

TRAILS and GREENWAYS

stewardship council meeting 10.12.23



TRAIL BENEFITS



Provide access to natural and cultural resources

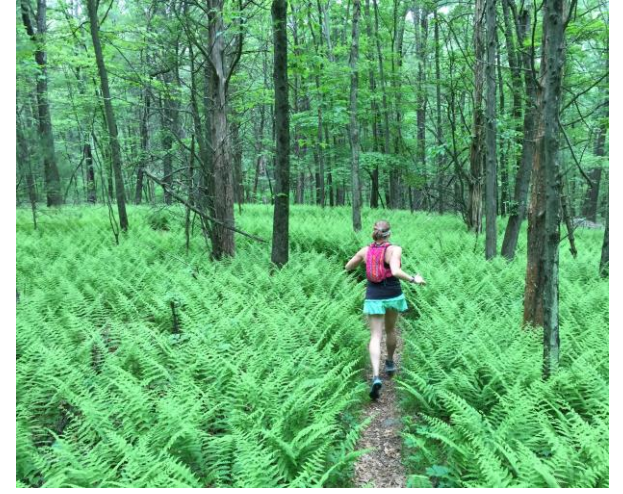
Provide outdoor recreation and sustainable transportation opportunities

Protect sensitive resources by directing the public to well-planned facilities

Support public health for all residents and communities

Support state climate resiliency, economic development, and equity goals

DCR TRAIL NETWORK



GREENWAYS are shared use paths for recreation and transportation that serve people walking, running, cycling, using wheelchairs and strollers, and more. Some are “rail trails” built on former railroad lines.

STATE PARK AND FOREST TRAILS serve hikers, mountain bikers, equestrians, off-highway vehicle riders, snowmobilers, XC skiers, and snowshoers.

ACCESSIBLE TRAILS are enjoyed by a host of different users including young families, elderly, people in wheelchairs, people with visual impairments, etc.

DCR TRAILS and GREENWAYS SECTION

Greenways



**design, build, maintain, &
expand shared use path network**

MassTrails



**lead grant program, outreach,
& information sharing**

State Park and Forest Trails



**plan, maintain, repair, & enhance
quality trail system experiences**

STAFFING STRUCTURE

Gerald Autler, Director, Trails and Greenways Section

Greenways	MassTrails	State Park + Forest Trails
<div>Stella Lensing, RP IV</div> <div>Amber Christoffersen, RP III</div>	<div>Amanda Lewis, RP IV</div> <div>Libby Knott, RP III</div> <div>Eli Velluti-Fry, RP II</div>	<div><i>Vacant, RP IV</i></div> <div>Ellen Huffman, RP III</div>

PARTNERSHIPS and FUNDING

- **State Capital Funding** (more detail on next slide)
- **Federal Recreational Trails Program:** Currently \$1.2M for MassTrails grants
- **American Rescue Act Plan (ARPA):** \$24M for trail investments through 2026
- **MassDOT:** Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) provides federal funding for many major greenway projects
- **Student Conservation Association (SCA):** Runs the annual Massachusetts Conservation Corps with DCR, providing support for over 40 weeks of natural surface trail crew projects
- **Multiple foundations** are providing funding and technical assistance support for trails work
- **Ongoing collaboration** with trail organizations, municipalities, community groups to shape policies and programs and advance individual trail projects.



CAPITAL FUNDING growth from FY21 to FY24

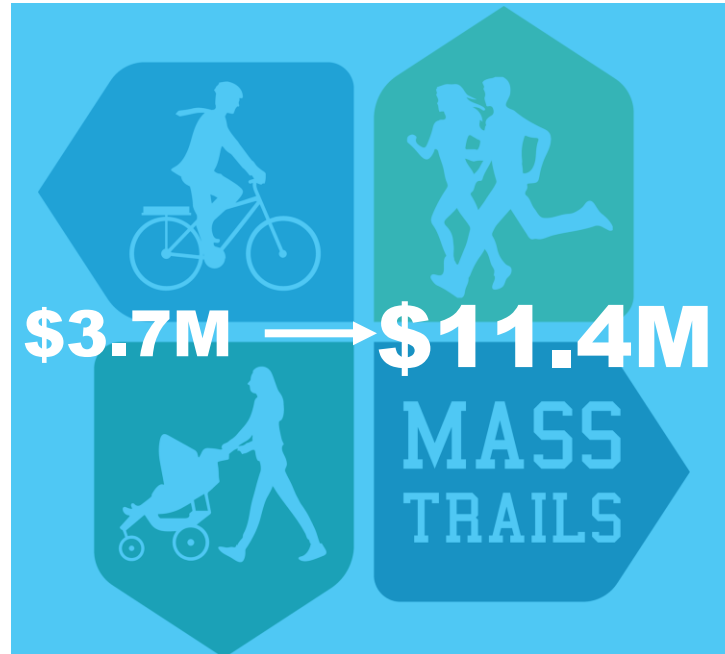
Greenways



\$2M → \$7M

- Planning, design, and capital construction for new greenways
- Design and capital construction for rehabilitation of existing greenways

MassTrails



\$3.7M → \$11.4M

- Grant Program
- MassTrails Conference
- Technical Assistance Publications

State Park and Forest Trails



\$1M → \$2M

- Trail system planning
- Natural surface trail repair
- Bridge assessment/replacement
- Student Conservation Association

GREEN TRANSPORTATION greenways on parkways



WE COLLABORATE WITH THIS TEAM ON THEIR PROJECTS, SUCH AS:

- Hammond Pond Parkway
- Memorial Drive Phase 3
- Lynn Fells Parkway
- Revere Beach Blvd and Ocean Ave

