ADOPT-A-TRAIL MANUAL

TRAIL WATCHERS

enjoy the experience

morris county park commission

1st Edition 2021
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this manual is to provide guidelines for the Morris County Park Commission (MCPC) Adopt A Trail (AAT) Volunteer Program specifically TRAIL WATCHERS. The manual will serve as a training guide and reference material for the Trail Watchers option of the Adopt A Trail Volunteer Program. The MCPC hopes you find this program both enjoyable and rewarding. Volunteers are the backbone to our trail community and are necessary to keep the trails safe and enjoyable for all trail users.

TRAIL WATCHERS

ROLE

Trail Watchers are trail users that report on specific trail conditions or trail issues, on any trail at any time of the year.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Report on the following conditions and/or issues:

- Tree blocking trail
- Trail asset condition (signs/kiosks, benches)
- Trail structure condition (bridges, steps, culverts etc.)
- Trail corridor issues
- Trail tread issues
- Vandalism and litter issues

Familiar with – Basic safety, trail courtesy, basic trail issues and internet reporting survey.

Term – one year and renewable upon Trail Superintendent’s recommendation.

Reporting – onsite using smartphone. Smartphone must have GPS and camera.
The Morris County Park Commission is concerned with the safety and well-being of our Adopt A Trail (AAT) Volunteers. Safety is our number one priority.

Know emergency procedures such as your work location, the location of the nearest emergency facility, the closest phone, and how to quickly summon the police, ambulance or staff member.

**EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

Calling for help is often the MOST IMPORTANT action you can take to help yourself and/or a person in need of aid.

- DIAL 911 FOR EMERGENCY
- (973) 326-7654 FOR THE 24-HOUR PARK POLICE EMERGENCY NUMBER. Use this number if lost or to report unauthorized activities or other incidents requiring police assistance.

When you speak to the 911 dispatcher or Park Police, the caller should:

- Indicate the type of problem (fire, heart attack, etc.).
- Identify yourself.
- Identify the specific location within the park using nearest trail intersection.
- Identify the best access or entry point.

**For your Personal Protection**

Know and be alert to toxic plants, such as poison ivy/oak. Care must be taken to avoid rabid animals, ticks, bees, wasps, and snakes. Perfume or fragrance is not advised as it may attract insects. Volunteers are encouraged to perform a tick check after any outing in the park.

**Proper Dress**

Start by dressing properly. Your clothing is your most basic form of protection against injury and annoying pests. Sturdy shoes are necessary for your safety and protection. Sandals or open-toed shoes are not acceptable. Long sleeved shirts and pants tucked into socks will help protect you from abrasions and insect bites. Light colored clothing is best, making insects easier to spot and tends to keep the skin cooler in hot weather. Insect/tick repellent and a hat will help provide additional protection.

When handling tools, wear gloves and eye protection. Eye protection can be safety glasses or regular eye glasses.

**Safety Tips for the Trail**

- Plan your route.
- Take a buddy. If alone, let someone know your plan.
- Pace yourself. If you cannot safely accomplish a specific task contact the Trail Superintendent. If in doubt, don’t do it, report it.
- Never confront persons engaging in illegal activities. Contact Park Police: (973) 326-7654.

Recommended items to take with you out on the trail;

- Water and food
- Cell phone
- Bug spray
- Sun screen
- First aid kit
- Map
- Trash bags
- Flash light
TRAIL COURTESY

More information coming soon.

BASIC TRAIL ISSUES

Corridor Issues
The trail corridor is the space that includes the trail tread and the area above and to the sides of the trail tread (see Trail Illustration and Definitions in this manual). MCPC trails range in type and managed use, therefore corridor dimensions will vary throughout the MCPC trail system.

Common issues that arise on most trail corridors are due to over or under utilization and a lack of maintenance.

Common problems include:

Tree blocking trail.
Litter and/or dumping.

Overgrowth of vegetation
Old or missing blazes.

Poor conditions of assets (signs, kiosks and benches)
Vandalism

**Tread Issues**

The trail tread is the portion of the corridor that the user travels upon. The tread surface material and width will vary depending on the trail type and managed use. MCPC has trails that are asphalt, gravel, dirt and mulch, with tread structures that could be wood, concrete, or metal.

Common issues that arise are due to poor design and lack of maintenance.

Common problems include –
Mud and standing water.

Surface erosion and/or issues.

Exposed pipe in trail tread.

2+ inch Asphalt crack.
A Trail Watcher should report any of these issues to the Trail Superintendent as soon as possible through the Trail Watcher Park Condition Reporter (AAT) survey.
REPORTING

IMPORTANCE OF REPORTING
The MCPC must have current and reliable information for trail users and be able to quickly respond to dangerous trail conditions or blockages. Thus, accurate reporting is essential. MCPC will provide Trail Watchers with a website link to our Park Condition Reporter (AAT) survey. Directions on accessing the website link and how to complete the Park Condition (AAT) Survey will be shown step by step in this manual.

WEBSITE LINK
https://arcg.is/8P00z0

The Park Condition (AAT) survey website link above can be accessed a couple different ways.

