

ROUTE 73 TRAILHEAD STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM MID-SEASON REPORT

Welcome to the third year of the Route 73 Trailhead Stewardship Program! The Route 73 Trailhead Stewardship Program's mission is to foster an outdoor ethic in every trailhead visitor, and provide the skills and knowledge needed to protect New York State's wild lands and waters for the benefit of all. ADK has hired five trailhead stewards who are stationed at trailheads from Thursday to Monday. Their season began on Friday of Memorial Day weekend in May and will end in October. Locations include trailheads for Giant (Roaring Brook Falls and the Ridge Trail), the Garden, Rooster Comb, and Cascade Mountain (on Thursday and Mondays when the 46er Trailhead Stewards are not there). Stewards will also visit busy rock-climbing destinations like the Beer Walls and Chapel Pond. Trailhead stewards will educate hikers, backpackers, and rock climbers.

This program is contracted by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Funding is provided through the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) as administered by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).

PERSONNEL



The crew on our climbing area training day! From left, Brigitte Bell, E Bentley, Audrey Willette, Elijah Doyle, Liam Ebner (Stewardship Manager), Ellen Conlon, Will Roth (Adirondack Climbers Coalition). The trailhead stewards are all brand new this year, but they are absolutely crushing it out there!

TRAINING

The trailhead stewards arrived on Friday, May 22nd, and were greeted with an orientation and introductions, a distribution of equipment, and a property tour of the Heart Lake Program Center. That weekend, stewards began with two days of Wilderness First Aid.

Monday, May 25th we did a training hike up Big Slide Mountain. Stewards went up the Brothers, and down the Slide Mountain Brook trail, a popular loop from the Garden.



Trailhead Stewards and Education Staff on the Leave No Trace Level 2 Course!

Tuesday, May 26th, we did a combination of radio protocol and interpretive communication training at ADK's Education Yurts. DEC Wilderness Land Manager Tate Connor gave a presentation on the High Peaks Unit Management Plan and all of the new changes to come. Forest Ranger Allison Rooney went over radio protocol and personal safety training. I went over interpretive communication. We finished with a drive down the Rt. 73 corridor.

Friday, May 29th through Tuesday June 2nd, the stewards went through a five day Leave No Trace Level 2 Instructor course (previously known as the Master Educator course), along with some additional ADK staff members. Daria Stacy and I taught the course in the Johns Brook Valley to familiarize staff with the area. The immersive course prepared the stewards with the knowledge and skills to educate the public on Leave No Trace.

Wednesday, June 3rd, everyone participated in ADK's All-Staff Training.

Saturday June 6th and Sunday June 7th were spent team stewarding at the Garden, Roaring Brook, and Ridge Trailheads. Team stewarding is an important part of the training process because it allows new stewards to learn techniques and receive constructive feedback on their own educational approach.

Monday, June 8th, we did a group hike of Rooster Comb and Snow Mountains to see some of the smaller peaks hikers are interested in, and to get experience seeing some of the non-High Peak alternatives for recreators. Afterwards, we headed down Rt. 73 to check out Shoebox Falls and the access at that site.

Tuesday, June 9th, trailhead stewards did a tour of rock climbing areas along the Rt. 73 corridor with [Adirondack Climbing Coalition \(ACC\)](#) President Will Roth. They were able to learn about rock climbing impacts, terminology, and how to educate rock climbers in Leave No Trace. Thank you to [Great Range Mountain Guides](#) for making this day possible.

Wednesday, June 10th, the trailhead stewards and summit stewards started the day off at John Brown Farm and heard from [John Brown Lives!](#) about John Brown, the farm's site history, and the abolition movement in the Adirondacks. After, the [Adirondack Diversity Initiative](#) provided a training and discussion on the seven cultural dimensions, cultural sensitivities, and creating a welcoming atmosphere. In the afternoon, staff traveled to Onchiota to the [Six Nations Iroquois Cultural Center](#) and met with Dave Kanietakeron Fadden for a presentation on Haudenosaunee culture and history. We've done something a little different every year for this training day, but this year was a huge success. We do lots of training on recreation and outdoor skills with these stewardship programs but want to make sure our staff have training and knowledge about the cultural history of the area.

TRAINING (CONTINUED)

Saturday, June 13th, we did another day of team stewarding at the Garden and Ridge trailheads so all trailhead stewards got experience at these locations.

Sunday, June 14th, the stewards were out on their own! Stewards were stationed at the Garden (both AM and PM shifts), Roaring Brook, the Ridge, and Rooster Comb trailheads. I visited each steward for a couple hours and did some more team stewarding with each of them.

Monday, June 15th, we did a morning of team stewarding at the Cascade Mountain trailhead, and then in the afternoon, the stewards made their way up Cascade so they are able to provide accurate and relevant trail information to the many people that hike that trail.

Thank you to everyone that participated in the training: Daria Stacy, Kayla White, Katie Leton, Zach Lawrence, Nate Fischer, Will Roth (ACC), David Kanietakeron Fadden, Martha Swann (JBL!), Anna Forsman (JBL!), Tamara Jolly (ADI), Lucienne Nicholson (ADI), Tate Connor (DEC), and Allison Rooney (DEC).

SCHEDULE

Roostercomb: 6 AM - 2 PM, Thursday-Monday

Cascade: 6 AM - 2 PM, Thursdays and Mondays when the 46ers aren't there

Ridge Trail-Chapel Pond: 6 AM - 2 PM, Thursdays-Monday, based at Ridge with visits to Chapel Pond

Roaring Brook-Beer Walls: 6 AM - 2 PM, Thursdays-Monday, based at the trailhead with visits to Roaring Brook Falls and the Beer Walls

Garden AM: 5 AM-1 PM, Thursday-Monday

Garden PM: 12 PM-8 PM, Friday-Sunday

EQUIPMENT

Thanks to [L.L.Bean](#), we received a donation of rain jackets, puffy jackets, zip-off pants, and warm gloves. They also donated gear to the summit stewards, trip leaders, volunteer crew leaders, and professional trail crew. They have been an amazing sponsor for ADK for many years. Thank you to the DEC for providing new uniform shirts.

USAGE

Through the end of June, trailhead stewards educated 3,440 recreators at our locations along Route 73. Compared to the numbers in 2025, we educated nearly 800 more people this year than last year through the month of June.

CONCLUSION

We are excited to be in our third year stewarding along the Route 73 corridor. Thank you for all of your support. Please feel free to reach out via phone or email with any questions or comments on how we can continue to improve the program and better protect the Forest Preserve. Thank you.

Most sincerely,

Liam Ebner
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