



CTA Newsletter

Chatham Trails Association

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

Coming in June

New Edition of the CTA Trail Map

A new CTA hiking trail map of the Cold River Valley and Evans Notch will be published and available for sale this spring. For several reasons, the new map will not have Janice Whipple's trail profiles on the reverse side. Instead the Tyvek® map, designed to fit in your shirt pocket, will feature on its reverse side a blown-up version of the trail network in the vicinity of CRC, as well as information on CTA membership, Leave No Trace, emergency contact information, and trail and scenic highlights. In addition to the long-time hardcopy format, the map will also be electronically available for the first time via the CTA's web site. The new map will be available for sale at Camp this summer (\$10) and, starting in June, it can be ordered at www.ChathamTrails.org for \$12 (\$10 + S&H).

In Memoriam – Dwight S. Wilder

Past CTA President Dwight Wilder passed away on February 8 at his home in Grantham, NH. Dwight served CTA for many years as president (2002-2004), vice-president (1998-2001), and as a Director. He and his wife, Meg Holland, were also active at Cold River Camp for many years. He was 70 years old.

Dwight graduated from Johns Hopkins University in 1968, and is remembered as an educator, craftsman, and storyteller. His sharp wit and notorious sense of humor brought smiles and groans to all who knew him, much to his delight.

In lieu of flowers, Dwight's family invited memorial donations to the Chatham Trails Association. As of March 24, CTA has received 21 donations in memory of Dwight totaling \$1,345. Thank you! Visit the CTA website for a list of memorial donors.

Visit the CTA Website

www.ChathamTrails.org

CTA is modernizing! Visit our website for the latest news, to register for a volunteer event, to make a donation via PayPal, to communicate with CTA leaders, to read past newsletters, to review CTA financials, to see CTA bylaws, to explore CTA archives, etc. We plan to enhance the website to allow hikers to report trail problems and see reported problems. Send comments and suggestions to Jim Boros at Webmaster@ChathamTrails.org.

Trail Signs Auction

Another chance to buy a CTA Trail Sign

10 more retired CTA Trail Signs go up on eBay for auction over the weekend of April 15-16.

The auction will last 7 days. For a direct link to the auction, go to the CTA website or Facebook page on April 15. You will also find a report there on the November auction. Thanks to Jim Boros for managing the auction.

Trailmaster's Report

THANK YOU to all who have contributed to our trail maintenance work. Without the commitment of our volunteers we would not be able to continue our stewardship work and maintain quality trails for hikers.

In 2016 sixty-nine members invested 1084 hours performing the basic maintenance tasks of cleaning drainage on the trails, cutting back brush to keep the trail corridor open and easy to follow, and ensuring the blazes and signs marking the trails are in good condition. Volunteers completed several projects that improved the trails including reconstruction drainage and rebuilding the trail treadway in a wet, muddy section of the Blueberry Ridge Trail.

Plans are in the works for the 2017 season.

Trail improvement needs that were reported by our trails crews and by hikers are being evaluated to determine what resources will be required to complete the work and to prioritize the projects so we can make the best use of our work weekends.

In January Jim Boros, Don Devine and I attended the annual partner meeting with the Saco District staff to review accomplishments during 2016 and to look at our priorities for the next two seasons. This is an important step since most work beyond basic maintenance is required to undergo a NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) review by USFS staff. The biologists, hydrologists, soils, wildlife and foresters all review the proposal and provide comments and guidance. The process can take some time but the reviews provide us information that will result in a

plan that will not impact endangered plants, animals and wetlands.

The plan for the Stone House Trail improvement was updated. CTA was awarded cost-share funds to enable us to make a significant improvement to the steep, eroded section of the trail.

Memorial weekend, May 26-29. We look forward to fifty volunteers gathering to patrol all 40 miles of trails to clear drainages, remove blow downs, open the corridor and assess needs for work on the trail.

National Trails weekend, June 2-4. The highlight of this weekend will be the installation of 20 new trail signs. This is the third year of the installation phase of the sign project and we will have replaced all of the signs with the exception of a few in the wilderness area that are in good condition

Fall Weekend September 29-October 1. Crews will work on trail improvement projects including bringing corridors and drainage to the USFS standard and working on some needs for better trail marking and correcting some perpetually wet areas of the trails.

Training. Our members participate in a variety of training that helps us maintain quality trails. Our partnership with the USFS has helped incorporate skill training into the work weekends activities. 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 weekend to lead a crew for a training experience. .

Please join in our stewardship work. Our trails vary from easy to strenuous so volunteers of all ability and experience can help. We provide training, coaching and the tools.

