

2015 Massachusetts Trails Conference



November 13-14, 2015
Double Tree Hotel and
Conference Center by Hilton
Leominster, MA

Sustainable Trails for a Sustainable Future



DCR is hosting this conference in partnership with the Massachusetts Recreational Trails Advisory Board (MARTAB) with funding provided through the Recreational Trails Program.

November 13, 2015: Field Trips

Field Trip 1: Half-Day (9am – 12pm) on Pine Hill Trail at Wachusett Mountain State Reservation

Steve Crowe of the Appalachian Mountain Club, Worcester Chapter will demonstrate some of the skilled work that is required to build the impressive Pine Hill Trail natural stone staircase, including a demonstration on splitting rock and discussion of other related rock work.

Field Trip 2: Half-Day (1pm – 4pm) at Barret Park in Leominster, MA

Dick O'Brien will lead a group on a hike through the network of trails at the City of Leominster's 75-acre Barret Park, where recent improvements as a result of receiving a PARC grant have served to provide safe and accessible trail experiences throughout the park. The Leominster Trail Stewards will join the group on the trails, for an interactive discussion around trail planning, construction, maintenance and other trail-related issues.

Field Trip 3: Full-Day (9am – 4pm) Bus Tour exploring Lancaster and Clinton Trails

Spend the day exploring Lancaster and Clinton learning about their cultural heritage and singular trails. Town planners and trail stewards will share how they are successfully visioning, implementing, linking, and funding recreational trail systems for diverse users. Site visit and walking locations will include the Cook Conservation Area along the Nashua River in Lancaster and the Rauscher Farm in Clinton.

November 14, 2015: Conference Agenda

7:00	Registration
8:00	Welcome
8:15	Keynote Presentation Woody Keen, Trail Wisdom, LLC.
9:15	1st Concurrent Sessions
10:45	2nd Concurrent Sessions
NOON	LUNCH & Massachusetts Trails Award Presentation
1:30	3rd Concurrent Sessions
3:00	4th Concurrent Sessions
4:15	Social Hour, Networking
5:00	Conference Ends

Keynote Address

Keynote Speaker: Woody Keen

Grand Ballroom

Woody Keen is the owner of Trail Wisdom, LLC and was a founding partner and served as president of Trail Dynamics for 12 years. He served as President of the Professional TrailBuilders Association for 4 years and was the first east coast builder to serve in that capacity. In his 15 years as a trail professional, Woody has earned an international reputation for his work on innovative sustainable trail design and construction projects which address the full spectrum of trail use, from hiking and mountain biking to equestrian, off-highway vehicle and accessible trails. He has worked in 25 states, 2 Canadian provinces, Scotland and Grand Cayman. He is semi-retired now allowing for more time recreating on and studying trails. His recent journey from Bend, OR to Brevard, NC had him traveling on trails in 7 states and 3 National Parks. Though semi-retired, Woody still does some consulting work focusing on trail education, and risk management.

Keynote Topic: Building S.M.A.R.T.E.R Trails
(Sustainable, Manageable, and Artistic Recreational
Trails that are Ecological Sound and have good
Risk Management Strategy).

Grand Ballroom

We have all heard the word “sustainability” and understand that, when applied as a trail design principle, you get a better trail that lasts longer while requiring less ongoing maintenance. A typical discussion around what is a sustainable trail will cover trail construction measures including surface materials, slope, grade and erosion control structures. However, in considering the sustainability of a trail, it is essential to its longevity that you incorporate a holistic and practical approach and begin the process by asking “what is a sustainable trail?” A trail should prove to endure not just physically, but be planned and designed to incorporate and address other, less acknowledged, components of sustainable trails including ecological, managerial and social sustainability. This presentation will elaborate on these four pillars of trail system sustainability that play a key role in the planning and design process of a successful trail, providing a practical and integrated approach to getting trails on the ground and keeping them there while also providing the trail experience that trail users are looking for.

