

# The Linkster

*The Official Newsletter for the Standing Stone Trail  
Summer 2009*

## **New Leadership**

Club events took a startling turn over the course of the winter of 2008/2009 when President Carl Lorence decided to step down from the position he has held for the last four years. Stating various reasons on why he could not fulfill his term Carl then declared himself "Acting President" until a replacement could be properly bamboozled for the job. Mel Cooper fell victim to Carl's strong-armed tactics and agreed to become the President of the Club.

President Cooper is now the 3<sup>rd</sup> President of the Standing Stone Trail Hiking Club. Mel has been working on the trail since 1999 when he volunteered to become a section maintainer. Around 2003 Mel became the Trail Master after Mike Sausser stepped down from that position. While Mel's credentials are strong, he has amazingly big boots to fill!

President Lorence inspired us to think big, he set forth the challenge and goal of creating the best trail in the state. Carl showed us it is possible to go after and receive state funding. He proved we could even get government officials to get personally involved with our beloved trail. With Carl's guidance we are in the process of creating a Master Plan for not just the near future but the long term vision as well. Thanks President Lorence for a fine and well done job.

President Cooper will now need our help. The Club is still without a Vice President. Mel is still the Trail Master, which is not that easy of a job in the first place. So Mel will need your help not just out in the woods but for the office and footwork as well.

## **All Hail the Chief**

*From the President  
June 2009*

2009/2010 will see the beginning of the rebuilding of the Standing Stone Trail. Presently we are awaiting the written approval from DCNR for the reroute on our southern most section. We have received verbal indications from Buchanan State Forest staff that approval is coming. Also, our District Land Manager for the PA State Game Commission, Mr. Brad Myers, is presently working with Tom Scully, our Trail Design Specialist, on the few remaining sections of State Game land 112. When they complete this, Mr. Myers plans to submit this section to the Game Commission with his support for approval. Brad has told me he is supportive of building a premium hiking trail in PA. He states he wants to be able to take people out to see the trail and be able to say "this is how it should be done". We very much appreciate Brad's passion for good trail building, and we thank him for his efforts in helping us, despite his difficult work load.

As president, it is time for me to ask you to begin thinking about building new trail and about the ways that you personally can contribute. Many of you may not think you have the strength, the ability or the skills to build trail, but I assure you, if you have the desire, with your help, we will find a way for you to contribute and be a part of this exciting effort.

(Continued on Page Three, see President.)

## Word From the Woods

Summer hiking opportunities abound for the adventurous. You can take some strides in another state this summer by hooking up with the Lebanon Valley Hiking Club. This club is going hiking on Isle Royal located on Lake Superior. Isle Royal is noted for its wolf packs and herds of moose. This will be a six day backpack for the experienced hiker. The trip is planned for June 29-July 4<sup>th</sup>. Contact Shirley at 717-865-6061 for more information.

The club is also heading to Vermont in July. Escape the summer heat the week of July 17-24 and attend the Appalachian Trail Conference held this year at Castleton State College, Castleton Vt. There will be hiking on the AT and perhaps some events will be held on the Long Trail as well some other less know trails in the Green Mountain state. You may contact Sharon at 717-274-5509 for more information.

How about a chance to head out west to Philmont? The opportunity to hike this famous Scout Camp is presented by Rick Neff and Scout Troop #31 from State College. While the trip is open to any that want to share their hiking skills with the scouts, Rick is seeking outdoor minded females in particular. Now please keep your mind free from perverted thoughts. Turns out Troop 31 is a coed group and they are having trouble finding women that are willing to share their knowledge and skill at camping/hiking. The troop has three young ladies that want to make the trip to New Mexico, these youngsters will not be able to make the trip unless an adult female goes along. There are also openings for a dozen more youngsters to make the trip. Of course, if more youth go along, more adults are needed as advisors. The troop has a training weekend set for June 26-28. For more info contact Rick Neff at [rickneff@psu.edu](mailto:rickneff@psu.edu) or call 814-876-0701.

## Volunteer Opportunities

Attention all club members: The club's Old-Timers maintenance gang is seeking new participants. The Old Timers Crew is set up to help the 24 volunteer maintainers clear their sections and to handle emergency clearing of a section. Regardless of the name you don't need to be old or experienced to take part. Youngsters and the middle aged are more than welcome, even encouraged, to participate. During hunting season, outings are held on Sundays, in the summer, the events are held on various days. If you want to pitch in, keep your eye on the club website for dates and meeting places.

If you're new to the idea of trail work, you might find it to be easier than you think and a lot more fun and rewarding than you would expect. That's the whole point of working with a crew instead of just one or two individuals. It spreads the workload around and keeps the jokes flying. Best of all it presents another reason to get out in to the woods and away from those weekend household chores. "But honey, it is a trailcare weekend, they need me!" Make a part of the Standing Stone Trail your personal trail! Individual Maintainers are also needed. If you're interested, contact Mel Cooper for more information.

## Info Update

If you're a club member and your mailing address or e-mail address and/or phone number has changed, the club needs to know. Carl Lorence has been trying desperately to reach a number of you. Help Carl out and contact us with your updated information.

(President, continued from page 1)

To all of you who are already involved and who are committed to building and maintaining the Standing Stone Trail; first let me say thank you and then ask you to set aside some time this coming April to provide the skill, supervision and support that the new people who come to us will need. Let us begin now to think about how and with whom we will build the Standing Stone Trail, and, when it is done may we be able to say that it was a job well done and a trail to be enjoyed by many for a long time to come.