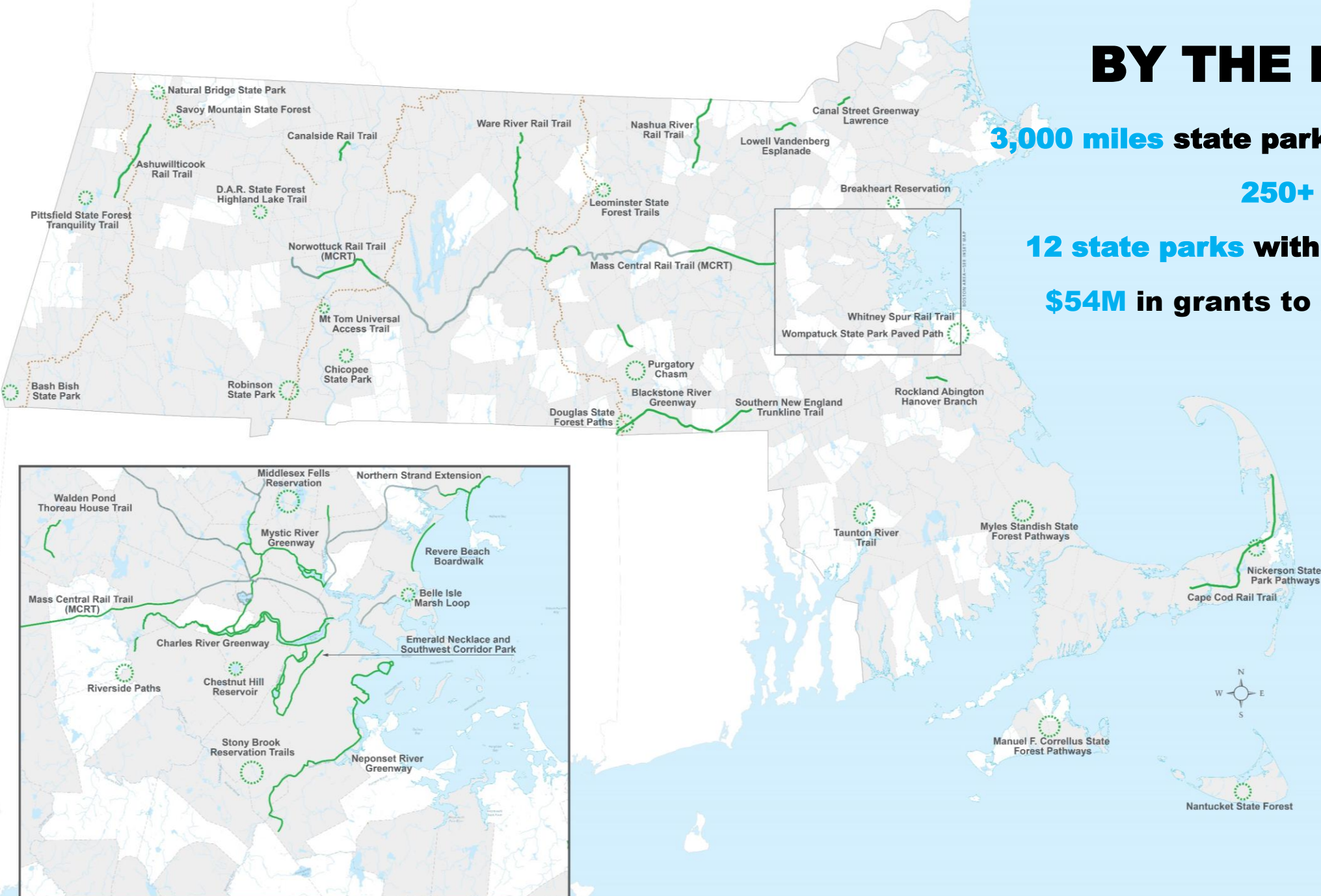
BY THE NUMBERS

3,000 miles state park and forest trails

250+ miles greenways

12 state parks with accessible trails

\$54M in grants to **250 communities**



GREENWAYS across the state



Blackstone Greenway



Mystic River Greenway



Watertown-Cambridge Greenway



Neponset River Greenway



Cape Cod Rail Trail

Ashuwillticook Rail Trail

Charles River Greenway

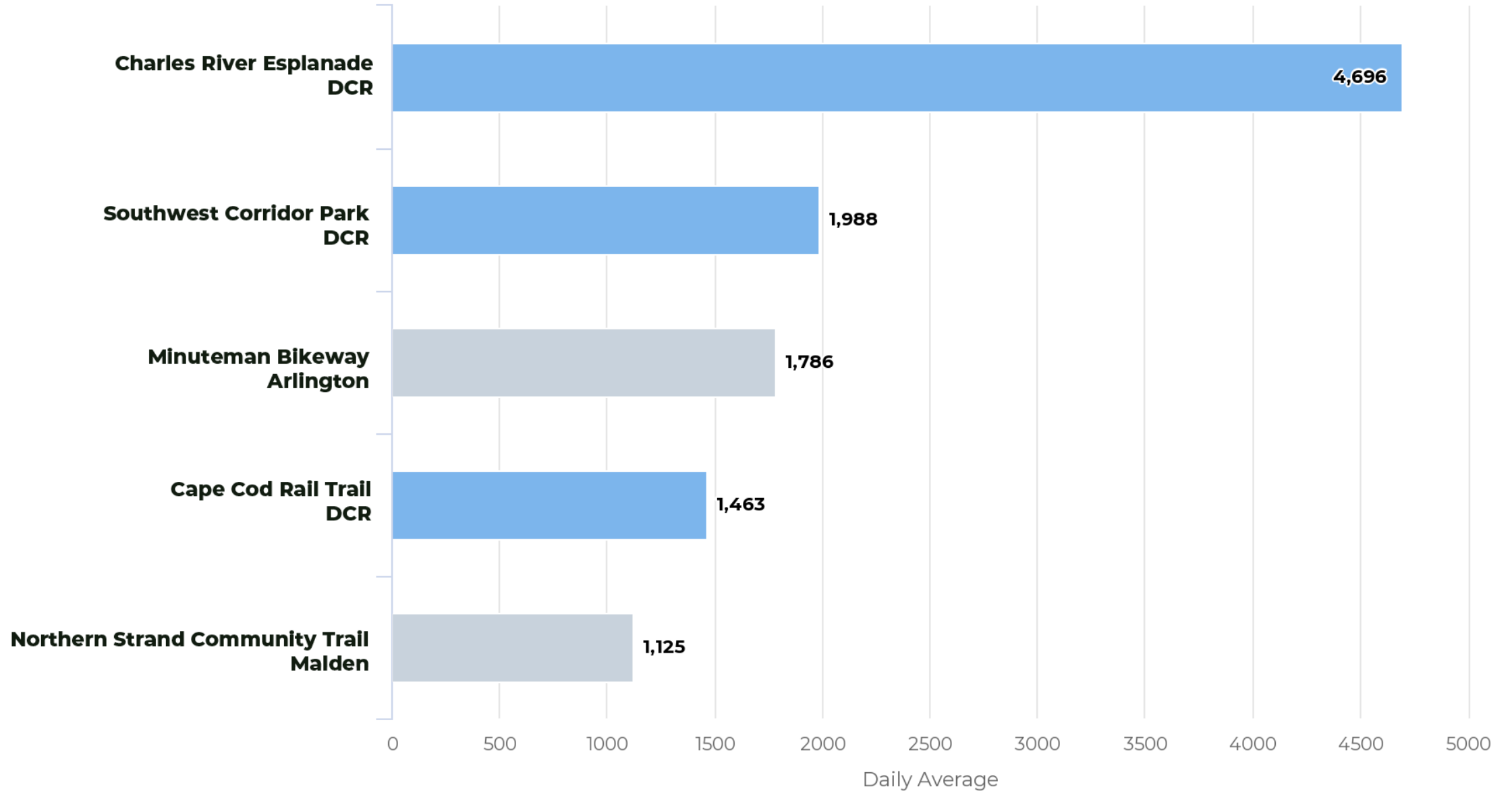
Emerald Necklace Paths

Norwottuck Rail Trail (MCRT)

Southwest Corridor Park

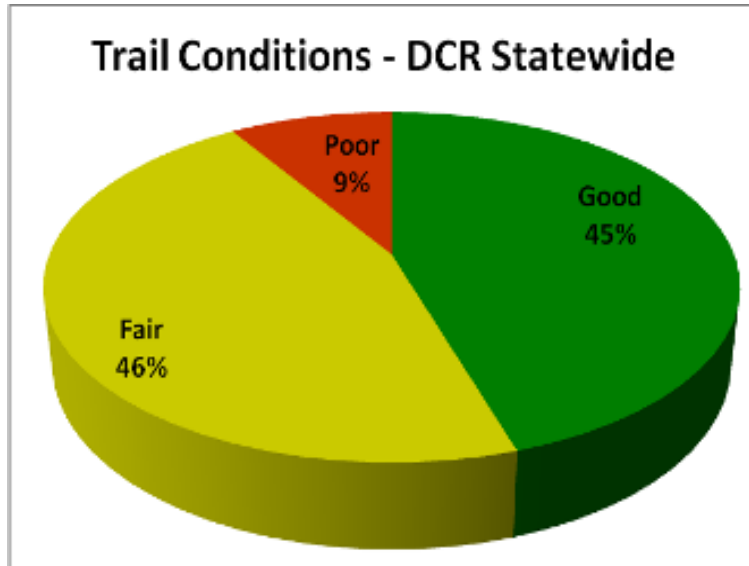
Southern New England Trunkline Trail

MASSTRAILS SHARED-USE PATH USER COUNTS
AVERAGE DAILY COUNTS // JULY 2023



GREAT STATE PARK TRAILS

Trail planning, policy, repairs, signage, and best practices for our 3,000 miles of natural surface and accessible trails



**Trail Condition Assessments
and Prioritization**



**SCA Project Selection and
Facilitation**



**Tread, Drainage, and Trail Bridge
Repairs and Replacements**

GREAT STATE PARK TRAILS

Provide invaluable opportunities to experience accessible natural surface trails in beautiful resource areas



Wells State Park
Mill Pond Trail



The accessible trail is due for repairs



Renovations are currently underway

GREAT STATE PARK TRAILS