Morning Indoor Sessions

1st Concurrent Workshops

9:15 - 10:30

Session 1

Amphitheatre

How to Build Big by Starting Small: Benton MacKaye, the Appalachian Trail, and the Bay Circuit

Benton MacKaye (1879-1975), the visionary conservationist best known for proposing the Appalachian Trail in 1921, was a long-time resident of Shirley, Massachusetts. Larry Anderson's presentation will trace the geographic influence of this local Massachusetts landscape on MacKaye's conception of the Appalachian Trail, as well as his other influential local, regional, and national trail and conservation efforts, including his role as a founder of The Wilderness Society. Anderson will focus in particular on MacKaye's involvement during the 1920s and 1930s in promoting the idea for the Bay Circuit, a protected belt of open space surrounding Boston, which evolved into today's Bay Circuit Trail.

Presenter:

Larry Anderson, Freelance Writer, Independent Scholar, and Conservationist

Session 2

Irving Berlin Room

Engaging Youth in Urban Forests – Highlighting the Brockton Audubon Preserve and Morton Middle School in Fall River

Urbanization has taken a toll on natural landscapes. Technology has distracted the younger populations from going outside and experiencing nature. Subsequently, many urbanites, and more importantly youth, have lost their connection to natural areas leading to documented effects on health and well-being. Many organizations and partnerships are seeking to provide that lost connection between urban youth and their natural environment through programming aimed specifically to engage youth in stewardship and educational opportunities at nearby nature preserves, parks and forestlands. This session will cover Wildland Trust's successful effort to engage local high school and college students in educational programs at the Brockton Audubon Preserve as well as the successful collaboration between the City of Fall River and Morton Middle School in fostering stewardship and educational opportunities for urban youth.

Presenters:

Katie O'Donnell, Program Manager for Community Conservation, Wildlands Trust

Karen Grey, Executive Director, Wildlands Trust

Maureen Estes Flanagan, Community and Family Partnership Coordinator at Morton Middle School in Fall River, MA

Mike Labossiere, Watuppa Reservation Watershed Superintendent, City of Fall River

Session 3

Gershwin Room

Organizing, Engaging & Sustaining Volunteers

Successful trails are the product of partnerships among a wide variety of entities. Arguably, no entity is more essential in the overall management of a trail system in the current economic climate than the volunteer community. With reduced funding sources and staffing levels, trails have never needed volunteers more. This session will cover steps in the process of organizing, engaging and sustaining a volunteer base effectively, safely and in a way that is mutually beneficial. Concrete information on volunteer recruitment, training and retention based on best practices of volunteer management will be covered as well as tips for organizations to increase the volunteer base and expand their capacity. This session will explore three diverse programs that foster collaboration and fuel passion for trails and their stewardship.

Presenters:

Jordan McCarron, Conservation Stewardship Program Coordinator, Town of Lexington

Bonnie Newman, Volunteer, Lexington Conservation Stewards

Fran Longton, Volunteer Coordinator, United Way of North Central Massachusetts

Noreen Piazza, Planning Director, Lancaster Community Development and Planning

Session 4

Cole Porter Room

Selecting the Right Bridge for Your Trail: Sustainable Bridge Design and Construction Guidance for Trails Organizations

Trail bridge planning can be perceived as a daunting and intimidating task to a trail volunteer or planner without prior experience. This session seeks to educate and provide guidance as a starting point for this process. Reed Brockman will begin the session with an overview of bridge types, costs, scenarios and conditions that play an important role in bridge type selection for long-term sustainability, based on his experiences volunteering with colleges, K-12 programs, and community service efforts in addition to his career as a structural engineer. The Student Conservation Association will pick up from there with a discussion of their bridge design and construction process using trained volunteers, including high school-aged teens. Topics will include bridge types and applications, challenges, logistics, and what works

Presenters:

