

MassTrails



MassTrails Staff

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DCR TRAILS and GREENWAYS SECTION

Greenways



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

MassTrails



lead MassTrails initiatives, including grant program, outreach, & information sharing

State Park and Forest Trails



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

MassTrails

One Team

One Vision

One Action Plan



MassTrails – One Team



The Inter-Agency Trails Team (aka MassTrails Team)

MassDOT, Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA), Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) representatives to coordinate on trail projects, trail-related policies, and programs to support a common vision for trails.

Public Partners

Commonwealth Agencies, Municipalities, Regional Planning Agencies, MARTAB, Federal Agencies, Trails Caucus

Private Funding & Partners

Conine Family Foundation, Barr Foundation, The Lawrence and Lillian Solomon Foundation, The Hellen and William Mazer Foundation, Trail Builders, and Others!

Stakeholder Partners

Non-Profit Organizations, Common Trails Coalition, Trail Committees, Trail Advocates/Users, Trail Planners, and TRAIL VOLUNTEERS!



MassTrails – One Vision



To expand, connect, and modernize the network of shared-use paths and recreational trails in Massachusetts for people of all ages and abilities





MassTrails – One Action Plan

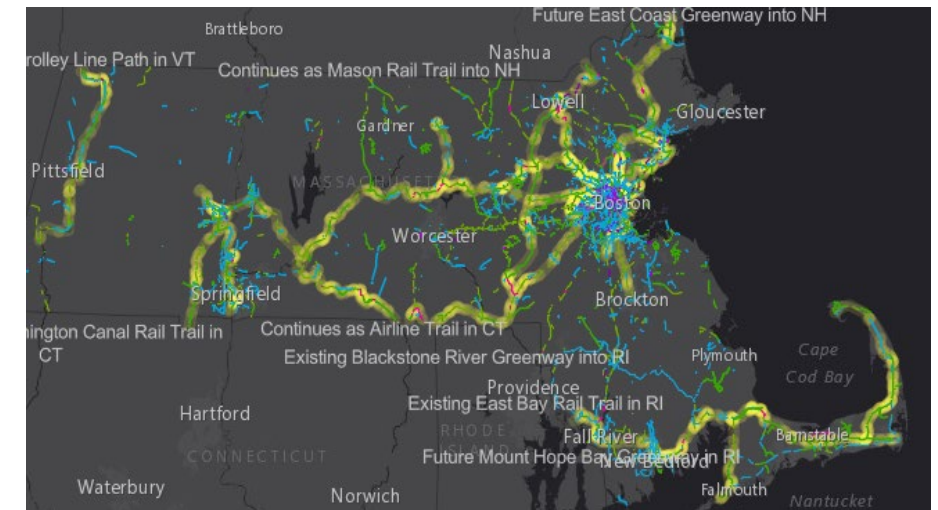
MassTrails – One Action Plan



MassTrails Team Coordination

Communicate with relevant state agencies, invite Trails Team participation, work together to overcome barriers and challenges to getting trails built.

- **Trails Policy Leadership:** Develop and/or communicate policies related to trail planning, design, construction, maintenance, and management.
- **MassDOT STIP / TIP Process:** Leverage state resources to maximize the impact of federal funding and create a multi-year pipeline of projects.
- ***Priority Trails Network:** Update and advance the MassTrails Priority Trails Network.



MassTrails Priority Network Map

MassTrails – One Action Plan

Outreach / Education

- **Events / Press Releases / Social Media:** Provide live connectivity through in-person events and media outlets.
- **MassTrails Website / Newsletter:** Provide passive connectivity through the MassTrails website and listserv emails/newsletter.
- **Conferences/Workshops/Webinars:** Provide conferences with the dual goal of communication/networking and education/guidance. Participate in other conferences.



September 2025 Newsletter News from your friends at MassTrails!

Meet Our New Staff



We'd like to welcome our new Senior MassTrails Planner!

Jeff Mast 📍Northampton, MA
Jeffrey.Mast@mass.gov | 857-288-9501
Brings a deep passion for trails and years of experience in planning and project work with both the U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Lupe Garcia 📍Cambridge, MA
Guadalupe.Garcia@mass.gov | 857-274-9238
Joins us from the U.S. DOT Volpe Center, where she focused on community-centered planning. Her work advanced access to parks and trails through transportation equity.

MassTrails Staff visiting the Wachusett Greenway section of the Mass Central Rail Trail, August 2025. From left: Jeff Mast, Lupe Garcia, Cindy Nelson (MassTrail Planner), and Amanda Lewis (MassTrails Director).

MassTrails 10 Find yourself on a trail.

MassTrails 10 is a new interagency initiative designed to spotlight 10 shared-use path trails across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The website features detailed information about each trail, including a featured ride, trail description, transportation access (such as parking and MBTA connections), local attractions, and an interactive map with elevation data. Some of the highlighted trails include the Neponset River Greenway, Cape Cod Rail Trail, Ashuwillitcook Rail Trail, and among many more.

Introducing MassTrails 10



dcrr MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

For more program information visit:
www.mass.gov/welcome-to-masstrails



FREE TRAIL PLANNING WEBINAR!

Trail Assessment for Accessibility and Sustainability

Join us **next Thursday** as we sponsor the latest free learning session from American Trails' *Advancing Trails Webinar Series* featuring one of the northeast's premier trail builders, Peter S. Jensen.

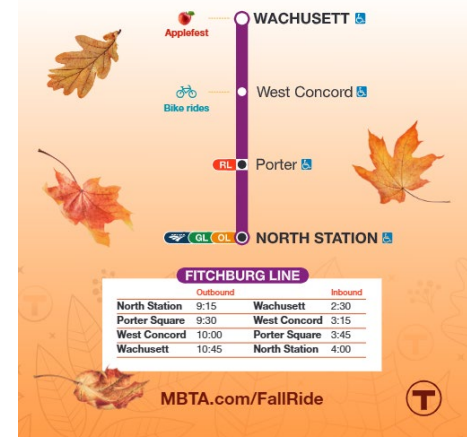


This webinar will explore the process of assessing natural surface pedestrian trails for accessibility and sustainability and will focus on developing new trails as well as conversion of existing trails.

All Aboard!

Join us for the Fall Rail Ride
Saturday, October 25

\$20 round-trip, with unlimited rides throughout the weekend via mTicket.



MassTrails – One Action Plan



MassTrails Conference

- Hosted **8** conferences since inception in 2011
- Organized by DCR in partnership with the **Massachusetts Recreational Trails Advisory Board** (MARTAB) and the **Inter-Agency MassTrails Team**
- Over 400 participants in 2024, 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 sponsorships



MassTrails – One Action Plan



Resources & Publications

- **One stop shop website:** www.Mass.gov/MassTrails
- Shared Use Path Planning and Design Guide (Aug 2018)
- Cost Estimator (Oct 2018)
- Benefits and Impact Study (March 2021)
- Wayfinding Design Guide (Nov 2022)
- Trail Count Primer and Dashboard (active)
- MassTrails Surface Condition Study (2023)

Welcome to MassTrails

Trails are the intersection of conservation, community, transportation and recreation. They connect Massachusetts residents and visitors to the places in which we live, learn, work, shop and play.



What would you like to do?