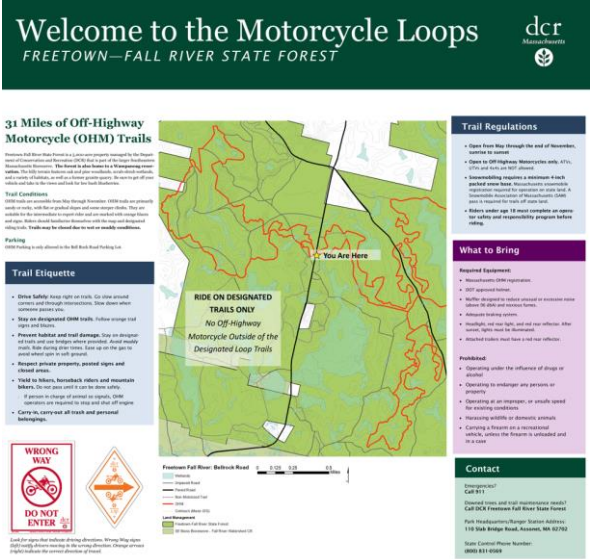
Balance the needs of multiple user groups AND resource protection: hikers, mountain bikers, off-highway vehicles (OHVs).



Trail closures are communicated to the user group



Boardwalks and puncheons allow users to visit resource areas without impacting the soil



Updated kiosks are installed with new routes and instructions

MASSTRAILS

Vision

One trails team, one vision, one action plan to maintain and continue to build out and connect the trail network across the Commonwealth for people of all ages and abilities

MassTrails Team

Inter-agency Team made up of EEA, MassDOT, and DCR representatives to coordinate on trail projects, trail-related policies, and programs to support a common vision for trails



Priorities

- Articulate the Priority Trail Network Vision and work toward its realization;
- Provide funding to municipalities and non-profits to support the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of a trail networks (MassTrails Grants Program);
- Consolidate the public face and outreach into one user-friendly platform;
- Collaborate effectively with municipalities, non-profits, & others to advance trail projects; and
- Provide access to technical expertise including publications and training.



