



Connecting the Wachusett Communities with Trails and Greenways

Greetings Wachusett Greenways Friends!

This is a great time of year to get outside to enjoy our beautiful countryside and waterways!

Wachusett Greenways Events

Wachusett Greenways Walk-Off-the-Bird at Trout Brook Reservation, Manning St., Holden November 30, 10 AM

Time to stretch your legs after your Thanksgiving feast. Join Wachusett Greenways for a 3 to 4 mile loop at Trout Brook Reservation. Contact Christy Barnes at christybarnes0706@gmail.com or 508-688-7540 to sign up.



Mass Central Rail Trail Clearing December 7, 9 AM-noon December 9, 1:30-3:30 PM

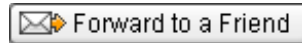


Welcome all volunteers for trail clearing! Contact Colleen Abrams at 508-479-2123 or colleen.abrams@verizon.net to sign up.

Hike at the Trout Brook Reservation, Manning St., Holden



Join Wachusett Greenways for an easy loop hike with a distance of about 3.5 miles. We'll hike through the Trout Brook Reservation recreation area, then follow the Red Trail along picturesque Trout Brook, and finally loop back to the trailhead using the Bob Elms (Blue) trail. The trailhead begins at the far end of the parking lot off of Manning Street in Holden. Contact Jeff Keay to sign up at jkeay23@gmail.com or 508-353-1174.



A Wonderful Resource for All to Enjoy

George and Suzanne Faucher are enthusiastic, long-time visitors to the Mass Central Rail Trail. "Our family has used the rail trail for 20 years," they recently shared, "and while we felt we should get out with other volunteers to work on the trail, other commitments always seemed to get in the way. So we try to help through regular financial support." For a number of years, the Fauchers have demonstrated their generosity through regular monthly donations.



The Fauchers' cumulative support entitles them to a handsome granite bench along the trail to be installed along the Quinapoxet River in West Boylston, with their names inscribed for posterity.

"Our kids visit the trail when they're in the area," said George. "Even after we're gone, our bench will provide them a reminder of fond childhood times and what a special place the rail trail was to us."

George and Suzanne lived in Sterling for about 20 years before relocating to Narragansett, RI, in 2018, "to be closer to the ocean," George said. He continues his career in the telecom industry, commuting to the Boston area and staying over at a family home in Waltham.

"The Mass Central Rail Trail was an ideal place to enjoy with our son and daughter as they grew up," said Suzanne. "The kids loved hiking and riding their bikes, and we walked the dogs there regularly. The calming sounds of the Quinapoxet River, watching the seasons change, finding time to talk about things that really needed talking about, and simply being in the woods as a family built lasting memories."

As the family's Yellow Lab aged and after losing a leg, he was still able to walk the rail trail when more strenuous hikes, such as up Mt. Wachusett, became too difficult.

Over the years, the Fauchers have followed the progress of Greenways to extend the rail trail, today ranging west into Barre and east into Sterling. "The upkeep of the trail, its cleanliness and general maintenance illustrate Greenways' dedication to its 'labor of love' -- its mission to connect the

communities it traverses" -- Sterling, West Boylston, Holden, Rutland, Oakham and Barre.

"Most places that entertain families have usage or admission fees. The rail trail costs nothing to use and is open year-round to everyone of all abilities," said Suzanne. "We liken the rail trail to public radio. If you use it and have the means, we feel strongly it's important to support it." George added, "We know there are ongoing expenses to maintain and extend the trail, and our monthly giving helps this terrific public resource survive and thrive. We feel financial support for Greenways is almost a responsibility."

To learn more about regular giving to Wachusett Greenways, please contact Colleen Abrams at colleen.abrams@verizon.net or 508-497-2123.

Active Transportation is Growing in Massachusetts!

Recently, two statewide conferences focused on advancing active transportation through walking, bicycling and connecting to transit. The drum beat for active, human-powered transportation and recreation is growing through initiatives such as Complete Streets and MassTrails.



