



## CHATHAM TRAILS ASSOCIATION

Grove Place, Unit 29, Winchester, MA 01890

March 2010

Greetings CTA Members,

Spring is here! The winter snow pack is melting and the trees are starting to open their buds. The winter storms were slow to add to the snowpack but did provide us with some snowshoe hikes and cross country ski adventures.

As we take advantage of the limited opportunities to enjoy a few more hikes on snow covered trails, the CTA Board and our partners at the Forest Service are gearing up for the 2010 trail maintenance season.

CTA has an important role in keeping Evans Notch and Cold River Camp a premier hiking destination. Although much of our work is done on our two work weekends, they are only one part of our trail stewardship. Caring for nearly 40 miles of trails is a year round effort. The success of our work is not just achieved by the boots-in-the-mud, tool-wielding crews but with the many hours of supportive work accomplished by members engaged in tool and sign maintenance, camp chores, office and administrative tasks, and supporting contributions. It is the combination of these efforts that makes CTA the vital organization it is today and I thank each of you for your contribution to this success.

### 2009 Season

CTA reported 834 hours of trail work to the Forest Service; 696 hours on the two work weekends and 138 hours during the rest of the season.

The 2009 season started with adopters visiting their trail as soon as the trails dried and began getting the trail back into shape. Over 50 volunteers, traveling from as far as South Carolina, gathered Memorial Day weekend. Ten new volunteers joined us this season. Crews performed basic trail maintenance, cleaning and repairing waterbars and drainage ditches, removing blown down trees and cutting brush to open trail corridors.

Our friends from Trailwrights also joined us, providing technical skills and leadership. Their efforts were concentrated on improving the treadway and drainage on the Stone House Trail. Fifteen new waterbars and over 200' of ditching was constructed. Corridor definition work pushed back the brush, making the trail easier and safer to hike.

The second weekend, registered as a National Trails Day event, had only 7 volunteers. Work was done on the upper part of Bicknell Ridge Trail to repair the braided trail in the krumholz on the ridge. The crew worked their way down brushing part of the lower section. On Sunday the crew continued the corridor definition work begun by Trailwrights on the Stone House Trail.

The USFS introduced new initiatives for skill training program for all adopters. The USFS is asking all workers to participate in one day of training each year with the goal of teaching current techniques and improving the quality and effectiveness of our efforts. Three CTA members attended the training session. Given the CTA work weekend schedule, the USFS agreed to our proposal that members attending the sessions bring the training back to the crews on the weekends.

For the third season, CTA volunteers partnered with CRC leaders leading a Trail Stewardship hike. These hikes are our opportunity to introduce CRC guests and hikers to trail construction and maintenance and CTA stewardship activities. Bob & Ellie Goeke led the hikes this year.

Our partnership with Summit Achievement saw students make a significant contribution to our stewardship efforts. They worked on the Shell Pond Loop Trail digging drainage ditches, improving water bars and installing a box culvert.

Our partnership with the Forest Service and CRC at the Brickett Place has resulted in an increase in visitation; through our efforts the center is open four days each week. This success has helped secure a \$400,000 grant to restore the building.

Highlights for this year included approval by the IRS of our application for 501(c)3 non-profit status. Also an embroidered CTA patch designed by the members was produced. The patch with a "Volunteer" rocker will be presented to participants in the work weekends. A separate "Adopter" rocker is presented to those making the extra year round effort on selected trails.

The records and documents of CTA are now in safe storage with the Chatham Historical Society. Ann Landers with the help of Barbara Eastman organized records dating back to our founding by year. Copies of key documents have been placed in the CRC Library. If you are interested in the history of CTA and CRC, plan a trip to the Chatham Library and Historical Society and peruse the collection.

The dues and contributions from our 238 members has been the principal source of funds. Closing out this year our expenses exceeded receipts by several hundred dollars. Since 2005 when I was first elected to the Board, the net worth of CTA has decreased from over \$10,000 to under \$7,000. Expenses and food for the work weekends is our most significant expense.

