

BRUSHWHACKER

Summer 2006

Somewhat regular publication of the Mid State Trail Association



GET TRAIL COORDINATING MEETING

Great Eastern Trail Coordinating Committee Meeting

On Saturday, May 27, representatives of the Mid Atlantic Foot Trails Coalition (MAFTC) and Southeastern Foot Trails Coalition (SEFTC) met in Blacksburg, VA, to discuss the Great Eastern Trail (GET) and a

memorandum of understanding (MOU) for coordinating GET efforts between the two coalitions and their member clubs. The GET, a long distance hiking trail which will run from Alabama to New York, was publicly announced in the spring 2006 edition of the American Hiker, the American Hiking Society's quarterly magazine. Within Pennsylvania, the GET will make use of the Mid State, Link, and Tuscarora trails. GET information is available at <http://www.greateastertrail.org>



Sign proposed to be used on the Mid State Trail to indicate this part of the Great Eastern Trail

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National Public Lands Day

Tioga Region

September 8 to 10, 2006 along with the Corps of Engineers a weekend work crew will relocate Stephenhouse Run footpath and extend MST in Elkhorn Valley With a good turnout we may finally be able to finish MST between Hammond and Cowanesque Lakes! Preregistration is desired if possible for those wanting to camp for free at Ives Run. A few spaces are available in Elkhorn Lodge (no tent needed!) Contact Pete Fleszar 717-583-2093

Keystone Trails Association Trail Crew

2007 Coming Attractions

The Keystone Trails Association will again sponsor a trail crew week on the Mid State Trail in the Tioga Region in June 19 to 24, 2007. Crew will camp at Twin Streams Campground in Morris, PA. The crew will be building new foot trail extending the MST northward.. Crew leader Pete Fleszar. KTA will have another Crew before or after in the Everett Region to improve the footpath way down south. John Stein crew leader. To register for trail crew contact Joe Healey, 93 Cedarwood Drive, Laflin, PA 18702, or by phone at 570.655.4979 or by email at jnlhealey@aol.com

The KTA will be sponsoring other trail crew weeks and trail care weekends throughout Pennsylvania. Further information at their web site <http://www.kta-hike.org/>

Volunteer for a day, a weekend, a week, or all three weeks. There are tasks for everyone. The crew assembles on Tuesday evening for dinner and orientation, works full days Wednesday through Saturday, and a half day on Sunday. KTA provides a place to camp and supplies all the food, tools, and work gloves.

The Summer Meeting was August 26 at Little Pine State Park. The Autumn meeting will be announced later. We apologize for the lateness of this notice and to any who might have missed the meeting because of it. B

The Mid State Trail Association was founded in 1982. Our bylaws state: The purpose of this organization shall be the completion and preservation of the Mid State Hiking Trail System. To this end the MSTA will: Supervise, coordinate, and carry out trail work. Ensure that maps and guides are available for the hiking public. Enter into agreements with private landowners and public land managers to provide for the trail. Take such other actions as may be appropriate to further the purpose of the organization.
Adopted September 30, 1984

Elections are held every other year at the first meeting of the year.

Current officers, elected for two year term until winter 2007:

Tom Kelliher, President
kelliher@goucher.edu
410.931.2946

Ed Lawrence, Vice President
cathyed@nationi.net
570.925.5285

Jean Aron, Secretary
shorthiker@aol.com
814.466.9260

Andrea Commaker, Treasurer
Ascl@psu.edu

**Mid State Trail Association
PO Box 167
Boalsburg, PA 16827**

The Mid State Trail is divided into four regions with a manager for each region. Managers are:

Pete Fleszar, Tioga Region
msttioga@epix.net

Joe Healey, Woolrich Region
jnlhealey@aol.com

Tom Thwaites, State College Region
ttt2@pennswoods.net

John Stein, Everett Region
Steinhike@cs.com

MSTA web site
<http://phoenix.goucher.edu/MSTA/>

To join the MSTA please send your name, and address, with dues to the MSTA. Dues are \$10.00 per family per calendar year or portion thereof. Please indicate if you would like to oversee a part of Pennsylvania's wildest trail. 🌲

