

The Register

The Online Stewardship Newsletter for the Appalachian Trail

A publication of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy – Fall 2008

Sidehill

By Hawk Metheny and Robert Proudman

Fall is a great time to get out and work on the Trail, monitor and maintain corridor boundaries, attend a chain-saw certification workshop or just enjoy a fall hike. (*Don't forget to wear blaze orange and be aware of [hunting seasons](#) when you're out on the Trail.*) Cool fall weather makes us feel energized and ready to take on challenges.

This issue, at least in part, addresses how the A.T. community handles challenges. Trail workers and land managers took on the challenge of heavy rainfall in the Northeast. The Green Mountain Club is coming back from a devastating fire and building an energy-efficient new visitor's center. A dangerous road crossing in Pennsylvania was replaced by a Trail underpass. In the Southern region, volunteers are being trained to identify and remove invasive exotic plant species. The Carolina Mountain Club and others are installing food storage cables at shelters to discourage bears from raiding hikers' packs.

In addition to on-the-ground challenges, there are more complex issues to wrestle with: power lines that will cross the Trail in designated national transmission corridors; residential and commercial developments; and climate change and its potential effects on the Trail's environment and the Trail experience. There are trends indicating that fewer people are visiting our national parks or experiencing nature in other ways, which may affect the broad base of public support not only for trails and parks but for conservation in general. The economic downturn will impact not only ATC's budget, but those of our agency partners, the Trail clubs, and all of us individually as well.

ATC's governing and advisory bodies generally meet twice a year to discuss not only issues affecting the organization, but some of those broader challenges. ATC's stewardship council will meet the first weekend in November in conjunction with the board of directors meeting, following meetings of all four regional partnership committees. We will report on those meetings in the next issue.

News and Features

Water, water everywhere...

Heavy rainfall in the Northeast this summer caused problems for hikers, workers, and land managers. The White Mountain National Forest in New Hampshire reported dangerous conditions due to high water levels and velocity caused by heavy rains. Visitors were urged to use extreme caution when walking near or crossing streams and rivers. Numerous roads and bridges were washed out.

In Maine, hikers reported dangerously high rivers and streams. Some made high-risk crossings; others camped and waited for waters to go down. The canoe ferry service across the Kennebec River had to be suspended for five days in June and another day-and-a-half in August. Ferryman Dave Corrigan said, "During the worst of the high water, the estimated flow at the crossing was 25 to 30 thousand

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cubic feet per second! This compares to “average” days that vary from less than 2 thousand, to perhaps 8 thousand cubic feet per second. To the best of my knowledge, the high water in June was the highest ever seen during the summer months in the entire history of the ferry service.” Hikers either had to wait until the ferry resumed service, arrange for vehicle shuttles, or make a 35-mile road walk to cross at a bridge and get back to the Trail. On Moody Mountain, hikers were forced to detour around a landslide that wiped out a section of the Trail, removing rocks, trees, and soil down to the bedrock for about 100 vertical feet. Maine Appalachian Trail Club volunteers flagged a temporary reroute near the top of the slide and are evaluating a permanent relocation.

In Vermont, a beaver pond broke through its dam, tearing down the hillside to a brook, uprooting trees and cutting a new path that washed out Vt. Route 140 above and below a Trailhead parking lot. The state’s department of transportation used the parking lot as a staging area while it repaired the road, culverts, and guardrails. The Green Mountain Club reported that some well-built and normally well-drained trail sections were overwhelmed by the amount of rainfall and churned to mud under hiker’s feet. One hiker described her section hike as the “Hiker Olympics, rock-hopping to keep out of the muck and mire and hurdling over the blowdowns.” Hikers praised both the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps and the Berkshire Teen Trail Crew in Massachusetts for persevering through torrential rain and thick mud. An excerpt from the Berkshire crew’s blog is reprinted in the club news section.

Pedestrian Underpass in Pennsylvania

A pedestrian underpass at Route 944, a heavily traveled commuter route in Pennsylvania’s Cumberland Valley, was completed in 48 hours over the Labor Day weekend in September. Three crews using heavy equipment severed the highway, dug a large trench, installed eight precast, custom-made concrete box culverts, repaved the road, and reopened it to vehicle traffic. The route will be open for hikers once some additional site work is completed and the heavy equipment has been removed. A ribbon-cutting ceremony is planned for November.

