



CTA Newsletter

Chatham Trails Association

Maintaining hiking trails in the Evans Notch area of Maine and New Hampshire since 1922

Old Trail Signs Auction

Here's your chance to buy a CTA Trail Sign



Trail signs are replaced as needed, mostly due to weather effects. Mike Zlogar saw that we were not keeping up. In 2011 we did a complete

inventory and created a master plan to bring our signs up to date. After FS approval, we began a major replacement project in 2015. It will be substantially complete in 2017, after which we will replace signs as they wear to avoid another major project.

We're auctioning the old signs to cover the cost of the new signs. 20 signs will be available on eBay no later than November 15. The auction for each sign closes in only 7 days; eBay displays the auction closing time and date for each sign. Winners can have their sign shipped, or put aside for pick up the next time they are near A.M.C. Cold River Camp.

Go to www.ChathamTrails.org or our Facebook page for the link to the eBay auction.

Thanks to Jim Boros for managing the auction.

It's Time to Renew Your Support for the CTA

Our goal each year is for dues and donations to cover our Operating Expenses. Although donations have been going up, we continue to have an operating deficit. To close the gap we need to bring in about \$3,300 more by the end of 2016. It cost us almost \$50 to put one volunteer out on the trail for one day.

We hope you'll send a generous donation. Please make your check out to Chatham Trails Association and **mail it to Steve Fink, 2062 Main Road, Chatham, NH 03813.**

You can also make a donation by credit card or using PayPal at our website, go to ... www.ChathamTrails.org.

Financial Summary

Operating Financials

We'll report 2016 actuals in our spring newsletter. In the meantime, here are two years of history, this year so far, and this year projected.

	2014 Actual	2015 Actual	2016 thru Oct.15	2016 Estimated
Operating Income				
Net Sales (1)	211	(304)	830	830
Program	870	1,764	1,239	1,239
Revenue (2)				
Public	2,438	3,425	2,479	(4) 3,319
Support (3)				
Total	3,519	4,885	4,548	5,388
Operating Expense				
Program (5)	4,798	5,926	6,577	6,577
Admin (6)	338	2,471	1,086	1,086
Total	5,136	8,397	7,663	7,663
Net Ordinary Income (Loss)				
Total	(1,617)	(3,512)	(3,299)	(2,275)

Notes to the Financials

(1) **Net Sales** is revenue from parking passes, T-shirts, Note Cards, and Hiking Guides, less the Cost of Goods added to inventory. Starting in 2017 all this comes out of the operating budget. We'll borrow the cost of goods from our endowment and repay the endowment when we make sales.

(2) **Programs** include sales of parking passes and trail maps. We've exhausted our supply of maps. A new edition will be printed in 2017. Starting then, this cost, too, will be borrowed from the endowment and sales will repay the endowment.

(3) **Public Support** is dues and donations.

(4) This figure estimates that 2016 year-end dues and donations will be the same as in 2015.

(5) **Program** The biggest item is work weekends (this cost goes up as we get more volunteers) plus outreach and supplies.

(6) **Administrative** includes insurance, website hosting, postage, printing, Brickett Place support, and government fees.

Trailmaster's Report

Maintaining and improving trails is why the CTA exists. We maintain 40 miles of trails in the Evans Notch area. We have seen a steady increase in the quality of our trails due to the conscientious efforts of our members. The trail corridors are wide and comfortable to walk and the water bars are moving water off the trail and preventing erosion.

In 2016 CTA reported 1084 hours of trail work to the Forest Service. Sixty-nine members participated in trail maintenance and projects.

Highlights of our work weekends:

Memorial weekend. Forty volunteers, traveling from all over the northeast, gathered Memorial Day weekend. Twelve new volunteers joined us this weekend. 510.5 hours were contributed to trail maintenance. Crews of 3-4 members concentrated efforts on one to two miles of trail to complete basic trail maintenance; cleaning and repairing water bars and drainage ditches. Nearly all 40 trail miles were visited this weekend. Volunteers invested extra efforts in corridor definition work, cutting back the brush, to open the trails to the USFS standard (4' wide x 8' high).

National Trails weekend, June 3-5. This weekend was listed as a National Trails Day event. Nineteen volunteers contributed 217.5 hours. This was our second year installing new signs. Thirty new trail signs were installed on Slippery Brook, Eastman Mountain, Stone House, Shell Pond, and Deer Hills. We have installed a total of 66 new signs in the past two seasons.

Fall Weekend September 30-October 2. Thirty-three volunteers, including 5 first time volunteers (now new members) worked on a variety of trail improvement projects. One crew focused their efforts to restore Shell Pond and Shell Pond Loop to the USFS standard. The water bars and drainages were repaired and reshaped and the corridor was opened to the standard. A second crew reconstructed a portion of the Blueberry Ridge Trail near the junction with Bickford Brook Trail. This wet and muddy area was cleared of debris, drainage was installed, the treadway raised and hardened for comfortable hiking. A third crew cleared large and challenging blow downs on the Hermit Falls and Laughing Lion Trails.

