NEWS RELEASE:
Public Programs at Minnewaska State Park Preserve
and Sam’s Point for August 2017

Pre-registration is required for participation in most public programs. Please call the Park Preserve Office at 845-255-0752, unless otherwise noted. For outings, please wear appropriate clothing and footwear and bring snacks and water. A parent or guardian over the age of 18 must accompany children wishing to participate in any programs.

Please pre-register for all public programs by calling the Park Preserve Office or the Sam’s Point Visitor Center where noted, seven days per week, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Attempted email pre-registration is not a guarantee of participation in any program. Internet service on site is not reliable, education staff is not able to monitor individual email accounts every day and emails may not be received in a consistent and timely manner. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

Minnewaska Nature Center Hours:
The Minnewaska Nature Center will be open Saturday, Sunday and Holidays from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., with a half hour closure for lunch, from Memorial Day until Columbus Day. Staff will either be at the Nature Center or out in the Park Preserve leading public programs during these time slots. When the building is closed, an information center will be available on the porch to assist patrons with questions about the Park Preserve.

Sam’s Point Visitor Center Hours:
The Sam’s Point Visitor Center is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

The following public programs will be offered at Minnewaska State Park Preserve and Sam’s Point Area in August:

Saturday, July 29, 9:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m.: Make Your Own Animal Print & Hike
Bring your children to the Minnewaska Nature Center to make their own plaster animal track to bring home. While the plaster hardens, we’ll take an approximately two mile loop hike on the Beacon Hill Carriage Road and Beacon Hill Footpath to look for signs of animal activity. This
hike features some tricky footing, elevation changes and gorgeous scenic views. This program is designed for children between the ages of seven to ten years old, accompanied by a parent or legal guardian over the age of 18. Siblings of any age are welcome; however, younger siblings may need parental assistance. Meet at the Minnewaska Nature Center. **Pre-registration is required.**

**Saturday, July 29, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.: Make Your Own Animal Print Drop-In Program**
Stop into the Minnewaska Nature Center to make your own plaster animal track to bring home. Children can choose from a variety of molds of mammal prints. This program is designed for children between the ages of six to ten years old, accompanied by a parent or guardian over the age of 18. Siblings of any age are welcome; however, younger siblings may need parental assistance. **Pre-registration is NOT required.**

**Sunday, July 30, 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.: Berries and Birds at Minnewaska**
Join Emily Shertzer, Student Conservation Association/AmeriCorps Intern, for a delicious morning stroll through the old Minnewaska golf course and orchard. This approximately mile-and-a-half long route wanders amongst blueberry and huckleberry bushes that should be ripe for the picking. Bring a small bag to collect berries as we hike. We will also look out for birds that frequent the golf course, so feel free to bring binoculars as well. Children of all ages are welcome; however, a backpack style carrier is necessary for children who are not able to walk this distance on their own. All children must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian over the age of 18. Meet at the Minnewaska Nature Center. **Pre-registration is required.**

**Sunday, July 30, 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.: Berry Picking on the Berry Picker Trail at Sam’s Point**
Enjoy the huckleberries and blueberries along this adventurous, strenuous hike. This approximately ten mile hike will traverse mostly carriage roads, with about two miles on a narrow, rocky footpath that includes some steep, challenging sections. Participants must be physically fit and wear appropriate shoes and bring a backpack with plenty of water, snacks, and lunch. All children must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian over the age of 18. Meet at the Sam’s Point Visitor Center. **Pre-registration is required by calling Sam’s Point at 845-647-7989.**

**Tuesday, August 1, 7:00 a.m.: Early Morning Birders**
Designed for birding enthusiasts, or those just looking to learn the basics, this series will offer various outings led by experienced birding volunteers and park naturalists. Participants will meet
at the Minnewaska main entrance and should come prepared with binoculars. Outing destinations will be determined the day of the program.

**Tuesday, August 1, 9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.: Shingle Gully Ice Caves**
Explore the Shingle Gully Ice Caves where ice persists into summer in deep crevice caves. These caves are in a backcountry area in Minnewaska State Park Preserve. This rugged, protected landscape is accessible only on guided tours led by park staff and volunteer docents. This all-day, strenuous adventure ascends and descends 1,500 feet, includes off-trail bushwhacking and steep rock scrambles, and is only appropriate for experienced hikers. **Pre-registration is required by calling Sam’s Point at 845-647-7989.** Pre-registration deadline: July 30th.