Route 944 was identified as one of 22 potentially hazardous road crossings for Appalachian Trail hikers in a 2003 study by the National Highway Safety Administration. ATC received a grant from the community conservation partnership program of the department of conservation and natural resources and contracted with engineering-design firm HRG, Inc., to plan and design the underpass. The Commonwealth’s department of transportation funded the project through transportation enhancement funds while ATC Regional Director Karen Lutz took on the contracting and oversight responsibilities. [one or more RT 944 photos]

New staff at NPS-ATPO

Todd Remaley has been appointed chief ranger for the Appalachian Trail, having served as acting chief ranger since Bob Gray’s retirement in December 2006. Remaley first came to the NPS-Appalachian Trail Park Office staff as a field ranger based at ATC’s mid-Atlantic regional office in Boiling Springs, Pennsylvania. Immediately prior to joining the ATPO staff, Remaley served as a ranger in Shenandoah National Park. The A.T. field ranger position is expected to be filled in the near future.

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Sarah Bransom is the new A.T. environmental protection specialist, succeeding Don Owen who retired in June. She has 28 years of federal service, including 15 with the National Park Service focused on the National Environmental Protection Act and planning. Most recently, she was project manager for the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail.

Jessica Liptak has joined ATPO as education and outreach specialist, a position being shared with the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. She is focusing on the Trail to Every Classroom program. A 12-year NPS veteran, Liptak served most recently as a training instructor at the Mather Training Center in Harpers Ferry.

MEGA-Transect Program Manager

Dr. Roger Moore, associate professor in the department of parks, recreation, and tourism management at North Carolina State University, has stepped down from ATC's board of directors to serve as program manager for the A.T. MEGA-transect during his year-long sabbatical from the university. The position is being funded by centennial challenge funds from the National Park Service.

Moore's core responsibilities include capacity building through broadening and developing partnerships. He will coordinate the work of multiple key science partners, including the National Park Service, U.S. Geological Service, U.S. Forest Service, Smithsonian Institute, and Cornell University, while expanding regional citizen-science programs along the length of the Trail. He also will focus on sustaining the MEGA-Transect program beyond the next year by collaborating with ATC staff to develop a multi-year business plan. Existing monitoring projects, including water quality, natural heritage, wildlife, American chestnut, and invasive species will continue to be implemented over the coming year.

ATC Volunteer Database is Nearly Complete

ATC has been working for several months with database developer CiviCore on the online database that will be the centerpiece of ATC's volunteer clearinghouse. For potential volunteers, the clearinghouse will provide a searchable source of all volunteer opportunities on the Appalachian Trail.

The database is nearly complete. During the next phase, ATC will preview the database for clubs. Online presentations and tutorials will be prepared for club administrators to introduce the function and flexibility of the database as access to the tool is made available. The database will function to manage their volunteers, track individual hours worked on various projects, obtain reports, and classify volunteers through geographic segmentation or skill levels, for instance. We look forward to the time when they will be able to log in and post volunteer opportunities, photos, and related documents.

For more information, contact ATC Volunteer Resources Coordinator Jeanne Mahoney at jmahoney@appalachiantrail.org.

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Maintainers Tips

Maintainer Solutions for Bear Challenges

Bear problems were reported at a number of A.T. shelters this year, resulting in anxious overnight stays for hikers and some temporary shelter closures. Some land-managers and Trail clubs are taking steps to reduce the likelihood of encounters between hikers and bears trying to get their food.

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park has used [food storage cables](#) successfully for a number of years. The Park has created a DVD demonstrating installation of a cable system in the Smokies. Contact TheRegister@appalachiantrail.org for information on obtaining a copy.

Similar cable systems are used by the Georgia Appalachian Trail Club (GATC) and the Carolina Mountain Club (CMC). Other options for keeping hiker food away from bears include bear poles, used in Shenandoah National Park, and bear boxes—sturdy metal containers that are used at some locations. (Note that while easy for hikers to use, bear boxes are likely to become trash receptacles. They also attract mice, raising concerns about exposure to hantavirus.)

Howard McDonald of the CMC has made a number of modifications to the original Smokies design, which he shares in the article below.