Top tasks

[Learn about MassTrails Grants](#)

[Explore the MassTrails Priority Trails Network Vision MAP](#)

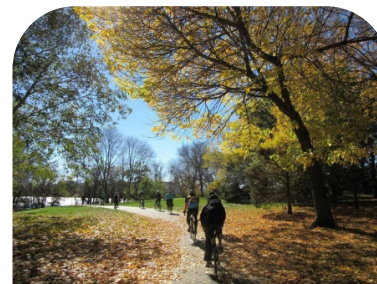
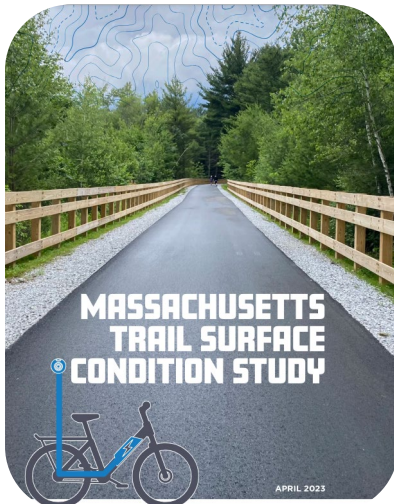
[View the Massachusetts Trail Surface Conditions Study](#)

All other tasks

[Build a Shared Use Path](#)

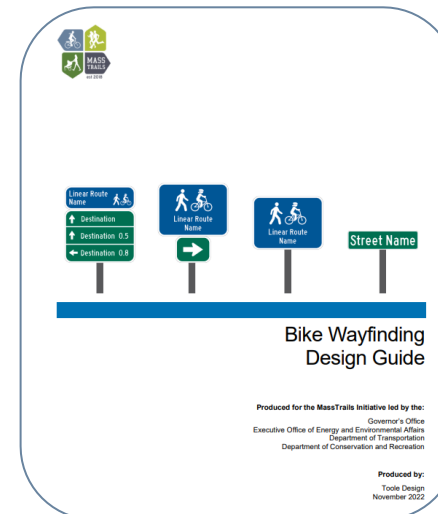
[Discover the Benefits of Shared Use Paths](#)

[Learn about Bicycle and Pedestrian Counts](#)



Benefits of Shared Use Paths FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

Shared use paths make economic, environmental, and social contributions to communities. This primer will help you understand the impacts of four paths in different Massachusetts contexts. The first step in measuring trail impacts is to determine who is using the trail, when, where, why, and how.



Bike Wayfinding Design Guide

Produced for the MassTrails Initiative led by the:
Governor's Office
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Department of Transportation
Department of Conservation and Recreation

Produced by:
Toole Design
November 2022



Shared Use Paths: FROM VISION TO REALITY

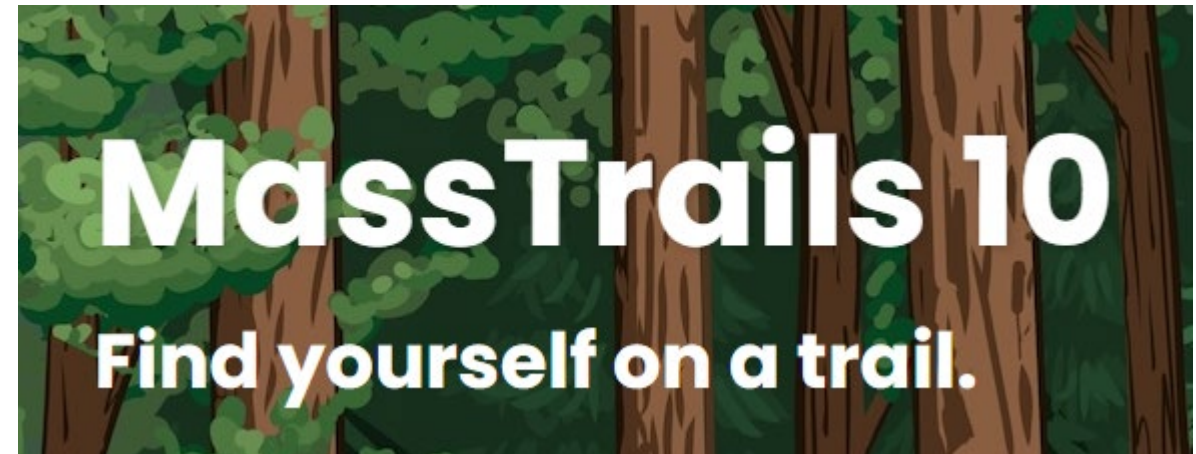
MassTrails – One Action Plan



Brand / Market Trails in Massachusetts

Promote/Market Trails in Massachusetts and develop strategies to further institutionalize the MassTrails program.

- **Massachusetts Interactive Trails Map:** Publish a statewide trail-finder map for all trails of all types across Mass for public consumption
- **Promote / Market / Brand Trails in Massachusetts:** Identify opportunities to market trails in Massachusetts through partnerships and collaboration with stakeholders and other state entities (Office of Outdoor Recreation, Office of Travel and Tourism, Etc.)



MassTrails

Grant Program



MassTrails Grant Program



- Grants for municipalities, public entities, tribal governments, and non-profit organizations to **acquire land, plan, design, construct, and maintain recreational trails and shared use paths.**
- Deadline is February 1st each year.
- Trail types include shared-use paths, hiker/pedestrian trails, off-road motorized trails and “other” trails including mountain biking and water trails.
- Reimbursement grants with required minimum 20% match.
- Maximum award of \$500,000.



MassTrails 2023 Grant Recipients – 68 awardees

MassTrails Grant Program



MassTrails Grants are funded through two different sources:

Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

Federally funded through the US Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration and administered at the state level. Provides funding for the construction and maintenance of recreational trail projects. Both motorized and non-motorized trail projects qualify for assistance.

Commonwealth Trails Grants

Supported by the state's annual Capital Investment Plan and authorized through the Environmental Bond Bill. Aims to help communities plan, design, construct, and maintain off-road shared-use pathway connections between where Massachusetts residents live, learn, work, shop, and recreate, especially by building out the longer distance regional networks of shared use pathways across the state and filling in critical gaps in existing networks, or overcoming current barriers to connectivity.

Grants are reviewed and recommended by the Inter-Agency Trails Team and the Massachusetts Recreational Trails Advisory Board (MARTAB).

