

Mount Agamenticus Adopt-A-Trail Program

Introduction

What is the Adopt-a-Trail Program?

This program is an all-volunteer effort that provides community members and trail users with an opportunity to become involved in conserving and maintaining the many miles of multiple use trails threaded throughout the Mount Agamenticus Conservation Region. Volunteers can help by "adopting" a favorite trail in the Mount Agamenticus Conservation Region and take responsibility for its upkeep. Adopters assist the Conservation Crew by monitoring, maintaining and enhancing trails and trailhead facilities. Volunteers work at their own pace and on their own schedule.

Don't like to get your hands dirty? You can also donate materials, equipment, or funds to carry out project plans on your favorite trail or site.

Who Can Adopt a Trail?

Any interested organization, individuals or neighborhood groups can care for their "own" section of trail. All it takes is the willingness and ability to get out and work! Volunteers may adopt a favorite trail if available, or the Conservation Coordinator can suggest a trail section needing to be adopted. Adopters or group leaders must be aged 18 and over. Group leaders and parents/guardians must use discretion if allowing participants under 17 to use trail tools.

What Are The Duties of an Adopt-a-Trail Volunteer?

The expectation is for adopters to assist the Conservation Crew in maintaining the trail network. Activities include keeping the trail surface and corridor clear of small limbs, cleaning waterbars, dips, and drainage ditches, and clearing debris from bridges, stairs, and viewing decks. Other responsibilities include litter clean-up, maintaining the trailhead area including parking lots, bulletin boards and trail signs, and reporting vandalism, trail hazards or safety issues. Adopters also serve as an extra set of eyes for the Conservation Crew to watch for large downed trees/branches, and reporting maintenance issues that will require further attention. Depending on interest and abilities, volunteers may want to join the Conservation Crew in more involved projects such as building bridges, repairing trail structures, or helping with environmental restoration work.

A group may sign up for any or all of these duties. Several groups may adopt-a-trail by sharing duties. Ideally, a trail will be maintained a minimum of 2 times annually (once in the spring and again in the fall), and will be monitored at least 2 more times annually (once in winter and again during the peak summer months) or more if able, such as after strong storms.

Training

The Conservation Coordinator and/or Conservation Crew will train volunteers in safe techniques for accomplishing Adopt-A-Trail duties and will work with groups to get them started. The Conservation Crew will provide orientation and training, including general guidelines for volunteers, specifications for the trail adopted, care of tools, and safety training. The Conservation Coordinator and Crew will work with volunteers until both parties are comfortable with the work, and will continue to coordinate projects after the adopters are working on their own.

Tools

Adopters provide their own tools when possible. The Conservation Program has a supply of tools for loan, trash bags, and gloves to be used for the Adopt-a-Trail program. Individual or group leaders must sign tools out (scheduled in advance) and go thru a tool care and safety training session.

Why should you participate?

Adopt-a-trail because it is fun! Enjoy your favorite outdoor setting with friends and family while you accomplish a worthwhile job. Adopting a trail provides an opportunity for you to be actively involved in conservation. Helping to maintain and enhance existing trails will not only improve visitor experiences but will also protect nearby wildlife habitats and sensitive streams and vernal pools from sedimentation caused by erosion. Enjoy the time outdoors and personal satisfaction gained through volunteering on the trail. Get involved, be a trail adopter. You really *can* make a difference.

How Can I/We Get Involved?

If you would like to learn more, or check on trail availability, please contact the Conservation Coordinator at: rstanley@tnc.org, 207-361-1102, or 186 York Street, York, ME 03909. Once you've chosen a trail the Conservation Coordinator will let you know when the next scheduled orientation is, or set a date that is convenient for you to meet and discuss the requirements and benefits of trail adoption.

many hands make light work