Additional food-cable tips:

- Choose sturdy anchor trees at least 12 inches in diameter.
- Use stainless steel cable and larger pulleys than recommended in the original plan.
- CMC and GATC use closed spring-loaded hooks to hang the packs to prevent them from bouncing and hooking onto the suspension cable. The park uses open hooks, so they can be shaken loose if they do get hooked.
- GATC recommends using all-aluminum pizza pans as baffles for small animals.
- PVC pipe placed over the suspension cable near the anchor trees will help keep critters from “tight-rope walking” across the cable.
- Educate hikers to use the cable system—they deter not only bears, but also mice, raccoons, and other hungry varmints.

Aerial Food Storage Cable System

Howard McDonald, facilities manager for the Carolina Mountain Club

The [Carolina Mountain Club](#) (CMC) had a number of bear sightings at shelters during 2007 and considerable problems with them in 2008. Thanks to funding from the North Carolina Appalachian Trail License Plate grant program, we are now installing aerial food-storage cables (bear cables) at all ten of our shelters. The Great Smoky Mountains National Park publication “Backcountry Food Storage

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Cable System" (September 1999) was used as the basis for our design.

There are no restrictions on the number of hikers that can be at a shelter on the CMC section of the Appalachian Trail, so we have no control over the number of food sacks and backpacks that hikers want to hang. Our design is for an average of thirty feet between anchor trees and four pulleys with an assumed 125 pounds maximum of material weight per pulley (250 pounds total load on each pulley when the load is suspended). The sag at the center of the suspension cable is no less than two feet, so that the suspension cable is subjected to a static stress of no more than 50 percent of the breaking strength of the ¼-inch-diameter stainless steel cable. This 2:1 safety factor will prevent cable breakage from occasional overloads and any dynamically created forces when the load is being pulled up to the top.

The [drawing](#) illustrates how the system is installed. The suspension-cable anchor eyebolt is 20 feet above the ground at the first tree, the second tree eyebolt is level with that of the first tree, and they are on opposite sides of the two trees. The eyebolts for the outside haul cables are on the same side as the suspension eyebolts and four feet above the ground. The inside haul-cable eyebolts are on the other side of the tree and three feet above the ground. The result is that the outside haul cable is too short to be connected to the inside haul-cable eyebolt, thereby physically identifying the two cables. We use three-inch diameter pulleys and a cable assembly design that will give us maximum life for the haul cables so that we do not have to make frequent repairs.

Two suitable trees are determined in a scouting trip and the distance between them plus any slope is measured. These measurements are used to calculate the length of the suspension cable and the haul cables, which are then cut to length. Some preassembly reduces the amount of work that must be done after arriving at the site.

Squirrel and raccoon barriers, as shown in the Smokies publication, are on the suspension cable and experimental mouse barriers are installed on the haul cables as part of the handle system. These six-inch diameter aluminum barriers are shown as triangular items at two handles on each cable in the drawing and in the photo. Hikers are being asked to assess how well they work. A stop is installed on the haul cables to keep the packs from touching the ground when they are connected to the pack hooks.

We are continuing to install these cables at our shelters and will evaluate them for effectiveness and long life.

For a detailed description of these cables and the installation method, contact me at howardamcdonald@bellsouth.net.

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Monitoring

Corridor Monitoring

The Trail “corridor” refers specifically the lands and easements acquired by the National Park Service for the protection of the Trail outside existing national and state parks and forests. The external boundary of that corridor needs to be monitored on a regular basis and the boundary lines maintained to protect against encroachments and prevent resource damage. Some of the volunteer Trail clubs that monitor the corridor boundary also take on the maintenance side of the job, marking the surveyed line and posting boundary signs. More information on corridor boundary monitoring and maintenance can be found here:

<http://www.appalachiantrail.org/boundarymonitors>.

Corridor Boundary Monitoring + Maintenance = Magic in Massachusetts

Steve Smith, [Appalachian Mountain Club-Berkshire Chapter](#)

With a little serendipity, and lots of good staff/volunteer interaction, we have stumbled upon a magic formula for making corridor monitoring and boundary maintenance fun and attractive to our club and volunteers. With leaders actively engaging volunteers, keeping them interested by creating project outings, and providing contact with ATC staff who are equally enthusiastic about their work, the Massachusetts corridor monitoring program has leapt forward in just five years.

Of course, good volunteer management practices—including a clear job definition, active recruiting, regular communication, opportunities for fun, leadership support, and rewards and recognition—are still the basic fundamentals of a successful volunteer program. But we’ve also found that by merging corridor monitoring and exterior corridor boundary maintenance (ECBM) tasks, our monitors report as much job satisfaction as do the trail maintainers along our 90-odd miles of the A.T.