Reed Brockman, P.E., Licensed Structural Engineer

James Sims, Conservation Service Coordinator, SCA Massachusetts AmeriCorps

Tim Craig, Program Director, SCA Massachusetts AmeriCorps

Session 5

Rodgers Room

Designing Sustainable Trails for Different Primary Uses

When planning and designing a trail for a primary recreational user group, the basic design, layout and construction principles are often the same. However, different goals will emerge for different users that are important to recognize and incorporate into the design process. Understanding user goals, motivations and desired experiences is key to providing SMARTER trails. While the general alignment design focuses on physical sustainability principles, the exact alignment and trail specifications focus on social sustainability which is also important to achieve managerial sustainability. Are the users motivated by the destination (getting to a waterfall) or the experience of the trail and how any given section “feels and flows” (trail runners and mountain bikers). Are trail users looking for an easy travel trail or something more burly and technical? Answering these and a whole host of other questions are important in the trail planning process and paramount to developing the trail system to satisfy the ever changing needs/desires of a growing trail user population. Come learn from one of the most respected trail planners and bring your questions about specific user trail design.

Presenter:

Woody Keen, Trail Wisdom, LLC.

Session 6

Hammerstein Room

Practical Considerations in the Design and Construction of Accessible Trails

Using four accessible trails as models, this workshop will explore some of the practical issues and considerations you will encounter as you implement your accessible trail plan. The four examples include the national accessible trail model at Crotched Mountain Rehabilitation Center in Greenfield, NH, the accessible trail at DCR's Dunn State Park in Gardner, MA, the newly constructed accessible trail at the City of Leominster's Barrett Park, and the accessible trail at the Trustees Doyle Conservation Center and Park in Leominster, MA. The presentation will cover aspects of the Federal Accessibility Guidelines, the Wetlands Permitting issues, the RFB process in bidding the work, and specific construction techniques that have been found to work.

Presenter:

Dick O'Brien, Trail Designer, Conservation Works LLC

Morning Indoor Sessions

2nd Concurrent Workshops

10:45 – 12 Noon

Session 7

Amphitheatre

Sustainable Tourism: Building a world-class off-road bicycle network in Southern New England that brings value to communities

Southern New England's railroad infra-structure was over-built by a factor of three and today with the transformation from a smoke-stack industrial economy, this network mostly lies abandoned. Much of this track mileage led to large mill complexes that are either torn-down, vacant or redeveloped into modern uses. The abandoned network of rail lines connects large cities, small towns, village centers and everything in between. Much of this network presents a unique opportunity waiting to be rediscovered/redeveloped into trail networks that connect the places many of us live, work and play. This workshop will show the abandoned network; where the re-development is taking place; and the potential for safe, family-oriented, off-road routes for both day trips and multi-day journeys. The attendees will also learn the pros and cons of developing either a fixed base or an inn-to-inn tour for bicycle tourism and touch on the infra-structure needed to set up such a system. Finally, the session will highlight stories of three places and the economic development that happened there, because of the rail-trail based tourism.

Presenters:

Craig Della Penna, Executive Director, Northeast Greenway Solutions

Session 8

Irving Berlin Room

Different Voices – Connecting People & Place

Join a lively conversation on using trails, working landscapes and open spaces to foster action and understanding of nature, environment, health and culture. Presenters will share how challenges fueled opportunities to create value, involvement and outreach with the communities that surround and define them. "Listen in" on engagement efforts from different organizations and leaders from the Berkshires, Fitchburg, Franklin County and Medford MA. Presenters will discuss how they involved diverse people and communities of interest, and navigated conflicting needs and motivations while building connectivity, ownership, trust and sustainability.