This newsletter is published approximately once each season and distributed to members of the MSTA. Opinions expressed are those of the listed authors. The Editors encourage submission reflecting all viewpoints for publication, but reserve the right to edit for reasons of space or to prevent violent confrontation. You are encouraged to submit your material by email, disc, or CD.
Newsletter editor, Mike Cosgrove, 610.449.4612
Hiking.midstatetrail@snip.net

Regional News

Tioga Region, Pete Fleszar regional manager

The June Keystone Trails Association Trail Crew worked wonders again! Over 20 volunteers from all over PA, plus MD and VA, came. The Mid State Trail is open all the way from the Mason-Dixon Line, through Blackwell to Route 287 between Morris and Wellsboro. The resulting 441 km continuous route now is longer than the fabled Long Trail in Vermont. A map and guide for the section from Blackwell to 287 is being prepared, check the MSTA website for updates.

Trail Crew blazed a blue path leading from MST at Stone Quarry Run, to the top of Fork Hill far above Blackwell. A crack crew removed excess vegetation to open a viewpoint overlooking Babb Creek, looking down on Gillespie Point, and over much of northern Lycoming County. Joe Healey proclaimed the result the "Best View on Mid State Trail".

The new trail passes traces of Tioga County's mining past, crossing the top of an old coal incline and making use of sidehill blasted by 125 Polish immigrants in 1903. MST enters an area of crevices in rock, then passes over a drainage channel on a prime example of KTA's rock work.

John Stein, Everett Region Manager, can now grip the rocks much better in his new Vasque (tm) boots, as he was the lucky recipient of the token of appreciation offered by Wild Asaph Outfitters of Wellsboro.

The last viewpoint over Route 287 and much beyond is another story. The isolated Anna S coal mine shipped its produce across the valley, on a bucket tram resembling a ski chairlift, to the railroad at Antrim. The miners, supposedly, often shortened their commute by riding the buckets instead of walking all the way down to the bottom of Wilson Creek and back up again. It is said that one or more miners froze to death on a winter night when the tram turned off before they reached the other side. One of the foundations from the tramway is still visible beside newly blazed MST. What is certain is that the miners left a huge bony pile reaching all the way from the mountain rim down to Wilson Creek 150 m below, and DEP is studying ways of removing its environmental degradation. So enjoy the view while you can.

Much farther north, MST is now complete between the Corps of Engineers Tompkins Campground at Cowanesque Lake and RV's Mountain Top Campground. Finally, the trail is marked along and across Route 49, up to a panoramic view and then descending to Elkhorn Creek.

June Trail Crew on Mid State Trail, Many Thanks

Tom Bastian, Bob Best, Jack Bushey, Joe Clark, Jeff Clarke, Tom Kelliher, Ed Lawrence, Sylvia Grisez, Joe Healey, Rick Hiemenz, Elwood "Woody" Loudenslager, Don Muth, Bill Pearson, Jeff Richardson, Harold Schneider, Wanda Shirk, Louise Sis, John Stein, Tom Thwaites, Dave Walp, Barb Wiemann, Michelle Wright, John Zinn, Pat Zinn, and Jason Mize and of course cooks Deb Dunkle and Judy Muth.

State College Region, Tom Thwaites regional manager

Forestry stopped the logger from getting his trees out of the Beaver Pond (near route 26) timber sale because of the soft wet ground this summer. It has rained a lot. This stoppage will automatically extend the sale time past 30 September. In addition the logger may purchase extra time

Everett Region, John Stein regional manager

MSTA Receives Grant for Yellow Creek Bridge Project

The Mid State Trail Association, Inc. has received a grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for Trail, Recreation Projects of: \$51,400 for the removal of an existing and unsafe trail footbridge and for the purchase and installation of a new bridge over Yellow Creek on the Mid State Trail in South Woodbury Township.

Update on MST Maps

Tom Thwaites

Hikers!

I have prepared masters (analog) of maps 317 to 320. Brief descriptions follow:

Map 317 is shifted a couple of kilometers east of map 211 to include Morris and PA 287. It extends from Jacobs Run to Basswood Run.

Map 318 extends from Rattler Mine Road to junction of SR 2018 and Elk Ridge Road.

Map 319 extends from junction of Elk Ridge Road and Hickory Ridge Road to Fire Tower site on SGL 37.

