



Harpers Ferry, West Virginia



# Appalachian Trail Community™

A Designation Program of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy



The Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) mission is to preserve and manage the Appalachian Trail – ensuring that its vast natural beauty and priceless cultural heritage can be shared and enjoyed today, tomorrow, and for centuries to come.





Hot Springs, North Carolina

# Appalachian Trail Conservancy

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) mission is to preserve and manage the Appalachian Trail – ensuring that its vast natural beauty and priceless cultural heritage can be shared and enjoyed today, tomorrow, and for centuries to come.

ATC traces its roots to the vision of Benton MacKaye, a regional planner who convened an Appalachian Trail



Benton MacKaye, the visionary of the Appalachian Trail

“conference” in 1925 in Washington, D.C. This initial gathering of hikers, foresters, and public officials laid the groundwork not only for the creation of the Trail, but also for an organization to build, manage, and protect it. Today, through the efforts of volunteers, clubs, and agency partners, the A.T. extends more than 2,180 miles from Maine to Georgia within a protected

250,000 acre greenway. ATC was instrumental in the passage of federal legislation that designated the A.T. as America’s first national scenic trail in 1968.

In order to coordinate the efforts of 30 member clubs and their volunteers, numerous federal and state agencies, and close to 40,000 members, ATC employs approximately 45 regular staff and numerous seasonal program employees. With a main office and official Trail visitor center in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, ATC remains singularly focused on the A.T. with regional offices in North Carolina, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire.

# Program Background

From the beginning, Benton MacKaye’s vision of an Appalachian Trail proposed to develop opportunities for recreation, recuperation and employment. “The project is one for a series of recreational communities throughout the Appalachian chain... to be connected by a walking trail,” he stated in his 1921 article *The Appalachian Trail: A Project in Regional Planning*. MacKaye was among the first of his time to propose land preservation for recreation and conservation purposes, understanding that the “secluded forests, pastoral lands and water courses” are “playgrounds of the people.”

Towns, counties, and communities along the Appalachian Trail’s corridor are considered an asset by A.T. hikers and many of these towns act as good friends and neighbors to the Trail. With millions of visitors coming to the Trail every year, it is no wonder that outfitters, restaurants and businesses catering to outdoor recreation call A.T. communities home.



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Designation as an Appalachian Trail Community™ and participation in the program is designed to act as a catalyst for enhancing economic development, engaging community citizens as Trail visitors and stewards, aiding local municipalities and regional areas with conservation planning and

helping local community members see the Trail as a resource and asset. The program also serves to highlight and recognize those communities who are taking steps to ensure the ongoing protection of their natural, cultural and recreational resources, including the A.T. Preserving and enhancing a charming, memorable community destination will contribute to the long-term economic health of A.T. towns and make an A.T. hike even more desirable.

# Benefits for Communities and Towns

Manchester, Vermont

SHORT TERM BENEFITS	LONG TERM BENEFITS
National designation network and communication	Increased community viability and economic health
Recognition and visibility through signage, media, ATC's Web site and publications	Increased community environmental stewardship
Enhanced partnerships with public land agencies and volunteers	Increased sense of place and cultural sustainability
Teacher eligibility for an ATC place-based education and service-learning program	Trail-friendly promotion through ATC-assisted marketing techniques



## Details of Community Benefits

### WEB DEVELOPMENT

Community webpage that reflects what the community has brought to the program.

Local articles and press releases highlighted in ATC's newsroom.

Subscription to e-news providing highlights of community successes and network to designated communities in the program.

Social networking outreach with ATC's Facebook and Twitter users.

### PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Teachers interested in Trail To Every Classroom from designated communities receive priority over other applicants.

### MEDIA SUPPORT

Press releases, access to Appalachian Trail media list, Public Service Announcements, proclamation, etc.

Recognition in publications such as the A.T. Databook and Thru-Hikers' Companion

### LOGO USAGE

Access to Appalachian Trail Community™ under signed licensing and usage agreement.

Incorporating national network brand to community.

### SIGNAGE

Two 18" by 24" full color metal aluminum street entrance signs; Two 6" window decals (suggested placement in town hall or chamber)

### PROGRAM TOOLKIT

Toolkit including examples of land use agreements, comprehensive planning documents, success stories and lessons learned from other designated communities, assessment template, etc.

### MEMBERSHIP

Complimentary library membership (with Appalachian Trail Journeys, the magazine of the Appalachian Trail)

Subscription to e-news providing highlights of community successes and network to designated communities in the program.



# Appalachian Trail Community™ Application

Overlooking the James River, Virginia

## CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

The application page is to be filled out by a town official (mayor, manager, etc.), and lead volunteer liaison/A.T. Hiking Club affiliate.

Any town in close proximity of the A.T. corridor may apply for town/ community designation and must commit to meet at least two of the criteria below, with creation of an advisory committee being highly recommended.

These criteria provide structure for the program and provide an awareness and appreciation among the community of the Appalachian Trail. and its special resources.