**Organized by Freedom's Way National Heritage Area in partnership with Montachusett Regional Trails Coalition and the National Park Service.*

Moderator:

Sheri Bean, Transportation Planner at the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission

Panelists and Topics:

Neil Anderson, Friends of the Middlesex Fells Reservation

Mary Giannetti, Philanthropy Generalist, Heywood Healthcare

Rachel Stoler, Franklin Regional Council of Governments

Dan Bolognani, Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area, Housatonic River Walk

Session 9

Gershwin Room

Partnerships (Motorized and Non) for Sustainable Trail Development: Maine Case Study

Trails support a wide variety of recreational user groups. Whether dictated by the past and culture of an area, the setting and terrain, or the design of the trail, each trail can only support those uses that will allow for its sustainability going forward. If trail use is not consistent with trail design, then the trail will either be destroyed, along with the natural resources that trails are meant to highlight, or it must be re-designed to sustain the desired use. This session will cover the challenges and successes of the Maine Department of Natural Resources in addressing trail development and maintenance while promoting partnerships among the trail user groups to ensure a safe, enjoyable and sustainable trail experience for everyone. After a presentation highlighting Maine's efforts, a panel of Massachusetts-based stakeholders will discuss distinctions and possibilities in promoting partnerships in this state to primarily address illegal use of OHV's on trails and partnerships to address a future where OHV riders and other recreational trail users groups can work together for a common solution.

Moderator:

Mike Toomey, Massachusetts Forest and Park Friends Network

Presenter:

Brian Bronson, Recreational Safety & Vehicle Coordinator - ATV Program, Maine Division of Parks and Public Lands

Panel:

Jim Sherman, President, New England Trail Rider Association (NETRA)

Christopher Bullett, West Region OHV Coordinator, DCR

Bob O'Connor, Forest & Land Policy Director, Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

Session 10

Cole Porter Room

Trail Signage: Wayfinding and Interpretation

This session begins with an overview of the research of the Groton Trails Committee into various alternatives for directional signs at trail intersections in the woods. The discussion will include a survey that was taken of what is in use world-wide, the various dead-ends that were explored and the solution that was finally chosen for the Groton trails system. This solution is surprisingly inexpensive, long lasting, low maintenance and accessible to anyone in Massachusetts. The session will continue with an overview by DCR Interpretive Services on the best way to reveal, relate and enhance the visitor experience and foster stewardship using interpretive best practices in your interpretive trail signage. This will include a summary of interpretive methods and tools that guide the design, development and installation of interpretive trail signage.

Presenters:

Olin Lathrop, Town of Groton Trails Committee

Kristin Karl-Carnahan, Chief of Interpretive Services, DCR

Session 11

Rodgers Room

Working with Conservation Commissions and the Wetland Protection Act

This session will discuss the Wetland Protection Act and how trails advocates can most efficiently and cost-effectively navigate through the regulations and requirements. Participants will leave the session with a solid sense of when they need to file, how to have a good relationship with the town Conservation Commissions, and how to avoid negative impacts on wetlands and complications in the filing process.

Presenter:

Mark Stinson, Circuit Rider for Western Regional Office, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection

Session 12

Hammerstein Room

Striving for Sustainable Trails in the White Mountains

Learn about what it takes to sustain one of the oldest and largest trail networks in the country. The AMC Trails Department will detail the organizational management and fieldwork that is necessary to maintain, construct, and design sustainable trails in the heavily trampled White Mountains.

Presenters:

Brendan Taylor, North Country Trails Volunteer Programs Supervisor, Appalachian Mountain Club
Zach Urgese, White Mountain Trails Supervisor, Appalachian Mountain Club

Afternoon Indoor Sessions

3rd Concurrent Workshops

1:30 – 2:45

Session 13

Amphitheatre

Trails as Community Connections: Engagement beyond the Path

Trails come in many forms, but the best trails are places that provide enjoyment to users as well as connections within communities. Likewise, trails can be designed to create visitor experiences specific to a given community. This session will review three unique case studies in which trails have created special community spaces in different ways. The session will also cover practical planning tips and suggestions for enhancing visitor experiences along trails. Topics will include: Trail construction with purpose, cost effective ways to build appealing systems, creating town or regional trail guides, “value-added” experiences and examples of trail systems created with the purpose as destinations.