1. Type the link into an internet browser (Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge, Safari, etc) on your smartphone.
2. Copy and Paste the link into an internet browser on your smartphone.
3. Use your smartphone camera on the QR code provided below. Once your smartphone camera recognizes the QR code a banner will appear at the top of your screen (see photo example), touch the banner and the website will appear in your internet browser.

For ease of use, it is highly recommended that you “Bookmark” the Park Condition (AAT) survey website on your smartphone for ease of access. Direction to “Bookmark” the survey website can be found on page...
PARK CONDITION REPORTER (AAT) SURVEY
The Park Condition Reporter (AAT) survey is an efficient and effective tool for reporting on trail conditions and issues that a Trail Watcher may find while recreating on any of Morris County Park Commission trails. This manual will take you through the survey screen by screen.

1 - Location, where is this condition? Touch map.

2 - Enable GPS on your smartphone. Touch Allow
3 - Use two fingers to zoom into the blue marker. Make sure Lat/Lon appears at the bottom of the screen. Touch the back arrow < at the top of the screen to continue with the survey.

4 - In what Park/Facility was this condition found?

- Touch the band below the question, a list of MCPC parks/Facilities will appear, scroll up to the correct Park/Facility and touch Done.
5 - Provide details about your Location. Touch empty box and type a short description of your location.

6 - When you are finished typing touch Done.
7 - What type of condition are you reporting? Touch the appropriate box.

8 – Describe the condition you are reporting. Touch box, type in a short description of what you are reporting on. Touch Done when finished.
9 – Attach at least one photo:

- Touch the box with the 1 Select the (number of the allowed 1-3). A drop down menu will appear, choose one option. I took my picture before starting the survey so I touched “Photo Library” to add my photo.

- In the “Photo Library” touch the photo you wish to use then touch **Add**.

- Once your photo appears in the survey, you can choose to add additional photos of the condition using the same steps. 3 photos are the maximum number of photos you can submit.
10 – Date Required – Touch calendar icon in box a calendar will appear with the current date. If this is the correct date touch OK. If you wish to change the date touch the number you wish to submit and then touch OK.

11 – First Name Initial, Last Name- Touch box and type your first name initial and full last name.

12 – Touch Submit. Your data was sent successfully. If you wish to another survey press here at the bottom of the screen.
TRAIL ILLUSTRATION AND DEFINITIONS

Clearing Height: The minimum clearing height determined to be appropriate to accommodate the Managed Uses of a trail.

Clearing Width: The minimum clearing width determined to be appropriate to accommodate the Managed Uses of a trail.

Tread Width: The tread width determined to be appropriate to accommodate the Managed Uses of a trail.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trail Type</th>
<th>Managed Use*</th>
<th>Minimum Clearing Height</th>
<th>Minimum Clearing Width</th>
<th>Minimum Tread Width</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hiking Only</td>
<td>Pedestrian</td>
<td>6 feet</td>
<td>3 feet</td>
<td>1 foot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Track</td>
<td>Pedestrian &amp; Non-Motorized Bikes</td>
<td>6 feet</td>
<td>3 feet</td>
<td>1 foot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Use</td>
<td>Pedestrian, Non-Motorized Bikes &amp; Equestrian</td>
<td>10 feet</td>
<td>5 feet</td>
<td>2 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Use Path</td>
<td>Pedestrian, Non-Motorized Bikes &amp; Equestrian</td>
<td>10 feet</td>
<td>12 feet</td>
<td>8 feet</td>
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*Managed Use indicated in the above chart does not include winter recreation. Please check the MCPC website for authorized winter recreation in specific parks.

MCPC trails vary in trail type and managed use throughout the entire trail system. The Trail Superintendent will advise you on the specific trail type and managed use for your adopted trail section.

Your trail section will vary in tread width, clearing height and clearing width, be sure that your entire trail section meets the minimum standards in the chart above.
INJURY AND INSURANCE PROTOCOL

While the Morris County Park Commission (MCPC) makes every effort to emphasize and support safety, the nature of the work may result in accidents and/or injuries. Before starting work, each individual should know what steps to take in the case of an injury. All referenced forms can be found at https://www.morrisparks.net/commission/volunteer/

A volunteer’s personal medical insurance is their primary insurance. Limited additional insurance coverage from the MCPC is available if needed. If the volunteer does not maintain medical or dental insurance, he/she will be required to sign a “Lack of Medical/Dental Coverage Affidavit.” The MCPC insurance is secondary insurance and may cover expenses not reimbursed by the volunteer’s personal health insurance provider.

Steps to Follow in the Case of an Injury

1. Assess the situation and risk. Call 911 if necessary.

2. Administer first aid and care within the scope of your ability and training. The person with the highest level of first-aid training should take charge of administering care.

3. If the injury is serious, seek professional medical attention immediately.

4. Notify the injured person’s emergency contact if necessary.

5. If the injured individual refuses care, they must check NO under “I Wish Medical Treatment” on the Accident Report Form and sign if they are deemed to show no evidence of an altered state of consciousness that impairs judgment.

6. Volunteers: Limited insurance coverage is available if needed (see above).

7. Report the injury to the MCPC Trail Superintendent and file an Accident Report within 24 hours or the next available business day, even if medical treatment is not sought. The Accident Report has a section to be filled out by the Department Head or Supervisor in charge.