**Wednesday, August 2, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.: Junior Naturalists at Minnewaska: Pond and Blueberry Adventure**
Join park educators to learn all about the animals and insects that live in ponds, and then pick delicious blueberries! We’ll take an approximately two mile long hike to visit two remote ponds where children will use nets to search for animals. When we’ve had enough fun with the ponds, we’ll pick wild blueberries until our hands are purple! This program is recommended for six to ten year old children, accompanied by a parent or legal guardian over the age of 18. Meet at the Minnewaska Nature Center. **Pre-registration is required.**

**Thursday, August 3, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.: Junior Naturalists at Minnewaska: Orienteering Scavenger Hunt**
Join park educators on an exciting and fun orienteering nature challenge. We’ll learn about using a map and compass, and then we’ll go on a scavenger hunt using our new compass skills to find a secret prize! This program is recommended for eight to twelve year old children, accompanied by a parent or legal guardian over the age of 18. Meet at the Minnewaska Nature Center. **Pre-registration is required.**

**Thursday, August 3, 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.: Babes in the Woods at Minnewaska**
Come join volunteer leader Renee LaMonica, and other parents with babies or toddlers at Minnewaska State Park Preserve, for an hour of leisurely strolling. “Babes in the Woods” is offered the first Thursday of the month at Minnewaska and third Thursday of the month at Sam’s Point. This program will be offered from June through October, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Please bring a jogging type stroller or back/front pack child carrier. Meet at the Wildmere Parking Area at Minnewaska. **Pre-registration is required.**
Saturday, August 5, 9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.: Kids Nature Craft at Minnewaska: Make an Insect Hotel
Bring your children to the Minnewaska Nature Center so they can make an insect hotel for the beneficial insects in your yard. Following a brief talk about native bees and other insects, we will look at examples of these insect hotels, which attract beneficial insects that use them as shelter or as a nesting site. Then, participants will construct a simple insect hotel to take home, using natural materials. This program is recommended for children between the ages of seven to twelve years old, accompanied by a parent or guardian over the age of 18. Younger children are welcome to attend, but may need parental assistance. Meet at the Minnewaska Nature Center. **Pre-registration is required.**

Saturday, August 5, 10:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.: Berry Bonanza Drop-In Celebration at Sam’s Point
In summer, wild blueberries and huckleberries can be found growing along almost every trail at Sam’s Point, providing a tasty snack for both wildlife and hikers alike. Can you identify these two berries? Stop by the picnic area at Sam’s Point to try the berry taste test, make your own berry holder to take with you on your hike, and play a game! Join a Sam’s Point Guide for a short walk to see remnants of berry picker shacks and learn about this interesting culture that once thrived here. The 27 minute documentary, *The Huckleberry Pickers: A Vanished Shawangunk Culture* will be shown in the Visitor Center throughout the day. All children must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian over the age of 18. **Pre-registration is NOT required.**

Saturday, August 5, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.: Leave No Trace Principles for Families at Sam’s Point
Have you ever heard the abbreviation “LNT” and wondered what it means? LNT stands for Leave No Trace and is comprised of seven principles designed by The Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics. At this family friendly program, you will learn how to protect the outdoors as we teach you and your friends and family how to enjoy it responsibly. We will discuss and practice the seven principles of outdoor ethics to ensure that we leave no trace on the lands that we love! This program will take place at the Sam’s Point Visitor Center rain or shine, and it is recommended for adults and children over the age of eight, accompanied by a parent or guardian over the age of 18. **Pre-registration is required by calling Sam’s Point at 845-647-7989.**
Sunday, August 6, 9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.: Hike to the Shingle Gully Ice Caves
Explore the Shingle Gully Ice Caves, where ice persists into summer in deep crevice caves. These caves are in a backcountry area in Minnewaska State Park Preserve. This rugged, protected landscape is accessible only on guided tours led by park staff and volunteer docents. This all-day, strenuous adventure ascends and descends 1,500 feet, includes off-trail bushwhacking and steep rock scrambles, and is only appropriate for experienced hikers. **Pre-registration is required by calling Sam’s Point at 845-647-7989. Pre-registration deadline: August 1st.**

Sunday, August 6, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.: Mossy Glen Meander at Minnewaska
Laura Conner, Environmental Educator, will lead this three-and-a-half mile hike that follows along the edges of the Peter’s Kill, a gently gurgling stream that runs through cool hemlock forests and tropical-feeling rhododendron stands along the Mossy Glen Footpath. This trail does include some tricky footing, including potentially slippery rocks and exposed tree roots, but the other half of this route, which follows along the Lower Awosting Carriage Road, is an easy stroll. Meet at the Awosting Parking Area. **Pre-registration is required.**

Tuesday, August 8, 7:00 a.m.: Early Morning Birders
Designed for birding enthusiasts, or those just looking to learn the basics, this series will offer various outings led by experienced birding volunteers and park naturalists. Participants will meet at the Minnewaska main entrance and should come prepared with binoculars. Outing destinations will be determined the day of the program.

