



CTA Newsletter

Chatham Trails Association

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

Another Trail Signs Auction

Our fall 2017 auction of retired trail signs was a great success. Our thanks to all of the generous bidders. All proceeds go to the CTA Endowment which paid for the last round and continues to finance our ongoing sign replacement project. If you did not get the sign you wanted ...

**10 more signs
will be up for auction on eBay
at noon on Sunday, April 29th,
closing on Sunday, May 6 at noon.**

Information about and pictures of the signs will be available once the auction officially starts on the 29th. The CTA Facebook Page, website (see address in the footer), and a blast email will be used to inform the community about the auction. If you decide to bid, thank you for your support and good luck on winning the sign(s) you want!

Our thanks to Mark Weston for managing the Trail Sign Auction again.

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

Trailmaster's Report

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

2017 accomplishments

The majority of our work is 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 that trail marking (blazes and signs) are in good condition.

Sixty-six members invested 769 hours of trail maintenance in 2017. Not included in the total are the hours for support tasks and helping in the kitchen. The hours contributed this year are about 25% below our typical level of 1100 hours.

The Officers, Board members and members who have volunteered to take responsibility for various functions spent many hours throughout the year on administrative and planning tasks without which our stewardship would not be possible.

In 2011 we began a project to replace and update all signs on our trails. Eighty-nine new signs were installed over the past three seasons. All signs have been updated. We will be monitoring the signs during spring patrols and replacing any damaged or missing signs as needed.

One important role of the crews, while performing basic maintenance, is assessing and monitoring trail conditions and reporting work needed to improve the trail. The reports from crews and hikers are collected in a master list of trail needs. The proposed projects are evaluated to determine what resources (volunteer hours and funds) will be required to complete the work. Projects are prioritized based on safety and trail protection. This list of

priority projects is our guide to ensure we make the best use of our work weekends.

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. Several members attended the ax and crosscut saw training offered by the Forest Service.

Our Plan for the 2018 season.

We welcome Bob Saari and Bernadette Cassidy who have volunteered to serve as Assistant Trailmasters. They have joined me in planning for the upcoming season and will help with organizing and managing the trail work weekends.

We have a lot of work planned for this season. We encourage you to invite others to join us to further our stewardship work and to make new friends at Cold River Camp.

Don Devine, Ray Jackson and I attended the annual partner meeting with the Saco District staff to review accomplishments during 2017 and to look at our plans and 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, soil scientists, wildlife biologists and foresters all review the proposals and provide comments and guidance. The process can take some time but the reviews provide us information that will result in trails that will not impact endangered plants, animals and wetlands and will be sustainable (think lower maintenance) for years to come

I submitted two projects for approval. The first is on the Deer Hills Trail moving the trail in the col between Little Deer and Big Deer to higher and drier ground. This project was approved by the USFS and we expect to begin work this spring. This is similar to work we did on the Deer Hills By-Pass a few years ago.

The second project is to construct a bridge over the stream on Horseshoe Pond Trail. Erosion is moving gravel from the trail into the stream making the crossing more difficult and impacting the stream. This project is undergoing the NEPA review. The proposed bridge is 18 feet long. The material cost is estimated at \$700.

Memorial weekend, May 25-28. 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 1-3. Once all the basic maintenance is complete we will begin work on the Deer Hills Trail and will start blazing all the trails in this area.

Fall Weekend September 28-30. 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.

This year, in response to CTA member interest we are looking into hosting a guest speaker share with us about life, history and working in the White Mountain region.

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

Thank you for your support!
Mike Zlogar, Trailmaster

Stone House Trail Improvement

Members of CTA and the hiking community have wanted to “do something” about the steep climb on the Stone House Trail. The initial thought was to install steps similar to the work done on White Cairn Trail about 18 years ago. Rehabilitating this part of the trail was identified as a priority and submitted to the USFS for review. After review and consultation with USFS staff and a trail design expert, we

determined that installing the estimated 200 rock steps was not practical. We decided that a better option was to construct about .4 miles of new trail to create a switchback with a grade of about 10%.

