



## The Keystone Hiker - February 2020

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### Member's Corner

#### Legislative Alert

KTA is following two bills in the PA House that could affect the construction and maintenance of hiking trails.

#### HB 2131

Under current Pennsylvania law, agricultural easements may only be used for the transportation of natural resources (coal, oil, etc.) or the installation of power, water, or sewer lines. Some agricultural land owners, however, would like to use such easements for the construction and maintenance of trails. This would provide farmers and similar land owners with tax breaks and other incentives while also helping to promote additional recreational opportunities to the public free of charge.

The legislation would allow farmers to grant easements on their land for use as trails. Under this measure, trails could be no more than 20 feet wide, could not interfere with agricultural production on the land, and could be used only for non-motorized recreation (without charge to the public).

#### HB 2148

Would establish several requirements that must be met when public funding is involved in an easement purchase. Among the proposed requirements are public notification that an easement is proposed, compliance with a sustainable forest management plan, availability of the land for outdoor recreational activities such as public hunting, and approval of the easement by the Hardwoods Development Council within the Department of Agriculture. This legislation would place additional burdens and restrictions on the development of forestry easements.

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**Sierra Club is Hiring  
Clean Energy Advocate in Pennsylvania!**



The Sierra Club is hiring a Senior Campaign Representative for its Dirty Fuels campaigns in Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh preferred.

This position will plan and implement campaigning strategies and activities of the Beyond Dirty Fuels campaign to challenge the gas industry, specifically focused on fighting petrochemical development and gas pipelines as a means to build a movement to keep fossil fuels in the ground, combat climate change, and support the U.S. transition to clean energy. The Senior Campaign Representative has overall program responsibility to challenge the rapidly expanding gas pipeline and petrochemical infrastructure in Pennsylvania.

Please find job details and [apply here!](#)

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## River Mountain

### Youth Digital Wellness Retreat Slated for Summer Opening Now Taking Reservations



In the heart of the Allegheny Mountains along the banks of Sweet Root Creek lies the River Mountain campus. When it opens this year it will host a company of young people on a quest for life/tech balance.

These young adventurers will be part of a first-of-its-kind digital wellness program that goes beyond the traditional fun of summer camps and empowers young people to disconnect from screens and reconnect with the natural world around them. Developed in conjunction with Penn State University, River Mountain's purposeful curriculum aims to provide a blend of challenging, fun, and educational activities for children aged 10 to 15. Through a mix of outdoor adventures and guided, experiential-learning based activities, River Mountain guests will learn about digital citizenship and self determination, and begin the journey towards creating healthier tech habits.

The River Mountain founders believe the dualities of nature and technology are important to general wellness and balance. "Young people are the most vulnerable to tech's intentional design. They're not emotionally or cognitively developed enough to understand the persuasive tactics that keep them hooked. That's why we believe this investment is of the utmost importance, and in fact a healthy new model for kids and families," said Ryan Tyrrell, River Mountain founder.

To that end, the River Mountain management team has been mindful of every detail of the curriculum and the facility. The retreat cabins, for example, were designed with circadian rhythms in mind so children wake with the sun and fall asleep to the stars -- not the blue light from cell phones. That mindfulness extends even to guest meals, which are served family style in a 19th-century log home where conversations of the day's activities flow freely. Finally, each day concludes around a campfire featuring guided discussions about the day's adventures and group conversations about the positive and negative aspects

of technology. Every aspect of programming and experience have been designed to allow young people to add their voices to the discussion and to encourage healthier tech habits that children will take with them when they return home. And by focusing on skills such as focus and attention, communication and relatedness, and health and well being, River Mountain's curriculum aims to arm children with tools that they can use for years beyond the retreat experience.

River Mountain is now accepting reservations for summer programs and offers a full slate of outdoor adventures for children and families year-round.

Visit <https://rivermountain.org/> to learn more

## Volunteer's Corner

### **ATTEND ANY ONE OF FOUR TRAIL CARES and Walk Away with Two Walking Sticks**

In order to encourage participation in the KTA Trail Care program, this year, volunteers who attend and put in at least 12 hours of work at one of the four targeted events will receive a pair of Masters walking sticks. The qualifying Trail Care weekends are:

Mid State Trail Everett Region (Aug. 6-9)

Pinchot Trail (Aug. 13-16)

Donut Hole Trail (Aug. 27-30)

Tuscarora Trail (Sept. 18 –20).