Sally Naser, ATC’s boundary program manager, has been an essential to this newfound magic. She brings surveyor-level competence and all the necessary tools and techniques to the ECBM job. The training she and her staff assistants provide have been an excellent way not only to get the work done, but to train and refresh our volunteers. Sally always shows up with all the materials needed to do the job correctly—maps, compass, tapes, paint, brushes, signs and posts, and she stocks enough supplies to equip two crews, so when she travels with an assistant, it provides the possibility of having two volunteer crews per day—each with an expert leader/trainer. She sometimes brings pretty good “swag” for the volunteers, too—patches, neckerchiefs, paint bottles, and holsters.

Over the past five years, Sally has responded to the ECBM needs in Massachusetts whenever we saw the need for a special effort. First, Sally and I determine a project period of four to seven days, send out an e-mail/phone blast for help to the volunteers, and then set up one or two crews per day. Wow, what results! Many of our regular monitors and maintainers, in addition to one-day volunteers, want to

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help. We always try to involve the assigned monitor in ECBM work on his or her own section and have been successful about 90 percent of the time—this is an important piece of the “magic.”

After seeing this serendipitous formula work well for a couple years, we want to share our experience. Here are the key elements:

- Treating the boundary work of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail corridor with respect and expecting competence. Volunteers respond to the need for a degree of expertise and having responsibility of protecting a national treasure.
- ECBM adds hands-on tool work to the monitoring function. This is fun for many volunteers, plus it creates a feeling of accomplishment that can be seen and felt.
- Organizing projects with the ATC boundary staff provides excellent training and motivation. Volunteers work side by side with committed and expert staff who communicate well and emphasize the value of volunteer efforts, which leads to building the volunteer program in both numbers and quality.
- ECBM requires the exact identification of the actual boundaries, not just a monitor walking the easy route. If the monitor has any doubt about the location of the boundary, the group approach of ECBM helps to work out the problems and properly identify the line and corners/monuments.
- Clear, well-marked boundaries make visits and discussions with Trail neighbors productive and positive.

Now, we're ready to move on, with volunteers trained to a level to properly lead ECBM projects ourselves. This level of skill did not happen in one season. It is the result of consistent, incremental efforts over a number of years by a strong volunteer/staff partnership. We will always need Sally's help with tough corridor problems, but we will not continue to need the time commitment she has made the past five years.

Through these efforts, the external corridor boundary in Massachusetts has been painted at least once since the original survey. Beginning in 2008, we are embarking on the second round of refreshing the blazes along our 150 or so miles of NPS boundary. Five years ago, we could not see the path to being almost self sufficient in the ECBM part of our work. Now, we are proud of our accomplishment as a club and as volunteers.

Environmental Monitoring: Partners in Protection

Julie Judkins, resource program manager at ATC's Southern regional office

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy, Western North Carolina Alliance and Southern Appalachian Man and the Biosphere (SAMAB) are partnering with land-managing agencies to identify and control exotic invasive plants through volunteer workshops and hikes. Volunteers are hiking the A.T. on a more meaningful kind of hike—one that will protect its special resources.

Exotic invasive plants displace and out-compete native flora for space, sunlight, water, and nutrients, causing a decline in biodiversity. Volunteers learn how to identify 12–15 plant species of concern, information they can take home to practice in their own yards. After the identification session, the

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volunteers, equipped with GPS units, take a tracking hike to monitor those plants along the A.T. The findings from these monitoring and inventory hikes will provide land managers data needed to begin efforts to control these plants and then prioritize management efforts.

Hikers also learn about an important online resource called [EDDMaps](#)—which stands for early detection and distribution mapping system— that allows citizen-scientists to input plant data from any location onto the Web resource. This data allows range distribution to be accounted for and facilitates a quick response to any new exotic invasive plants that may come into the region.

The partners in this program are moving forward with making focused “cooperative management areas” around the A.T. to integrate management resources across jurisdictional boundaries as well as to leverage additional resources. The more partners work together to combat these plants, the more success will be seen.

The presence of exotic invasive plants is a health indicator for the Trail. The A.T.’s north-south alignment across 14 eastern states represents a cross-section of those states and offers a perfect setting for collecting relevant and scientifically valid data on the health of the landscape and the species it fosters. We call this ATC’s [MEGA-Transect](#) program.