Thank you for your support.
Mike Zlogar, Trailmaster

Update on the WMNF Challenge Cost Share Agreement

CTA is great at maintaining hiking trails, and that work consumes pretty much all of our resources during our three annual volunteer trail work weekends. Sure, almost every year we also get a chance to work on the serious remediation of one or two trail sections, but more complex trail remediation and trail relocations are beyond the scope of our usual work.

As previously reported, CTA and the WMNF reached a cost-share agreement in early 2016, under which funds can be used to hire a professional trail crew to address major rehabilitations projects and trail re-locations. There are probably a half dozen places on the CTA trail system that could use this kind of effort.

It's a five year agreement that has already run for one year. 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 multiple day, maybe week-long, work session, in addition to our regular work weekends.

Annual distributions from the CTA Endowment can fund a portion of CTA's \$8,000 obligation. However, we're looking for a few one-time special donations of \$1,000 or \$2,000 to close the gap. Please help us. Contact Don Devine if you'd like to make such a donation or if you'd be willing to work on soliciting major donations.

Conant Trail Rehab

Late in 2016 there was logging on a private woodlot through which the Conant Trail passes. As you hike counterclockwise it is the section which starts where you leave the woods road and make almost a U turn at a large old cellar-hole, and start uphill. We do not yet know how much work will be required to re-open this section. We'll assess it in early in May and work on it, as resources permit, during our first two trail work weekends. But we can't predict when this section will be back to standard.

Looking for a Trail Project?

There are lots of easy trail maintenance projects near Camp that can be accomplished by one or two people in half a day. CTA tools are handy and Don Devine can show you the projects. Also, as you are hiking some longer trails a little further from Camp, there are some other things you could do, all without requiring tools, which will add only 15 or 20 minutes to your outing while making a worthwhile improvement. If you're interested, ask Don Devine. He lives near Camp and will try to stop by on Saturday evenings to meet incoming summer guests.

Visit the CTA Facebook Page

Add content to the CTA Facebook page. Visit

www.Facebook.com/ChathamTrailsAssociation/

CTA Operating Financials

	2014	2015	2016
Operating Income			
Net Sales	211	(304)	830
Program Revenue	870	1,764	1,359
Public Support	2,438	3,425	3,745
Total	3,519	4,885	5,934
Operating Expenses			
Program	4,798	5,926	5,754
Admin	338	2,471	1,785
Total	5,136	8,397	7,539
Net Ordinary Income	(1,617)	(3,512)	(1,605)
Other Income			
Trail sign sales			920
Tool Shed donation (1)			2,654
Total			3,574
Other Expenses			
New Trail Signs (3)			824
Trail sign sales costs (4)			189
Tool Shed materials (1)			2,654
Total			3,667
Net Other Income/Expense			(93)
Up tp 4% of endowment (2)			1,346
Net Operating Cash Flow			\$(352)

Notes

- (1) Volunteers contributed the labor, Hancock Lumber discounted the materials, an anonymous donor paid for the materials.
- (2) \$4,192 available; \$1,346 taken.
- (3) Material and labor.
- (4) Pack/ship supplies & PayPal fees

Consider a Bequest to 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. Distributions cover operating deficits and capital projects. The balance at the end of 2016 was \$112,597 up from \$106,853 at the end of 2015.

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 and supplies, etc.

In addition, starting in 2017, CTA can borrow from the Endowment to buy items CTA sells, like maps and signs. Revenue is repaid to the Endowment. The CTA Board will only approve loans it expects to fully repay, plus a reasonable interest rate, 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.*** For information contact President@ChathamTrails.org.

CTA Contact List

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 Ann Landers Archivist@ChathamTrails.org
 Michelle Murray (2) Outreach@ChathamTrails.org
 Mike Arnott (3) Grants@ChathamTrails.org

- (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

Get Involved in CTA Leadership

One of the great things about Americans is their dedication to create and voluntarily support organizations for the public good, donating their time, skill, energy, and financial support to a purpose they know is important and an activity they find personally rewarding. There are thousands of examples of this in America, and few anywhere else in the world.

Public spirited Americans have made The Chatham Trails Association a success in its mission of maintaining hiking trails in the vicinity of Cold River Camp. Thanks for your financial donations, and thanks for your volunteer trail work.

We're now looking for a new generation of leaders to see us through the coming decades. Our small Board of Directors has two critical opening right now, for **Vice President** and for **Secretary** and, in the relatively near future, we will need a new President. On October 1, 2017, Don will have served as president for 6 years. He's willing to continue helping out, but he is looking for someone to step up to take over. Are you ready to take your turn? Do you know someone who would be just right for this job? Ideally you or that person should step in as Vice President now and work toward an orderly transition. To learn more, contact Don Devine (see the CTA Contact List).

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

Volunteer for 2017 Trail Work Weekends

May 26-29, Memorial Day weekend

June 2-4, National Trails Day weekend

September 29 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 Friday dinner. **No charge for volunteers.**