Presenters:

Daniel P. Biggs, RLA, Team Leader/Senior Landscape Architect, Weston & Sampson

Michael Tully, Senior Parks Project Manager, City of Springfield Parks Department

Ryan Mann, Executive Director, Westport Land Conservation Trust

Session 14

Irving Berlin Room

Recreational Trails Program and Transportation Alternatives Funding for Trails

This presentation will discuss federal transportation funding programs that benefit trails and trail-related activities, focusing on the Transportation Alternatives Program and the Recreational Trails Program. These programs provide funds to develop transportation and recreation infrastructure. They benefit the traveling public, help communities to increase transportation choices, and provide funds for States to develop and maintain trails and trail-related facilities across the spectrum of recreational trail user groups. The program coordinators for each of these funding sources in Massachusetts will provide an overview of funding availability, requirements, application procedures and successful project examples.

Presenters:

Peter Sutton, Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Coordinator, MassDOT

Amanda Lewis, Recreational Trails Program Coordinator, DCR

Session 15

Gershwin Room

Managing Trails for Multiple Uses: the Middlesex Fells Case Study

Trails and trail systems can be many things to many different users – places to exercise on foot or bike, an opportunity to find solitude and escape from the stresses of daily life, ways to connect home to work, a place to walk with a dog– sometimes these many goals and uses of trails can create or lead to conflict. Trail system managers need to anticipate, understand, plan for and manage multiple uses and users in ways that satisfy demand, but minimize conflict. The Middlesex Fells Reservation, nearly 3,000 acres just 5 miles north of Boston, is an historic DCR property that attracts dogs owners, mountain bikes, hikers, families, athletes and nature seekers in large numbers and in close quarters. This session will explore some of the various conflicts that can arise in a popular trail system, and discuss some of the approaches the DCR has used and is using to manage for multiple uses.

Presenter:

Paul Jahnige, Director of Greenways and Trails, DCR

Session 16

Cole Porter Room

Trail Planning and Design for Wildlife Impacts

This session will present an overview of known impacts to wildlife from trail construction, management and maintenance; and highlight methods and strategies to incorporate wildlife habitat support and protection into trail projects and maintenance plans. The session will also provide species-specific examples of impacts and project success stories.

Presenter:

Jennifer Jones, Wildlife Stewardship Biologist, Northeast District of the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife

Session 17

Rodgers Room

Trail Easements and Lease Agreements: Getting Trails and Trail Facilities Built on Land You Don't Own

Often trails are designed because land is available and ready to be developed for recreational use, but, in other situations the work must start with acquiring an easement or parcel of land before the trail design process can begin. This is often the case in Rail Trail and long-distance trail planning, or when access points, parking areas, and other vital components of a trail system require additional pieces of land in order to complete the project goals. This session will cover the process by which a trail organization can work with private or institutional landowners to secure trail easements, licenses or handshake agreements. Permitting, easement documents and case examples of easement negotiations, successes and pitfalls will be covered. The session will also cover the process by which Squannacook Greenways became the first non-profit in Massachusetts to sign an MBTA lease, giving them the legal right to build the Squannacook River Rail Trail in Townsend and Groton. Presenters will describe the twelve year process, the other options that were pursued, the actual lease bidding procedure, and the implications for a non-profit signing an MBTA lease.

Presenters:

Pete Westover, Conservation Works, LLC

Bill Rideout, Squannacook River Rail Trail

Steve Meehan, Squannacook River Rail Trail

Session 18

Hammerstein Room

Striving for Sustainable Trails in the White Mountains

(Repeat Session – See Session #12)

Afternoon Indoor Sessions

4th Concurrent Workshops

3:00 – 4:15

Session 19

Amphitheatre

Planning Municipal Trail Systems for a Healthier Community

This session will discuss the synergy of thinking about multi-use trails, multi-modal transportation systems, land use patterns, open space and public health holistically to meet multiple needs. The presentation will cover how to develop the resources needed to expand trail systems, drawing from experience in the development of 12 miles of multiuse trails in the Northampton area, as well as other bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, using a wide variety of financial, regulatory and policy approaches.