If you are interested in participating in a training workshop and hike in the southern region of the Trail, or in helping to control the spread of these plants in significant natural areas, please contact Julie Judkins at jjudkins@appalachiantrail.org. Workshops, monitoring hikes and control efforts are planned throughout the year and can be found on the [Appalachian Trail Web site](#).

Clubs

AMC teens persevere through rain and mud

Excerpted with permission from the [Berkshire Teen Trail Crew blog](#) of the Appalachian Mountain Club for the week of August 2–8

Brian Schmitt, Berkshire Teen Trail Crew Leader

Within thirty seconds of our arrival at Wilbur’s Clearing, we were met with a torrential downpour. As we powered on towards our campsite with our awkward tools and heavy packs, we got a chance to see the part of the A.T. we would be working on and what obstacles we would face during the week. Previously installed check-steps had helped caused mini-flood spots on the Trail, and bog bridges needed to be strategically moved to trouble spots.

The crew worked in the mud far more than any person in their right mind would ever sign up for. The mud and constant wetness throughout the week became entertaining in a twisted sort of way. We all dreaded putting on our wet boots so much that we turned it into a group event. When we were all

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ready, we would gather around our tent platform and simultaneously put on our soaking wet boots and socks, and groan and cry and laugh together.

By Thursday, we had completed some truly remarkable work. Using mostly backpacks and buckets, we ferried about 100 loads of crush from far away back to our work site in order to fill in our turnpike and cover areas of the Trail that were flooded. Check-steps were installed, bog bridges were successfully set and moved, and a quality native-wood bog bridge was installed at the last minute.

The crew participants excelled in working as a team, maintaining their morale and group chemistry while battling through some of the dirtiest work conditions I've seen, impressing me as much as any group we've had the pleasure of working with this summer. Well done, gang.

Going green in the Green Mountains

The [Green Mountain Club](#) (GMC) is using “green technology” to construct an energy-efficient visitor center in Waterbury Center, Vermont, replacing the historic South Barn that was destroyed by fire in 2003.

The new building is being constructed of sustainably harvested local timber. The structure is designed and oriented to take advantage of natural light and allow passive solar heating in winter, while minimizing heat gain in the summer. To further reduce heat loss, the structure will be heavily insulated and have triple-glazed, argon gas-filled windows. Heat and hot water will be provided by a wood-burning boiler fueled with wood from local, renewable sources. The cooling system will draw in outdoor air when possible and use cold well water in a high-efficiency air-conditioning system when necessary. A light-colored, reflective, standing-seam metal roof will help reduce cooling needs. Additional features include composting toilets and low-flow showers and faucets.

GMC held a timber-frame barn-raising event in August. By early October, the building was enclosed, insulation panels were being installed, and roof installation was about to begin.

MATC and Camp Tekakwitha: Bringing Youth to the A.T.

For ten years, the Maine Appalachian Trail Club (MATC) has had a successful partnership with Camp Tekakwitha (or Camp Teki), a French-speaking summer camp for youth aged 8–17. Camp Teki's program for older campers (14–17) centers around a hike on the Appalachian Trail.

Although Camp Tekakwitha had been leading campers on hikes on the Appalachian Trail for decades, they have become model Trail users through their work with MATC's Outreach Coordinator Heather Murzak and other MATC members—carefully adhering to Leave No Trace principles during their hikes and volunteering hundreds of hours on the A.T. over the past ten years.

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MATC coordinates work trips, working with camp staff to identify the number of campers involved and pulling together needed supplies. Usually boys and girls work in separate groups on projects, which may be broken down into stages: one group may pack in materials, for instance, while the second works on a building project. Camp Teki kids have taken on some major projects—they have built and repaired campsites, bridges, privies and other structures, and packed in thousands of pounds of materials.

The work done by Camp Teki kids depends on the current needs of MATC. Dick Fecteau, overseer of the 65-mile Bigelow District, says “there is always something to do,” trips just need to be geared towards teenagers. Recently, twenty-five kids from Camp Teki cheerfully packed 1,500 pounds of roofing shingles and lumber up to a building site. Fecteau says when he started working with groups from the camp ten years ago, he did not plan enough work for them. He is amazed by their enthusiasm and how much they can accomplish during a short work trip. In one of his favorite trips, a group built a privy after first packing in the needed materials. Their energy and enthusiasm did not flag, even after four inches of rain.