MASSTRAILS GRANT PROGRAM



Provides grants to plan, design, construct, and maintain recreational trail and greenway projects across the Commonwealth.

- Applications are accepted annually. Deadline for the current round is February 1, 2024.
- Eligible recipients are municipalities, public entities, Native nations, and non-profit organizations.
- Over \$11 million in funds available each year, awarded to approximately 60 - 80 projects.
- Reimbursement grants, meaning grantee must first pay for expenses and then submit for reimbursement using required documentation.
- Matching grants requiring a minimum of 20% match of the total project value.



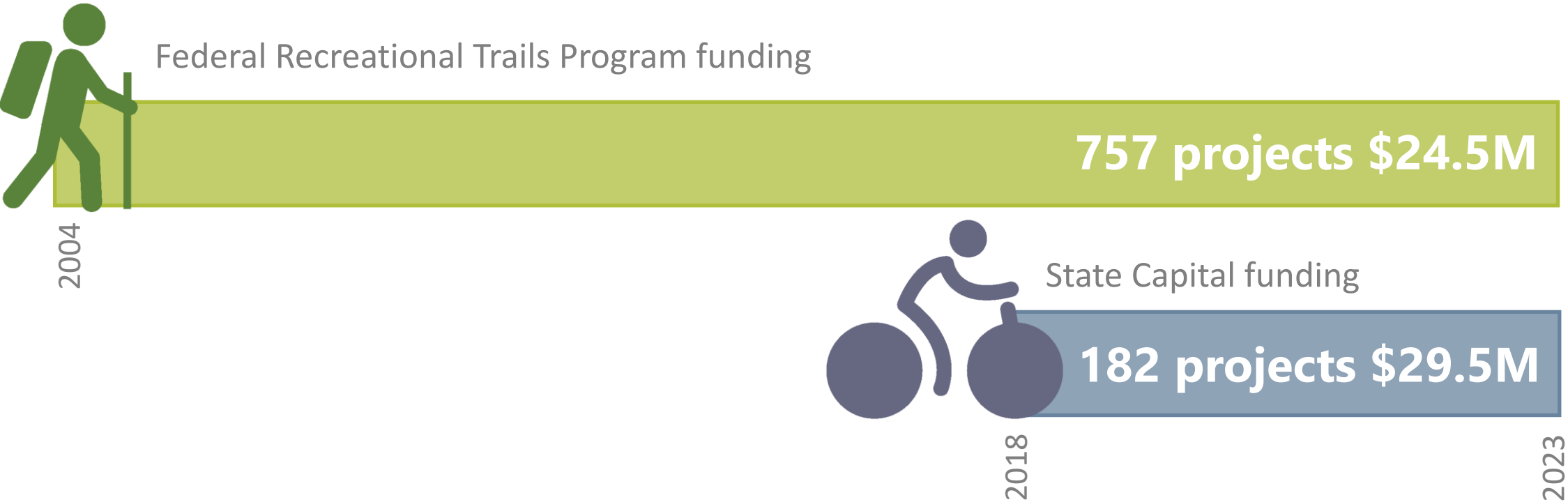
MASSTRAILS GRANT PROGRAM



TOTAL FUNDING TO DATE

\$54 million in funding awarded over 20 years

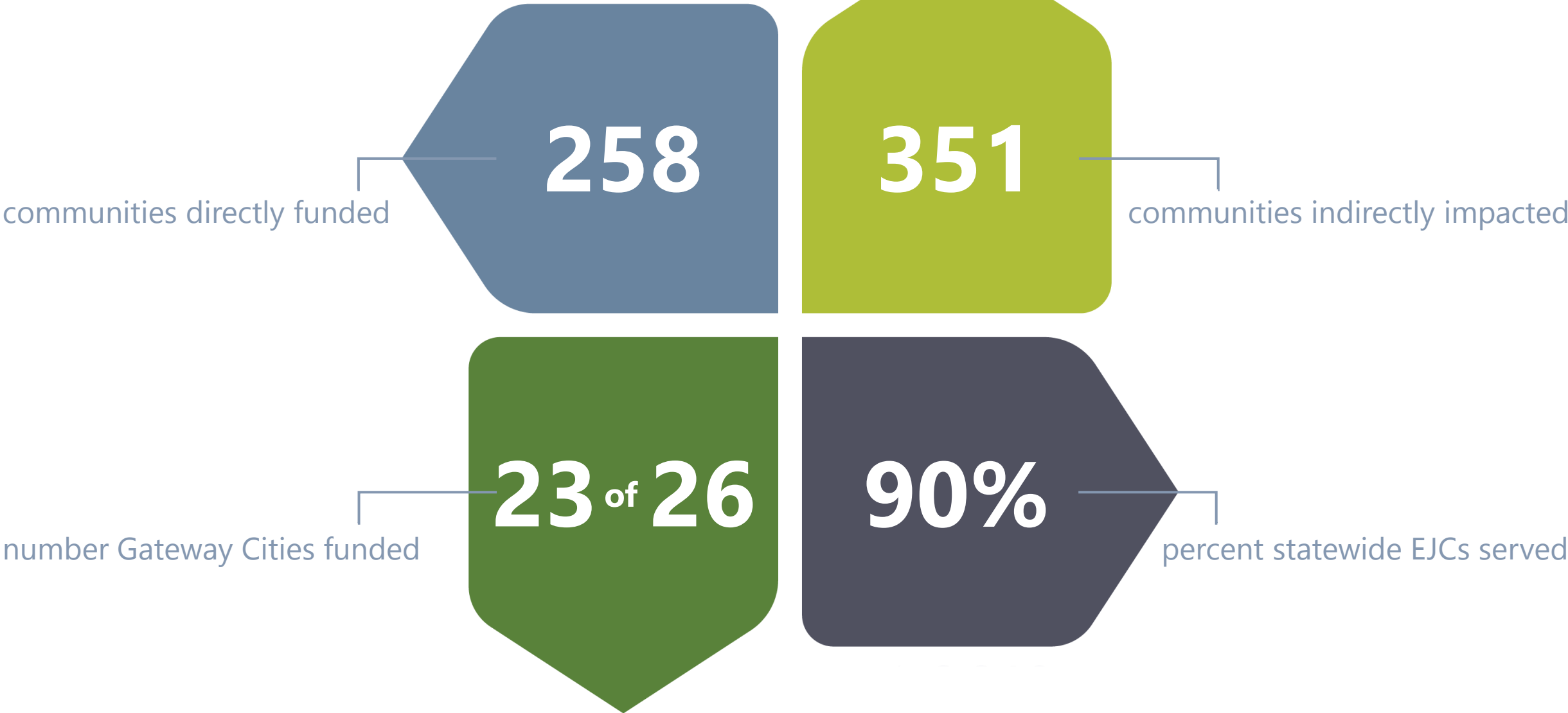
\$60 million in match leveraged from grantees

