



Volunteering with **Lehigh Gap Nature Center**

Trail Team



Lehigh Gap Nature Center (LGNC) is seeking **Trail Team volunteers** to help us maintain our 13-mile trail system and 756-acre wildlife refuge. Do you enjoy hiking and working outdoors? As a Trail Team volunteer, you will have the opportunity to support the stewardship of one of the region's top outdoor recreation destinations and America's first nature center on a Superfund site!

Trail Team Role at a Glance:

Responsible for: Inspecting trails; maintaining trails/amenities; managing wildlife refuge habitats

Report to: Chad Schwartz, Executive Director
(chad.schwartz@lgnc.org | 610-760-8889)

Time Commitment: 1-6 hour work days, primarily spring through fall

About LGNC

Nestled within the Kittatinny Ridge alongside the Lehigh River, Lehigh Gap Nature Center is a member-supported 501(c)(3) nonprofit environmental education center and wildlife refuge. LGNC is the *first and only nature center in the U.S. created from a federal Superfund site*. When LGNC was founded in 2002, much of the mountainside in our surrounding area was barren and lifeless, scarred by decades of industrial pollution. LGNC's efforts to revegetate several hundred acres of this former 'moonscape' have not only successfully restored life to the mountain, but they have also established a community resource that is now enjoyed by thousands of visitors annually. Today, the restored site is home to a 756-acre wildlife refuge featuring hundreds of native species, 13 miles of trails, and endless opportunities for learning, ecological research, and outdoor recreation. Visit lgnc.org to learn more.

Volunteering with the Trail Team

LGNC's free public trail system draws thousands of visitors per year to hike, bike, run, and enjoy other forms of outdoor recreation. Our trails provide access to LGNC's wildlife refuge and serve as the only point of connection between the D&L and Appalachian trails. They also provide a means for our visitors to observe nature and discover local history and ecology through guided and self-guided exploration. LGNC's trail system was designed and built by volunteers, and maintaining this vast resource requires the ongoing support of our Trail Team.

Alongside trail maintenance, Trail Team volunteers are involved with ecological management activities across the refuge. Although LGNC and its partners have succeeded in revegetating the once-barren mountainside, this work is never done. Science-based adaptive management is key to sustaining this vibrant ecosystem.

Responsibilities of the Trail Team

Trail Team volunteers are responsible for the following in support of LGNC's trail maintenance and refuge management:

- Assessing refuge and trail maintenance needs through visual inspection
- Maintaining trails, including, but not limited to, weed whacking, pruning, raking, and blazing
- Identifying and removing invasive plants and sustaining native vegetation
- Installing and repairing trail amenities, including signs and posts
- Assisting with other outdoor repairs and maintenance activities

From June through August, Trail Team volunteers work closely with LGNC's Stewardship Interns, who also support trail maintenance and refuge management activities.

Trail Team Leadership

The Trail Team is coordinated by LGNC's Executive Director, Chad Schwartz. Trail Team volunteers should contact Chad directly at 610-760-8889 or chad.schwartz@lgnc.org with any questions or concerns.

Training and Orientation

At the start of each scheduled Trail Team work day, all volunteers are briefed on the day's goals. LGNC provides any training or equipment needed for the day's tasks. Volunteers are welcome to bring a personal pair of work gloves or other equipment if preferred.

A group planning meeting is held at least once per year to discuss projects and priorities and to address questions or concerns.

Time Commitment

The Trail Team is most active April through October. Trail Team volunteers may volunteer as often or as little as they are available.

Work days are scheduled as needed throughout the year, primarily on weekdays, to address maintenance and management priorities as they arise. Trail Team volunteers also have opportunities to support occasional weekend activities, including the spring cleanup.

Clearances

In accordance with Pennsylvania Act 153 (Child Protective Services Law), all LGNC volunteers must complete free criminal background checks prior to volunteering. Clearances must be renewed every 60 months. Clearances must be renewed every 60 months.