This partnership has turned out to be a great fit for both MATC and Camp Tekakwitha, and the kids who have participated in Trail projects over the years will remember their time on the A.T.

Along the Trail

Motorized Access to Party Spot Limited

The installation of a gate [insert Gov. Clement Shelter photo] limiting motorized access to the Governor Clement Shelter in Shrewsbury, Vermont, is good news for overnight hikers on the Appalachian Trail/Long Trail. The stone-walled shelter, built in 1929, had long ago become a difficult place to spend a quiet night in the woods. After years of discussion and concern regarding rowdy partying at the shelter during hiking season, a decision was made to gate the road for part of the year. It will be locked and closed to unauthorized motor vehicles from April 15 to September 15. A cooperative effort by the [Green Mountain Club](#), ATC, the Green Mountain National Forest, the state department of forests, parks and recreation, and the town of Shrewsbury led to this solution. Funding was provided by ATC and the National Park Service.

Earl Shaffer shelter preserved

The Appalachian Trail Museum Society is preserving a shelter built by Earl Shaffer, the first hiker to complete the entire Trail. After 40 years of use, the shelter on Peters Mountain in Pennsylvania had come to the end of its useful life. Volunteers from the society, several A.T. clubs, the Earl Shaffer Foundation, ATC staff, and others gathered in August to honor Shaffer and to carefully dismantle and remove the shelter, which is being stored at ATC’s Scott Farm near Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Links to photos of the event are at the [museum society’s Web site](#). The shelter will be reconstructed as a display

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once permanent quarters for the museum have been acquired. Other A.T. museum exhibits are currently displayed at ATC headquarters in Harpers Ferry.

Shenandoah National Park updates

Martha Bogle is the new superintendent of [Shenandoah National Park](#), replacing Chas Cartwright who became superintendent of Glacier National Park earlier this year. Bogle has more than 30 years of service at eleven national park units and one national wildlife refuge. She began her career as a seasonal park ranger at the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and served most recently as deputy superintendent of the Blue Ridge Parkway. As superintendent of Shenandoah National Park, she will be responsible for the management of 197,411 acres, approximately 250 employees, and an operating budget of over \$11 million. The park has more than 500 miles of trails, including 101 miles of the Appalachian Trail.

Shenandoah National Park also has a new trails coordinator, Melissa Rudacille. She volunteered as a Student Conservation Association resource assistant at the Park in 1996 and was hired as a seasonal employee the following year. Since then she has worked at least one season in each district of the park. Her offseason jobs included working for The Nature Conservancy and the U.S. Forest Service. Rudacille replaces Shawn Green, who retired this summer.

New Southern Regional Forester

U.S. Forest Service Chief Gail Kimble has appointed Elizabeth Agpaoa as southern regional forester (Region 8), succeeding Chuck Myers who recently became associate deputy chief of the national forest system in Washington, D.C. Agpaoa began her career with the Forest Service in 1979 on the Willamette National Forest in Oregon. Most recently, she was acting regional forester for the Pacific northwest region. Agpaoa will oversee 14 national forests in 13 southern states and Puerto Rico. She holds a bachelor's of science degree in wildlife management and a master's degree in natural resource management.

Side Trails

Waterman Fund Alpine Stewardship Grants

The Waterman Fund is dedicated to strengthening stewardship of the open summits, exposed ridgelines, and alpine areas of the Northeast. It provides grants to individuals and organizations for educational and trail maintenance projects affecting those areas. December 1 is the application deadline. That is also the deadline for nominations for the 2009 Guy Waterman Alpine Steward award. Information on both of these programs is available on the fund's Web site: www.watermanfund.org.

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Trail Builders Conference in Asheville

The annual [Professional Trail Builders Association](#) conference will be held March 17-19, 2009 in Asheville, North Carolina. Workshops will be held before and after those dates. The program is in the planning stages—those interested in the conference can sign up for e-mail updates or present proposals for presentations online.

Climate Change and Our National Forests

Forest Service Chief Gail Kimble is stressing the effect of climate change on our natural resources as one of the most significant issues facing the U.S. Forest Service, saying, "History will judge the leaders of our age by how well we respond to climate change." The Forest Service Web site has information on climate change as it relates to forests and forest ecosystems, including a video: www.fs.fed.us/video/climate/.