stylish” But Serious Dodgeways and Stiles



Cow Eeta’s story doesn’t end just with her famous dip. A rambunctious cow, she continued to try to break away, forcing her owners to fence her in. So a century-plus later, when the Bristol Hills Branch ran across the pasture she had roamed in, there were still some fences that needed to be crossed.

In his article in *Mother Earth News* (January/February 1981) entitled, **Stylish Fence Stile**, author/illustrator John W. Hanes explained the essential purpose of a stile thusly: “When a farmsteader needs to keep his or her livestock contained but doesn’t want to install a gate — because it might get left open — a fence stile is the logical solution.” As Hanes also explained, the image on the left depicts a “walk through,” rather than a stile, but it serves much the same purposes as the stiles to its right.

Now days, stiles and walk-throughs, also called dodge-ways or pass-throughs, are used to keep some animals out of a pasture, crop field, or hunting preserve, as well, or at least to make it more difficult for persons to get in except on foot. Stiles and dodge-ways block out atv-, snowmobile-, horse-, and bicycle-riders, while allowing foot travelers easy in and out. These structures also provide excellent locations for posting signs that make it clear that the trail user is entering private, posted lands, where hunting is prohibited and the hiker is not to stray from the trail. These structures do not prevent abuse 100% of the time; but they will help, since anyone who climbs over or passes through cannot deny encountering a barrier with signs affixed to it. Should non-foot travelers intrude on the trail, they can be fined and/or

arrested for trespassing. If the land is posted against hunting, then any hunter or person *just carrying a hunting weapon on the trail* during hunting season can lose his/her hunting license – an outcome far more serious to hunters than being fined \$200 for trespassing!

Understandably, new landowners may need to be convinced that the FLT will not become a highway for non-hikers – especially hunters and bike riders -- to access their land. If the land isn’t fenced already, offer to erect simple twisted wire fencing (same as barbed wire but without the barbs) on each side of the barrier. A dodge-way or stile is also a site for a motion detection camera (quite affordable these days), should a landowner want to see who is coming onto the land via the trail.

Last fall, dodge-ways like the one Hanes drew, were set up on the private lands next to Ontario County Park (B1), to stop mountain bike riders from crossing private lands using the FLT. VP of Crews and Construction, Matt Branneman, used measurements taken off walk-throughs in England by Dave Newman and in California by Lynda Rummel. If you think a barrier or two are needed on private land on your section of trail, contact your RTC, club trails chair, or the FLTC VPs for Crews & Construction, Maintenance, or Quality. We may be able to help with labor or materials.

Water Bars Redoux

Two issues ago, we discussed several water control devices. One of these, the rolling grade dip, or Coweeta Dip, can be created by using a tool like a Pulaski or a McLeod to grub away the lower lip of the dip so it's elongated. A second device, the water bar, has been maligned lately, in part because it is not as accessibility-friendly and it does need attention annually. But really, the same can be said about Coweeta Dips that aren't well-maintained. Anytime there's serious run-off, gravel, sand and debris will be deposited in the pipe, dip, or behind the bar (see p. 4 for examples).

Waterbars are especially useful when you cannot relocate or seriously rebuild the trail. And now, thanks to our wandering T. Mapping Curmudgeon who visited Ecuador recently, we've learned about a fascinating (no, not an oxymoron) type of water bar that's indigenous to countries in the southern hemisphere. Here's Curmudgeon's description and a photo of an example:

Southern Hemisphere Water Bars

by: T. Mapping Curmudgeon

In December I took a trip to Ecuador. This was my first trip to South America, and I learned a lot about the country, the people, and most importantly, the hiking in Ecuador.

I was based in Quito, the capital of Ecuador. One day I took a trip to Mitad del Mundo - the center of the earth. This place and its museums are located on the equator, and this gives them a unique location for educational displays and demonstrations. For example, on the vernal and autumnal equinox, the sun is directly overhead, and there are no shadows on these days. (Ed. Note: sad news for the South American ground hog, the guinea pig).

A couple days later, I decided to summit the nearby volcano, Pichincha. I was able to see this mountain from my B&B window, except when the clouds obscured it. I took a cab to the cable car (the Teleferico) and rode it to the trail head. The Teleferico takes you up about 2,500' in 1.2 miles.