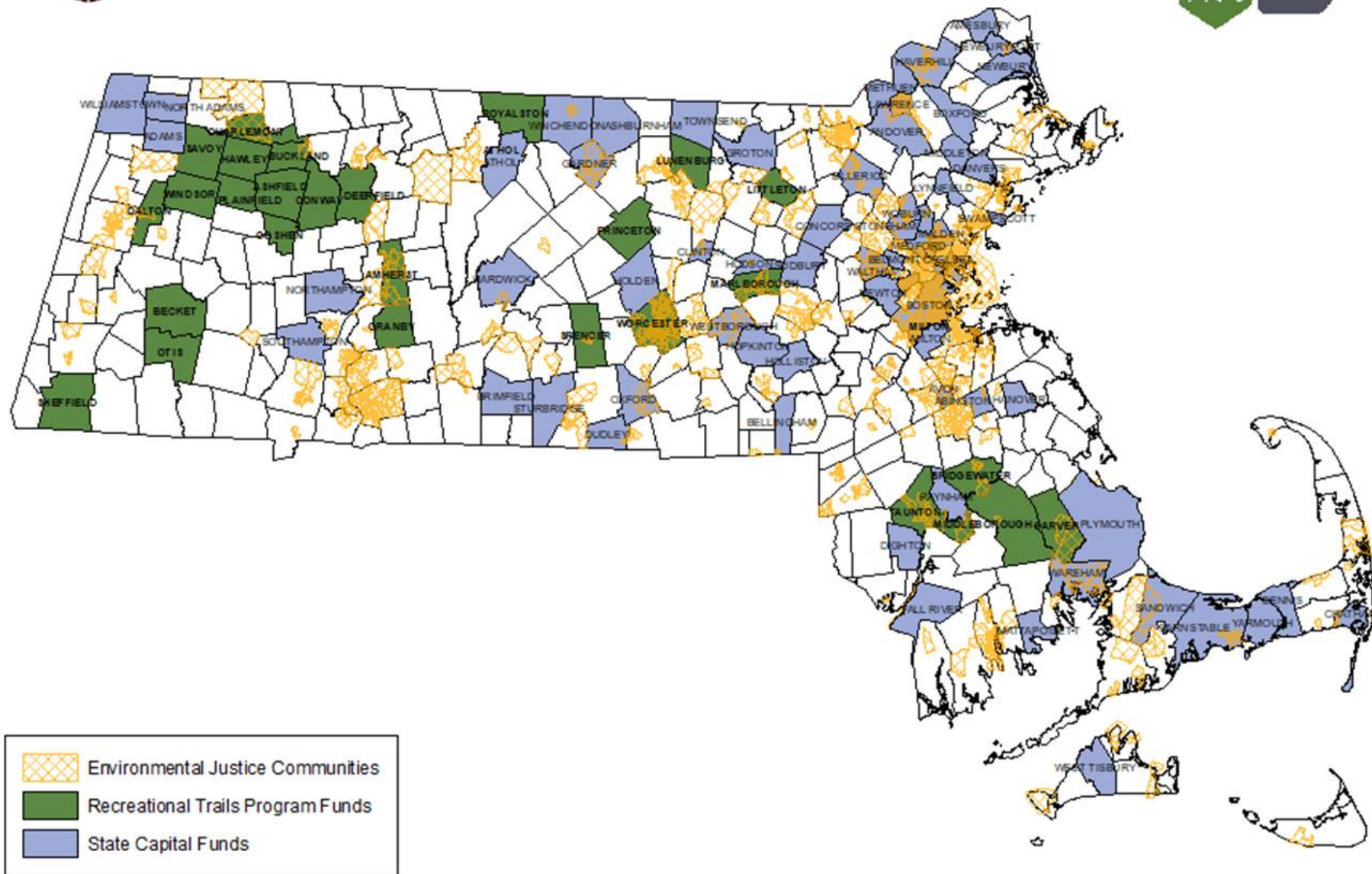


MASSTRAILS GRANT PROGRAM



KEY STATS – ALL TIME





MASSTRAILS CONFERENCE

[HOME](#)[PROGRAM](#)[ABOUT](#)[CONTACT US](#)[CONFERENCE ARCHIVES](#)

