



## **APPALACHIAN NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION PROGRAMS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The *Comprehensive Plan for the Appalachian National Scenic Trail* includes a definition of the Appalachian Trail that states: “The body of the Trail is provided by the land it traverses, and its soul is in the living stewardship of the volunteers and workers of the Appalachian Trail Community.” ATC and the federal agencies are very proud of the volunteer commitment to protect and manage the Trail. This recognition program is offered by ATC and the NPS-Appalachian Trail Park Office (ATPO) as a means of thanking A.T. volunteers for their contributions.

It is worth noting that some very dedicated volunteers reject the thought of formal recognition for their efforts. This program is not intended to force anyone to participate. It is an option to assist clubs that do not have a recognition program of their own, as well as to provide an optional Trail-wide structure to complement existing programs.

### **HOURS OF SERVICE PROGRAM**

The Hours of Service recognition program is based on the cumulative hourly contributions of volunteers to the Appalachian Trail, and is administered by ATC, primarily through local Trail clubs. Trail clubs may decide whether or not to participate in this program as a resource for recognizing volunteers, and if it augments other volunteer recognition programs within the club.

Award items are available to clubs on fulfillment schedule of January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1. Vests are size-specific and may need to be ordered due to limited stock.

With the exception of pins, each club is responsible for providing hours of service information to ATC when requesting award items. Recipients of pins will not be tracked by ATC and are available to clubs in quantities of 25, up to 250, to issue to club volunteers and anyone else the club would like to recognize for a day or more of service.

<b>Hours of Service</b>	<b>Item</b>
Minimum of 8 hrs	Pin (multicolor, 1”, “Appalachian Trail Volunteer”)
Minimum of 100 hrs	Patch (multicolor, 2.5”x 4”, with embroidered logo)
Minimum of 500 hrs	Cap (khaki, with embroidered logo)
Minimum of 1,000 hrs	Vest (Black fleece vest in unisex sizing*--Available in small, medium, large, extra large, and double-extra large)
4000 hours	Take Pride in America, Presidential Award (certificate/plaque, lapel pin, letter from the President)

Excessively worn or damaged caps bearing the A.T. Volunteer Emblem may be subject to replacement after every 7 years, contingent upon their continued active involvement (defined as either at least two work-trips in the last year, or a minimum of 200 hours above the last time a cap was issued to the individual). The request should be made through the club using the recognition item request form, indicating that it is a replacement request beside the volunteers' current volunteer hours.

For purchasing lost caps or vests, volunteers should contact [volunteer@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:volunteer@appalachiantrail.org).

## **PRESIDENTIAL LIFETIME SERVICE AWARD**

ATC is certified to award Presidential Lifetime Service Awards to volunteers who have contributed at least 4,000 hours of service to the Appalachian Trail. The award includes a framed certificate, a letter from the president and a presidential "Call to Service" pin.

Please include in the volunteer recognition request:

- The volunteer's name as it should appear on the award
- 3-5 sentences describing how the recipient earned this award.
- A Trail club leader must affirm that the nominated volunteer meets the criteria found at <https://www.presidentialserviceawards.gov/>.

## **VOLUNTEER RECREATION (AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL) PASS**

The NPS-Appalachian National Scenic Trail office provides a Volunteer Recreation pass for volunteers who accumulated 250 hours of service. The "America the Beautiful" Interagency Volunteer Pass, provides fee-free access to federal lands for 12 months after issuance. It cannot be awarded more frequently than once every 12 months. Any excess of 250 hours of service within a year does not "bank" for a future pass. When a pass is issued, the volunteer's time clock resets to zero, until another 250 hours of volunteer service has been recorded, and the 12 month timeframe has elapsed. Hours for the first issuance of the pass may be accrued since January 1, 2007; there is no specific time frame in which the hours must be accrued.

Volunteers already in possession of a "Senior Pass" or comparable pass gain no additional benefit from the America the Beautiful Pass. Passes are non-transferable; other information on pass benefits are included with card issuance. The America the Beautiful Passes are issued quarterly and are mailed directly to the qualified volunteer.

## **YEARS OF SERVICE PROGRAM: SILVER AND GOLD AWARDS**

NPS-Appalachian National Scenic Trail office recognizes volunteers who have completed 25 and 50 years of service to the A.T. with Silver and Gold awards. Recipients of these awards will be announced formally at ATC Annual Business Meetings, and awards will be sent directly to clubs.

The names of volunteers who have actively worked on the A.T. for 25 years or more (Silver Service award) and 50 years or more (Golden Service award). Club leaders should submit this request once annually before January 1 using the recognition form. Additional information, including any accomplishments, hours/years of A.T. service, or initial date of volunteerism should accompany the recognition request submitted to [volunteer@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:volunteer@appalachiantrail.org).

## **NOMINATION PROCESS FOR ABOVE RECOGNITION ITEMS**

- One officer of the club should be responsible for submitting nominations.
- Hourly and Presidential Service Awards, as well as America the Beautiful Passes are fulfilled on this cycle: January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1. Requests should be made using [this template](#) and returned to [volunteer@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:volunteer@appalachiantrail.org).
- Silver and Gold Awards are called for by a January 1 deadline annually. These nominations should be made using the [recognition request form template](#), accompanied by an additional attachment that provides any accomplishments, hours/years of A.T. service, or initial date of volunteerism.
- Items will be mailed to the requesting club officer to be presented at a club event(s). The exception is the Volunteer Recreation (America the Beautiful) Pass that is mailed directly to the qualified volunteer.
- Information stating how the club has chosen to award the items (e.g. an awards banquet on December 8), should accompany the email submittal of the recognition request form.

## **VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT AND OTHER FEATURES**

ATC regularly features A.T. volunteers in a Spotlight feature on its website and e-newsletters. The intent is to spotlight the wide variety of work done by hard-working volunteers to benefit the A.T. Volunteers in the spotlight are not required to complete any certain number of hours or years of service to be eligible for this recognition. ATC may additionally pursue PointsofLight.org, or other similar entities, that feature volunteers making extraordinary impact. [Nominate here](#).

In an effort to bring volunteer success stories to the public-at-large, ATC will work with your club to showcase volunteer accomplishments and achievements. These do not need to be by a single individual, and may include complex projects, multi-year efforts, or initiatives that leverage creative solutions or expanded partnerships to meet a shared goal to help the A.T. A profile of volunteer accomplishments may be achieved through press releases shared by ATC or NPS NER Public Information Officer, stories Inside NPS "People News," Partnership for the National Trails System news, ATC's magazine *Appalachian Trail Journeys*, The Register newsletter or blog, and nominations to the George and Helen Hartzog Award. Volunteer leaders are encouraged to send success stories of individual or collective accomplishments to [volunteer@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:volunteer@appalachiantrail.org).

## **SCOUT VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION**

Scouts (boy, girl, or venture), Troops, Order of the Arrow Lodges, or Eagle, Silver or Gold scouts who complete A.T. related projects are entitled to receive a letter of appreciation from ATC's Program Director of Volunteer Relations recognizing their contributions that accompanies a certificate from NPS Appalachian National Scenic Trail Superintendent and Appalachian Trail Conservancy President. The accomplishment can be reported on the form found at [www.appalachiantrail.org/scouting](http://www.appalachiantrail.org/scouting) to initiate this acknowledgment.

Inquiries or Questions: E-mail [volunteer@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:volunteer@appalachiantrail.org)