I then walked up to the summit at 15,204', and back. This took about 6.5 hours to walk 7.3 miles. Much of it was scrambling up steep ascents on loose talus. The "trail" was only marked with a post every kilometer, so many places, where footsteps weren't visible, it was more like "throwing around" to find the way.

When I got to the summit, it began snowing. Then it changed to rain as I descended and I saw a rainbow below me. Eventually the clouds blew away and the sun warmed everything up. Then I saw a firsthand example of Ecuadorian trail maintenance: water bars.

At Mitad del Mundo, I had learned that due to the Coriolis effect, water drains in the opposite direction in the southern hemisphere than it does in the northern. When I saw the water bars (*right*) I thought they were backwards. But then I remembered the Coriolis effect demo I had seen, and realized that whereas water drains down trail in our neck of the woods, here in Ecuador, south of the Equator, it must drain up trail. And that is really why the water bars appear to be backwards!

Really!

(Ecuadorian Waterbar photo at right)



Coweeta Dip: No photo exists of Coweeta, but allegedly this drawing was made by the family's young son. Now days: It's the name for a gently descending grade over 10' followed by an equally long ascending grade, with the downhill side edge lower than the top and sending water gently off the trail into a large collection area. Created by gentle grubbing and scraping, using a Pulaski or a McLeod. Best if capitalizes on existing grade dip.

Alley Cat Projects Coming Up – Serious Fun

By Matt Branneman

- A traditional log shelter will be constructed on the Bock – Harvey Preserve in Tompkins County.
- A post and beam style shelter will be built on M 12 as the Robert Muller Memorial lean-to, thanks to the leadership and generosity of Susan Yee.
- There will also be a trail reroute that will take more of the FLT off the road.
- Trail in Ontario County Park (B1) *may* be refurbished. Whether this will involve any Coweeta Dips is not yet known, but installation of these and other water control measures is highly likely. Possibly as part of the same workweek, 2-4 short switchback legs may be built between Dennis and Monterey-Sexton Hollow Rds. in South Bradford State Forest (M13).

Of course nailing down the projects and dates is still in the works. If you are considering volunteering this year **check our website often for information and updates.**



Above: As explained by Curmudgeon (at left), water drains upward in the Southern Hemisphere, or at least, in Ecuador. In this picture, presumably water would run up the hill until it hit the center of the bar and then drain upwards and off to the sides.

Water Bars and Rolling Grade Dips, *continued*



Top: A worn but otherwise good rolling grade dip is silting in; soon, water won't be able to leave the trail. **Bottom:** Drain on uphill side of an old rock waterbar needs cleaning out.

Resources Redoux!

At <http://www.flconference.org/trail/members1/volunteer-trail-workers/> you can find the **FLTC's Field Maintenance Manual** and **Safety Manual**, along with issues of the **Trail Tenders' News** dating back to 2008. Use the search function to find a topic; e.g., type in "wilderness toilet" to see articles about back country privies.

At: <http://www.nps.gov/noco/parkmgmt/ncttrailconstructionmanual1.htm> you can find the handbook we use for building *all new trail* anywhere in the Finger Lakes Trail System – click on [North Country Trail Handbook for Trail Design, Maintenance and Construction. 1998 \(11.9 MB\)](#)

At <http://northcountrytrail.org/members/volunteer-resources/trail-design-construction-and-maintenance/> find **on-line videos** about *trail design, layout, and construction* (by Jeff McCusker, recent NCNST Trail Manager) and *Trail Adopter Basics* (by NCTA Wisc. Regional Trail Coord., Bill Menke). Info is tailored for the NCNST (blue-blazed west and east of the main FLT) but the basic trail construction standards, principles and practices apply to all trails in the FLT System.

No bull! Improve your own skills and give back to the trail by teaching others how to care for it. Join the FLTC Travelin' Training Team. Interested? Questions? Email *TTN* editor/writer – Lynda "No Class" Rummel (ljrassoc@roadrunner.com). Irregular contributors: Bill Coffin (wmscoffin@twcny.rr.com); Mary Coffin (mcoffin1@twcny.rr.com); Irene Szabo (treeweenie@aol.com); Greg Farnham (greg@gfarnham.com); Marty Howden (howser51@yahoo.com); Matt Branneman (mattbranneman@gmail.com); & Steve Catherman (stevec@roadrunner.com).

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8th April Fools' Issue!
(includes Some Serious Stuff, too)
Finger Lakes Trail Conference
6111 Visitor Center Road
Mt. Morris, NY 14510