



Fundraising Guide



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Photo by Kate Schoonmaker

Cover Photos Left to Right: High Angle Rescue Training by Chuck Reid; Indigo Bunting by Tom Weiner; Invasive Species Management in Action by Mohonk Preserve Staff; Pin Oak Allee Summerhouse by Gerald Liddelow



Welcome



Thank You for being a Ridge Rocker and helping Mohonk Preserve create a place where people and nature thrive!

You are raising funds to support Mohonk Preserve's mission – to protect the northern Shawangunk Ridge and inspire people to care for, enjoy and explore the natural world.

Our goal is to make your Rock The Ridge fundraising campaign easy, successful and fun! We've created this guide and toolkit so you'll have everything you need to have an effective fundraising campaign.

We recommend you read the entire guide and refer to it throughout your fundraising campaign.

This guide will help you:

1. Learn how your fundraising efforts support Mohonk Preserve
2. Prepare your fundraising message and materials and launch your fundraising efforts
3. Identify your list of possible donors
4. Set goals and design a calendar to keep you on track



Getting To Know Mohonk Preserve



Rock The Ridge fundraising supports Mohonk Preserve, New York's largest member and visitor-supported nature preserve. Mohonk Preserve protects over 8,200 acres of mountain ridges, forests, fields, streams, ponds and other unique and beautiful places.

Mohonk Preserve's mission is to protect the northern Shawangunk Ridge and inspire people to care for, enjoy, and explore the natural world.

Our Programs:

- **Community Education** — We serve over 40 area schools and adults through our award-winning, innovative outdoor education programs.
- **Conservation Programs** — We protect fragile habitats, scenic viewsheds and key recreation areas and conduct conservation, climate and natural history research to manage the Preserve's ecosystems.
- **Stewardship** — We protect and manage over 8,200 acres of property including 70 miles of historic carriage roads and trails, along with the Visitor Center and trailheads, and other Preserve buildings, facilities and equipment.
- **Visitor Experience** — We provide member and visitor safety and support services and maintain the critical balance between recreation and conservation. In 2024, Mohonk Preserve was designated as a Leave No Trace Gold Standard Site, the first to achieve the designation in New York State.



Preparing Your Campaign



Craft Your Message and Tell Your Story

Stick to 3 points you want people to remember:

1. Event
2. Cause
3. Ask

Example:

I'm (running/hiking) 50 miles during Rock The Ridge for Mohonk Preserve. Ridge Rockers like me fundraise to protect the northern Shawangunk Ridge and inspire people to care for, enjoy, and explore the natural world. Would you please donate to my campaign and help protect our environment?



Preparing Your Campaign



Customize Your Fundraising Page

Make your fundraising page personal and engaging by including:

- A personal story about why you're participating in Rock The Ridge and what motivates you.
- Photos of yourself on the trails or during training runs.
- Updates on your training journey and thank-yous to keep your network engaged and invested in your success.
- A clear invitation to donate and encourage supporters to leave a comment to help build momentum.

The more personal and authentic your page is, the more likely people are to connect with your story and support your fundraising goals.

Photo by Maryalice Citera



Preparing Your Campaign



Prepare a Written Message

Find your personal connection to Mohonk Preserve. Ask yourself, what does nature/Mohonk Preserve mean to me? How does being outdoors impact my life? Why is protecting the environment important to me?

Write a sincere, informative message.

- **Why do I want to participate in Rock The Ridge?**
- **Why is this cause so important?**
- **Who is reading this message?**
- **What aspects of Mohonk Preserve can I highlight to inspire this donor?**



Preparing Your Campaign



Show Donors the Impact of Their Support

Bring donations to life with examples:

\$10 — Helps to care for Mohonk Preserve's resident rescued turtle, who is a nature ambassador to visitors and school children during education programs.

\$50 — Would provide a new trail sign at one of our 200 trail and carriage road intersections.

\$75 — Underwrites one school student to experience nature on a guided visit to the Preserve.

\$100 — Helps protect and steward one acre of land.

\$250 — Assists in providing an outreach program like Pond Keepers to an entire class of school children.

\$500 — Would support one week of Ranger Rescue Services.



Making The Ask



Whom Should I Ask?

Develop your contact list, including your friends on social media. Keep it simple. Your friends and family care about you and want to support your efforts.

- Family
- Friends
- School
- Small Businesses
- Neighbors
- Co-Workers
- Healthcare Providers
- Groups and Organizations

Tip: Don't be afraid to hear "no" — while many people will be happy to support you, some will say "no" and that's okay!



Rocking Your Campaign



Set Fundraising Goals

Setting monthly targets for yourself can help you pace your campaign and prevent procrastination.

You'll even earn awesome Rock The Ridge swag for going beyond the minimum.

Set a Fundraising Timeline

Write your fundraising goals on your calendar and set reminders on your computer or phone.

Map out when you will ask each group of people on your contact list, and when you will follow up with those who haven't donated.

Make sure you thank your donors!



Rocking Your Campaign



How to Fundraise in One Week:

Day 1: Kick off your fundraising campaign by supporting yourself with a \$25 contribution. Announce your plans and campaign goals on social media. Include a link to Mohonk Preserve's website so your followers can see what you're raising money to support. Don't be surprised if you get some donations right away!

Day 2: Thank your new donors personally with an email or note and on social media. If you received \$50 in donations, share that on your social media platforms with an upbeat post!

Day 3: Make a direct ask on social media or via email. Talk about what donations support (refer to page 8). Publicly thank social media friends who donate.

Day 4: If your employer allows, ask co-workers to support your campaign.

Day 5: Thank your new donors personally with an email or note and on social media. Keep those posts lively and fun. Remember to include a link to your campaign.

Day 6: Give a final campaign report via email and on social media. If you only need \$75 to reach your goal, let your friends, family and followers know! Remember to give a big shout out to everyone who has supported your campaign.



Thank You!



Get out there and rock your fundraising campaign!

For additional fundraising information or questions, contact:

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Photo by Kate Schoonmaker