Map 320 extends from Fire Tower site on SGL 37 to New York line.

There is no need for a map 321.

Minutes of the 2006 Spring Meeting of the Mid State Trail Association

June 17, 2006 in Morris, PA

- 1) Reimbursements. \$408 to Tom Thwaites for first printing of new maps (return his check to him). \$240 to Peter Fleszar for Carsonite labels.
- 2) Form a maps & guides and storage committee to examine the future of our publications and where/how our inventory stock will be stored. Membership: Scott Adams, Jean Aron, Peter Fleszar, and Tom Thwaites. (I don't believe I appointed a chair. Jean, would you chair the committee?)
- 3) Propose to Woolrich that they consider sponsoring the GET logo contest. (I brought three potential projects before them: the logo contest, GIS equipment, and Yellow Creek Bridge. I haven't heard anything back, yet.)
- 4) Need to contact Fish & Boat Commission and PennDOT regarding any approvals for Yellow Creek bridge site.
- 5) Find and appoint a public relations director.
- 6) Work on capacity building (growing the leadership ranks and cultivating the next set of leaders).
- 7) Institute an annual hiking series, focusing on a different region each year. First region, starting next year: Woolrich.
- 8) Talk to the Game Commission regarding land transfers in the Everett region. (Tom Kelliher, Deb Dunkle, Brad Myers)
- 9) Consider windmills within 300 meters of the trail to be an issue affecting the trail and examine the impacts on a case-by-case basis.
- 10) Check the GET Coordinating Committee Blacksburg meeting minutes for mention of the dual main route. (Done. Confirmed the dual main route with Carl Lorence.)

Note: Anyone who is interested or knows someone who may be interested in the public relations position please contact the Association.

Report Trail Damage

The best way to report trail damage or maintenance issues is through the Keystone Trails Association website according to Tom Thwaites. The address is:

<http://www.kta-hike.org>

Alternately or concurrently report to the regional trail manager or the MSTA website. If it isn't reported we may think everything is fine!

GET Trail continued from front page

The MAFTC was formed in November, 2005, specifically to work on the GET. The members of the coalition are the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, the Link Trail Club, the Mid State Trail Association, and the Finger Lakes Trail Conference. KTA has an observer within the coalition. The MAFTC has support from the Green Ridge State Forest in Maryland.

The primary goal of the SEFTC is to increase the availability of hiking trails within the southeast. The GET, while important, is not a primary focus to all of the SEFTC member clubs. SEFTC members include the Cumberland Trail Conference, the Alabama Trails Association, the Georgia Pinhoti Trail Association, and the Pine Mountain Trail Conference.

The MOU was crafted to foster a spirit of cooperation between the two coalitions and allow for maximum flexibility, given their different priorities. The local regulations and policies currently in force for each trail along the GET will continue to hold force. Public and private partners of the member clubs will continue to work with the member clubs, and not the MAFTC or the GET Coordinating Committee. The MOU defines the GET Coordinating Committee as including one primary and one alternate member from each state through which the GET passes. In Pennsylvania, Tom Kelliher will be the primary member and Carl Lorence the alternate. There will be two co-chairs, one from each coalition. The co-chairs are Bob Williams, Alabama Trails Association, and Tom Johnson, PATC.

Ron Stanley, MSTA, and Francis Zumbrun, Green Ridge State Forest, made presentations in support of a proposal to include a loop within the GET in Maryland and southern Pennsylvania. The loop includes the C and O Towpath Trail, the Green Ridge Hiking Trail, the Mid State Trail, the Link Trail, and the Tuscarora Trail. This proposal was later accepted. Both the eastern and western legs of the loop will be considered to be the main route of the GET. Backpackers looking for a loop route will be able to find it on the GET and will have access to the amenities at the proclaimed trail town of Everett.

Several years ago, when the MSTA undertook the task of extending the Mid State Trail to the New York state line and connecting to the Finger Lakes Trail, we did so with the thought that later something like the GET would come along. Little did we realize it would come along so quickly.

