



The Keystone Hiker - July 2021

Member's Corner

Farewell from Joe Neville

Dear KTA Members,

It has been an honor to lead KTA these past 6 years and to serve the hikers of Pennsylvania. I am proud of what we have accomplished as a team on behalf of our clubs and members as we pursue the mission of the organization. I am convinced that KTA will continue to be an increasingly strong force in the hiking community and will protect our trails for current and future generations.

It has been my pleasure to lead the team at KTA. I could not have asked for a more supportive board of directors and KTA volunteers. I treasure the friendships I have cultivated with each one of you, and the achievements made possible by a committed team of gifted, tenacious individuals who come together to work relentlessly for a common goal. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Executive Director these last 6 years.

With gratitude and warm regards,

Joseph J. Neville

The Trail Ahead Job Opening: Executive Director

Dear Hikers,

Changes are coming to KTA. Joe Neville, KTA's executive director, is stepping down after six years of dedicated service to Pennsylvania's hikers. He has managed the KTA office, created and organized events, advocated for hikers in Harrisburg, and has been the person who connects KTA with members, clubs, legislators, and agencies. He's arrived early, worked weekends, and taken on the many roles needed to help KTA thrive. We wish him well wherever his next steps may take him.

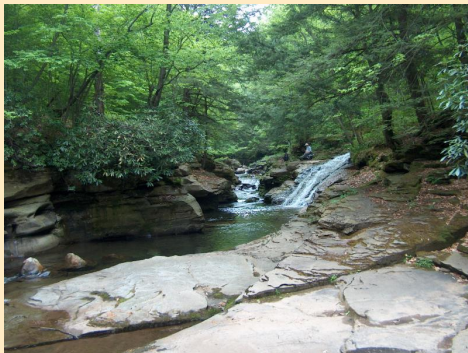
After Joe's departure on July 5th, the office will continue to be staffed by our invaluable Program Administrator, Casey Schneck. Casey will be joined by Paul Shaw, who will serve as part-time Interim Executive Director while we search for a permanent ED. Paul Shaw was KTA's first executive director and has a long history of volunteering with KTA and the trail community. His willingness to step into this position is much appreciated.

Board members Karen Lutz and Bob Merrill have joined me to form an Executive Director Search Committee. We welcome referrals of experienced nonprofit professionals who have the desired qualifications. Please visit kta-hike.org/careers to apply or for more information.

Yours for trails,
Katie Barker
Board President

On the Trail

In June, KTA took a trip to the Old Loggers Path, slackpacking the 28 mile trail over 3 days. KTA then set off on the Susquehanna River for a kayaking day trip from Marysville. Visit kta-hike.org/events to learn about more KTA outing opportunities.



2021 Winter/Spring Photo Contest Winner

Congratulations to Debra Takach, for this wonderful snowy scene from Ricketts Glen State Park in Benton, PA.



Receive a Free Map When You Pledge to Keep Trails Alive

KTA is pleased to announce a new donor appreciation program.

When you sign up or increase your [Keep Trails Alive monthly donation](#) amount by at least \$10, you will receive one complimentary copy of your choice of [Purple Lizard Maps](#) available for purchase in the KTA Book Store. Visit kta-hike.org/keep-trails-alive to sign up for recurring online payments, or contact the KTA office for information on direct ACH transfers.

We at KTA are very grateful for your contributions to our trails, As thanks, we hope these maps will help you explore the footpaths that your donations help to provide, protect, preserve, and promote.

Volunteer's Corner

Trail Challenge Volunteers Needed

Join us on September 11, 2021 to help put on this trail running event. It takes over 120 volunteers to pull off the KTA Trail Challenge. Please sign up for the hours during the day that best fits your schedule. We need volunteers from 5:00 AM to 7:30 PM. We will try to accommodate your shift preferences as best we can. You will receive an email confirmation after signing up. If you do not receive an email, please contact us. Volunteers receive an official KTA Trail Challenge Volunteer t-shirt, access to the delicious Finish Line Picnic, and the awesome feeling that comes with doing good. Thank you so much for supporting the Keystone Trails Association!

[Sign up here!](#)

Volunteers are also needed prior to the event to prepare finisher medallions. If interested, please contact the KTA office.

