



Car Trek participants pose for a picture at Heritage Park after a presentation about the ecological importance of the New Jersey Highlands.

Coalition's annual 'Fall Car Trek' highlights history of the Highlands

The New Jersey Highlands Coalition (NJHC) hosted its annual "Fall Car Trek" fundraiser on Sunday, Oct. 23.

The theme of this year's trek was "Industrial Archaeology" with a route that highlighted the rich industrial history of Warren and Hunterdon Counties. Approximately 60 participants met at Subaru World of Hackettstown at 10 a.m. to receive turn-by-turn directions and tour packet before setting out in their personal vehicles to drive the 60-mile route.

Drivers and their navigators enjoyed fall foliage along scenic backroads as they learned about Highland industries from the 1700's through present day.

The tour packet helped participants discover hard-to-spot evidence of former mills, foundries, factories, and railroads as well as the Morris Canal that once connected the Delaware to the Hudson River. The trek wound through Hackettstown, Port Murray, and Califon before a stop at Heritage Park in Bethlehem Township where NJHC Policy Coordinator Elliott Ruga provided an overview of the geography and history of the Musconetcong River Valley and its connection to vast expanses of mature forest to the north.

NJHC Executive Director Julia Somers answered questions from trekkers about the ongoing work of the New Jersey High-

lands Coalition to conserve and protect the resources of this ecologically significant region that provides safe, clean drinking water to 6.2 million New Jerseyans each day.

After the presentation at Heritage Park, the trekkers continued the route to explore the Musconetcong Gorge, the site of the former Finesville Dam, and Pattenburg. The trek concluded in Clinton with many trekkers opting to explore the Main Street shopping district or enjoy lunch at the Clinton Station Diner.

The NJHC Car Trek is made possible with generous support from Motor-sport Club of North Jersey, Sports Car Club of America Northern New Jersey Re-

gion, and the Raritan Valley Sports Car Club. Volunteers Peter and JoAnn Schneider and Bob Shore work closely with Coalition staff to plan a safe and enjoyable route for each Car Trek.

Proceeds from the Car Treks support the conservation and education efforts of the New Jersey Highlands Coalition. "Rain Check Tickets" are still available for \$35 per car and include the full tour packet in PDF format. NJHC strongly advises drivers to have a passenger to serve as a navigator and share the historical information about the sites as they drive by. To purchase a Rain Check Ticket visit www.njhighlandscoalition.org/events

The Boonton based New Jersey Highlands Coalition (www.njhighlandscoalition.org) is the only non-profit organization whose entire focus is protecting the pristine aquifers, lakes and rivers, rugged forested ridges, rolling farmlands, abundant wildlife, historic treasures and diverse recreational opportunities found in the New Jersey Highlands, the State's prized piece of the Appalachian Mountain chain.

It is made up of 114 member organizations, small and large, local, regional, statewide and national as well as over 1,000 individual members who have joined together to safeguard and defend this crit-

ical area. The Coalition is a 501(C)(3) tax exempt organization.

The Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) is a non-profit American automobile club and sanctioning body supporting road racing, rallying, and autocross in the United States. Formed in 1944, it runs many programs for both amateur and professional racers. The mission of the SCCA is to fuel a safe, fun and exciting motorsports experience for auto enthusiasts. The Northern New Jersey Region of the SCCA offers a wide variety of events from RoadRacing and Autocross to simple tours/drivers on the back roads of northern New Jersey.