Presenter:

Wayne Feiden, Director of Planning and Sustainability, City of Northampton

Session 20

Irving Berlin Room

Bringing a Trail Network to Life: Partnerships, Strategies and Challenges in Developing Multi-Community Trail Systems

This session will highlight two trail development projects that have been successful, but also challenged, in their efforts to create a multi-town, diverse stakeholder, multi-landowner trail system that crosses many borders and walks of life. The two case studies will cover the “Ten Town Trails Linkages Project” in Western Massachusetts and the Titanic Rail Trail in Central Massachusetts. Both projects address different goals and user groups, while both require an optimistic, shrewd and adaptable planning process in covering the myriad issues encountered when working to link a trail system among communities, land owners, stakeholder/user groups and the policies, procedures and emotions connected to them.

Presenters:

Jeffrey Scott Penn, Architect in Western Massachusetts, active in Historic Preservation, Planning, Conservation and Recreation

Thomas Chamberland, Retired U S Army Corps of Engineers Park Ranger, Community Trail Advocate and Volunteer

Session 21

Gershwin Room

Trail Assessments: Visitor Experience and Sustainable Trails

Trail Assessments are an important vehicle in the trail planning and design process, which can ultimately improve the visitor experience and contribute towards the creation of a sustainable trail system. This session will present the nuts and bolts of a good trail assessment, technology and methods for conducting them, and strategies for using the assessment to attract funding, engage local support and advance on the ground improvements. Recent trail assessments conducted by the National Park Service have been used not only to identify current conditions and quantify needed trail infrastructure improvements, but also to engage trail organizations, local communities, state agencies and funders. Using current technology platforms, The Trustees of Reservations have implemented innovative methods for assessing trails, which have helped to inform the development and application of standards while also shaping budgets, fundraising efforts, volunteer projects, and work plans.

Presenters:

Charles Tracy, Superintendent, New England Trail, National Park Service

Carl Demrow, Trail Designer, Seven Oaks Consulting

Tom O'Shea, Director of Field Operations, The Trustees of Reservations

Vin Antil, GIS Program Manager, The Trustees of Reservations

Session 22

Cole Porter Room

Building a Trail Boardwalk: Permitting, Design and Implementation

A trail boardwalk is a functional and often attractive method in constructing trails in sensitive and challenging environments. Whether your goal is to create an accessible trail on uneven and unpredictable terrain, navigate a wetland crossing by necessity or create an interpretive or nature-based experience within a unique, wet environment; a boardwalk will likely be a key component of your project. This session will cover two projects that required a boardwalk to develop a trail system. The variety of methods by which a boardwalk can be built and with what materials may surprise participants as well as enlighten future trail project, regardless of budget and particular skillsets of the work party.

Presenters:

Robert Decelle, Volunteer, Andover Trails Committee

Bettina Abe, Natural Resources Assistant, Town of Acton Natural Resources Department

Session 23

Rodgers Room

Trail Planning and Permitting: The Nitty Gritty

This workshop will provide participants with examples of DCR and Municipal trail projects from soup to nuts incorporating planning, environmental permitting, construction, trail use monitoring and maintenance. Projects discussed will range in magnitude and include trail maintenance activities in the Blue Hills Reservation, new trail construction in the Holyoke Range and Middlesex Fells, bridge abutment reconstruction at Maudslay State Park, river crossings in the city of Worcester, and a trail reroute in the Town of Hingham. The workshop will give participants opportunities to learn about the challenges associated with trail planning, construction, and permitting, as well as learn some valuable tips and tools that help ease navigating through the process.

