

Rock, Root & Trail



JANUARY 2018

Be Bold, Start Cold - Volunteer Spotlight

Hanna Holcomb is the leader of WesCFPA, a Wesleyan University Student Club. She also helps out at CFPA and that includes writing for us. She is an avid hiker and shared these tips in an article for Connecticut Woodlands (with an assist by editor Timothy Brown). Winter hiking can be fun so safely enjoy your next snowy, outdoor adventure.

10 Tips for Winter Hiking

- ☑ Check local conditions and the weather forecast. Make sure roads are accessible and that trails are open
- ☑ Wear breathable, wicking layers. No cotton! Have a winter hat and gloves, and always wear proper footwear. Nothing can ruin a winter hike faster than cold hands and feet.
- ☑ Remember the Rule of 20s: Dress as if it were 20 degrees warmer, but pack enough clothing to protect you from a worst-case scenario that turns 20 degrees colder.
- ☑ Start hiking cold, but not freezing, to prevent sweating. Remove a layer if you start to sweat.
- ☑ No thermos? No problem. Put a thick sock over a water bottle to prevent liquid from freezing. Either way, stay hydrated!
- ☑ Stay warm with snacks that have a high-fat content, like nuts and cheese.
- ☑ Keep electronics close to your body to prevent a dead battery.
- ☑ Be prepared for ice on the ridges and on steep slopes. Use microspikes when necessary.
- ☑ It gets dark early in winter. Carry a headlamp or flashlight and plan accordingly so you don't get stranded in the dark.
- ☑ Make a hiking plan and let others know about it. And don't be afraid to turn around if weather conditions change unexpectedly.



Hanna Holcomb, WesCFPA

Be the Voice for Forests and Trails

You want to make your community better – so please know that:

You are more than a lone voice calling in the wilderness

Your voice is strong when you choose to use it

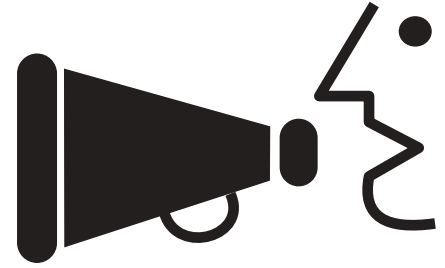
And it is amplified when united with CFPA and others...

Over and over again the power of your calls and emails to legislators are demonstrated with the passage of positive, legislative action ... like the Passport to the Parks.

As few as a half dozen calls can turn the tide and help your legislators understand how important a piece of legislation is to your community.

We know BECAUSE they tell us your calls and emails are important.

Thank you for raising for your voice to protect trails, and trees, and parks. You are their voice and their protector.



Park for Free!

The Passport to the Parks was just passed last year by your General Assembly - thanks to your emails and calls.

Hooray ... but what does this mean for you?

- Your State Parks are more sustainable (no longer totally reliant on the General Fund)
- Because of your calls and emails, more people will get to enjoy Parks and campgrounds.
- No more parking fees for you to get into any State Park (this year, the parking fee was \$13 for just one weekend visit to a shoreline Park like Hammonasset Beach State Park and \$9 at many other Parks); and
- You will have a \$10 charge added to your DMV vehicle registration (paid every other year) which generates funding for the operation, maintenance, and enhancement of your State Parks.
- Please pat yourself on the back and thank you!



Getting the “Passport to the Parks” is fantastic news in a very tough budget environment, so please take a few minutes to contact your Legislators to let them know that you appreciate their efforts on behalf of your State Parks - and you want to make sure the Passport funds are not diverted from their intended purpose. Thanks to them, and thanks to you for your action and support of CFPA!

Save Your Public Lands

You have a unique opportunity to do something historic in 2018 – amend Connecticut's constitution to protect your public lands!

Why is this necessary? Public lands like your State Forests and Parks are swapped, sold or given away every year through a “conveyance bill” that is often changed in the closing days of the session with no public input and a simple majority vote.



Heublein Tower at Talcott Mountain State Park

Your special places should not be so vulnerable.

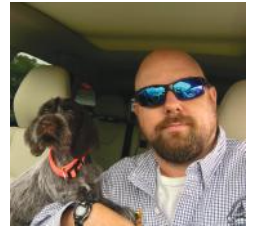
If approved by voters, this amendment would require a public hearing and a two-thirds vote before state-owned public lands could be sold, swapped, or given away by your state legislators.

But you won't get the chance to vote for this amendment in November if it doesn't get through the CT General Assembly this year. An identical resolution stalled in the Legislature in 2017 despite 46 co-sponsors and the support of more than 130 advocacy organizations and businesses. With most resolutions this level of bipartisan and partner support would have been enough, but it's clear that your help is needed to allow voters to decide in 2018.

Your voice is critical to get this question on the 2018 ballot. Contact your Legislators to let them know this is an important issue for you, and/or follow-up with CFPA's Executive Director Eric Hammerling via ehammerling@ctwoodlands.org or 860/346-TREE to learn more about this issue.

Your Man on the Hill

John Larkin looks nothing like a lobbyist. More like an outdoorsman who forgot to shave for the last five years ... or more. And he'd prefer that description. He is a husband and father of three -- an outdoorsman lobbying, advocating, and working to protect Connecticut's forests and parks for you and CFPA.



There is no typical day for John at the Capitol. He meets with Legislators to work on conservation issues important to you and CFPA. He understands who is a friend ...and who is not so friendly. He works with state agencies such as CTDEEP, attends committee meetings such as the Environment and Appropriations Committees, and is on CFPA's Public Policy Committee. In other words, John is your eyes and ears at the Capitol.

When I met him recently, he reminded me that as few as a dozen people can make all the difference to a piece of legislation by contacting their legislators. Forest, parks, trails - and John - need your help. He also reminded me that 2018 is a “short session” where all work by the Legislature will be crammed into just 13 weeks (from February 7th to May 9th). All it takes is a simple email or call to your legislators ...

Thank them for their support of Passport to the Parks. Tell them how critical the constitutional amendment to protect state lands is to you. Ask them restore bond funding for Connecticut's Recreational Trails & Greenways program. Your call can make positive legislation a reality.

We thank John for his work ... and you for your emails and calls in support of the outdoors you love.

Like to Party?

Then you are just the person(s) Liz Fossett wants to speak with – like right away. She is looking for a few creative, hard-working, reliable people to help CFPA plan and implement CFPA gatherings – like the Member Updates, CFPA's Field Day, the CFPA Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, etc. It is fun and rewarding volunteer work.

You can work on one, two, or all of them if you wish. Please drop an email to lfossett@ctwoodlands.org and help CFPA party like it's 2018!



Guiding Forest Bathers

by Alexandra Lowry

Guided shinrin-yoku (forest bathing) walks are primarily silent, slow, sensory walks, where a deeper connection to self and the forest can be found. The connections made to your internal world, and to nature, can be powerful and healing.

While forest bathing can be a profound solo practice, the power of a guided walk runs much deeper – it creates community. A gathering of mostly strangers from all walks of life and locations often starts out in an eager but awkward fashion. By midpoint of the walk, participants' comfort in sharing observations starts taking form, generating a budding, happy energy. By the end of the trail participants are usually laughing, smiling, and happily sharing their experiences with each other, sometimes exchanging information, and making new friends.

A beautiful spectacle and validation of the powerful and healing interconnected web of life, all in one walk, is one of the extraordinary benefits of being a volunteer guide with CFPA... and why I do what I do.



Alex with a Forest Bathing group at Highlawn Forest

Visit us at www.ctwoodlands.org



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