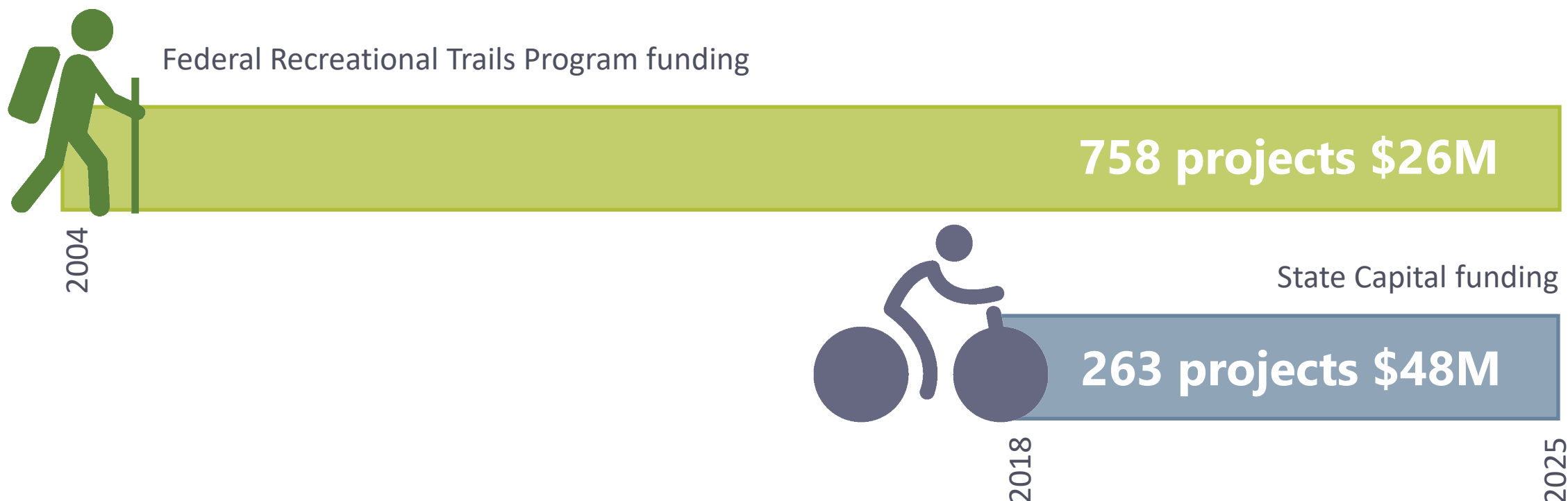
MassTrails Grant Program



Total Funding To Date

\$74 million in funding awarded over 21 years

\$99 million in match leveraged from grantees



MassTrails Grant Program



MassTrails Grant Program



Eligible Grant Projects – by trail type

Shared-Use Paths

Defined as off-road infrastructure that is physically separated from motorized vehicle traffic and designed for use by bicyclists and pedestrians; paths provide flexible transportation options and recreation opportunities

- Greenways
- Rail Trails

Examples: Charles River Pathway, Mass Central Rail Trail, Mystic River Greenway

Hiker/Pedestrian Trails (“Woodland Trails”)

Trails which are designed, constructed, and maintained for hiker/pedestrian use (designed use).

- Long-Distance Natural Surface Trails
- Community/State/Federal Natural Surface Trails
- Historic/Cultural/Ecological Interpretive Trails

Examples: Appalachian Trail, Stone Farm Trail System in Brockton, Riverwalk in Great Barrington

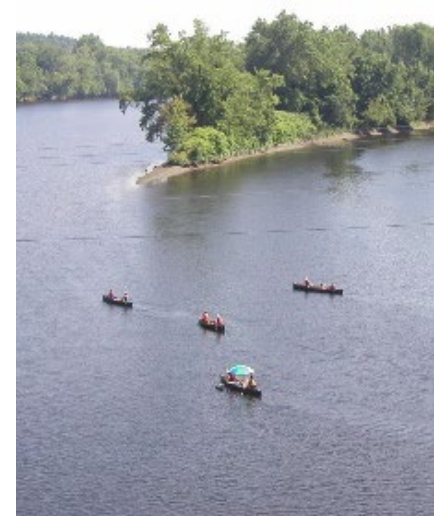
Off-Road Motorized Trails

Trails designed to accommodate ATVs, off-road motorcycles, and snowmobiles

- ATV, Off-Road Motorcycle, 4-Wheel Drive Truck, and Snowmobile Trails
- *Examples: Snowmobile Association of Massachusetts Trail Network, October Mountain State Forest*

Other

- Water Trails, Mountain Biking Trails, Cross-Country Ski Trails, Equestrian Trails, etc.