Carry That Weight

Imagine that you are hiking down a beautiful section of trail paralleling a rock strewn run through one of Pennsylvania's extensive state forests (it isn't hard to do) and you come upon another hiker traveling in the same direction, but at a slower pace than you. After exchanging some trail pleasantries the other hiker says to you:

"Would you mind carrying my pack for me?"

'What did you say?'

"I asked if you would carry my pack for me for the next few miles?"

'Why? Are you hurt or not feeling well?'

"No, I'm fine, its just that it would be easier and more enjoyable for me to hike if

someone else were to carry my pack and I didn't need to carry that weight."

'Mmm.'

Although this scenario may seem absurd, it is basically what hikers, whether seasoned backpackers or new to the footpath experience, who never do trail maintenance, are asking of others in the hiking community who are involved in doing volunteer trail work. These volunteers give of their own time to help keep our state's hiking trails open and accessible to everyone. If you hike, but are not a trail care volunteer, then you are not, in essence, carrying your own weight. Plus, you are denying yourself the extraordinary satisfaction that comes from giving back to the trails that you enjoy hiking. Helping maintain trails at a state park, with a local hiking club or with the KTA Trail Care Program is a way to become part of the movement that will carry the passion for foot trails forward. Who else do you expect to carry that weight?

-Ed Lawrence

2021 Trail Care

July 15-18: Trail Care

Mid State Trail, Tioga Region

Tioga State Forest

Leaders: Kevin Busko / Kristin Joivell

statecollege@hike-mst.org

814-386-8728

Camp: Hills Creek SP Organized

Group Tenting area

August 12-15: Trail Care

Pinchot Trail

Pinchot State Forest

Leader: Jeff Mitchell

jmitchmitch@hotmail.com

570-441-2952

Camp: Pocono Mountain

Bible Conference camp

191 Clifton Beach Rd.

Clifton, Pa. 18424

August 19-22: Trail Care

Allegheny Front Trail

Moshannon State Forest

Leader: Ben Auer

auer.ben@gmail.com

608-772-1715

Camp: Black Moshannon

State Park Organized Group

Tenting Area

Sept. 16-19: Trail Care

Donut Hole Trail

Sproul State Forest

Leader: Tony Robbins

tony.robbins.kta@excellservices.com

570-437-0065

Camp: Sites 1,2 & 3

Hyner Run State Park

October 21-24: Trail Care

Reeds Gap Spur Trail

Bald Eagle State Forest

Leader: Ed Lawrence

cemclaw216@gmail.com

570-925-5285

Camp: Reeds Gap State Park

camping area

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

Tioga Region of the MST Rules July

If you want to walk from North Dakota to Alabama via the North Country and

Great Eastern Trail systems then you will need to pass through the Tioga Region of the Mid State Trail. This indispensable northern section of Pennsylvania's longest and wildest trail is the focus of the July 15-18 trail care. Volunteers are needed for a variety of tasks, from reblazing to lopping and general maintenance. The event will be based out of Hills Creek State Park Organized Group Tenting Area in the scenic Wellsboro / Mansfield area of the state. Come assist Trail Care leader Kevin Busko improve the hiking experience for day hikers and long distance backpackers. Contact him before hand to let him know that you are coming.

-Ed Lawrence

Cowanesque Lake Conservation CleanUp Day

Saturday, September 4th starting at 8am. Meet at South Shores boat launch or Tompkins Campground boat launch.

Cowanesque Lake and picnic areas have trash floating in the water, on the shoreline and on land. We are reaching out since some of the trash can only be retrieved by boat, kayak or canoe. We also have areas on land that could use your help.

If you can spare a couple of hours or stay all day, your clean up efforts will be appreciated. We will supply plenty of trash bags and please don't forget to bring durable gloves.

Hope to see you there!
Thank You

[Friends of Tioga-Hammond and Cowanesque Lakes](#)

Learn about Trail Care



Ever wonder what goes into maintaining a trail?
Learn the basics with a new video from KTA produced by film students at Messiah University. You can visit <https://www.kta-hike.org/trail-care-and->

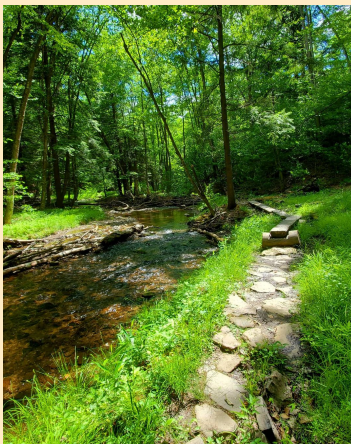
[trail-crew](#) to learn more and volunteer to help with KTA Trail Care and try it out for yourself on a trail near you!