This is an effort to boost participation in these particular 4 events by giving volunteers some trail swag to walk away with. The Masters walking sticks are a set of high quality collapsible aluminum poles made in Italy. This is an offer you can't refuse.

Thank you, and see you there.  
Ed Lawrence

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### **Upcoming Trail Care**

**April 2 – 5: Trail Care BTD**

**WEST RIM TRAIL**

Tioga State Forest

Leader: Ed Lawrence

[cemclaw216@gmail.com](mailto:cemclaw216@gmail.com)

570-925-5285

Camp: Ranger Station Lodge Blackwell

**April 23 – 26: Trail Care BTD**

**ALLEGHENY FRONT TRAIL**

Moshannon State Forest

Leader: Ben Auer

[auer.ben@gmail.com](mailto:auer.ben@gmail.com)

608-772-1715

Camp: Organized Group Tenting Area, site 1, at Black Moshannon State Park

**May 7 – 10: Trail Care BTD**

**CHUCK KEIPER TRAIL**

Sproul State Forest

Leader: Tony Robbins

[tony.robbins.kta@excellservices.com](mailto:tony.robbins.kta@excellservices.com)

570-437-0065

Camp: Middle Branch Camp 3 miles down Penn Rose Rd off Rte. 144 between Snowshoe and Renovo

## 2020 Trail Care Schedule

Visit <https://www.kta-hike.org/trail-care-and-trail-crew> for more info

**May 14 – 17: BLACK FOREST TRAIL**

**May 28 – 31: MID STATE TRAIL, Tioga Region**

**June 6: HICKORY RUN STATE PARK**

**June 11 – 14: NORTH COUNTRY TRAIL**

**June 20: GOLDEN EAGLE TRAIL**

**June 25 – 28: MID STATE TRAIL, Woolrich Region**

**July 9 – 12: LOST TURKEY TRAIL**

**Aug 6 – 9: MID STATE TRAIL, Everett Region**

**Aug 13 –16: PINCHOT TRAIL**

**Aug 20 – 23: THUNDER SWAMP TRAIL SYSTEM**

**Aug 27 – 30: THE DONUT HOLE**

**Sept 18 – 20: TUSCARORA TRAIL**

**Oct 3: GIFFORD PINCHOT STATE PARK**

**Nov 5 – 8: BUCKTAIL PATH**

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## Chuck Keiper Date Changed

The date for the Chuck Keiper Trail Care Weekend has been moved back a week to May 7 – 10 (from the previously announced April 30 – May 3).

This change is to accommodate a scheduling conflict with our host at the Middle Branch Camp. We very much appreciate the members of the Middle Branch Camp allowing us to base our work crew at their cabin. The camp is conveniently situated in the wild heart of the Chuck Keiper Trail loop, which gives volunteers easy access to work on the various sections of the trail. Due to the remoteness of this trail the yearly KTA Trail Care weekend is very important in the continuous effort to keep it open and in good shape. Please plan on attending.

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## A.T. Volunteer Newsletter & Special Offer

The ATC has started publishing "[The Register](#)" newsletter and blog again for A.T. volunteers. The Register serves as a platform for sharing A.T.

management information, reminders for A.T. maintainers, a support mechanism for sharing information between volunteers, and a notification system for upcoming volunteer training events.

In the current issue of the newsletter ([www.shorturl.at/qrs38](http://www.shorturl.at/qrs38)), A.T. volunteers have an opportunity to get the **A.T. Guthook Guide smartphone app for free** when they sign up before February 14.

The Guthook guide is like having a map, a streamlined guidebook, and a place to find crowd-sourced information on the Trail. ATC Regional Director Morgan Somerville says of the app, "it's an asset that volunteers will find useful." People with interest in getting the bi-monthly The Register newsletter sent to their inbox in the future can use the subscribe button in the upper left corner of the current issue.

- from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy

## Hiker's Corner

### 2020 Photo Contest

The 2020 Winter/Spring Photo Contest is now open! Get your cameras ready in the new year and share the awesome views you find with us.

Submit your photos at <https://www.kta-hike.org/contest.html>

The winner will be announced in July and will receive a free 1 year membership and KTA hat.