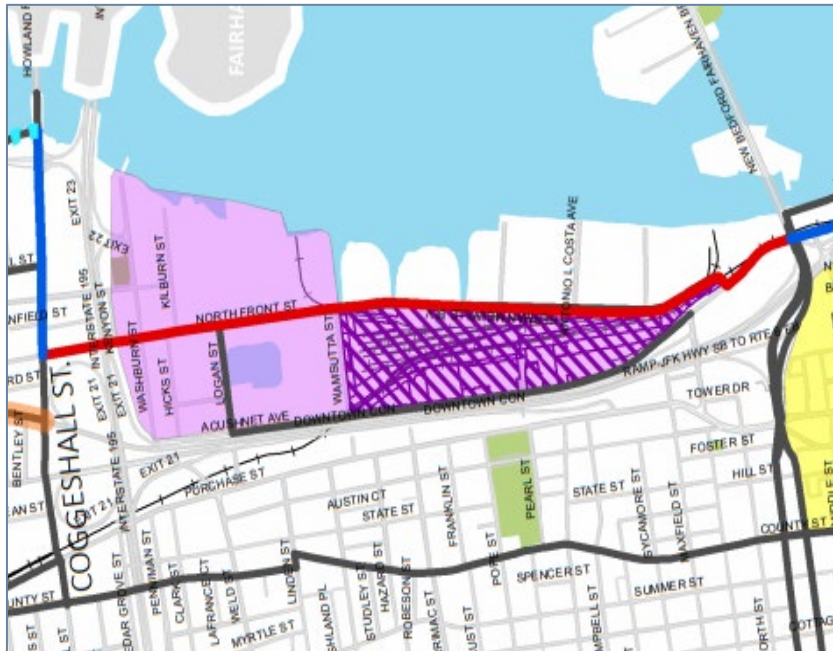


MassTrails Grant Program

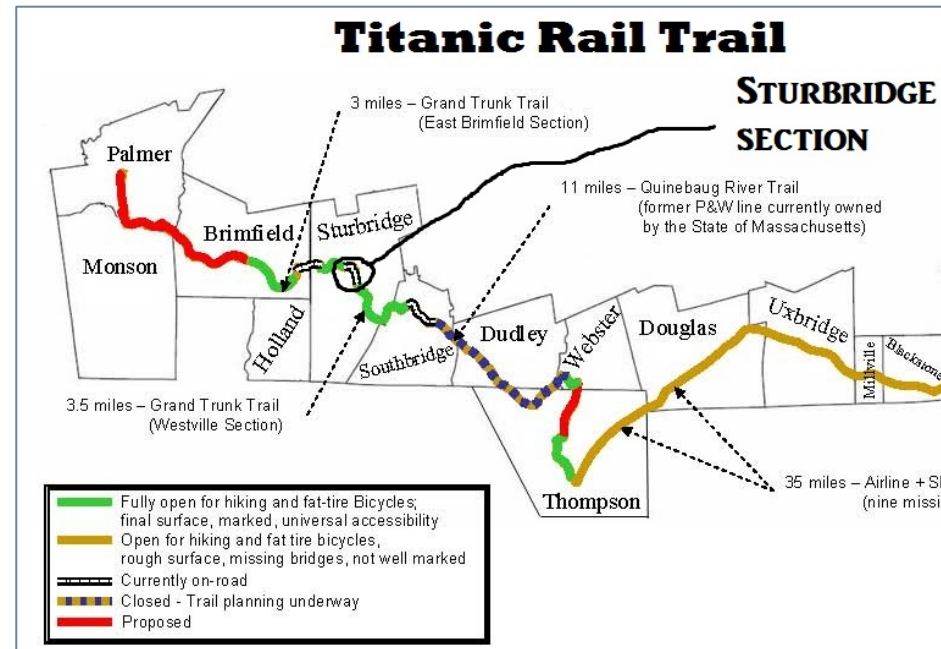


Eligible Grant Projects – by activity

Project Development / Feasibility Studies / Conceptualization



City of New Bedford
New Bedford Working Waterfront Connector



Town of Sturbridge
Grand Trunk Trail - Central Section

MassTrails Grant Program



Eligible Grant Projects – by activity

Design / Engineering / Permitting



Groundwork Lawrence
Merrimack Riverwalk Path

MassTrails Grant Program

Eligible Grant Projects – by activity



Construction of new trails



MassTrails Grant Program



Eligible Grant Projects – by activity

Maintenance and restoration of existing trails

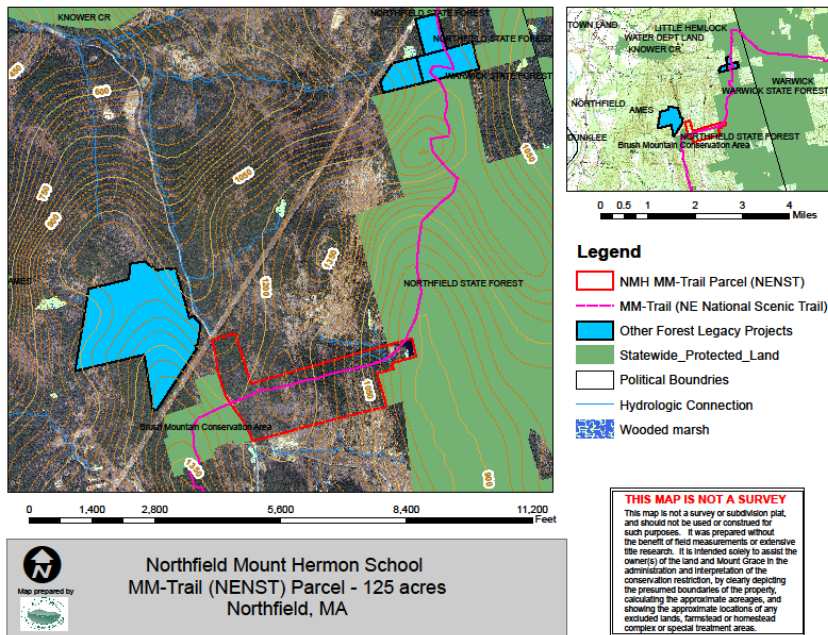


MassTrails Grant Program



Eligible Grant Projects – by activity

Acquisition of easements and fee interest in property for trails and trail corridors



MassTrails Grant Program



Eligible Grant Projects – by activity

Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities



mass.gov/doc/masstrails-bike-wayfinding-design-guide/download

MassTrails Grant Program

Eligible Grant Projects – by activity

Design and creation of paper and digital trail maps or brochures



Photo by Robert Whelan

Safety and Etiquette

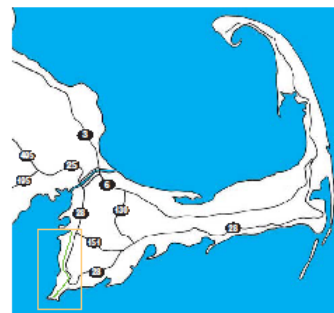
- Speed limit for all users is 15 mph (24 km/h).
 - Motorized vehicles are prohibited, with the exception of motorized wheelchairs.
 - Always keep to the right, except to pass.
 - Pass on the left, only when safe, and call out or sound a warning signal before passing someone.
 - Do not block the path. When stopping, move off the path so other users can pass safely.
 - Do not litter.
 - Keep dogs leashed and controlled.
 - Please respect private property along the Bikeway.
- Massachusetts State Laws include:
- Obey all traffic control signs;
 - Helmets are required for bicyclists and skaters aged 16 and under;
 - A headlamp is required when using the path at night.

The full list of Rules and Regulations is posted in the informational kiosks on the Bikeway.

For Emergencies:

Medical, Police, and Fire: Call 911

To report non-emergencies, contact Falmouth Police: (508) 457-2527



Directions

From Bourne Bridge to Bikeway Northern Terminus at County Road Exit Rte. 28 at Rte. 151. Go west, through traffic light at Rte. 28A. Cross railroad tracks, and turn right into parking lot. To Depot Ave. Bikeway Parking in Falmouth Village. Continue south on Rte. 28 into Falmouth Village. Turn right onto Depot Ave., and parking lot is on left across from bus station.

Trail Management

The Shining Sea Bikeway is maintained by the Town of Falmouth Department of Public Works and the Falmouth Bikeways Committee (bikeways@falmouthmass.us). To volunteer as a bikeway steward, contact the Friends of Falmouth Bikeways (friendsoffalmouthbikeways.com).

Brochure Credits and Sponsors

Content -

Town of Falmouth Bikeways Committee • Stacey Beaulieu, Project Manager • Kaitlyn Sharp-Frisbee, Writer • Joanne Briana-Garner, Designer • Bob Shea, Falmouth GIS Coordinator

Consultants -

Bein Schwarzman, Geologist • Ivan Valleja, Ecologist

Funded by -



Shining Sea BIKEWAY

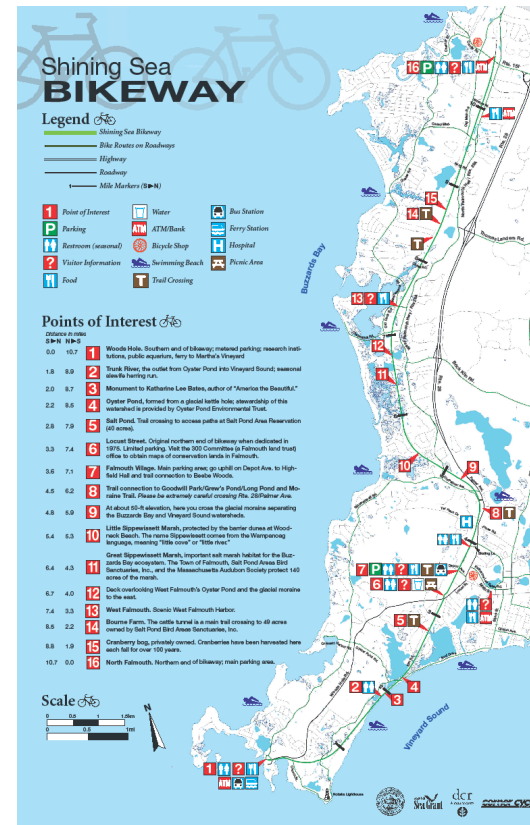
from sea to shining sea



Photo by Kathy Sharp / Falmouth 10/10/17

Exploring the Natural History
and Cultural Heritage
of Falmouth, Massachusetts

cape cod



MassTrails Grant Program



Eligible Grant Projects – by activity

Rental or purchase of trail construction and maintenance equipment



MassTrails Grant Program



Eligible Grant Projects – by activity

Trail Assessments



MassTrails Grant Program



What's Not Eligible

- 
- Sidewalks
 - Roads
 - Bicycle Lanes
 - Park Projects
 - Environmental mitigation
 - Law enforcement
 - Habitat Restoration
 - Landscaping

MassTrails Grant Program



Regulatory Requirements

- Landowner Permission (including CR approval)
- Public Access
- Environmental Permitting
- Historic/Archaeological Resources



MassTrails

2025 Grant Awards





MassTrails Grant Awards

2025 Grant Application and Awards Summary

112 Applications with \$16,476,546 in funding requested and over \$13 million proposed match

State Funds Budget: \$6.4 million

\$6,439,922 Awarded

31 Projects Awarded Funding

\$5 Million in Proposed Match

Recreational Trails Program Budget: \$1.1 million

\$1,150,837 Awarded

19 Projects Awarded Funding

\$2.8 Million in Proposed Match

Grant funding will directly impact 67 communities across Massachusetts!

