

Monhegan Associates, Inc.

An Island Land Trust

Trails Policy

The aim of the Monhegan Associates' Trails Committee shall be to preserve the natural state of Monhegan's wildlands. When trimming trails it is important to remember that each foot of the way is a place of wild natural beauty. We are not just cutting an easy highway from the trail beginning to a place of beauty and peace at the end. In its work on the trails the Committee shall strive to leave as little evidence as possible of human activities.

1. Where grasses obscure narrow paths, they may be cut back minimally (a few inches, just enough to improve the visibility of the trail to see protruding rocks or roots).
2. On worn trails, watch for small loops formed by roots exposed by traffic. They should be clipped and removed for safety.
3. If feasible, cut thorny fronds (ie blackberry, barberry, and multiflora) at the base, as opposed to clipping at the trail's edge.
4. Clippings of trails should be unobtrusive, with the clippings hidden off the trail, close to the ground. If the trails are very muddy, you may leave the clippings on the trails (use restraint in this regard).
5. When removing small trees or shrubs, always saw them off level to the ground. If a young tree near the path needs extensive trimming, it is better to saw the tree off level to the ground (or pull the tree) than to trim it and leave it in a disfigured condition.
6. When trimming branches, saw or clip them close to the trunk of the tree (just outside the branch collar), provided that the branch can be trimmed without disfiguring the tree. Do not leave 4 or 5 inches sticking out from the trunk. (See addendum for illustrations of how to prune a tree.)
7. When cutting blowdowns, reasonable effort should be made to remove debris from the edge of the path.

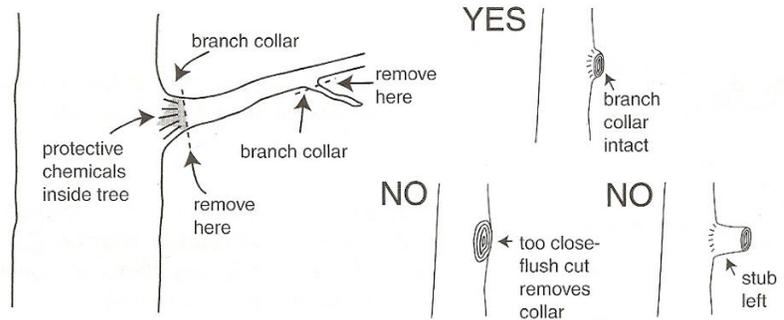
8. The trails should be marked at each end and at junctions with an approved trail sign (about 2.5 inches square, with a green background and white lettering or numerals). A sign with double arrows (↔) may also be used where two trails interconnect. Painting of trail signs directly on rocks or trees is not in keeping with the aims of the Trails Committee.
9. Where false paths intersect trails, Trails Committee Members may block the false trail with brush and the correct trail be indicated with an approved trail sign.
10. When found, cairns should be removed from trails.
11. No existing trails will be closed nor new trails established without the approval of the Trustees. Minor modifications to existing trails may be made at the discretion of the Trails Committee Chairman.

The above criteria are not exhaustive. It is probable that the Trustees and Trails Committee, jointly, will want to add to them as experience warrants. As a protection both for the Trails Committee and for the Monhegan Associates, Inc., the trails policy ought to be set by the Trustees in consonance with the Monhegan Associates' statement of purpose.

Addendum: Illustrations for Pruning Trees

Save Branch Collars

Trees produce natural chemicals to prevent decay from entering the tree at the base of each branch or limb. To preserve this chemical zone, leave the slight swelling, or branch collar, at the branch base. The resulting wound will be smaller than if the branch were cut flush. This rule applies to large limbs and small branches.



Remove Whole Limbs or Branches

It is preferable to remove an entire limb or branch rather than to shorten its length. Branches may be cut back to a twig, or twigs to a bud, where new growth will resume. This technique respects natural growth patterns.