Tuesday, August 8, 9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.: Tuesday Trek: Shingle Gully Ice Caves
Explore the Shingle Gully Ice Caves where ice persists into summer in deep crevice caves. These caves are in a backcountry area in Minnewaska State Park Preserve. This rugged, protected landscape is accessible only on guided tours led by park staff and volunteer docents. This all-day, strenuous adventure ascends and descends 1,500 feet, includes off-trail bushwhacking and steep rock scrambles, and is only appropriate for experienced hikers. **Pre-registration is required by calling Sam’s Point at 845-647-7989. Pre-registration deadline: August 3rd.**

Thursday, August 10, 9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.: Shingle Gully Ice Caves
Explore the Shingle Gully Ice Caves where ice persists into summer in deep crevice caves. These caves are in a backcountry area in Minnewaska State Park Preserve. This rugged, protected landscape is accessible only on guided tours led by park staff and volunteer
docents. This all-day, strenuous adventure ascends and descends 1,500 feet, includes off-trail bushwhacking and steep rock scrambles, and is only appropriate for experienced hikers. **Pre-registration is required by calling Sam’s Point at 845-647-7989.** Pre-registration deadline: August 5th.

**Saturday, August 12, 9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.: Shingle Gully Ice Caves**
Explore the Shingle Gully Ice Caves where ice persists into summer in deep crevice caves. These caves are in a backcountry area in Minnewaska State Park Preserve. This rugged, protected landscape is accessible only on guided tours led by park staff and volunteer docents. This all-day, strenuous adventure ascends and descends 1,500 feet, includes off-trail bushwhacking and steep rock scrambles, and is only appropriate for experienced hikers. **Pre-registration is required by calling Sam’s Point at 845-647-7989.** Pre-registration deadline: August 1st.

**Saturday, August 12, 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.: Berries and Birds at Minnewaska**
Join Emily Shertzer, Student Conservation Association/AmeriCorps Intern, for a delicious morning stroll through the old Minnewaska golf course and orchard. This approximately mile-and-a-half long route wanders amongst blueberry and huckleberry bushes that should be ripe for the picking. Bring a small bag to collect berries as we hike. We will also look out for birds that frequent the golf course, so feel free to bring binoculars as well. Children of all ages are welcome; however, a backpack style carrier is necessary for children who are not able to walk this distance on their own. All children must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian over the age of 18. Meet at the Minnewaska Nature Center. **Pre-registration is required.**

**Saturday, August 12, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.: Berry Picking Stroll at Sam’s Point**
Did you know the Shawangunk Ridge was once home to a thriving berry-picking industry? Discover this fascinating cultural history on a guided hike to the remains of cabins in a berry-picking encampment. We will hike along the three mile Loop Road and search for any remaining tasty blueberries and huckleberries as picking season comes to an end. We will also stop at the Sam’s Point Overlook to experience amazing views of the surrounding valleys and Catskill Mountains. All children must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian over the age of 18. Meet at the Sam’s Point Visitor Center. **Pre-registration is required by calling Sam’s Point at 845-647-7989**

**Sunday, August 13, 2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.: Citizen Science Plant Hike at Sam’s Point**
When do the flowers bloom? When do the leaves fall? We are very curious to find out! In this program, you will learn all about phenology, the study of how plants and animals change throughout the seasons, while working as a citizen scientist to collect information about the plants in the Park Preserve. We will be offering this hike once a month at Sam’s Point to monitor seasonal changes in plants along the Loop Road. Along this carriage road, you will encounter a variety of flowers, ferns, shrubs and trees which change as you move up in elevation. This program is recommended for adults and children over the age of eight, accompanied by a parent or guardian over the age of 18. Meet at the Sam’s Point Visitor Center. **Pre-registration is required by calling Sam’s Point at 845-647-7989.**

**Sunday, August 13, 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.: Beautiful Butterflies for Children at Minnewaska**

