



Adopt-A-Trail 2009 in Review

This is the second year of the program and being so permits comparison in terms of what was accomplished and reflection on the changes that were recommended.

Trails:

In 2008, seven volunteers monitored 6 trails; in 2009, fifteen core volunteers monitored 13 trails. These were

Champlain	Discovery
Hickory	Horizon
King Mountain	Kennedy
Lauriault	Lusk Falls
Lusk Cave	Pink Lake
Ridge Road	Wolf
Trail 72	

Hours: In 2008 85 volunteer hours were dedicated to the Program over 47 documented excursions. Taking into account those who accompanied volunteers, such as the fellow hikers of Club Oxygène, 250 volunteer hours were recorded over 82 documented visits in the period of June through November 2009.

Persons encountered: While the number of persons encountered was not documented last year, 1269 persons were encountered this year, including 54 persons on bicycles. Not documented was the number of persons with whom our volunteers spoke.

The Friends advanced its research mandate by assisting Park staff who were doing a survey of the bike use of the authorized and unauthorized trails of the Park. With one trail exception, bikers were not observed to be on the authorized trails of the Park. This was a similar observation to that observed a year ago.

Tasks: Our main tasks were removal of litter and debris and reporting concerns (i.e. safety). Fifty Eight percent of reports stated removal of litter/debris. Again this year, cigarette butts were frequently reported. Near forty percent of reports stated concerns, such as erosion or occasional fire pits. Concerns were communicated to park management. For the most part, parking lots and amenities were well maintained – a similar finding to a year ago.

While we did agree to observe the condition of the interpretative panels, as this was not referenced in the prescribed form, information was not collected.

An orientation session with a speaker occurred in the spring and a rap up session occurred in December. Both were found to be helpful. The volunteer kit, including a map of the park was found to be useful.

The organizing committee included a representative from DEMSIS associated with trail maintenance.

Recommendations:

1. Program to continue. How is it best to communicate or illustrate the amount of litter left in the Park? Hikers/bikers need to come to an appreciation of the size of the problem.
2. Volunteer co-ordinator and APG-FGP's office assistant play important roles in ensuring concerns of our volunteers are communicated to park representatives. Notifications through the Visitors Centre of circumstances requiring early action will continue to be used. However acknowledgement that the form has been received would enhance the process.
3. Completion of the forum on-line rather than as being sent to the office or the coordinator as an attachment is favoured. A copy to be sent to the Park representative for this program and to DEMSIS.
4. When assistance with form completion or other tasks is requested, an early response would be appreciated.
5. When two persons/groups are assigned a trail, reports should be shared between them.
6. While the vest, with the Friends' logo increased feelings of legitimacy, it would be helpful for it to communicate that the wearer is a volunteer.
7. While volunteers appreciated the June '09 opportunity to be oriented to Leave No Trace, knowing more about its principles would enable volunteers to communicate its message, if asked.
8. The Adopt-A Trail poster at trail-head should be a main means of communicating the Leave No Trace message.
9. Stating the name of the current and past year volunteer(s) were favoured.
10. Trail assignment should begin on completion of the current year. The cohort for the year should be canvassed at year's completion.
11. Begin earlier than was achieved this year.
12. Trail kits for volunteers will be used again next year. The addition of a trail map was helpful.

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