With the design complete, the Stone House Trail improvement project was added to the USFS list of small projects eligible for funding. Last year CTA was an awarded cost-share funding to enable us to hire a contractor to perform the work. The cost share program requires that CTA provide a match equal to 20% of the contract. More recently, the WMNF has agreed that volunteer hours can be counted toward the required match.

In January 2018 requests for proposals were sent to contractors for bids to be submitted by April 1. We expect to select a contractor late spring and will work with them to select a start date.

White Mountain Trail Collective

Two years ago, representatives from trail maintaining clubs in the White Mountain region gathered to discuss challenges we face meeting our mission to maintain trails in the region. We all are experiencing difficulties procuring adequate resources and funding and recruiting new volunteers to our organizations. The USFS, in partnership with Plymouth State University, provided support and leadership for the organizational process. Many hours were spent studying the issues and developing a white paper to guide the development of a backbone organization.

The group adopted the collective impact model as a guide to bring the trail stewardship community together. The fourth meeting was held March 10 at PSU. The agenda included updates on the development and funding for the organization, workshops addressing key issues and a presentation of the first collective project, the rehabilitation of the Crawford Path in preparation for the 200th anniversary. More information will be available on the WMTC website and Facebook page.c

Treasurer's Report

CTA Operating Financials - 2017

	2015 Actual	2016 Actual	2017 Actual
Operating Income			
Net Sales	(304)	830	608
Program Revenue	1,764	1,359	410
Public Support	3,425	3,745	4,782
Total	4,885	5,934	5,800
Operating Expenses			
Program (1)	5,926	5,754	6,036
Admin	2,471	1,785	2,863
Total	8,397	7,539	8,899
Net Ordinary Income (Loss)			
Total	(3,512)	(1,605)	(3,099)
Other Income			
Trail Sign sales		920	1,733
Tool Shed Donation (2)		2,654	1,069
Borrow from Endowment for new maps (3)			6,350
Memorial Fund donations			2,080
Major Projects Fund donations			1,195
New map sales (3)			1,915
Total		3,574	14,342
Other Expenses			
New Trail Signs		824	438
Trail Sign sales costs		189	185
Tool shed construction (2)		2,654	1,069
New map design and printing			6,350
Deposits in Endowment fund			
Net old Trail Sign sales proceeds			1,110
Memorial Fund donations			2,080
Major Projects Fund donations			1,195
Map Sales proceeds (3)			1,915
Total		3,667	14,342
Net Other Income (Loss)			
Total		(93)	-
Grand Total			
Total		(1,698)	(3,099)
Up to 4% of endowment (4)		1,346	3,470
Net Operating Cash Flow		(352)	371

- (1) Includes \$1,000 owed to Cold River Camp at year end
- (2) An anonymous donor paid for the electrical work to complete the tool shed built in 2016.
- (3) In 2017, \$6,350 was borrowed from the Endowment to pay for the printing of new trail maps; new map sales proceeds of \$1,915 were repaid to the Endowment.
- (4) \$4,245 available; \$3,470 taken

Sign Up for the 2018 Trail Work Weekends

May 25-28, Memorial Day weekend
June 1-3 National Trails Day weekend
September 28-30

Register at www.ChathamTrails.org

Accommodations in the comfortable cabins at
A.M.C. Cold River Camp, with centralized
showers and toilets. Meals are professionally
prepared and served in Conant Lodge. You are
encouraged to arrive for Friday dinner.

No charge for volunteers.

Get Involved in CTA Leadership

In addition to trail work volunteers, we need a few folks to help manage the CTA. Each job is well defined. **If you'll take on a job, we promise not to expand that job or press you to do even more.** That way everyone will know what's expected.

There're openings on the **CTA Board of Directors, Vice President, and Secretary**. The Board usually meets face-to-face only once a year, during our Memorial Day work weekend. We transact most of our business by email, and typically we deal with only one or two new matters a year. Even our budget is pretty routine.

Contact Don Devine to explore any of these jobs, or, if you have some specific project that you'd like to get started and run for the CTA.