Katahdin, Baxter State Park

Editorial Note

Many readers will be familiar with the names above in association with the northern terminus of the Appalachian Trail. Fewer perhaps with Governor Baxter's magnificent gift and his legacy of conservation. For the first time ever Baxter State Park has the opportunity to include a large parcel that was one of Governor Baxter's greatest desires to be part of the park, the Katahdin Lake property. To find out more or to donate or aid in this acquisition visit the park website baxterstateparkauthority.com (what's new) or at 64 Balsam Drive, Millinocket, ME 04462, telephone: 207-723-5140

Contributions to the Brushwhacker

See your writing in print or view your photography. Articles and pictures of or about the Mid State Trail are welcome. Do you have some historical knowledge you would like to share. Please submit to the address listed on page two.

Historic Mid State Trail Sign



Tom Thwaites recently found this sign when cleaning out some attic space. Why does it say "NE SW"? The sign was made ca. 1969 when it was uncertain as to where the Mid State Trail would be routed. Was it to go in an East-West direction or from South to North? (Or possibly from Scranton to Pittsburgh?) We now know the answer.

Moth Balls

While working on the Mid State Trail during KTA Crew near the haunted mine we encountered a DCNR ranger. Somewhat to his disappointment we were not the ATV riders he had hoped to catch. During a congenial conversation he was asked if there was anything that the MSTA could do to help. It turns out that people sometimes spread moth balls and flakes under their cars to deter porcupines from chewing on various car parts. Apparently it does work to some extent, but the problem is that sometimes people forget to remove the moth balls when they leave, leading to poisoning of the environment. So, if you do this please place the moth balls in small sacks or mesh bags that you can pick up when you leave. Two types of moth balls are available, old fashioned and long lasting naphthalene and the more recent para-dichlorobenzine (trade names, Paramoth, Para Crystals, Paracide). P-DCB will break down to harmless products in about a month. It is very volatile and evaporates readily from water and soil. As such it poses much less chance of environmental harm than other products.

Hikes on the Mid State Trail

The MSTA will be sponsoring hikes on the MST as a means of introducing people to this marvelous trail. Each year we will concentrate on a particular region. In 2007 the Woorich Region, from Ravensburg State Park to Blackwell will be the featured region. Come along and see fabulous views of the Pine Creek Valley, knee buster descents through ravines in the Alleghenies, unusual wildflowers, swim at Little Pine, perhaps see a Bald Eagle, visit Bark Cabin Natural Area, and of course have a great time. Details in coming newsletters. If you would like to lead a hike please contact Joe Healey, Woolrich Regional Manager.

Make the Mid State Trail Yours

Opportunities continue for new overseers for sections of the 430 or so kilometers of the Mid State Trail. It's a wonderful excuse to get out and hike the trail at least three times per year. We will help you if you run into situations you can't handle yourself.

Comments, questions, suggestions, and volunteers to help with all aspects of trail care are always welcome. Please contact the Mid State Trail Association or msttioga@epix.net

Mid State Trail Association
PO Box 167
Boalsburg, PA 16827



Haunted Mine Vista

The vista is on newly built trail during the KTA trail crew in Tioga Region, June 2006. This is where the bucket line extended across the valley and where reputedly some miners froze to death when the bucket line was turned off for the night before they reached the other side. From left to right, Jeff Clarke, Tom Thwaites, and John Stein.

Do Trail Crew Workers Eat?

You bet they do, and well too! Thanks to the efforts of cook Deb Dunkle who traveled all the way from Everett Region and assisted greatly by Judy Muth. Thank you ever so much. The cook tent at Twin Streams Campground where the trail crew camped for the week while working on MST in the Tioga Region.