Presenters:

Alexandra Echandi, Wetland/Wildlife Scientist, BSC Group, Inc.

Jeff Fasser, Senior Landscape Architect, BSC Group, Inc.

Session 24

Hammerstein Room

Practical Considerations in the Design and Construction of Accessible Trails

(Repeat Session – See Session #6)

2015 Massachusetts Trails Award Recipient

Alan French **Champion and Implementer of the Bay Circuit**

Many were involved in the evolution of the Bay Circuit concept from the 1920s through the 1980s, including Benton MacKaye, The Trustees of Reservations and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation and the National Park Service. But it was Alan French who led the effort towards its implementation.

Alan was a part of the State's initiative to develop the Bay Circuit greenway concept in the 1980's focusing on protecting an outer emerald necklace. This effort stalled and at the suggestion of the National Park Service, the focus shifted to focusing on engagement directly with communities in establishing a trail through the heart of the greenway. A leader was needed to spearhead the Bay Circuit Trail effort, and Alan volunteered. Along with Steve Golden and Ron McAdow, they hiked existing trails, paddled rivers, and biked roads for 10 days to confirm the trail concept.

The next step was the formation of the Bay Circuit Alliance, a nonprofit, volunteer-led and staffed organization, with towns, conservation groups and land trusts as members. Alan was the Chairman and Executive Director and quickly built an extraordinary organization. This was a grassroots collection of people and organizations that understood the importance of establishing and protecting a trail as both a town and regional recreational resource. The first segment of the trail was established in Boxford that year, and, with each "Bay Circuit Trek" the membership and miles of trail grew and more communities joined in the vision of protecting open space and establishing a trail that people could use to enjoy the abundant open space around Boston.

There were many obstacles to confront in developing the Bay Circuit Trail through suburban Boston. Access permission issues, restrictions and changes of use, commercial and residential development, and private land agreements that all needed to be negotiated and resolved. In his work, Alan was a master of persuasion, a true networking salesman, and set standards for regional trail development that are still used today. Alan's accomplishments are significant and include:

Membership: 6 regional, 4 statewide, and 35 local member organizations


Expansion of the greenway: more than 4,000 acres

Trail coverage: 37 towns

Trail mileage: 245 miles, 64% off-road

Main Trail from Plum Island to Kingston Bay: 92% complete

Alan retired in 2013 and handed over the Alliance responsibilities to a partnership of the Trustees and AMC. Through his dedication, determination, and tireless effort, he has accomplished a monumental task. At his retirement party, held on top of Holt Hill at Ward Reservation in Andover, overlooking the vast expanse of land to Boston and south to Kingston Bay, he was lauded for leading the effort to realize a trail and greenway system that has become the outer Emerald Necklace for Boston.



The health and happiness of people across Massachusetts depend on the accessibility and quality of our green infrastructure—our natural resources, recreational facilities, and great historic landscapes.

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, watersheds, dams, and parkways, including over 3,500 miles for woodland trails, and over 200 miles of paved multi-use paths and rail trails. Led by Commissioner Carol Sanchez, the agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit www.mass.gov/dcr. Contact us at mass.parks@state.ma.us.

The Massachusetts Recreational Trail Advisory Board (MARTAB) is a volunteer board, appointed by the DCR Commissioner through the Director of DCR's Recreational Trails Program. As an independent entity, it provides advice to DCR staff on issues and projects of importance to the trail community. It represents every major trail user group from motorized users to non-motorized users and seeks to promote a cooperative, practical approach to solving trail issues. Its most important function is to make recommendations to the Commissioner on the distribution of the federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP) funds that come to each state from the US Department of Transportation. MARTAB also sponsors educational workshops and the Massachusetts Statewide Trails Conference to improve the skills, experience and networking of the many individuals working to enhance our trail network within the Commonwealth.