

On November 17, 2001, the ATC Board adopted the following:

Policy on Advertising in the Appalachian Trail Corridor

The Appalachian Trail Conference places a high value on maintaining the natural character of the Appalachian Trail corridor and is well-aware that small changes that diminish that character can cumulatively alter the Trail environment to the point where the A.T. is no longer a simple footpath passing through a natural setting. Those principles are embodied in numerous ATC policies.

At the same time, ATC recognizes that many A.T. hikers value the services (e.g., lodging, restaurants, outfitters, and shuttles) that are available in many communities along the Trail. Those services may be commercial in nature or offered by Trail enthusiasts acting on their own initiatives, who provide free or for-cost assistance to hikers. Both commercial businesses and Trail enthusiasts make significant contributions to the over-all experience of hiking the A.T. and are important to many hikers, especially long-distance hikers.

Both the National Park Service and Forest Service prohibit advertising on federal lands. ATC and the clubs should take steps to ensure that those longstanding prohibitions in federal regulations are clearly disseminated, implemented, and understood by hikers, Trail neighbors, and affected area businesses or individuals. In order to maintain the natural character of the A.T. corridor, it is the policy of the Appalachian Trail Conference that advertising is incompatible with the Trail and should not take place within the A.T. corridor. Furthermore, ATC and the clubs should urge the adoption of regulations prohibiting on-site advertising by states and municipalities that control Trail lands where such regulations do not now exist. If necessary, the availability of hiker services outside of the Trail corridor should be publicized through other means, such as publications and Trailhead signs.

For the purposes of this policy, advertising is defined as posting materials, such as signs, notes, or business cards, or distributing flyers, brochures, or similar materials designed to call specific services, both commercial and noncommercial, to the attention of hikers. Materials that promote membership in ATC or Trail-maintaining clubs or participation in volunteer Trail-management activities and materials that recognize the donations of commercial or noncommercial entities for the A.T. are not included in this definition.

Appalachian Trail Conference policies are intended to guide the ATC Board of Managers and staff and to inform Trail clubs, agency partners, and the general public of ATC's position on matters concerning the Appalachian Trail.

ATC policies are compiled into a loose-leaf notebook known as the Local Management Planning Guide (LMPG), last updated in 1997. The LMPG is available from the Appalachian Trail Conference free of charge to Trail-club and government-agency partners and for a copying fee to others. The Conference hopes to publish the LMPG on its website in 2002.

The Appalachian Trail Conference
www.appalachiantrail.org