



Super Steward: Trail Maintainer Program

Volunteer Opportunities

For more information: Josh.Otero@naturalareasnyc.org

Advanced Trail Skill Levels

Trail Maintainers must meet established trail maintenance goals and volunteer a minimum of 12 hours per tier level or have previous trail maintenance, forest restoration, or other related experience. The amount of hours will stack, ie. Level 2 - 12 hours, Level 3 - 24 hours and so on; hours will correlate with tier specific metric based goals (listed below). Hours reported will be documented through Survey123 and reviewed when possible via on the ground inspection to ensure both quality and integrity of reporting. Below are annual metric goals for each tier, which may vary depending on the specific trail segment and will be discussed individually:

Corridor Keepers maintain trail corridors, ensure informal trails remain closed, keep trails free of debris, report on trail conditions, and manage non-native species along trail edges. Corridor Keepers must complete the following to advance to Structure Maintainer:

- 1 mile of non-native species removed along trail edges and/or
- .5 miles of corridor pruned and/or
- .5 miles of desire line reclosed/closed
- 6 bags of debris removed from trail/natural area and/or
- Report trail conditions at least 4 times a year

Structure Maintainers maintain water bars, check steps, puncheons, turnpikes, drainage dips and other structures present on trail. They also actively close informal trails as part of restoration efforts. Structure Maintainers must complete the following to advance to Structure Builder I:

- Maintain 5 structures (less can be maintained dependent on amount of structures present on adopted trail)
- Close at least 2 desire lines within a trail network (including desire lines closed during training)
- Prep materials for at least 1 locally sourced structure

Structure Builders I volunteers will install check steps, water bars, and rustic check steps on the trail. Advance to Structure Builder I after reporting at least 24 total hours of trail improvement activities. Structure Builder I must complete the following to advance to Structure Builder II:

- Report at least 36 total hours of trail improvement activities
- Install 2 trail structures (including a structure installed during training)
- Build 2 puncheons (including a structure built during training)
- Build 2 rock structures (including a structure built during training)

Structure Builders II install puncheons and rock steps along the trail.



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Leadership Opportunities

These opportunities are available to Trail Maintainers who are interested in project and event coordination, opportunities to train other volunteers and other organizational initiatives within their park. Some opportunities require technical skills associated with different Trail Maintainer tier levels, which can be acquired through the program's advanced trails skills training. All leadership opportunities require training or related experience.

The leadership opportunities outlined below will be facilitated by the Natural Areas Conservancy and NYC Parks and guided by volunteers.

Train other Trail Maintainers

Enter the role of Trail Maintainer Trainer for your park. The Citywide Trails Team will train Trail Maintainer Trainers on how to teach new skills to prospective Trail Maintainers and how to provide ongoing support to advanced volunteers. Trail Maintainer Trainers must have accomplished a minimum of 12 hours of work at the skill level that they are teaching.

Lead a trail work event

Lead on the ground trail work events in your park alongside other Trail Maintainers and volunteers. Trail Maintainers must be within the skill level of the work event being led and have co-led at least one trail event with the Trails Community Engagement Manager.

Organize a Trail Event

Organize trail work events and/or educational events for the Trail Maintainer network, other volunteers and the general public. Trail Maintainer Event Organizers receive training from the Citywide Trails Team and are connected with the appropriate NYC Parks staff.

Become an ambassador

Spread the word about natural area trails in your community, and encourage others to become Trail Maintainers. Ambassadors represent and promote the Super Steward: Trail Maintainer Program and engage in advocacy efforts, such as contacting elected officials to give testimony in support of natural areas. We also ask ambassadors to photograph trail events and trails throughout the seasons to capture the experiences NYC nature trails have to offer.

Become a borough representative

Organize and be a voice for Trail Maintainers at the boroughwide level. Trail Maintainer Borough Representatives will work with the Citywide Trails Team on boroughwide events and keep Trail Maintainers up to date on news, events and activities. Eligibility to become a Trail Maintainer Borough Representative requires a minimum of 6 months participation in the Trail Maintainer program.