



## ATC Conservation and Trail Management Policy Hang-Gliding

<b>Published:</b> April 1996	<b>Reviewed:</b> January 2020
<b>Category:</b> Non-hiking Recreational Use	<b>Updated:</b> April 1996

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC), a §501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, works closely with Appalachian Trail volunteer maintaining clubs (“Clubs”) and other public and private partners to ensure the protection and stewardship of the natural, cultural, and experiential resources of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail (known as ANST, A.T., or “the Trail”). Approximately fifty federal, state, or other public agencies have authority or jurisdiction over lands and resources within the protected A.T. corridor. ATC has a central management role by virtue of its Cooperative Agreement with the USDI National Park Service and its close working partnership with the USDA Forest Service and other agencies.

ATC's Trail management and conservation policies are meant to provide guidance for (a) dissemination to the public; (b) use and implementation by the ATC and the Clubs; and (c) recommendations for land-managing and other agencies. It is the agencies who work within their defined procedures to propose, administer, and enforce public policy. ATC policies are recommendations developed to support appropriate, coordinated Trailwide management.

### Overview

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy believes that hang gliding (including paragliding), being a non-motorized and non-mechanized pursuit, may be suitable in certain locations along the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. The remote recreational experience of the Trail and the resources that enhance that experience should be carefully considered and protected. Launch and landing sites must be managed in a manner that is consistent with the overall management direction for the A.T. corridor, and in such a way that it does not harm the resource or experience of A.T. hikers.



## ATC Conservation and Trail Management Policy Hang-Gliding

### Policy

In order to meet this policy's objective, *all* of the following criteria must be met:

- The hang-gliding site must be administered and maintained by a hang-gliding organization recognized by the U.S. Hang Gliding Association and be covered by a permit or cooperative agreement between that organization and the land-managing agency. The Trail-maintaining club and the land-managing agency must endorse the use of the site.
- In cooperation with, and under the guidance of, the Trail-maintaining club and land-managing agency, the hang-gliding organization will be responsible for maintenance of the site and management of hang-gliding use at the site. New sites should not be cleared and vegetation at existing sites should not be removed without explicit written permission from the land-managing agency. Permission for clearing of vegetation should not be granted unless such action clearly enhances Trail values and does not degrade any natural resources that may be present. The Appalachian Trail footpath should not be modified in any way to accommodate use by hang gliders.
- Use of the site and improvements to the site should not adversely affect the natural and cultural resources present at the site and should be consistent with the Conservancy's policy on managing the Appalachian Trail as a primitive resource.
- The hang-gliding organization will be responsible for preventing resource abuse and conflicts with hikers, and the site may be closed if any abuse cannot be rectified or any conflicts cannot be resolved.
- The hang-gliding site should be physically separate from Trail shelters and other overnight facilities, and no activities associated with use of the site should be permitted that would affect any shelters or overnight facilities.
- Hang gliding sites will not be used for any motorized use and will not promote such use. Access to any hang-gliding site must be on foot unless vehicular use is available *via* an existing public road.
- Sites will not be used for commercial or competitive events. Specific conditions, such as limitations on group size, noise, and equipment, should conform to local regulations and be included in any event planning and notice.



## **ATC Conservation and Trail Management Policy Hang-Gliding**

For questions related to this policy please contact the Appalachian Trail Conservancy at [www.appalachiantrail.org](http://www.appalachiantrail.org), or P.O. Box 807, Harpers Ferry, WV, 25425-807.

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy's mission is to protect, manage, and advocate for the Appalachian National Scenic Trail.