

Volunteer Summit Stewardship Program

Overview:

The goal of the Volunteer Summit Stewardship Program is to protect New York's fragile alpine ecosystem through environmental education, trail maintenance, and research. A Volunteer Summit Steward's foremost goal is to encourage hikers to walk on the solid bedrock above treeline, thereby protecting the threatened and endangered flora of the alpine zone.

The Adirondack High Peaks Summit Stewardship Program is a cooperative effort of the Adirondack Chapter of The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), and the Adirondack Mountain Club (ADK).

Program Location:

The Volunteer Summit Stewardship Program focuses on the High Peaks region, specifically Mt. Marcy, Algonquin Peak, Wright Peak, Mt. Colden, and Cascade Mountain.

Responsibilities:

- Through "low-key," person to person educational contacts on the summits protect the endangered alpine flora by encouraging hikers to walk on the solid bedrock.
- Provide hikers with interpretive education to promote a greater understanding and appreciation of the alpine communities. Have information available about the natural history, ecology, and botany of the summits.
- Complete alpine trail definition projects which include: (re)building rock cairns, scree walls, and rock packing.
- Encourage hikers to follow DEC regulations, and inform Rangers of trail misuse and emergencies.
- Gather and report use figures from the summits to be incorporated into the High Peaks Unit Management Plan.
- The Volunteer Summit Stewardship Program **shall not** be responsible for initiating or conducting backcountry search and rescue operations.

Qualifications:

- Excellent interpersonal skills and ability to work effectively with a diversity of people.
- Commitment to stewardship and environmental education.
- Knowledge/awareness of alpine zone environmental issues

- Ability to hike moderate-long distances
- Comfortable hiking and standing in inclement weather
- Willingness to wear required uniform
- Able to complete paperwork at end of each service weekend

Typical Schedule: (Marcy, Algonquin, Wright, Colden)

- Arrive at Adirondack Loj at 7:15 am
- Get radio, map case and first aid kit at pick up location
- Hike to the summit, aiming to arrive by 9 or 9:30am, trying for earlier on Saturdays
- Spend a day on the summit, talking to visitors and spreading the message of alpine stewardship; tally number of visitors with whom you converse using clicker
- Depart summit at approximately 4-4:30pm
- Return radio, map case, first aid kit and completed report form

Typical Schedule: (Cascade)

- Same schedule as above, except that radio, map case, and first aid kit can be picked up at Cascade Ski Center.