Bring the family to the Minnewaska Nature Center to learn about butterflies and what makes them so unique. We’ll search for evidence of their activity, including eggs, caterpillars, leaf chewing and actual butterflies, as we walk the trails near the Nature Center. We’ll also make a simple butterfly craft that your children can take home. This program is recommended for children between the ages of six to ten years old, accompanied by a parent or guardian over the age of 18. Siblings of any age are welcome; however, younger siblings may need parental assistance. Meet at the Minnewaska Nature Center. **Pre-registration is required.**

**Tuesday, August 15, 7:00 a.m.: Early Morning Birders**

Designed for birding enthusiasts, or those just looking to learn the basics, this series will offer various outings led by experienced birding volunteers and park naturalists. Participants will meet at the Minnewaska main entrance and should come prepared with binoculars. Outing destinations will be determined the day of the program.

**Wednesday, August 16, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.: Junior Naturalists at Minnewaska: Music in the Park**

Join park educators for an exciting new program, making music in the Park Preserve. We’ll participate in a listening activity on the trail to learn about sounds in nature and then we’ll make our own instruments and play them together as a group. Children with music experience are welcome to bring their own instruments as well, but no prior musical experience is required. This program is recommended for six to twelve year old children, accompanied by a parent or legal guardian over the age of 18. Meet at the Minnewaska Nature Center. **Pre-registration is required.**
Thursday, August 17, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.: Junior Naturalists at Minnewaska: Who’s Hooting Here?
Learn about a mysterious nighttime visitor at Minnewaska – the owl. We’ll play a game about predator-prey interactions and practice using tools such as a spotting scope and binoculars, which birders and scientists use to observe these fascinating creatures. Then, we’ll dissect real owl pellets. This program is recommended for six to twelve year old children, accompanied by a parent or legal guardian over the age of 18. Meet at the Minnewaska Nature Center. Pre-registration is required.

Thursday, August 17, 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.: Babes in the Woods at Sam’s Point
Come join volunteer leader Renee LaMonica, and other parents with babies or toddlers, at Minnewaska State Park Preserve for an hour of leisurely strolling. “Babes in the Woods” is offered the first Thursday of the month at Minnewaska and third Thursday of the month at Sam’s Point. This program will be offered from June through October, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Please bring a jogging type stroller or back/front pack child carrier. Meet at the Sam’s Point Visitor Center. Pre-registration is required by calling Sam’s Point at 845-647-7989.

Saturday, August 19, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.: Mossy Glen Hike at Minnewaska
Explore the scenic Peter’s Kill Stream with Student Conservation Association/AmeriCorps Intern Emily Shertzer on this three and a half mile hike. We’ll follow along the stream on the Mossy Glen Footpath, surrounded by rhododendrons, then return on the easier Lower Awosting Carriage Road. The footpath includes some tricky footing, including potentially slippery rocks and exposed tree roots. Meet at the Awosting Parking Area. Pre-registration is required.

Saturday, August 19, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.: Live Birds of Prey Drop-In Program at Sam’s Point
Have you ever been so close to a hawk that you could see how sharp its talons are? Have you ever been so close to an owl that you could see what color eyes it has? Now is your chance! Join Annie Mardiney, wildlife rehabilitator for Wild Mountain Birds, and Laura Davis, Sam’s Point Interpretive Ranger, to see and learn about these fascinating raptors. Stop by the picnic area near the Visitor Center to see a variety of live education birds. All children must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian over the age of 18. Pre-registration is NOT required.

Sunday, August 20, 2:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.: Hike with a Ranger to the Ice Caves at Sam’s Point
Join a Park Ranger on this interpretive hike through the Ice Caves at Sam’s Point. Learn about how these fascinating crevices formed, while cooling off in their natural air conditioning! Along the way to the Ice Caves you will see evidence of the wildfire that burned 2,028 acres through the Park Preserve and surrounding lands in April, 2016. It is captivating to see what is growing after the fire, and our Ranger would love to tell you all about it! This hike is three miles roundtrip, with two and a half miles on carriage roads and half a mile on a footpath which includes stone stairs, two small ladders and boardwalk sections. All children must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian over the age of 18. Meet at the Sam’s Point Visitor Center. Pre-registration is required by calling Sam’s Point at 845-647-7989.

