



Connecting People with Nature since 1920

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Dear Local Trail Chair,

Welcome to the volunteer Local Trails Committee (LTC) Chair role! You are stepping into an important leadership position that enables the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference to maintain and protect over 2,000 miles of trails.

As a Trail Chair you will take the big-picture view of your region, identify the short- and long-term goals for it, and work with your Program Coordinator to plan how to accomplish those goals. Your work will build a positive future for all the trails and volunteers you oversee. You will find opportunities to learn new skills, meet interesting and highly motivated people (such as your fellow volunteer leaders), and do meaningful and rewarding work.

Your willingness to contribute your time, energy, enthusiasm, and talents for the benefit of public lands is deeply appreciated.

The Trail Conference was started in 1920 and from day one has been a volunteer-powered organization. Our volunteers have accomplished amazing feats over the decades, including building the first six miles of the Appalachian Trail, and you are now joining our century-old legacy that has provided millions of trail users with a means to explore the outdoors.

Our Trail Conference family is passionate and dedicated, and we are so happy you are a part of it. The over one-hundred thousand hours donated by volunteers each year make it possible for our park partners to have work completed that otherwise might not get done.

The primary objective of this onboarding packet is to give you an understanding of your role and how it supports our shared mission. Please contact your Program Coordinator or the Volunteer Engagement team ([volunteer@nynjtc.org](mailto:volunteer@nynjtc.org)) if you have any questions.

Thank you for accepting the role of Trail Chair, and congratulations!

*Katie Kourakos*

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## OUR MISSION

The New York-New Jersey Trail Conference is a volunteer-powered organization that builds, maintains, and protects public trails. Together with our partners, we strive to ensure that the trails and natural areas we share are sustainable and accessible for all to enjoy for generations to come.

## OUR VALUES

- The joys of nature belong to everyone.
- Environmental conservation is a shared duty.
  - Volunteers are our superheroes.
  - Respect is essential to success.
- The right path is always a responsible one.
- [Financial] Sustainability is fundamental to a healthy organization.

## New Local Trail Committee (LTC) Chair First Year Plan

### Before Your Onboarding Session

You will be provided all the onboarding in materials advance. We know there's a lot so we'll be walking you through everything during the session. You are not expected to read through *all* the materials in advance of our meeting, unless you want to!

Two things we ask you to complete before the session:

- If you haven't already, log into your dashboard (<https://www.nynjtc.org/dashboard>). If you need help follow the instructions provided in the zip file.
- Look over the [Trail Volunteer Structure \(RTC\)](#) Chart in the zip file to familiarize yourself with the volunteer structure. We'll review this during the meeting.

### Months 1 – 6

1. Attend an onboarding session with your program coordinator and/or the volunteer engagement team to learn the basics of being a Trail Chair
2. Meet with your program coordinator and discuss the highlights, priorities and challenges for your region
3. Learn how to interpret your regions' hours, and submit your own hours with the Online Reporting System
4. Attend live or watch replays of the following trainings:
  - a. [Trail Maintenance Workshop Webinar](#) – It is crucial to understand maintenance responsibilities
  - b. [Trail Layout and Design Workshop Webinar](#) – Helps you understand their physical attributes and mechanics of trails
  - c. [Old Trails, New Systems: Re-Imagining Existing Trail Networks](#) – Very helpful for big picture planning, thinking and understanding of trail systems
5. Meet with your supervisors individually and walk their region's trails with them
6. Learn if you'll be working with land managers/park partners, and if so, who they are and meet them
7. Familiarize yourself with the crews in your region and get to know the crew leaders. Learn about any projects planned for your region and known problems
8. Attend Regional Trails Council (RTC) meetings to network with your peers and stay up to date on all important news for your region
9. Get to know the RTC Chair

### As you continue to move through your first year you will have:

- Worked with the Volunteer Engagement team, Program Coordinator and Supervisors to fill vacant maintainer positions
- Participated in the annual planning process and prioritized the following year's projects
- Learned to track blowdowns and request the help of the sawyer team to address them
- Worked with the Volunteer Engagement team to ensure all the trail and volunteer assignment data in your region is up to date
- Participated in recognition activities and nominated volunteers for annual awards
- Learned what you can be reimbursed for and how to request reimbursement
- If interested, hosted a get together with your supervisors or led a trail maintenance workday to address trails that need extra work