

AMC VOLUNTEER TRAILS PROGRAM SUPPORTS AMC 4,000' FOOTER CLUB MISSION

The AMC 4,000 Footer Club and the Appalachian Mountain Club North Country Trails Volunteer Program worked together in 2014 on a partnership to support recreation in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. With 48, 4,000 foot peaks in the North Country, there are a lot of opportunities for hikers to get outdoors and enjoy invigorating hikes and stunning views—but--to get to all of those peaks, they must pass over countless miles of trail. With so many people using those trails to get to the summits of the 4,000-foot peaks, there is substantial impact on the natural and recreational resources of the North Country.

To help counterbalance those impacts, the AMC 4,000 Footer Club developed a close relationship with the AMC Trails Department several years ago, and in 2014 that connection continued. One of the Trails Programs that the AMC 4,000 Footer Club supported was the North Country Trails Volunteer Program. The Club provided \$17,500 total to the Trails Department and of that, \$9,000 went directly to funding projects by the Volunteer Trail Crews. These projects included installing new bog bridges near Mt. Avalon and Mt. Tom, as well as much needed general maintenance on the Caps Ridge Trail.



4-Week Leadership & Conservation Crew Installing Bog Bridges

Without this support, the Volunteer Trails Program would not have accomplished some important trail work feats. Our 4-Week Leadership & Conservation Teen Trail Crew worked for a week installing dimensional bog bridges on the Mt. Tom Spur trail. The funding from the AMC 4,000 Footer Club not only provided the necessary lumber and airlift fees, it helped to fund a meaningful service learning project for nine teenagers interested in getting involved in the outdoor and conservation fields. Our 4-Week

Leadership crew provides a diverse set of experiences for these teens, from teaching them about alpine plant ecology to AMC Hut management, but with this particular funding from the AMC 4,000 Footer Club, we provided these teens with an opportunity to give back and develop some quality trail work skills. After only one week, our crew of 9 teens and 2 Crew Leaders spent 440 hours to install 10 bog bridges hardening 80' of tread, in addition to building a 12-rock staircase, an 8' long rock waterbar, 2 rock check steps, and removing 1 blowdown, brushing 50' of trail, and closing off 160' of user-created trails around the summit of Mt. Tom, which was seriously degrading the natural resource, not to mention the aesthetic value of that 4,000' peak. That was quite the accomplishment for our crew, all of which was made possible by funding from the AMC 4,000 Footer Club.

But that was not the only accomplishment of the Volunteer Trails Program and AMC 4,000 Footer Club. At the end of our season, we worked with a private Custom Crew to complete some much needed maintenance work on the Caps Ridge trail. Caps Ridge is an important access trail to the Northern



Custom Crew Removing Blowdown

Presidentials that many seeking to complete the 4,000' peaks use, but it is a fairly remote trail with access off of Jefferson Notch Road. Therefore, it is not the most consistently maintained trail; however, with money from the AMC 4,000 Footer Club, and with labor from the Mrosak Custom Crew, we addressed that important need. A team of 5 crew members and 1 crew leader worked on a full mile of the Caps Ridge trail, cleaning 3 rock waterbars, 40 wood water bars, 3 drainage dips, and they removed 1 blowdown. With only 39 hours of volunteer labor, quite a substantial difference was made on this trail, and that positive impact was only possible with the continued and vital funding of the AMC 4,000 Footer Club.

Report prepared by the AMC Trails Department 2014