Sunday, August 20, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.: Views across the Ravine Walk
Join Emily Shertzer, Student Conservation Association/AmeriCorps Intern, for a Sunday morning stroll along the Castle Point and Millbrook Mountain Carriage Roads to reach two iconic, cliff-edge, scenic lookouts, Kempton’s Ledge and Patterson’s Pellet. These two spots are located across the Palmaghatt Ravine from each other and, if conditions are correct, we should be able to see one from the other and perhaps even the tower at High Point State Park in New Jersey. Meet at the Minnewaska Nature Center. Pre-registration is required.

Tuesday, August 22, 7:00 a.m.: Early Morning Birders
Designed for birding enthusiasts, or those just looking to learn the basics, this series will offer various outings led by experienced birding volunteers and park naturalists. Participants will meet at the Minnewaska main entrance and should come prepared with binoculars. Outing destinations will be determined the day of the program.

Saturday, August 26, 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.: Wildflowers of Summer at Minnewaska
Come take a wander on the trails near the Minnewaska Nature Center to discover, identify and document some of the wildflowers that we will meet on our excursion. As we meander, and come upon a wildflower, we will take some time to document it, through photographing or sketching the flower. Color pastels and sketch paper will be provided. Participants may want to bring a camera, sketch book or preferred medium to work in. For comfort and safety for the outing, participants will want to bring plenty of water, a hat or sunglasses and a comfortable or packable surface to sit on. Meet at the Minnewaska Nature Center. Pre-registration is required.

Saturday, August 26, 10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.: Indian Rock Hike at Sam’s Point
Starting at the Sam’s Point Visitor Center, we’ll hike past the scenic vista at the Sam’s Point Overlook and then make our way around Lake Maratanza. At Indian Rock, we’ll enjoy beautiful views of the Catskill Mountains while we eat lunch. This nearly five mile hike traverses woods roads and a rocky footpath featuring a bog bridge. Most of the terrain is fairly level with some short, steep sections. Please bring plenty of water and a lunch with you. All children must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian over the age of 18. Meet at the Sam’s Point Visitor Center. **Pre-registration is required by calling Sam’s Point at 845-647-7989.**

**Sunday, August 27, 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.: Citizen Science Phenology Hike at Minnewaska**

Learn all about phenology, the study of how plants and animals change throughout the seasons, and collect real data that can be used by New York scientists to monitor climate change. We are offering this hike once a month to monitor seasonal changes in plants along the Beacon Hill loop hike. This two mile hike offers beautiful views of the Rondout and Wallkill valleys as well as the Catskill Mountains. This program is recommended for adults and children over the age of eight, accompanied by a parent or guardian over the age of 18. Meet at the Minnewaska Nature Center. **Pre-registration is required.**

**Monday, August 28, 9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.: Shingle Gully Ice Caves**

Explore the Shingle Gully Ice Caves where ice persists into summer in deep crevice caves. These caves are in a backcountry area in Minnewaska State Park Preserve. This rugged, protected landscape is accessible only on guided tours led by park staff and volunteer docents. This all-day, strenuous adventure ascends and descends 1,500 feet, includes off-trail bushwhacking and steep rock scrambles, and is only appropriate for experienced hikers. **Pre-registration is required by calling Sam’s Point at 845-647-7989. Pre-registration deadline: August 23rd.**

**Tuesday, August 29, 7:00 a.m.: Early Morning Birders**

Designed for birding enthusiasts, or those just looking to learn the basics, this series will offer various outings led by experienced birding volunteers and park naturalists. Participants will meet at the Minnewaska main entrance and should come prepared with binoculars. Outing destinations will be determined the day of the program.

For more information and to register for programs at Minnewaska, please call the Park Preserve Office at 845-255-0752. For more information and to register for programs at the Sam’s Point Area, please call the Sam’s Point Visitor Center at 845-647-7989. Minnewaska State Park
Preserve is open from 9:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m., until July 31st, when the closing time switches to 8:00 p.m.

The fee for parking is $10 per vehicle or a valid Empire Pass may be used. All fees are subject to change. There are no additional fees for public programs, unless noted otherwise.

Minnewaska State Park Preserve consists of over 23,000 acres of wild and scenic land located on Route 44/55, five miles west of the intersection with Route 299 in Gardiner, New York and also includes the Sam’s Point Area, located in the hamlet of Cragsmoor, south of Route 52.

The Palisades Interstate Park Commission administers 30 parks, parkways and historic sites for the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation in New York as well as the Palisades Interstate Park and parkway in New Jersey. For more information about New York State Parks, please visit parks.ny.gov