



DELAWARE & LEHIGH NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR

TRAIL PATROL

New D&L Trail Patrol Volunteer Training

Goals

There are two general goals for the D&L Trail Patrol program:

1. Trail Patrol volunteers serve as trail ambassadors helping other trail users, demonstrating proper trail etiquette, and promoting the trail.
2. Trail Patrol volunteers serve as the “eyes and ears” reporting both the good and the bad things that they see on the trail and that they hear from other trail users.

Volunteer Requirements

We ask that formal trail patrol members complete at least two trail patrols a month April through October. Fill out your online reports in a timely manner so the D&L and trail landowner can respond in time. If there are any special incidents or information that doesn't fit into an online report, make sure to contact the Trail Programs Manager. In case of emergency, call 911!

General Recommendations

The most important thing is to be friendly and helpful to other trail users. The D&L Trail is a great community resource and we want it to be the best trail in the country!

The role of a Trail Patrol - "3 + ☺" adapted from: <https://www.ptny.org/get-involved/volunteer/trail-ambassadors>

The role of the Trail Patrol can best be described by "3 + ☺" functions, as follows:

1) Assist and inform trail users

D&L Trail Patrollers know the trail well. They learn the locations of trailheads, restrooms, food and water sources, other services and key information. They also are aware of the local landowners and the D&L. They carry a copy of their local section [D&L Trail Map](#).

2) Monitor trail conditions.

D&L Trail Patrollers serve as the “eyes and ears” of the organizations and agencies that maintain the trail. They report any conditions they consider to be problems or potential problems to the D&L using the online reporting form. A focus on safety is important. We also

like to hear about good things that you see on the trail (like when things get fixed, happy trail users, new features, or local businesses that do a great job of serving trail users).

3) Promote trail courtesy, safety and awareness.

In their interaction with people on the trail, D&L Trail Patrollers have an opportunity to educate them about trail etiquette related to trail use. D&L Trail Patrollers are NOT expected to enforce rules, but instead provide information in a friendly and positive manner. Often trail users are not aware that what they are doing violates rules or trail etiquette.

😊 Serve as a “Cheerleader” for the D&L Trail

D&L Trail Patrollers should go beyond providing technical assistance and local knowledge. Instead, they also express excitement and passion for the D&L Trail as a recreational resource and the rich history and cultural heritage of the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor. The railroads and canals that make up the D&L Trail played a pivotal role in the history of PA and the nation as transportation and technology improvements that fueled America’s Industrial Revolution. Therefore, taking a ride on the D&L Trail is a unique experience following in the footsteps of history. Trail Patrollers foster an appreciation of the history and significance of the route that trail users now enjoy.

Proper Trail Etiquette

In general, it means “be nice” and “share the trail”. The D&L Trail is a multi-use trail designed for hikers, walkers, bikers, runners, and in some sections horses and snowmobiles. We want an inclusive trail that is welcoming to people of all backgrounds, ethnicities, abilities, incomes, and recreation preferences. This means that we all need to get along. Here are some general guidelines to help create a culture of proper trail etiquette. It is important to:

- Be friendly –a smile, wave, or hello can go a long way.
- Be courteous-respect other trail users regardless of their mode, speed or level of skill.
- Be predictable – travel in a consistent and predictable manner.
- Be careful – Be in control and paying attention especially at pinch points or intersections.
- Give an audible warning before passing - bells or say on your left. Try not to startle.

The [Rails to Trails Conservancy recommends the following general guidelines:](#)

- Use safe speeds.
- Keep right, pass left.
- Standing still? Stand off the trail.
- Mind your pets and others.
- Be alert.
- Know and follow local rules

General Trail Patrol Volunteer Process

What to bring / wear.

- Always wear your vest so others can identify you.
- Bring whatever you need for your normal outing plus:
 - A small first aid kit.
 - A trail map.
 - A smartphone.

How to interact

Trail patrollers are encouraged to interact with the other trail users. Say hello and ask others how they are doing. If you see people with inquisitive looks ask if they are familiar with the trail. If you see people in need of mechanical assistance ask if they need any help. If they say they are good or not interested then respect their space. Some common opening lines:

- How are you doing?
- Having fun on the trail?
- Where did you start? Where are you going to?
- Any questions about the trail?
- Have you been on this trail before?
- Need any help?

If you see people doing something against the trail rules or etiquette, you are not empowered to force someone to stop. If you feel comfortable, approach them in a friendly way and try to have a teaching moment. Many people may not be familiar with the rules. For example, you could try:

- Dog off leash – “Hi, did you know that dogs are supposed to be on a leash here? I don’t want your dog to get hurt by accidentally running into someone.”
- Someone going too fast for the conditions “You should slow down. We don’t want anyone to cause an accident and get hurt.”

What to Report

In general, we want to be alerted to serious issues related to safety or damage to the trail. We are especially interested in new things or changes to the regular conditions. Telling me every time about the same puddle isn’t that useful. We also want to hear about good things, when things are fixed, and what trail users are talking about.

These are the questions from our online form.

- Name
- Date

- Trail Name – Click D&L Trail or write in the name of the trail if it is different.
- Trailhead name – Where did you start?
- Direction Traveled – On the D&L Trail we have two general directions, Wilkes-Barre (upstream) or Bristol (downstream). Use other and write “Both” if you go both ways from a trailhead or a different term for a different trail.
- Start Time
- End Time
- Total Miles Patrolled Round trip
- Overall Trail Condition – Your opinion of the overall general trail condition
- Trail users helped – How many people did you answer questions for or assist?
- General comments – Tell us anything that you think is important, positive news about the trail, or what you hear trail users talking about.
- Situation Description – If there is a specific situation that you need to alert us to. This could include a downed tree, graffiti, poor trail surface, unsafe conditions, problem with other trail users. Write as detailed description as possible.
- Situation Location – We need to know where this took place. GPS lat/long work best.
- Situation photos / video – Take a photo or video of the situation so that we can see what is going on.