Hiker's Corner

Raccoon Loop Raccoon Creek State Park



Jeff's Jaunts - Morrison Trail - Allegheny National Forest



The Morrison Trail is one of the finest hikes in the Allegheny National Forest. It is a loop with a cross-connector, creating two loops. The longer of these loops is the Rimrock Loop. In recent years, the trail has been extensively rerouted in places, avoiding Campbell Run and some wet areas. Also a new side trail, the Black Bear Trail, has been added. Our hike followed the Rimrock Loop and Black Bear Trail, and was about fourteen miles long; longer than the maps would suggest. Further trail modifications may occur in the future.

The trails are well established, have signs at intersections, and are blazed with white or silver diamond placards. These trails are ideal as either a long dayhike, or short overnight backpack.

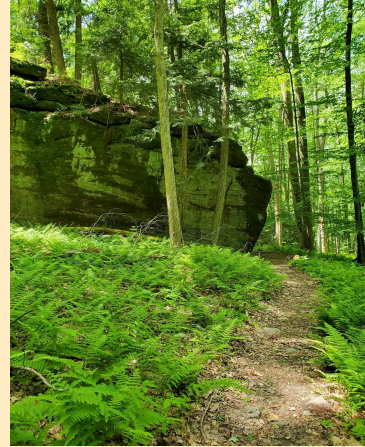
From the parking area, we followed a connector trail and turned left at the loop. The forests were mostly hardwoods with vast glades of ferns. We could see deep in the forest. As we descended, hemlocks became more common and we reached a small stream, and the cross connector trail. This was the start of the Rimrock Loop and we went right. Luckily, this was the peak blooms for mountain laurel and the pinkish white blossoms adorned the forest. It was beautiful. The trail was level and rolling through the laurel. We then reached the juncture with the new Black Bear Trail and turned left. The trail descended, passing groves of hemlocks and small streams. We then hiked among some

large mossy boulders in open hardwood forests with ferns. The trail curved around the mountain, passing more boulders and then gradually climbing back to the Rimrock Loop. While Black Bear is nice, it is not a must-see, but is a great way to make a longer hike.

The new section of the Rimrock Loop soon began as we climbed through open hardwoods and then dropped over a rocky section. The trail continued a descent and entered a very scenic cove with large hemlocks and gigantic boulders with ferns, moss and lichens. Some giant boulders had entire forests growing on top. This was my favorite spot and I'd like to explore more of it. It felt primeval.

The trail returned to the open hardwoods and gradually descended to a side trail that leads to the Morrison Campground. The trails in this area are brushy, but still easy to follow. The only way to see the reservoir is at the campground, which is a nice place to take a break. There is a fee to camp here.

After the campground, the trail made its way up Morrison Run, another gorgeous section with great campsites, hemlocks, cascades and pools. The streamside hiking was a joy as trout darted in the pools.



At the next intersection, we turned left to begin the cross connector up a side stream of Morrison Run. This is another great trail with cascades, hemlocks, and more giant boulders. At one place, just off trail, the creek flows underground, beneath the mossy boulders with awesome rock formations, a cave, and cascades. One thing I love about the Allegheny National Forest are all the giant sandstone boulders.

We completed the loop and returned back to the car. Hopefully the national forest will continue to expand its hiking trails.

After your hike, be sure to check out the beautiful Rimrock Overlook, which is nearby. At the base of the cliffs, cold air blows out of the cracks in the rock in the summer.

[-Jeff Mitchell](#)

Watch Out for the ATV's

We have rights! DCNR is mandated under the Conservation Resources Act (CNRA) to manage our State Forests and Parks in compliance with Article 1 Section 27 of Pennsylvania's Constitution, which states:

"The people have the right to clean air, pure water, and the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and aesthetic values of the environment. Pennsylvania's public natural resources are the common property of the people. As Trustee, the Commonwealth shall conserve and maintain those Resources for the benefit of the people both living today and for future Generations."

Last year the General Assembly along with the Governor enacted a law as Amendments to the Fiscal Code. This law states that the DCNR in consultation with the Dept. of Transportation develop, open and maintain an ATV Trail connecting Whiskey Springs and Bloody Skillet ATV Trails in the Sproul State Forest.