### 1) Community support is evidenced by creation of an advisory committee.

Suggested candidates for this committee would be representatives of the county or community (elected officials, etc.), representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, tourism development association, business association or equivalent, local hiking and A.T. maintaining club, etc.

### 2) Hosting an annual A.T. volunteer project, event or celebration (ATC regional offices can provide ideas and suggestions)

### 3) A.T. related educational or service-learning program or project (teachers participating in the Trail To Every Classroom qualifies)

4) Language for the protection of the A.T. is included in land-use plans, planning tools, ordinances or guidelines; or there is demonstrated support to amend, change or add such plans.

Before beginning the process of applying for designation, please contact Julie Judkins at the Appalachian Trail Conservancy at (828) 254-3708 or e-mail at [jjudkins@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:jjudkins@appalachiantrail.org)

### 1) Town, City, Community Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

### 2) Contact information of town representative:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3) Contact information of lead volunteer:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

### 4) Criteria selected for consideration. Please select at least two from the four criteria options recommended and add descriptions as requested.

**1) Advisory committee:** Please list members and who they represent from

**2) Annual project or celebration:** Describe the event and list the lead volunteer liaison with contact information.

**3) A.T. educational or service learning project**  
Describe the event and list the lead volunteer liaison with contact information.

**4) Language for the protection of the A.T. is included in land-use plans, planning tools, ordinances or guidelines; or there is demonstrated support to amend, change or add such plans.** Language for the protection of the A.T. is included in land-use plans, planning tools, ordinances or guidelines; or there is demonstrated support to amend, change or add such plans. Attach any necessary documents, state the support for these tools and list who is the lead contact for this initiative.

# Appalachian Trail Community™ Application

## CRITERIA (two of the four criteria should be met)

### 1) Advisory committee:

Please list members and who they represent from the community. Briefly describe the committee's structure.

### 2) Annual project or celebration:

Projects or events may include promoting or sponsoring a volunteer workshop/workday, assuring information about the Appalachian Trail and the ATC is available at ongoing community events, etc... Describe the event and list the lead volunteer liaison with contact information.



# Appalachian Trail Community™ Application

## CRITERIA (two of the four criteria should be met)

### 3) A.T. educational or service learning project

Describe the event and list the lead volunteer liaison with contact information. Please list any activities Trail To Every Classroom alumni may be implementing.

### 4) Language for the protection of the A.T. is included in land-use plans, planning tools, ordinances or guidelines; or there is demonstrated support to amend, change or add such plans.

Language for the protection of the A.T. is included in land-use plans, planning tools, ordinances or guidelines; or there is demonstrated support to amend, change or add such plans. Attach any necessary documents, state the support for these tools and list who is the lead contact for this initiative.



# Appalachian Trail Community™ Application

## CRITERIA (two of the four criteria should be met)

### PROCESS FOR SELECTION

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Once the application has been received by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, its local Regional Partnership Committee will evaluate the request. The committees meet every spring and fall, so approval will be recognized in April or November.

Mail completed applications to your regional ATC office no later than September 1 or March 1.

ATC New England Regional Office  
158 Sweetwater Drive  
White River Junction, VT 05001  
802-295-1514 Fax: 802-295-1514  
(call first)  
E-mail: [atc-nero@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:atc-nero@appalachiantrail.org)

ATC Mid-Atlantic Regional Office  
4 E. First St.  
Boiling Springs, PA 17007  
717-258-5771 Fax: 717-258-1442  
E-mail: [atc-mar0@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:atc-mar0@appalachiantrail.org)

ATC Central & Southwest Virginia  
Regional Office  
P.O. Box 174  
Blacksburg, VA 24063  
Phone: 540-953-3571 Fax: 540-552-4376  
E-mail: [atc-var0@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:atc-var0@appalachiantrail.org)

ATC Tennessee, North Carolina and  
Georgia Regional Office  
160 Zillicoa St  
Asheville, NC 28801  
Phone: 828-254-3708 Fax: 3754  
E-mail: [atc-soro@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:atc-soro@appalachiantrail.org)

5) Describe why your town should be selected as an Appalachian Trail Community. What can this program do for your community? What can your town do for the Appalachian Trail?

6) Please attach any further letters of support and documentation to augment your application. A letter of support is required from the local A.T. Trail-maintaining club.



# Appalachian Trail Community™ Application



Please attach any other supporting documents or letters of support from those in your community.

Questions about designation?  
Call Julie Judkins at the Appalachian Trail Conservancy at (828) 254-3708 or e-mail at [jjudkins@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:jjudkins@appalachiantrail.org)

## What's Next? The Process After You Have Been Selected

Once your town has been selected as an A.T. Community™, there will be an event celebrating the official designation. ATC will work with appropriate A.T. Advisory Committee representatives to coordinate the event. Approximately 3 or more months is needed for planning the event.

ATC will also coordinate with the lead volunteer on developing the ATC Webpage that will highlight the community accomplishments.

Signage Placement:  
Upon designation, two signs will be provided to the town from ATC. It is recommended that these signs be placed in a visible location where hikers and town visitors can see. For example, at the entrances to town.