Training. In keeping with the USFS initiatives for skill training, we incorporate activities and resources into the work weekends with the goal of improving the quality and effectiveness of our efforts. Members have the opportunity to learn about the USFS trails program and standards and to learn best trail work practices. A member of the Saco District staff joins us on Memorial Day weekends to lead a crew for a training experience. .

Trail Improvement Projects. Each spring, part of our basic maintenance is an assessment of work needed on the trails. Basic maintenance does not allow time to work

on trail improvements. The assessment reports are compiled into a project log, currently about 40 projects. Once the tools are put away at the end of a weekend, the projects are prioritized and planning begins so the work is ready for future work weekends.

Each year during the National Trails Weekend and the fall weekend we complete some of these projects. More projects are being added to the list than we can complete in a season. We are searching for new strategies to grow our most important resource-our members and the hours they contribute to the trails and to a quality experience for hikers.

Our thanks to all our volunteers. Please pass the word and help us recruit more new volunteers.



Volunteers replacing trail signs
on the summit of Little Deer

Visit Our New Facebook Page

Thank you Susan DiPietro for setting up the CTA Facebook page. You are invited to add content. Please visit www.Facebook.com/ChathamTrailsAssociation/.

The CTA Endowment

The CTA Endowment started in 2010 when Jack Harrington left a bequest of \$94,000 to the CTA. The fund is professionally managed. Withdrawals cover operating deficits and capital projects. The balance is currently about \$106,000.

Each year, CTA policy permits us to spend up to 4% of the fund balance, averaged over the previous 20 quarters. The first priority is covering any operating deficit. The remainder is available for capital projects like the new tool shed, purchasing tools, etc.

Starting in 2017, we will borrow from the Endowment to buy items CTA sells, like maps and tee shirts. Revenue will be repaid to the Endowment. The CTA Board will only approve loans it expects to fully repay, plus 0.5% monthly interest on the unpaid balance, to cover the income and appreciation the funds would otherwise have earned.

The Endowment is an important feature of the CTA. As it grows, it will support an increasing number of volunteers and allow CTA to undertake bigger projects that may require professional help. Please consider including the CTA Endowment in your will. Contact President@ChathamTrails.org for more information.

Upgrading the CTA Website

Jim Boros, CTA Webmaster, is enhancing the CTA website, with the goal of having everything completed by late winter. Look in at www.ChathamTrails.org from time to time. Send suggestions to Webmaster@ChathamTrails.org.

CTA Contact List

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- (1) Merritt manages the CTA tools
- (2) Michelle assists in recruiting volunteers, including college outing clubs, etc.
- (3) Mike assists in evaluating possible grants and in drafting grant proposals

To receive future CTA Newsletters only by email, send a request to Webmaster@ChathamTrails.org

The New CTA Tool Shed



Building the new CTA Tool Shed next to the woodshed at CRC

For years, CTA's trail maintenance tools have been crammed into a small closet in the back of *Rayner's Roost*. There has also been an open locker in the back of that building with a complete set of tools that Cold River campers can use for small trail maintenance projects that come up in-between CTA work weekends. But everything had been overcrowded.

We've wanted to put up a tool shed and workshop for years, but we couldn't afford it. Finally, in 2016, the accumulated payout from the endowment let us do the job with volunteers.

On September 29 and 30, Mike Zlogar, Bob Saari, and Dick Pollock, under the direction of Todd Flagg, put up the new building. Our thanks to them and Hancock Lumber for providing all the materials at a discount.



CRC Volunteers stained the new CTA Tool Shed on October 8, during CRC Closing Weekend

New WMNF Challenge Cost Share Agreement

Good News! We've been working for several years with the Forest Service to qualify CTA for a cost-share agreement. It finally came through. Over a period of five years, CTA will put up \$8,000 in cash and the Forest Service will match it 2.5:1, which means the FS will contribute \$20,000. In addition to cash, the FS will put up staff time, and the CTA will put up volunteer time, all aimed at completing one or more major projects – projects generally beyond the scope of CTA's volunteer efforts. The money must be spent with a FS approved professional trail crew on a FS approved project.

Under this agreement the FS has already approved a 0.3 mile switchback near the top of the Stone House Trail. We hope to begin working on this in 2017. In addition to the professional trail crew, which must be involved, we're looking into how volunteers might contribute to the work, perhaps in a special week-long work session.

The CTA Endowment can fund a portion of CTA's \$8,000 obligation. However, we plan to launch a special fund raising campaign, looking for a few one-time larger donations specifically directed to this program. More information to come.

Chatham Trails Association
2062 Main Road
Chatham, NH 03813

Trail Work Weekends for 2017

Mark your calendars with the 2017 trail work weekends at A.M.C., Cold River Camp.

May 27-28-29, 2017 Memorial Day weekend

June 3-4, 2017 National Trails Day weekend

September 30 to October 1, 2017

Register at www.ChathamTrails.org.

Accommodations are in the comfortable cabins at A.M.C. Cold River Camp, with centralized showers and toilets. Meals are professionally prepared and served in the Conant Lodge dining room. You are welcome to arrive for dinner the Friday before. **No charge for volunteers.**