2022 MASSTRAILS CONFERENCE

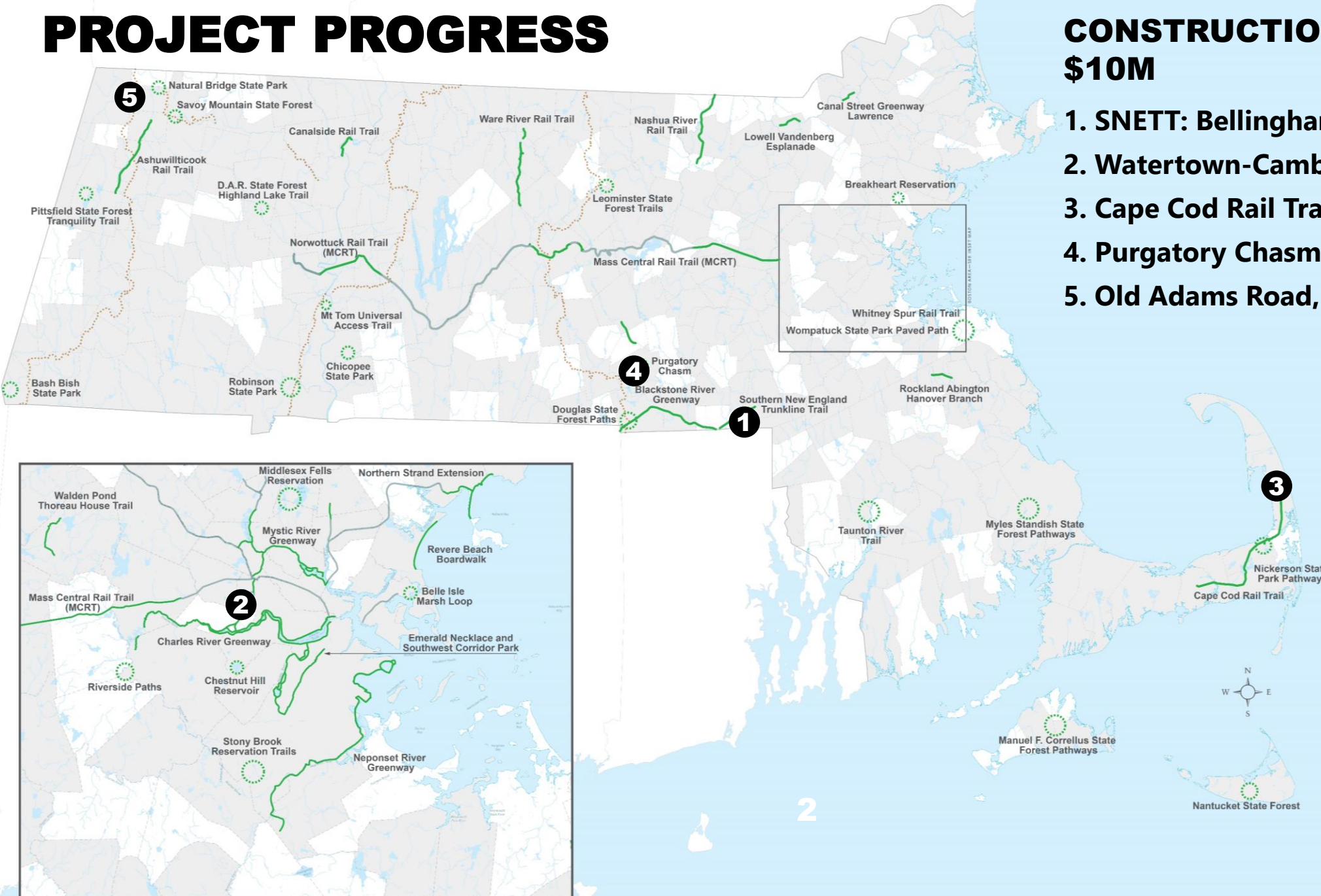
'Building Trails <---> Creating Community'

- Hosted **8** conferences since inception in 2011
- Next biennial conference planned for fall **2024**
- Organized by DCR in partnership with the **Massachusetts Recreational Trails Advisory Board** (MARTAB) and the **Inter-Agency MassTrails Team**
- Over 400 participants in 2022, attending a week of virtual presentations, hands-on workshops, field trips, and a full-day plenary with 20 concurrent sessions and keynote speaker
- Funded through DCR's Recreational Trails Program and private donations (HubLuv in 2022)