The 2009 season was most successful.

### 2010 Season

The 2010 season began in March, meeting with the Forest Service to review accomplishments and to explore ways to cooperatively assess trail conditions, complete basic maintenance and planning work projects. This collaboration is done in part by careful review of the previous year's work, reports turned in by trail adopters and the knowledge of damage sustained by the trails as a result of winter conditions.

January brought news that long time member Jack Harrington who attended every work weekend and was one of the "core" group looking out for the needs of CTA and it's members, continued his support in the form of a bequest. The gift in the amount of \$94,000 will provide for CTA's future. The Board is discussing the best method of investing and protecting these funds for long term return. We expect to present a proposal at the annual meeting.

Our first 2010 trail weekend will be Memorial Weekend, May 28-31. The annual membership meeting will be held Saturday May 29. The second weekend is June 4-6 and this year coincides with National Trails Day. Based on discussion at the annual meeting arrangements that "a long weekend" may improve attendance, arrangements have been made for members to stay longer if they wish. We will complete basic maintenance and tackle some trail improvement projects. The CRC work weekend coincides with our second weekend so we will have the opportunity to catch up with friends.

The idea of reinstating the fall work weekend has been brought up by several members. We will be exploring the availability of space at CRC and seeking a commitment from members. Please contact Volunteer Coordinator Sandy Finn if you are interested in participating.

Considerable planning is required for the weekends including preparation for meals, lodging and work projects, please register for the trail weekends as soon as you are able. You may register for the trail weekends at our website [www.chathamtrails.org](http://www.chathamtrails.org) or by contacting volunteer coordinator Sandy Finn (603-232-1721, [sandycta@comcast.net](mailto:sandycta@comcast.net)) or by returning the Volunteer Registration form by mail to: Sandy Finn, 1163 Island Pond Road, Manchester NH 03109.

In addition to basic trail maintenance and work weekends, other projects for 2010 include our partnership with the Forest Service to improve and operate the Brickett Place Wilderness Information Center. The grant-funded restoration work on the building should begin this season. The exhibits may be moved to

temporary quarters while the work is done. We will continue our partnership to improve the displays and support staffing.

We look forward to leading Trail Stewardship hikes for CRC guests this summer. This is a wonderful opportunity to share our care for the trails with other hikers.

As I look to the future some goals for CTA are:

- Recruit new trail adopters to increase our year round presence on the trails
- Increase participation for the second and fall work weekends
- Identifying members to serve on the Board and as officers
- Increase participation in tool, trail work planning and membership committees
- Improve the website and publicity
- Identify members who will attend USFS skills day to attend one of the skill days (May 29, June 5, 12 or 19) and help train CTA volunteers
- Writers for American Hiking Society (AHS) grants and USFS Cooperative Project Proposals
- Recruit members and hikers to create and update the Trail logs for all our trails. This involves walking with a measuring wheel and recording trail features, structures and sites where work is needed. We will provide training and equipment
- Create a financial plan to ensure a strong future and enable us to continue our contribution to Evans Notch

We need the help of all our members. Consider throwing your hat in the ring as part of the membership or tool committees; or perhaps working on the website or publicity is more up your alley? Is it time to adopt a trail, renew your membership or make a donation? Better yet, recruit a new member and introduce them to the fun and fellowship of CTA!

Your work and commitment to the trails are both noticed and appreciated. Hikers express their thanks as they pass, CRC hike leaders and hikers write notes of thanks in their trip reports and the USFS, who cannot do all the work required with their limited resources, recognizes our contribution to the quality of the WMNF.

Thank you for all your support for CTA, CRC and the WMNF. I look forward to seeing you this spring as we meet renew friendships, meet new friends and spend some time on the trails of Evans Notch. Please contact me and let me know how you can help keep CTA strong.

Happy hiking,

Michael V. Zlogar  
CTA President  
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**Register early for the trail work weekends!**  
**The annual meeting is Saturday May 29, 7:30 p.m. at Cold River Camp**