MassTrails Grant Awards

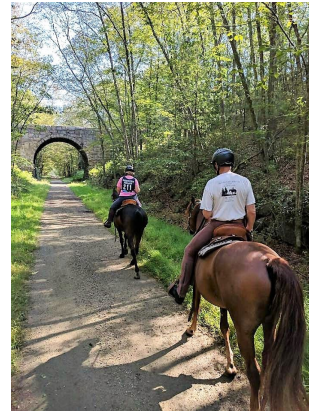


2025 Grant Application and Awards Summary

31 Shared-Use Path
Projects



10 Woodland Trail Projects
7 Unpaved Accessible Trails



9 Motorized Trail
Projects



MassTrails Grant Awards

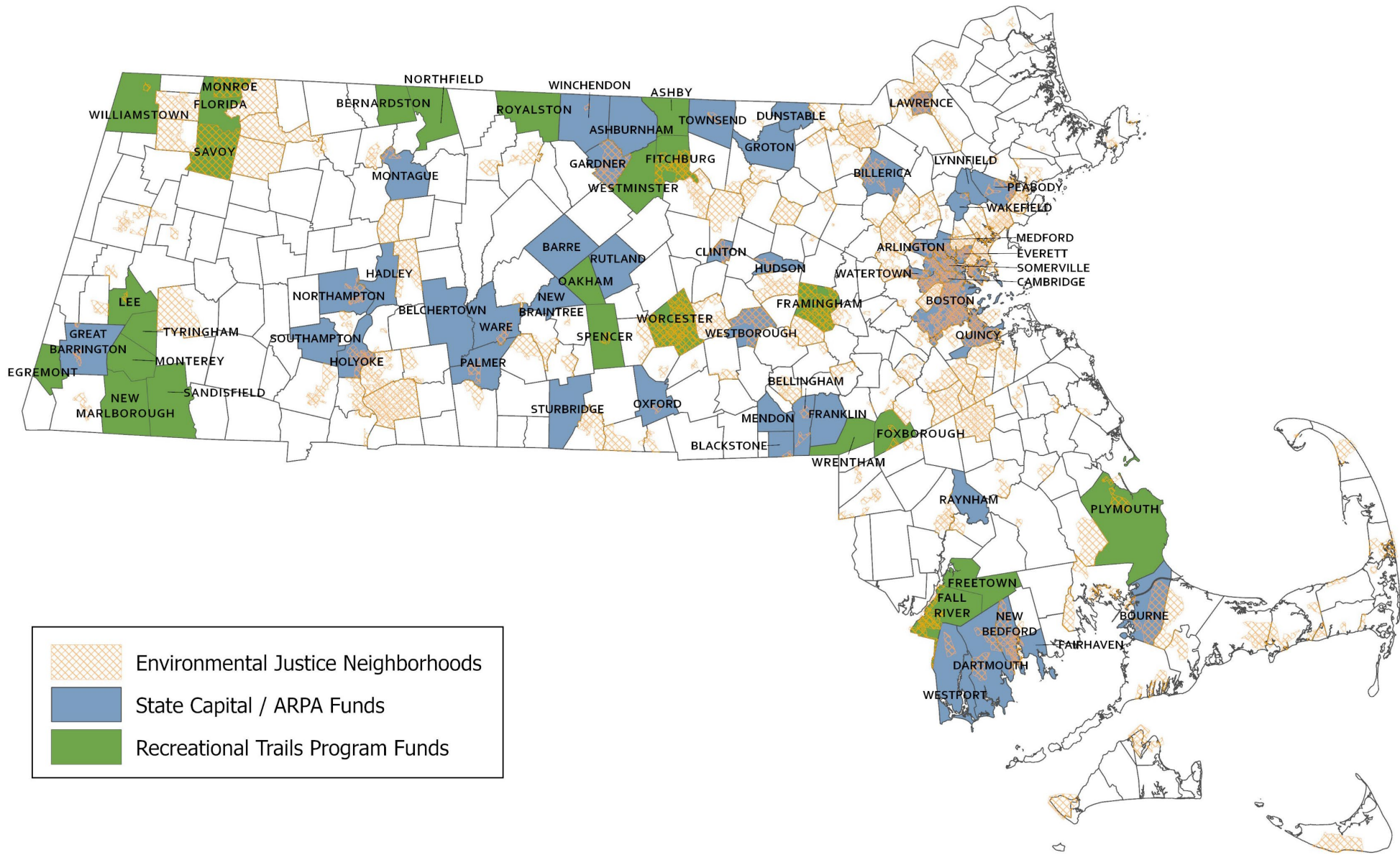


Environmental Justice Communities

- A total of **34 Projects** and **\$6,193,906.33** in funding will impact Environmental Justice Neighborhoods directly.
- In addition to Environmental Justice impacts, many projects will also impact underserved communities directly, such as the elderly and mobility impaired, as well as youth populations.
- The recommended group of projects also exhibits great geographical diversity and, when compared to the history of the grant program, several communities are being served this year which have not been awarded grants in the past.