PROJECT PROGRESS

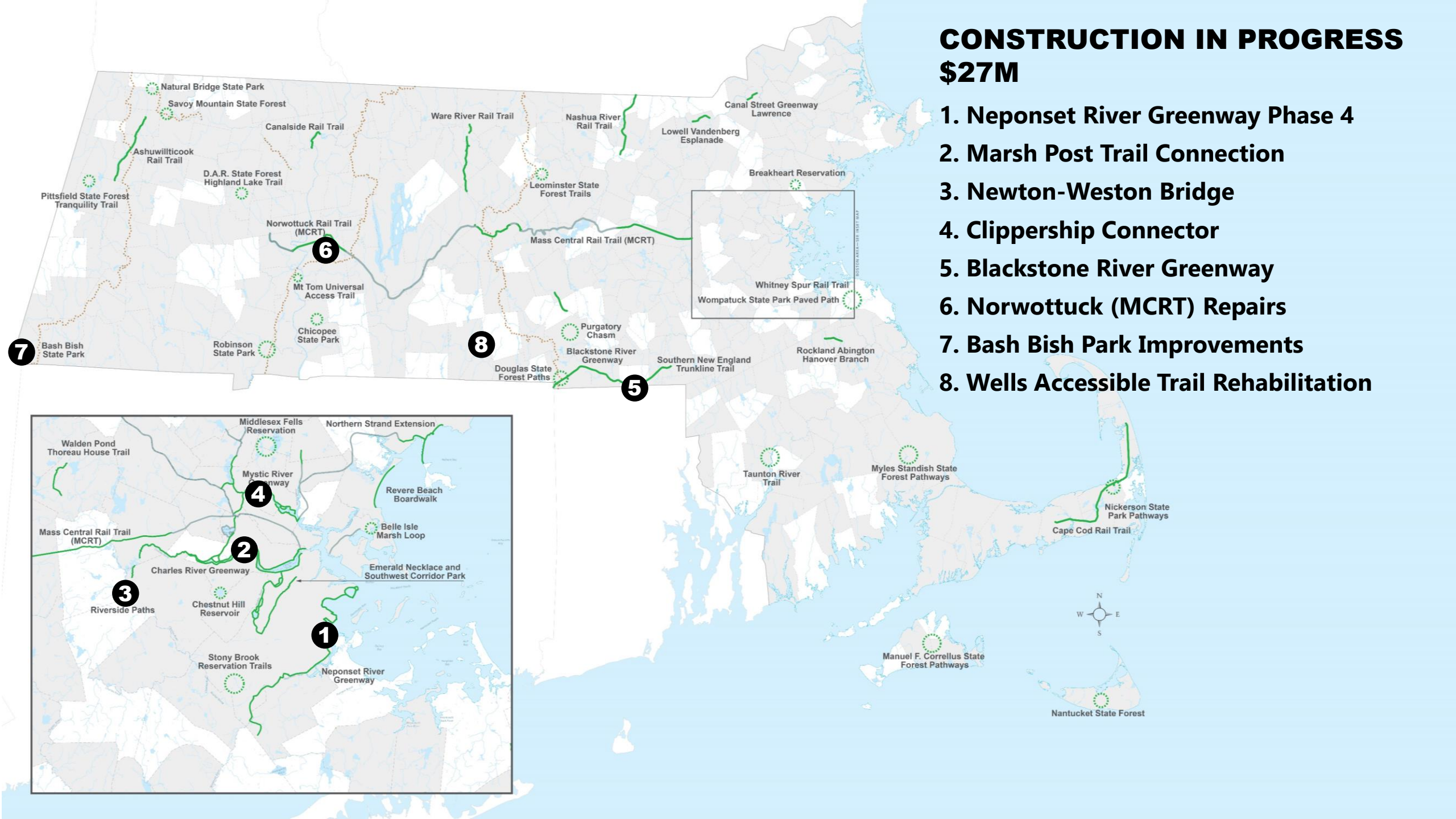
**CONSTRUCTION COMPLETE
\$10M**

- 1. SNETT: Bellingham to Franklin**
- 2. Watertown-Cambridge Greenway**
- 3. Cape Cod Rail Trail Wellfleet Ext. Phase 1**
- 4. Purgatory Chasm State Park Entrance**
- 5. Old Adams Road, Greylock**



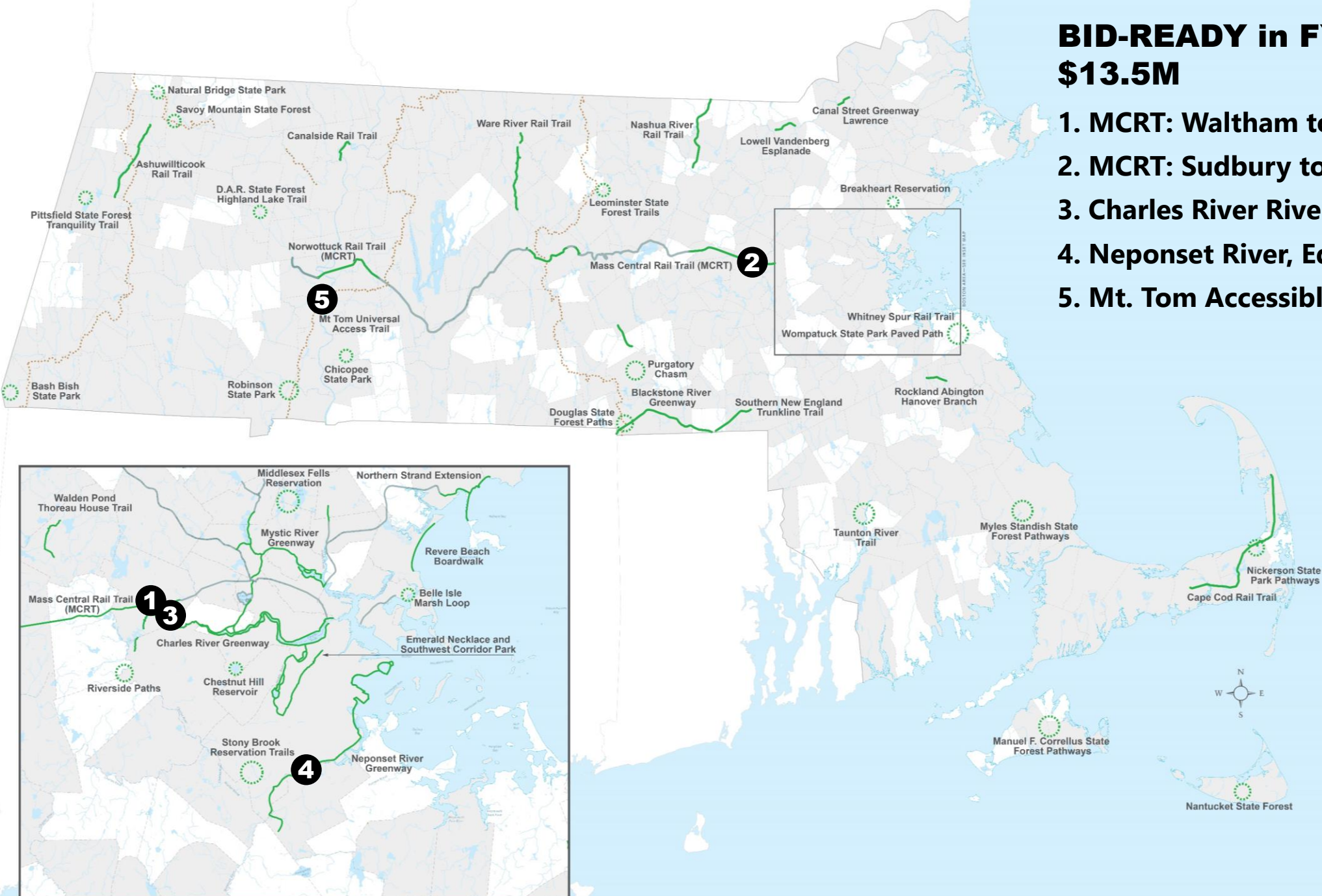
CONSTRUCTION IN PROGRESS \$27M

1. Neponset River Greenway Phase 4
2. Marsh Post Trail Connection
3. Newton-Weston Bridge
4. Clippership Connector
5. Blackstone River Greenway
6. Norwottuck (MCRT) Repairs
7. Bash Bish Park Improvements
8. Wells Accessible Trail Rehabilitation