The law also states the two Departments shall implement the full Northcentral Pa. ATV initiative and create a network of ATV trails connecting Clinton County to the New York border by using existing State (highways) roads and State Forest roads by April 1, 2024.

Another aspect of the law targets 5 Forest Districts, Elk, Moshannon, Sproul, Susquehannock, and Tioga, for roads and trails to serve potential regional connectors and to provide local access or serve as a trail complex for ATV use. DCNR was to perform an assessment for charging fees for access to the Department ATV area. All of this was to be done by Dec. 31, 2020.

Beginning in January this year DCNR was to have consulted with local community leaders to assess their interest and feasibility of a DCNR ATV pilot area. (The last information on this was that it may be from Germania, Potter County to Colton Point, Tioga County.) The DCNR is being asked to monitor the use of the pilot area and any associated impacts to State Forest land resources, values and forest users resulting from the DCNR pilot ATV area. On or before Dec. 31, 2023, DCNR shall submit a report to the General Assembly on the DCNR ATV pilot area.

It would be wise for all hikers to let the community leaders and DCNR know how the wide use of these off-road vehicles effect the environment and us. The Pennsylvania Environmental Defense Foundation (PEDF) is mounting a law suit against the General Assembly, Governor and others to show the unconstitutionality of this new law done through an amendment to the fiscal code.

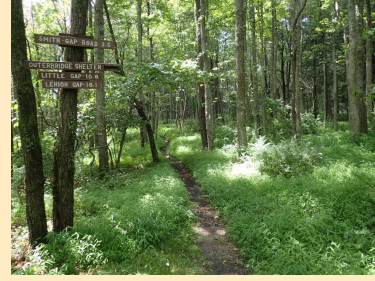
The PEDF and KTA can use whatever support the hiking community can muster to reduce or eliminate this affront on our hiking and other outdoor experience.

-Robert Merrill
KTA Board

2021 Summer/Fall Photo Contest

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

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



Community Calendar

KTA Events

Susquehanna River Trip - July 17

KTA takes to the trails – Water trails this is! Our day long adventures, featuring professional and knowledgeable guides, include all paddling equipment, and are suitable for novice and experienced paddlers alike!.

Black Forest Trail Slackpack

July 9-12 or August 20-23 or September 24-27

Take advantage of this incredible opportunity, to complete in ONE WEEKEND the trail that everyone talks about: The Black Forest Trail.

Allegheny National Forest Weekend - August 20-22

It's time to leave the city behind and get back to nature. During our weekend hiking adventure we'll be staying at Groves Lodge in the heart of the National Forest.

KTA Trail Challenge (25k and 50k) - September 11

The KTA Trail Challenge is an event for adventurous trail runners and hikers on the wild river hills of the lower Susquehanna Gorge. This daunting trail challenge event on the Conestoga Trail, State Park trails, alternates breathtaking vistas with steep descents into dark, scenic hollows followed by strenuous climbs to the next vista.

Fall Hiking Weekend - October 15-17

KTA heads to Lock Haven for a weekend of hiking and camaraderie in the Pennsylvania Wilds.

Community Events

2021 Duncannon Appalachian Trail Festival - August 28

Join us on the Appalachian Trail in Duncannon between Cumberland and Ann streets on Saturday, August 28th from 10AM to 4PM for some great family-friendly fun. Admission is free, there will be live music, food trucks, free craft projects for kids, hiking and outdoor clubs, and arts & crafts vendors.

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 ktaadmin@kta-hike.org.

Club Spotlight

Duncannon Appalachian Trail Community



The Duncannon Appalachian Trail Community Advisory Committee hopes that our mission statement “Promoting, Protecting and Preserving Our Outdoor Recreational Resources for Future Generations” will carry over into all changes being considered for the Duncannon Borough, including improved river access and beautification of the town. The Committee plans to support and implement projects and programming that

enhance tourism opportunities for Duncannon as an outdoor recreation destination and encourage everyone to get outside, enjoy nature and recognize the connection between the health and abundance of the region's natural assets and the vitality of its communities. Our volunteer committee meets monthly. We support the efforts of the Trail Clubs maintaining the A.T. in the Greater Duncannon Area including MCM (Mountain Club of Maryland), SATC (Susquehanna Appalachian Trail Club), CVATC (Cumberland Valley Appalachian Trail Club), and YHC (York Hiking Club).

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. 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.