MassTrails 2025 Grant Recommendations

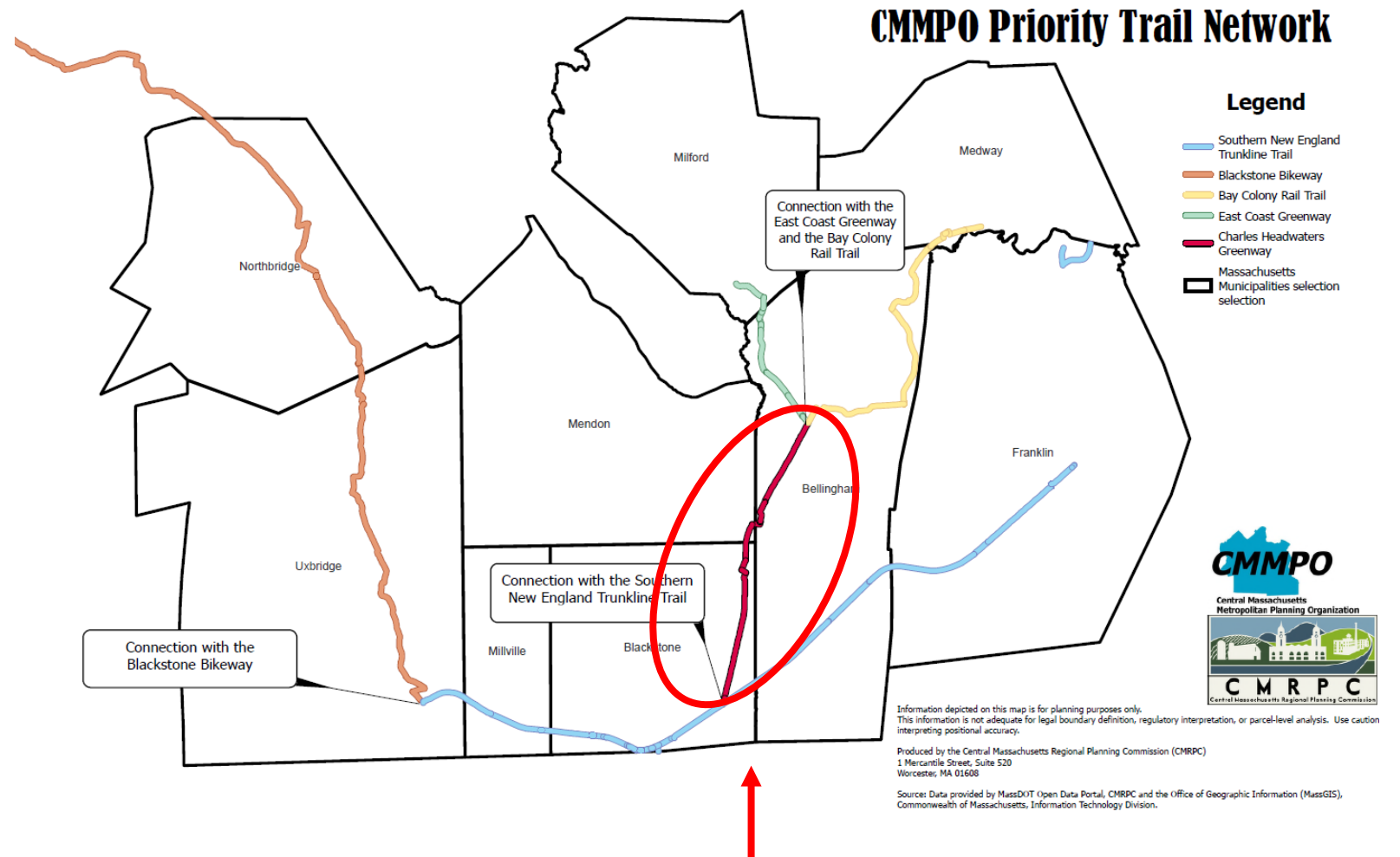


MassTrails 2025 Grant Recommendations



CMRPC, Three Town Feasibility Study – Charles Headwaters Greenway

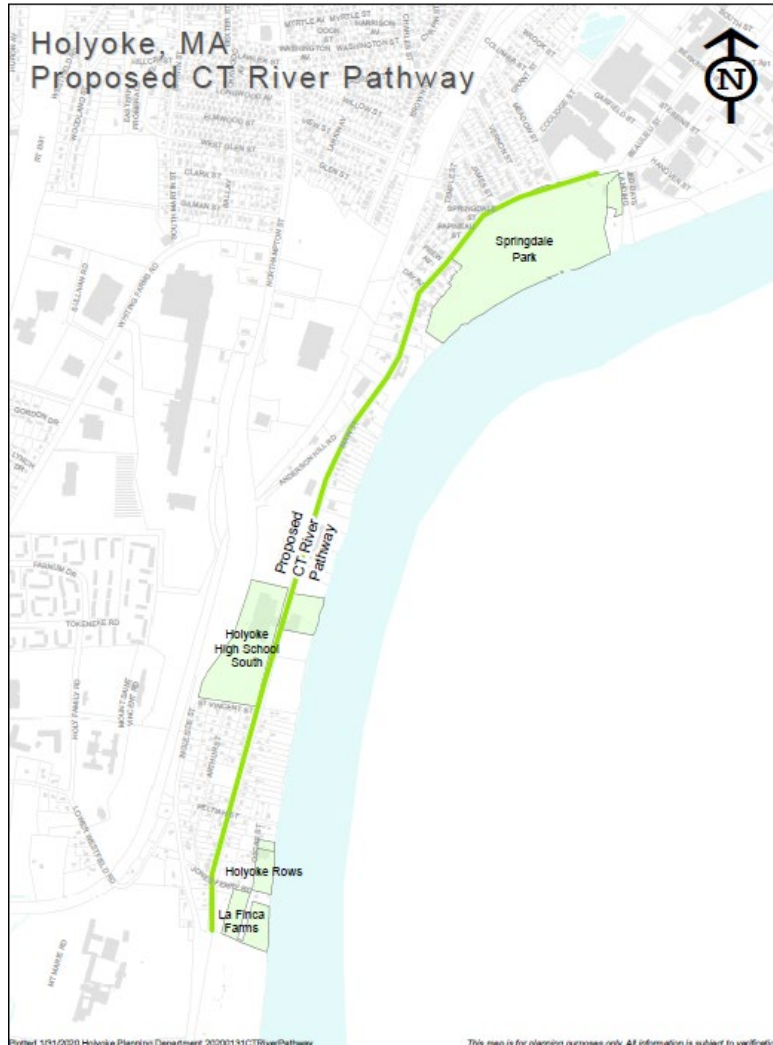
- Feasibility Study: **\$100,000**
- Link the East Coast Greenway and the Milford Rail Trail - Upper Charles Trail on the north and the SNETT and the Blackstone River Bikeway/Greenway on the south.
- CMRPC/MAPC working with Bellingham, Mendon, and Blackstone (Cohesive Strategy)
- MassTrails Priority Network



MassTrails 2025 Grant Recommendations



City of Holyoke, Connecticut River Pathway



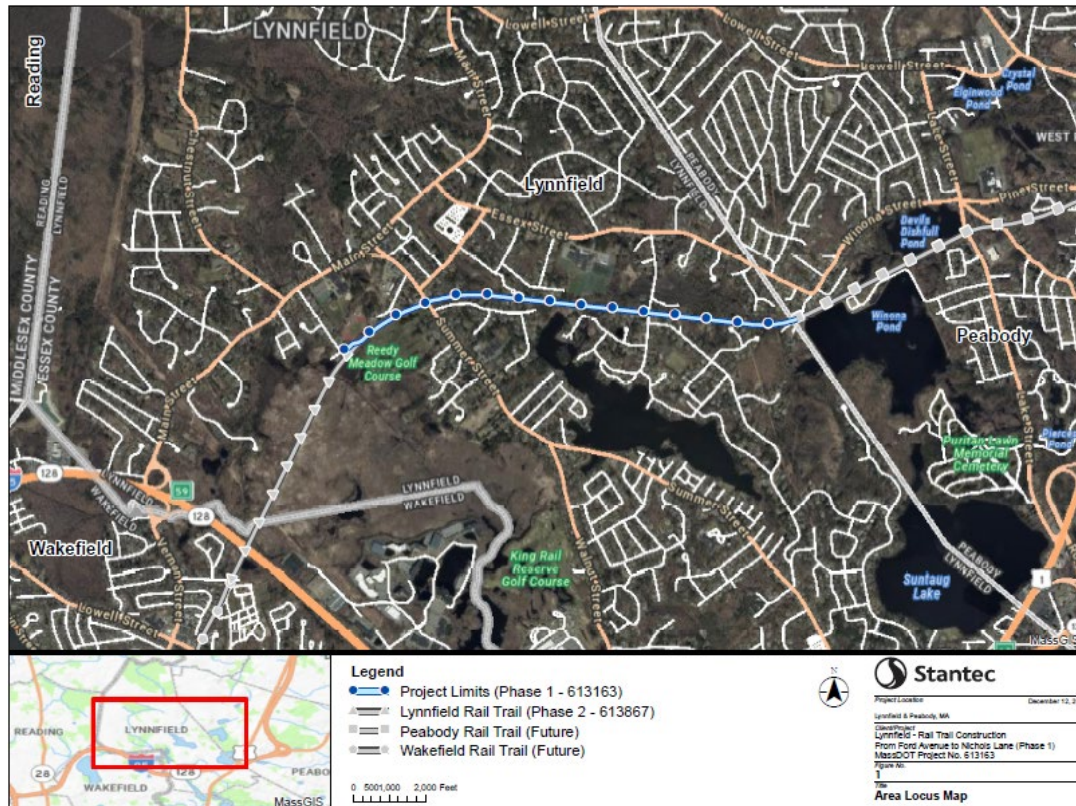
- Preliminary Design for 1.6-mile shared-use path corridor connecting southern portion of the City to the flats (downtown) area: **\$239,000**
- Within Environmental Justice Neighborhood
- MassTrails Priority Network / Funded previous feasibility stage and provided technical guidance