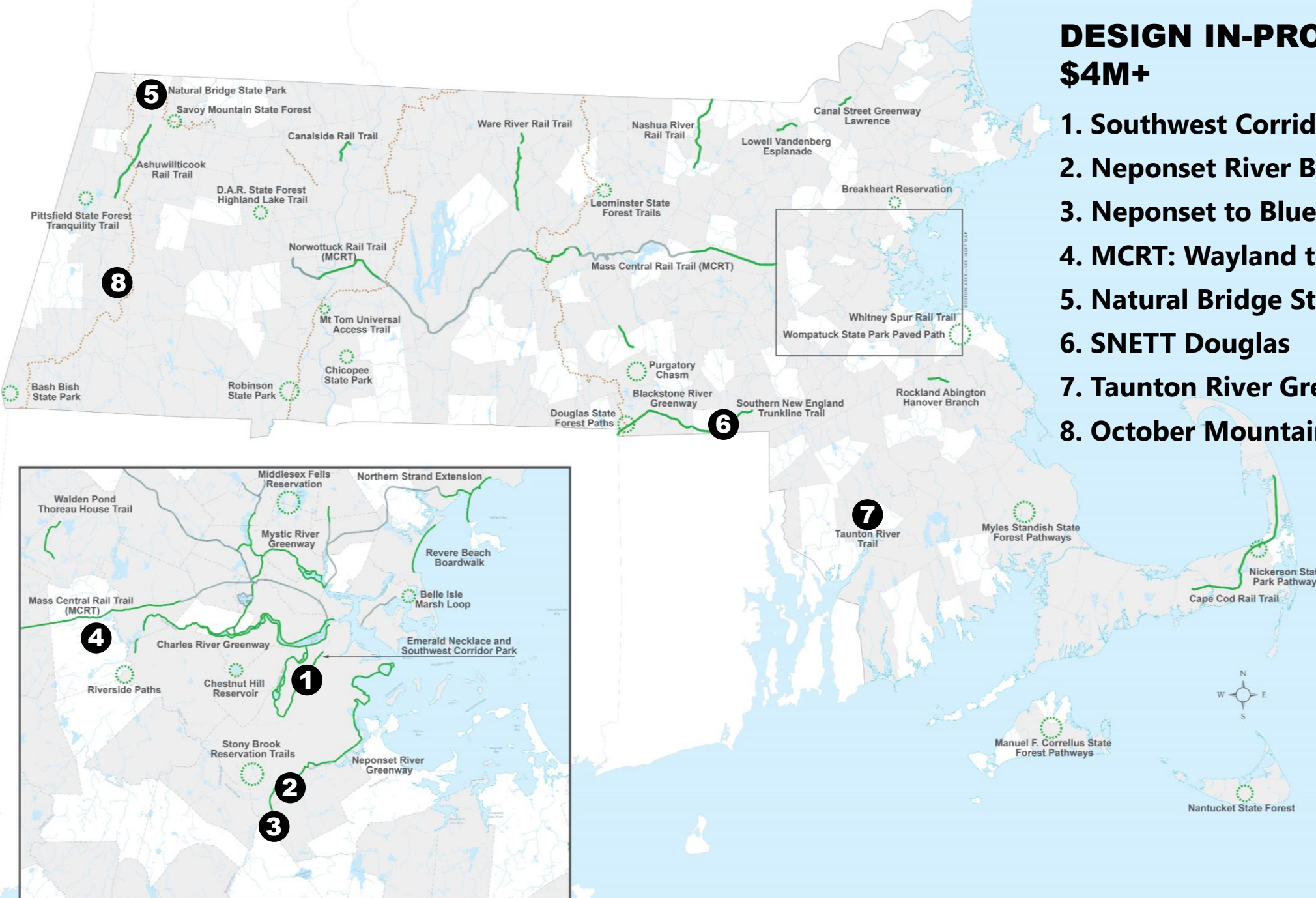
BID-READY in FY24 \$13.5M

- 1. MCRT: Waltham to Weston**
- 2. MCRT: Sudbury to Hudson**
- 3. Charles River Riverwalk: Waltham**
- 4. Neponset River, Edgewater Greenway**
- 5. Mt. Tom Accessible Trail Rehabilitation**



DESIGN IN-PROGRESS \$4M+

1. Southwest Corridor Action Plan
2. Neponset River Bridge at Osceola Street
3. Neponset to Blue Hills Feasibility Study
4. MCRT: Wayland to Sudbury
5. Natural Bridge State Park Plan
6. SNETT Douglas
7. Taunton River Greenway
8. October Mountain OHV Trail



PRIORITIES

Connectivity: create a network of paths for recreation and transportation

Equity: prioritize projects in environmental justice communities that have been underinvested in

Safety: prioritize emergency repairs and public safety issues

Use Levels: invest in facilities with the highest regional use

Partnerships/Advocacy: take advantage of opportunities with local communities and stakeholders

Permitting Constraints: all things equal, prioritize projects that have fewer environmental impacts and permitting challenges

CHALLENGES

Capital funding tied to fiscal year: flexible funding is needed for unpredictable nature of projects resulting from permitting, construction challenges and public process

Federal funding via MassDOT: increases cost and timelines due to redundant design processes and stringent highway design standards

Operations and maintenance funding: we do not have an adequate budget for snow clearance, plant establishment/care and pavement repairs– this is exacerbated with our expanding portfolio of greenways

Permitting (especially wetlands): WPA regulations are difficult to meet and poorly suited for trail projects, especially simple woodland trails and greenways on former rail corridors

E-bikes/scooters and mode conflicts with growing use: we need to develop a consistent policy that includes signage and enforcement capabilities

THANK YOU!



QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?