

**Annual Report Pigeon Lake Wilderness Area including West Mountain Trail  
10/27/08**

Mary Coffin, ADK-Onondaga Chapter

**Chapter (ADK-Onondaga) Contacts:**

1. Mary Coffin -designated ADK-ON Contact person < mcoffin1@twcny.rr.com> or 328 Deepsprings Dr., Chittenango, N.Y. 13037.
2. Tony Rodriguez <syr1boricua@juno.com> is ADK-ON Chapter Trails Chair
3. Kathy Disque <disque@dreamscape.com > Norridgewock Trail Steward
4. Sigi Schwinge <[SigiSchwinge@aol.com](mailto:SigiSchwinge@aol.com)> West Mt. Trail Steward

**Overview:** To give our adopted wilderness area a high profile with the chapter Membership we have included articles in our newsletter and website, encouraged National Trails Day events and constructed a display board for our Open House. To provide opportunities for exploring Pigeon Lake Wilderness Area we planned recreational outings and/or work trips as listed below.

**2008 PLWA Trips and Events Summary**

**5/10/08 Recreational Hike:** Constable Pond Trail, Hermitage Trail, Queer Lake Trail to Chub Lake to Constable Pond back to Higby Rd. Conditions reported below. 10 hikers, Theresa Evans and Hal Boyce leaders.

**5/25/08 West Mt Work Trip:** Three 3 subgroups covered the entire 5 miles from brown Tract Ponds to summit. Work done: extensive sidcutting, deadfall removal and drainage clearing. The trail is in very good shape. There are 3-4 trees down on the final ascent near the top that were too big for our saws. The two bridges (Beaver Brook and especially Sucker Brook) need watching. Soil is eroding away from the ends. One of the ADK procrew bog bridges was upturned by the roots of a fallen tree but is passable in dry weather. 8 workers, 5 hours and 5 hours drive time, Mary and Bill Coffin leaders

**7/12/08 Norridgewok Trail Work Trip:** . Trail well cleared and signage is adequate. Work done: extensive sidcutting, deadfall removal Kathy Disque Leader, ADK-ON: 10 workers from ADK and Twichell Lake homeowners, 5 hours plus 6 hr. drive time from Syracuse.

**9/28/08 West Mt Trail Work Trip #2:-** Condition of trail is generally good to base of mountain on land, some bridges need work. Work performed: sidecutting and overhead cutting to base of mountain, smaller blowdown flicked off the trail, inspection of trail to the top, approx. 12 trees removed with handsaws, 5 volunteers worked 6-1/2 hrs ,drive time 7 hrs. Leader-Sigi Schwinge, ADK-ON West Mountain steward

**10/4/08 Chain Ponds Recreational Hike:** We entered Cascade Lake Trail, hiked up to old camp (no loons on lake) then crossed over to Chain Ponds, back to jct then out via Windfall Pond where a car was spotted. The Windfall Trail still has blowdown. 10 hikers- Mary and Bill Coffin Leaders

**Total Work= 357.5 person hours including drive time. NPS rate of \$18/hr. is a value of \$6435.00**

**Also the ADK Procrew under DEC contract cleared trail from Constable Pond to the summit of West Mt (back side) and used removed deadfall to construct bog bridges in wet areas. 11/11/08**

**Trail Conditions :Future Work for the Chapter, ADK and DEC in PLWA**

There is potential for ADK Procrew and Student Conservation Association contracts as well as ADK and Onondaga Chapter volunteer opportunities. Is another National Trails Day in the area a possibility on a 5 year rotation?

**Hermitage Trail (red)** was in good shape. Someone has cut out the winter blowdown, and only minor branches and one tree were in the trail.

**Queer Lake Trail** beyond the lean-to turn-off has not been maintained this spring. There were only a few blowdowns requiring detours, one of which was at the deep mudhole we encountered the last time we hiked this route. This should be left in place since it blocks the mudhole.

**Constable Pond Trail-** All trails to the junction of the Constable Pond Trail were well cut back and need no work at this time other than removing the blowdown mentioned above. The Constable Pond Trail from the Queer Lake Trail junction to the Hermitage Trail junction needs side-cutting, no major blowdown on this section. Mays Pond Trail, perhaps the sign has fallen down. The sign at the start of the spur trail to the Chub Lake campsite is missing.

**West Mt. Trail from Brown's Tract:** Generally on good condition for most of the 5+ miles and well marked except at very top where trail continues to Constable Pond. The Uncus Rd trailhead sign is missing by the ponds and gate. Four trees need to be removed by chainsaw: one 8 min. from Upper Pond trailhead, the other three after Sucker Brook.

Bridges need attention as follows: 1. between Upper and Lower Brown's Tract Pond is partially off its base at one end and therefore slanted, 2. bog bridges were also very slippery. Hardware cloth would help traction, 3. Sucker Brook bridge is still in place for now but ends are washing out and can use cribbing or reinforcement, 4. Beaver Brook bridge still has one tree across that needs removal (we removed three).

Other work: Extensive sidecutting needed from base of mountain to top, water bars or drainage in spot ex. bog bridge/puncheon area.

**Mays Pond Trail-** Sign down? Volunteers removed many blowdowns in 2006 but more work is required. This makes part of a nice loop trail. I'm unsure how well it is marked.

**Higby Rd. to Constable Pond Trail** Puncheon planking is an improvement.

**Cascade Lake Link Trail** -Trail narrow and rough in spots, needs side-cutting. Several blowdowns easy to get over or around.

**Queer Lake-Windfall Pond (yellow) Trail** between junction of private trail and Queer Lake Landing the old corduroy near private trail junction just after descending from ridge is slippery and rotting. Some puncheon nearer the lake is still ok for now.. Between 2nd bridge and Windfall Pond there are two beaver dams flooding the trail but it was just passable along the edge.

**Constable Pond to Chub Lake-** Puncheon planking could help the large wet, swampy spot, now filled with old logs. Otherwise is now in good shape.

**Constable Pond to West Mt. via Pigeon Lake-** Puncheons are helpful. We unsure of the effect of the seven beaver dams near the outlet of Pigeon Lake.

**Norridgewock Trail-** It is well marked, clear and in excellent shape but will need annual sidecutting and be checked for blowdown removal and beaver activity.