

A Bench With a View

Life Scout, Sam Fowler, of Hopewell Borough, is working hard to get us all out into the Sourlands!

Sam's Eagle Scout project is to build and install five benches and four signs, describing the different ecosystems at the D&R Greenway Cedar Ridge Preserve and create a small hundred foot trail that leads to the Stony Brook, that runs alongside the preserve. Sam is working with the D & R Greenway, the administrators of the Cedar Ridge Preserve. Boy Scout Troop 71, his family and also many local families are helping Sam to organize and lead volunteers to achieve the project goals.

Although the preserve is located near his house, Sam had never been there before his project advisor, Laurie Cleveland of Hopewell Township, suggested Cedar Ridge as a location for this project.

How aware are you of the treasures that the Sourland region has to offer - the wildflowers, mushrooms, lichens, amphibians...? How often have you exclaimed – I had no idea this kind of thing was right here in my own “backyard!”

Besides the benches being installed by Sam at the Cedar Ridge Preserve, there are many other benches from which to “see the Sourlands.” We sent out Rob Drobish, our Rowen University summer intern, to seek out benches in the many Sourland region parks and preserves (for maps of the Sourland trails below, visit <http://sourland.org/sourland-trail-maps/>) and he found benches at the following parks/preserves: *Otto Farm Park*, Hillsborough; *Pryde's Point*, West Amwell; *St. Michaels Preserve*, Hopewell Borough/Township; *Elks Preserve*, Hopewell Township; *Skyview Preserve*, Hopewell Township; *Eames Preserve*, Hopewell, Township; *Nayfield Preserve*, Hopewell Township.

Sam's project at the Cedar Ridge Preserve will enable him to become an Eagle Scout; in addition to that worthy goal Sam hopes that his project will enable others to “sit down after a long walk or be able to admire the Stony Brook from the new trail.”

When asked why he wants to become an Eagle Scout, Sam gave a response that would make his family and all of his project supporters proud: “I look up to my brothers very much and my older brothers have gotten their Eagle Scouts and I would love to be like them.”

Have you discovered any Sourland benches not listed here? Do you have a favorite Sourland bench from which to see the Sourlands? Tell us about it and tell/show us what you see there. Send an email to director@sourland.org and we will post your favorite spot on our Facebook page to encourage others to get out into Sourland parks and preserves to, in the words of Jim Amon (Sourland Conservancy trustee), “just look and look to see what becomes clear.”