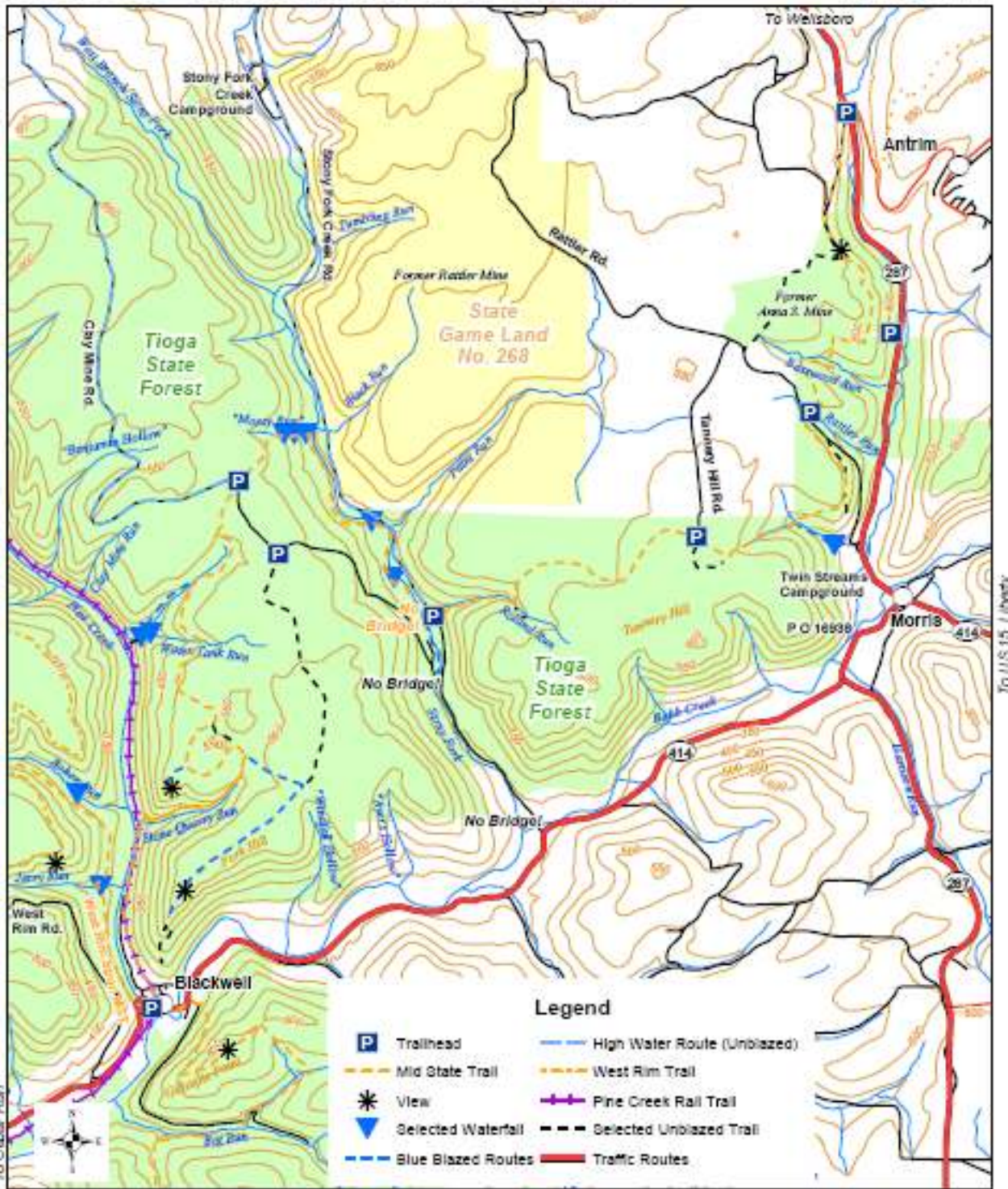


New Style Trail Sign

Tom Thwaites in front of the new style Mid State Trail Sign. Note the addition on the bottom that identifies the MST as a foot path only. Much of the trail is unsuitable for mountain bikes or horses but now is definitively identified as such.

Mid State Trail: Blackwell to PA 287

A part of the Great Eastern Trail
Temporary Map, July 2006



Mid State Trail South to Maryland
 Production of this map supported by a grant from ESRI
 Copyright 2005, Mid State Trail Association, Inc.
 0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2 Kilometers
 1:48,000
 Contour Interval 60 m
 To US 220, Jersey Shore

Map showing the proposed route of the Mid State Trail at the present northern end near Blackwell and Morris. Next June the Keystone Trails Association Trail Crew will build new trail in this area. The Crew will be staying at the Twin Streams Campground in Morris, on the map, right side near the middle. Twin Streams is a modern campground with hot showers, a small store and other amenities. Morris has several stores and a couple of restaurants. Mark your calendar now and join the Crew. Map courtesy of Pete Fleszar and ESRI