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### DCNR Accepting Public Comment on Revised ATV Policy

DCNR has issued a draft revision of its ATV policy to support increasing demands for more riding opportunities. The proposal under consideration rescinds the ATV trail development moratorium and authorizes the DCNR to consider new ATV trails and connectors on state forest lands.

[Read the Policy Draft Here](#)

DCNR will be accepting comments on this draft policy until March 27th. Comments may be submitted via email to [PaForester@pa.gov](mailto:PaForester@pa.gov)

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### Golden Eagle Trail Patch

New in the [KTA Store!](#)

The [Golden Eagle Trail](#) is a rugged and beautiful loop trail that starts in the east side of

Pine Creek Gorge and features a strenuous climb to pristine mountaintop streams and several outstanding vistas. Tom Thwaites, an accomplished hiking authority, states that in 50 Hikes in Central Pennsylvania (2001), the trail “may be the best day hike in Penn’s Woods.”

So take on the Golden Eagle Trail and order a patch to commemorate your adventure!



## **Community Calendar**

### **KTA Events**

#### **Spring Hiking Weekend - April 17-19**

Join us in Wellsboro for a weekend of hikes and history at the historic Penn Wells Hotel. Choose from a variety of hikes, easy to rugged, long or short, in and around the beautiful Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania

#### **Horse-Shoe Trail Slackpack - April 22-26**

A 5 day excursion to hike 76 miles covering half of the HST without ever pitching a tent. A second trip will tackle the other half, but you are welcome to join us for just one or both.

#### **Allegheny Front Trail Slackpack - May 15-18**

Hike the AFT in 1 weekend, with transportation each day between the trailheads and the cozy Black Moshannon Lodge.

#### **Allegheny National Forest - July 24-26**

Spend a weekend in Pennsylvania's only national forest. Stay in Groves Lodge as you explore the many trails and sights of the ANF.

#### **Trail Challenge - Sept 12**

Join us on September 12th for a one-day hiking event spanning 50 (or 25) kilometers of trails in Lancaster County

#### **Black Forest Trail Slackpack - Oct 23-26**

Hike through the 42 mile BFT in 4 days with just a day pack. Stay in comfortable cabins at Pettecote Junction Campground.

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### **Annual Brandywine End-2-End Hike**

Take on the Wilmington Trail Club’s annual End-2-End hike, a 36 mile trail and road challenge through the beautiful Brandywine Valley. Hikers and runners will wander down the scenic Brandywine Trail through parks, farms, pastures, woods, and country roads.

For more information and to register for the event, head to <https://wilmingtontrailclub.org/about-wtc/wtc-events/brandywine-e2e-hike>

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## KTA Pyrenees Mountains Trip

Coming Soon!

In October 2020 KTA will host a 10 day hiking trip in Spain featuring the Pyrenees Mountains, Barcelona, and Andora. Package includes hotel accommodations and air travel. Registration will open later this month with limited spots available.

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## WANT YOUR EVENT FEATURED ON THE COMMUNITY CALENDAR?

KTA will promote your club/organization's major events through The Keystone Hiker, Facebook, and our website. It's a perk of membership! Just submit a list with date, time, location, and link to web page for only those events that the public should see, to [info@kta-hike.org](mailto:info@kta-hike.org).

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## Club Spotlight

### Alpine Club of Williamsport



The Alpine Club of Williamsport, PA, organized in 1953, maintains the 59.21 mile Loyalsock Trail (LT) and has trail care hikes and other outings. Hike offerings and Spring Work Hikes will appear on the [Activity Schedule](#) page of the web site. Alpine Club membership is open to anyone over the age of 18.

The Alpine Club invites you to hike the Loyalsock Trail in hopes that you will enjoy, explore, and protect the wild lands and places of natural beauty!

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### NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

This newsletter is published monthly by Keystone Trails Association. Submissions are accepted on a rolling basis. Opinions expressed are those of the listed authors. The Editor encourages submissions reflecting all viewpoints, but reserves the right to edit material. You are encouraged to submit material (even just a trail closing or care alert!) to the Program Administrator, Casey Schneck, at [ktaadmin@kta-hike.org](mailto:ktaadmin@kta-hike.org). The deadline for newsletter submissions is the 15th of the prior month. Submissions received after that time will be considered for the next month.

Please reference our [Editorial-Style Guide](#) while you compose your piece.