MassTrails 2025 Grant Recommendations



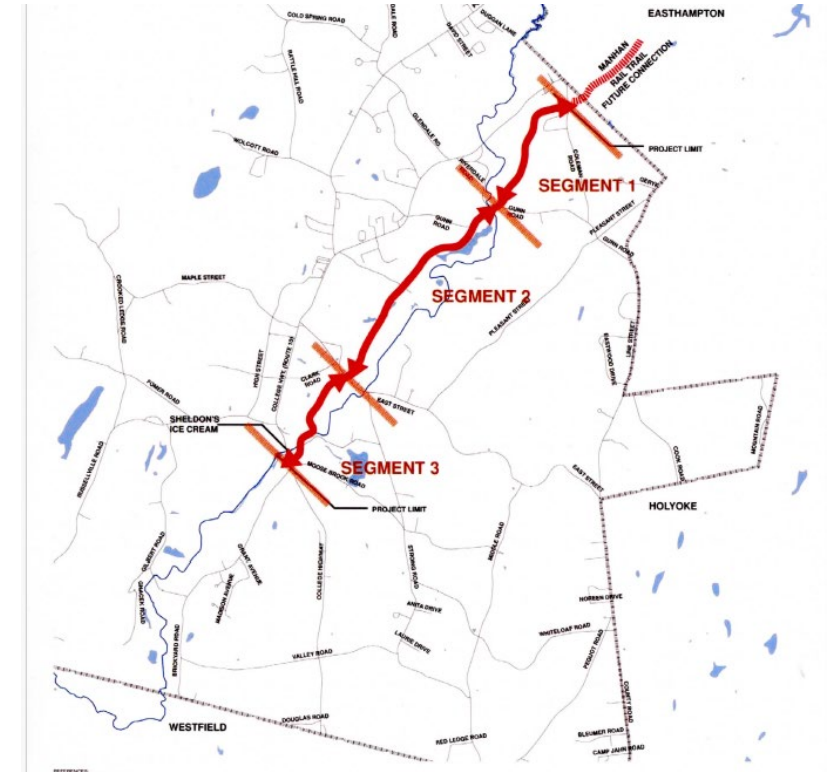
Town of Lynnfield / Southampton – Path the to STIP Design/Engineering/Permitting

Town of Lynnfield: \$100,000



2.8 Miles, FY 2027 STIP Project

Town of Southampton: \$324,000



3.1 Miles, FY 2028 STIP Project

MassTrails 2025 Grant Recommendations



Town of Fairhaven, Phoenix Rail Trail Rehabilitation



- Maintenance: **\$500,000**
- 3.3 miles of pavement overlay, ADA improvements at street crossings
- One of the first trails build by MassDOT!
- 1 of 9 first time applicants to MassTrails!

MassTrails 2025 Grant Recommendations



Mystic River Watershed Association, Wayfinding Plan at Mystic and Alewife Reservations



Modernize wayfinding signage system with compliant with the 2022 MassTrails Bike Wayfinding Design Guide:
\$100,000

MassTrails 2025 Grant Recommendations



Mass Central Rail Trail Projects

BOSTON to NORTHAMPTON | 104 Miles

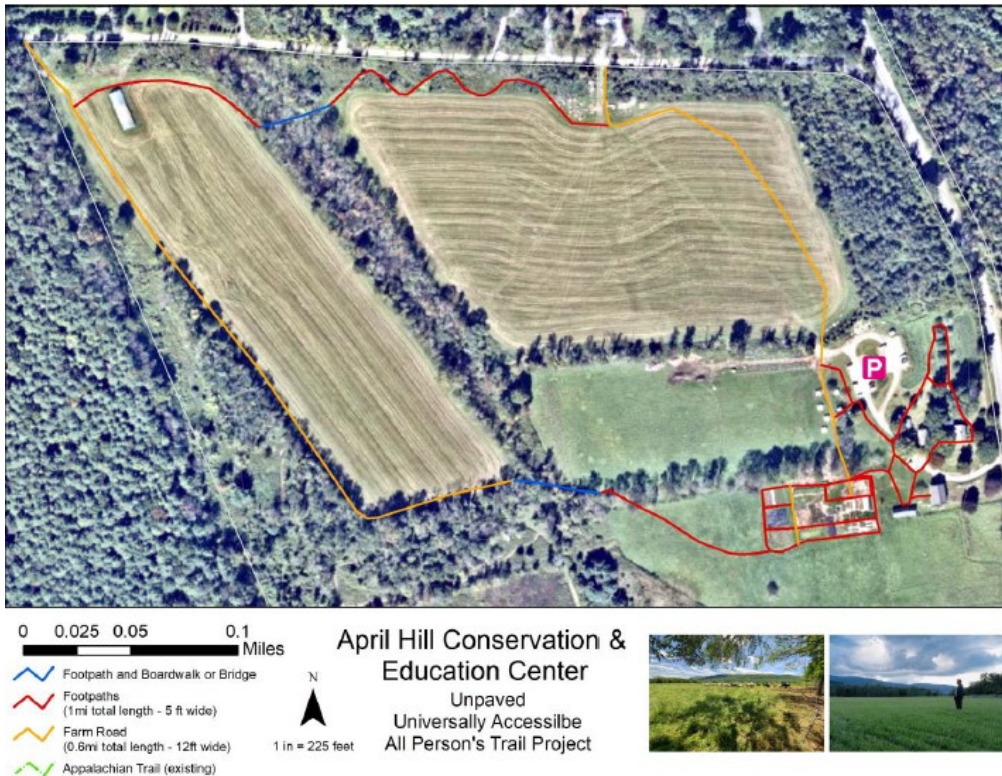


- Northampton: City of Northampton, Rehab Pedestrian Bridges - **\$500,000**
- Belchertown: Friends of Belchertown Greenway, Jabish Brook Trestle Repairs - **\$86,010**
- Palmer: Town of Pamer MCRT Feasibility Study - **\$58,100**
- Ware: Town of Ware, Greenville Park to MCRT Connector Construction - **\$79,140**
- New Braintree & Barre: East Quabbin Land Trust, Construction of MCRT - **\$160,000**
- Rutland: Wachusett Greenways, MCRT Construction - **\$111,815**
- Clinton: Clinton Greenway Conservation Trust, MCRT Build Phase 2 - **\$500,000**
- Hudson: Town of Hudson, MCRT Hudson to Berlin 25% Design - **\$203,000**

