



Mount Agamenticus Conservation Program 2022 Outreach and Education Report



Each year, the Mount Agamenticus Conservation Program expands efforts to engage seasonal visitors and local residents. The goal is to create an immersive experience, promote responsible use of the area, instill a greater appreciation, love, and respect for the environment and inspire future advocates for protecting our natural resources.

The following section highlights annual and ongoing public outreach and environmental education that is designed to help visitors understand the unique resources located here and the importance of responsible low-impact recreation as they set out to explore the area. There is a continued increase in visitation to the area and with it, increased visitor expectations. A wider range of outreach efforts and community collaboration is crucial to ensure successful communication of the Conservation Program's mission.

Highlights

- Learning Lodge
 - Our summit visitor center was made available to visiting school groups starting in April, and open to the public every weekend from Memorial Day Weekend to Indigenous Peoples' Day.
 - Staffed by the Outreach and Education Coordinator and volunteer docents, the Lodge provides a variety of intriguing resources and interactive displays for discovery of all ages. Topics and activities include:
 - Nature journaling
 - Introduction to *Leave no Trace*
 - Community science and native plants and pollinators
 - Tracking signs of wildlife
 - Topographical map and trail information
 - Regional biological diversity and key habitats and species
- Registered Groups
 - Worked with many diverse groups to assist in planning visits to Mount A: hiking groups, outdoor ceremonies, scouts, school group visits, summer camps, etc.
 - 54 groups registered to visit including over 1,850 people.
 - 35 groups were identified as schools or summer camps. Of these, over 700 students and campers visited the Learning Lodge exhibits, and 13 groups participated in staff-led programming (including 4 off-site programs). Youth program offerings include:
 - Hands-on watershed model

- Hands-on *Leave no Trace* program
- Guided Tree Identification hike
- Collaborated with Great Works Regional Land Trust, York Water District, and the Center for Wildlife on a vernal pools study with Coastal Ridge fourth grade. Students visited vernal pools at the Center for Wildlife, Payeur Preserve and Mount A to record evidence of pool species.
- Other notable groups: 6 wedding ceremonies; 2 neighboring recreation department senior programs; 3 private tour groups.



- Public Programming
 - Led 16 public programs including monthly partner programs with the Center for Wildlife and guided walks for York's Center for Active Living.



- Special Events
 - *Imagine a Day Without Water*
 - Mount Agamenticus Program staff worked with the York Water District, York Sewer District, and the York School Department to educate students from Coastal Ridge and Village Elementary Schools about water usage.
 - As a precursor to the event, over 200 Village Elementary School students planted saplings on York Water District property and then visited the summit of Mount A to gain some perspective on the York watershed.
 - Big A 50K
 - This volunteer-run trail race benefitting the Conservation Program returned for its 11th year, with just over 100 participants.
 - 6th Annual Trail Challenge
 - 139 participants in-person and virtually, 20+ volunteers
 - 2nd Annual Friends of Mount Agamenticus Plein Air Paint Out
 - 17 artists participated



- Online Presence
 - Continued to maintain Agamenticus.org website; developed content for and managed social media accounts and e-mail distribution list; produced press releases and other media with program listings, news, and updates.
 - Daily correspondence with visitors via online contact form and inquiries over social media accounts.
 - Worked with the Friends of Mount Agamenticus 501(c)(3) to produce and distribute the Summit View newsletter as well as promote fundraising efforts.
 - Researched third-party websites and applications and ensured information on Mount Agamenticus was accurate and up to date.
- On-site Information, Interpretation, and Education
 - Installed and maintained seasonal StoryWalk.

- Developed educational and promotional content for kiosks and trail boxes, updated seasonally or as needed.
 - Ticks and poison ivy safety
 - Promotion for programs and events
 - Hunting season information
 - Parking and Restroom Project information
- Helped develop and promote “Leave the Leaves” campaign to encourage visitors not to clear leaves from trail.
- Annual Visitor Use Survey
 - 565 groups (over 1,200 visitors) were surveyed.
 - Information gathered to track trends and evaluate public opinion about the area. For a full survey report, please see Mount Agamenticus *Visitor Use Survey Results 2022*.
- Gift Shop
 - Gift Shop sales support outreach and education efforts in the Learning Lodge and beyond.
 - Care is made to select inventory that is in alignment with the Conservation Program’s mission and vision, which includes a variety of sustainably and locally produced or printed items.