



## **AMC Volunteer Trail Work/Trail Project Leader Requirements and Guidelines January 2020 Adopted May 2020**

In addition to the Appalachian Mountain Club Leadership Requirements and Guidelines (LRG), a committee of staff and club volunteers has developed this template of additional leadership requirements and guidelines specific to Trail Crew/Work Party projects led by AMC Volunteers. This template is designed to help Club Units establish their own Trail Work activity-specific requirements and guidelines to qualify trail work party Leaders. AMC Trail Committee Club Units are encouraged to incorporate these best practices, requirements and guidelines across all AMC Chapters.

**Trail Work/Trail Project Trip Leader(s):** This refers to a person/people who intend to lead an AMC Chapter-sponsored volunteer group trail work activity

**Trail Work Trip Leaders will:**

- Have appropriate leadership training as noted in the LRG
- Demonstrate ability to perform trail work, or work on trail-related structures, that meets the recommendations outlined for a particular Skill Level, below.
- Co-instruct on at least one work trip of a particular Skill Level before serving as a primary Leader for that Skill Level.

**LRG Safety Requirements for Trail Work Trip Leaders:**

*Trail work requires safety precautions beyond that of a recreational hike and use of appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). The Leader and Assistant Leader (if present) are required to determine the PPE or other equipment necessary for each project, and that it is used consistently and correctly by participants.*

- *Note: Participants who ignore PPE requirements should be dismissed from the project, or assigned work that does not require the PPE.*

**Guidelines for Trail Work Trip Leaders:**

In addition to any training required by sponsoring Club Units, Leaders should:

- Hold current certification in some type of basic first aid or better (WFA, WFR, Red Cross, etc).
- Should carry a first aid kit or kits appropriate for the size of the group and work being done.
- Demonstrate the necessary technical skill that is appropriate for the level of activity that is being conducted. Specific skills will be determined by the appropriate Club Unit.
- If appropriate, Leaders may engage subject matter experts or other qualified individuals to provide advanced skills that may be needed for specialized work projects.
- Responsible to ensure that the tools and PPE for the project are in working condition and appropriate for the type of work. These may be provided by the chapter or participants will supply their own, provided they meet any required standards (typically ANSI or OSHA).
- Communicate the project's activity plan to all participants--who should be pre-screened for the level of difficulty the activity requires. A "tailgate session" before departure for the work site will include tool use and operation, emergency

communications, PPE use and any other specific risks or safety concerns the terrain or project might entail. Many land managers have Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) documents that describe hazards specifically associated with many different aspects of trail work. If JHA's exist within the land-manager's organization, these should be used as part of this pre-work communication.

- Understand and conform to additional requirements Land Managers (State, Federal or private) may have for training, land use, equipment and hazard communication.

Below is a template of recommended skill levels for Trail Work Trip Leaders-in addition to the requirements in the AMC Leader Requirements and Guidelines (LRG).

**GUIDELINES FOR SKILL LEVELS OF VOLUNTEER TRAIL WORK:** *Club Units are responsible for defining and assessing the skill level of Leaders. This list is not intended to be all encompassing.*

**BASIC:** Basic maintaining work with hand tools and includes clipping, blazing, raking, widening, weeding, clearing water bars, removing trash, small downed limbs or trees, etc.

**INTERMEDIATE:** Work generally involves construction of new (or repair of existing) trail features such as water bars, step stones, bog bridges, etc. Trained/Experienced Leader or subject matter expert must be present to lead more complicated trail improvement projects such as water bar construction, bog bridge installation, treadway re-grading, etc. This level does not include work that requires grip hoist or other overhead rigging. May serve as an instructor for Basic level leaders.

**ADVANCED:** In addition to Basic, a Trained/Experienced Leader can lead projects such as trail relocation, new trail construction, construction/repair of bridges and other trail structures. May serve as an instructor for Basic and Intermediate leaders.

**Note:**

- Sawyers and Swampers using chainsaws under the AMC umbrella have specific requirements and certifications: (<http://www.outdoors.org/pdf/upload/AMC-20Chainsaw-20Policy.pdf>). A work party leader does not need certification to lead the project, but only qualified sawyers may use chainsaws.
- Large projects likely require consultation with land-managing organization. Consult with AMC Trails Staff.