MassTrails 2025 Grant Recommendations



Greenagers, April Hill Accessible Trail

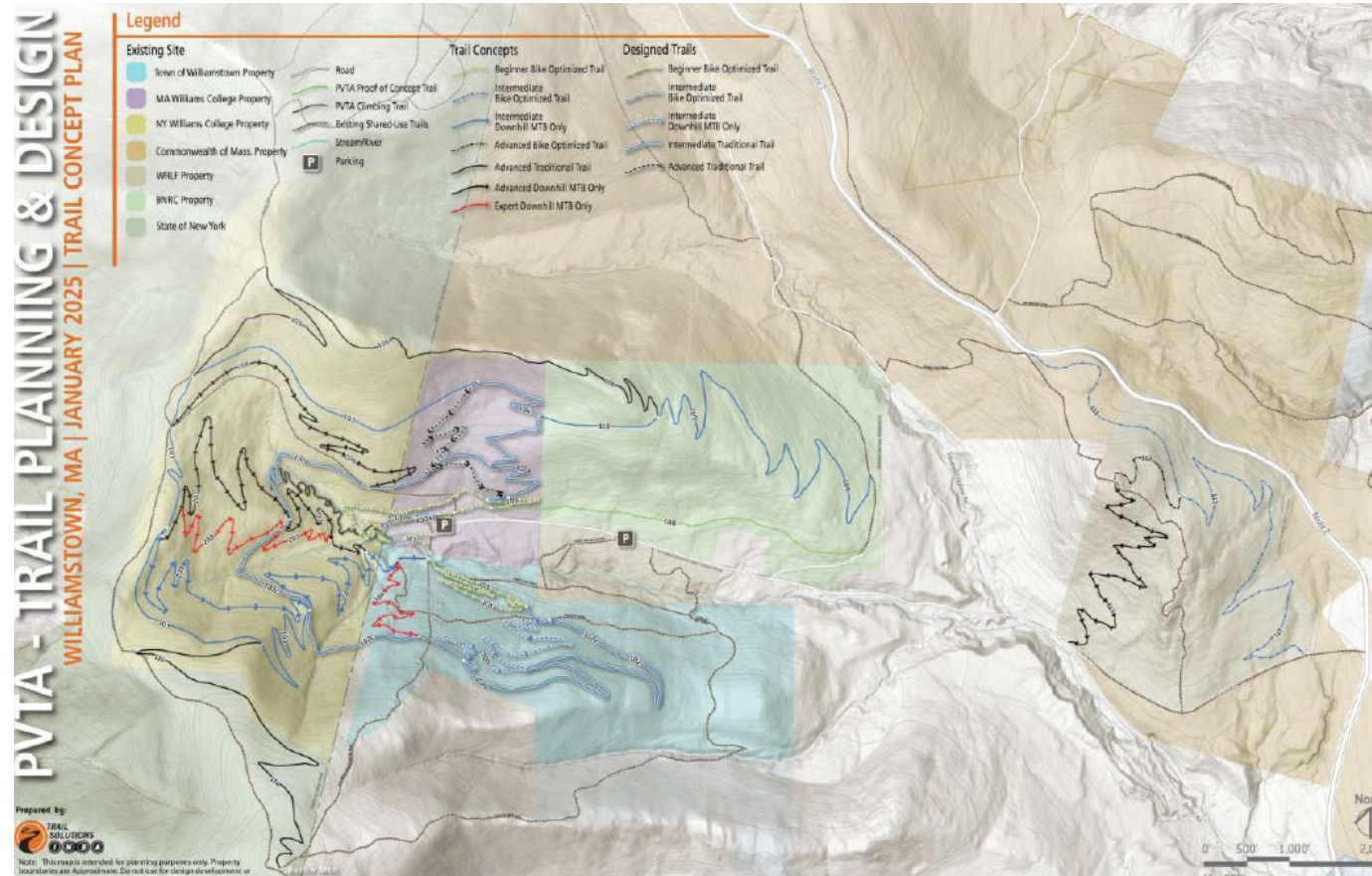


Construction of 1.6-mile network of unpaved, universally accessible, all-persons trails. The trails will provide access to sweeping vistas, a working farm, vocational skills workshops, grassland bird habitat, and educational opportunities.: **\$100,000**

MassTrails 2025 Grant Recommendations



New England Mountain Bike Association, Purple Valley Trails



Construction of 2.5 miles of intermediate trails as a part of a 20+ mile sustainable, professionally designed mountain bike trail network in Williamstown: **\$89,920**

MassTrails 2025 Grant Recommendations



Bernardston/Gill/Leyden Snowmobile Club, Bridge Rehabilitation

Redecking existing bridge with pressure treated lumber, securing to the steel I beams, upgrading side skirts for better visibility and safety, and replacing the center wear strips: **\$5,306**





MassTrails 2025 Grant Recommendations

1 Direct DCR Grant Recommendations

- Wrentham and Franklin State Forest Motorized Equipment Purchase - Rokon

10 Projects with DCR Land interests

- Mystic River Watershed Association, Wayfinding Plan: Mystic & Alewife Reservations
- Wachusett Greenways, Mass Central Rail Trail
- Franklin Bellingham Rail Trail Committee, SNETT Benches
- Watertown Community Gardens, Watertown-Cambridge Greenway Invasive Plant Management
- Town of Hudson, MCRT Hudson to Berlin - 25% design (DCR Lease from MBTA)
- City of Somerville, Blessing of the Bay Greenway
- Florida Mountaineers Snowmobile Club, Florida Mountaineer Groomer Initiative
- Pilgrim Sands Trail Riders, Pilgrim Sands Trail Riders Equipment Grant 2025
- Knox Trail Riders, Beartown State Forest Trail Maintenance
- Snowmobile Association of Massachusetts, Statewide Snowmobile Trails Grooming 2025

MassTrails Grant Program



**2026 Application
Period is OPEN**

**Deadline: Monday, February 2,
2026 by 11:59pm**

Learn more:

**[www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-
for-a-masstrails-grant](http://www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-for-a-masstrails-grant)**

MassTrails Program Resources and Contacts



MassTrails Contact Info:

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Learn more about
MassTrails Grants:

[https://www.mass.gov/
guides/masstrails-grants](https://www.mass.gov/guides/masstrails-grants)



Apply for a MassTrails
Grant:

[https://www.mass.gov/
how-to/apply-for-a-
masstrails-grant](https://www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-for-a-masstrails-grant)



MassTrails Website
(Main Page):

[https://www.mass.gov/
welcome-to-masstrails](https://www.mass.gov/welcome-to-masstrails)