Lest we forget that our reroute approval came by a simple proposal to DCNR or the PA Game Commission. Let me remind you that it took great effort by people like Carl Lorence, Tom Scully, Peter Fleszar and Joe Clark with some assistance from folks like Betty Clark, Jack Bushey and myself. We needed help and Carl found Tom Scully, new reroutes had to be found by Tom and flagged and then GPS'd by Joe and transferred to existing maps by Pete Fleszar and Joe. The executive committee had to look at the new sections and weigh in on approval so we had permission to contact official authorities who have and are inspecting each section to assure that we have not imposed on any local, state or federal laws.

Some progress on projects I recently received from Carl Lorence who is now

serving as our Project Manager will help you envision some of the things that are entailed in building this trail.

- Carl is working with several people like Carl Witzman and Scott Alexander to get approval to cross the Sloan Property. If gained, it would allow us to cross 522 at a new point and enter the Truitt Property which would get us to SGL 81. It would eliminate at least 4 ½ miles of road walk.
- He is attempting to solicit the help of a prominent trust to help if land owners wish to sell a right of way.
- With the Three Springs Boro Council he is attempting to get a more direct route to Game lands.
- With Mapleton Depot he is providing encouragement and assistance in their and our effort to build a campsite along the Juniata for hikers and Juniata River travelers.

Carl continues to push for approvals; Scully continues to flag and reflag the route and Joe continues to GPS and we all work together to build trail and the Executive Committee keeps watch and provides advice and approval. We all work together to build and maintain trail. Come and join us. Let me know how you would like to help. No offer is too small. The task is great as is the effort to complete it.

## MASTER PLAN UPDATE

The long-term enhancement optimization of the Standing Stone Trail route continues. Following is the status of some of the planning efforts:

### *Game Lands #112*

Brad Myers, Land Manager for the Game Lands along the Standing Stone Trail received our 106-page Master Plan document for Game Lands #112 in June 2008. The document format was based upon a pre-application meeting with Brad by Carl Lorence and Tom Scully in early spring 2008. The relos were then flagged in detail for Mr. Myers by Tom Scully and Mel Cooper, and Brad has reviewed all but one of the nine relo segments proposed within Game Lands #112. Several relos were then re-flagged by Tom after his review comments. Once the possible routes are finalized to Brad's satisfaction, they will be submitted formally by him to the regional Game Commission office and the central office in Harrisburg. The final outcome of the review process is uncertain, given that there are more review levels to clear. The standard that seems to be applied to review of our proposals is that the trails be suitable for hunters and trappers to easily access an area. This eliminates anything other than easy to moderate grades, and includes no significant sidehill construction or scrambling through rocks.

The suggested relocation just north of Route 655 has been denied, and Mr. Myers would like the slope and erosion of existing trail descent to the highway lessened. The relocation through the large rock outcrops just south of the service road to the Game Lands parking area has been denied. Several of the relocation segments that are

still viable at this point have been significantly changed due to his review comments; however, the revised routes are still a marked improvement of the hiking experience over the current trail. With the revisions required by the Game Commission, any relocations that are approved should be easier to physically implement, requiring mostly just clearing and blazing, versus tougher trail construction. .

### *Buchanan State Forest*

A formal 96-page Master Plan document including all lands in Buchanan State Forest was submitted to Buchanan State Forest. Review by the Forester, Steve Keiper, has proceeded rapidly in comparison to the Game Lands mentioned above. Tom Scully flagged the entire relocation for Forestry review. Joe Clark established a GPS file for the flag route. It appears from recent e-mails that approval of the relocation here is imminent. A potential conflict from the PNDI was resolved with DCNR: no anticipated impact on species of concern. This relocation would create an entirely new SST within this State Forest (except for a few hundred feet of the Todd Trail switchbacks constructed in 2007), and will include a new terminus with the Tuscarora Trail at the lake in Cowans Gap State Park, and several dramatic vistas. The Todd Trail switchbacks and the existing SST to the Tuscarora Trail will become an official side trail, thus creating a dayhiking loop.

(Continued on page 5, see Plan)

## *Rothrock State Forest*

A formal Master Plan document for all lands in Rothrock State Forest was submitted to Rothrock State Forest. No comments have yet been received, but are expected soon. Note that a mile-long relocation was constructed by the SSTC within the last year, and is open for hiking, but not yet finished; some sidehill digging and rock work remain to be done. This was the first major actual physical implementation of the Standing Stone Trail Master Plan.

Tom Scully

## Hike Leader Wanted

To help promote both the club and the trail, the club would like to hold a series of hikes that would travel the length of the trail from start to finish. Except we have no hike leader! If you are interested in section hiking the trail then please contact us. You can make your own schedule; pick your own meeting spots. You can make the hikes once a month or once a week or do the whole trail in one week. The hikes would be open to club members and the general public. Of course we will help you advertise the events.

## **The Club**

**President:** Mel Cooper, RR1 Box 433C, Huntingdon Pa. 16652 Ph. (814) 643-2641

**Vice President:** Vacant

**Secretary:** Mike Sausser

**Treasury:** Rich Scanlon

**Trail Master:** Mel Cooper, RR1 Box 433C, Huntingdon Pa. 16652 Ph. (814) 643-2641

**Tool Master:** Joe Clark, 410 South Washington St., Mount Union Pa., 17066. Ph. (814) 542- 4467

**Newsletter Editor:** Mike Sausser, 1608 Long Run Rd., Schuylkill Haven Pa. 17972. Ph. (570) 739-4803

**Club Website:** <http://www.hike-sst.org>

**Club Address:** Standing Stone Trail Club, Inc., c/o Rich Scanlon, 27 Sandy Lane-Suite 206, Lewistown Pa. 17044

## It is dues time!!

The club is now collecting membership dues for the year 2009. If you have not renewed your membership for the year please take the time to do so now, while you are still thinking about the trail.