Jonathan Gulliver, MassDOT Highway Administrator, expressed Governor Baker's strong commitment to active transportation at the **Moving Together Conference** in Boston on October 24. "We're in the business of accessibility-getting people what they need-helping people to thrive," Jonathan affirmed as he referenced the critical value of local advocacy in putting together a network of walkways, multi-use trails, transit and highways for everyone.

Wachusett Greenways invites you to check out the Moving Together Conference presentations to learn about advocating for and building more active transportation connections:

www.umasstransportationcenter.org/assnfe/ev.asp?ID=4257



The recent **Mass Trails Conference** advanced the theme "Trails as Connections" for everyone. Keynote speaker Charles Thomas, Outward Bound director, inspired us to "make trails a transformative place for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities." Please take time to visit the presentations highlighting work by many dedicated trail advocates:

www.masstrailsconference.com/2019session-details.html.

Amanda Lewis, MassTrails Program Manager and conference director, offered a wealth of sessions to energize trail advocates. MassTrails partners introduced participants to the new MassTrails Program: www.mass.gov/welcome-to-masstrails.

The MassTrails website tells us, "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.

MassTrails seeks to expand and connect the Commonwealth's networks of off-road, shared-use pathways and recreational trails for all users across Massachusetts by providing matching grants, technical assistance and resources to individuals, municipalities, non-profits, and other public entities to design, construct, and maintain high quality Massachusetts trails."



MassTrails is an interagency initiative of the Commonwealth lead by the Governor's Office, Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Department of Transportation and the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Eight Wachusett Greenways volunteers participated in these conferences, including making two presentations. Meeting with other active-transportation advocates and being reminded of the Commonwealth's growing commitment to access for all is invigorating. Onward!

With Gratitude

We acknowledge and heartily thank everyone who has joined Wachusett Greenways as a 2019 member, and all those who have made extra gifts for the Mass Central Rail Trail!



Hopefully our November postal mailing reached you, inviting you to contribute and become a member or renew your membership. If you have not yet responded, please consider this invitation, using the envelope included with that letter. Or give on line at www.wachusettgreenways.org. We welcome gift memberships for friends and family. Thanks!

Events Sponsored by Our Friends at the Mass Department of Conservation and Recreation



December Hiking Series

Beat the winter blues, bundle up and get outside. This series of winter hikes will take you along the North Dike to the Wachusett Reservoir Dam. Hikes meet at the same location at Gate 39, Route 110 & South Meadow Road, Clinton. The area offers a variety of interesting views allowing a new topic of focus each week. About 3 miles round trip, all ages welcome. Be prepared for cold weather and wind: dress in layers and wear winter boots.

Dogs are not permitted on watershed property; service dogs are welcome. For additional information, please contact education staff at Kathryn.Parent@Mass.gov or 774-261-1809.

Seeing Green Evergreen Hike

Saturday, December 14, 10:00-11:30 AM

Meet at Wachusett Reservoir, Gate 39, Route 110 & South Meadow Road, Clinton



Snap out of the winter blues and search for green on a brisk easy walk to appreciate how evergreen plants adapt to the cold while providing food and shelter for wildlife. Discover the role of pine trees and arborvitae in the design of the Reservoir. For additional information, please contact education staff at Kathryn.Parent@Mass.gov or 774-261-1809.

Earth, Wind & Water Hike

Saturday, December 21, 10:00-11:30 AM

Meet at Wachusett Reservoir, Gate 39, Route 110 & South Meadow Road, Clinton



This hike will feature how nature and architecture aligns along the hillside walk through a rock cut to the spillway, fountain, and points of interest around the Wachusett Dam. See what the engineers had in mind to turn utilitarian structures into attractive features of the landscape. For additional information, please contact education staff at Kathryn.Parent@Mass.gov or 774-261-1809.

Legends and Lore Hike

Saturday, December 28, 10:00-11:30 AM

Meet at Wachusett Reservoir, Gate 39, Route 110 & South Meadow Road, Clinton

'Tis the season for family gatherings and storytelling. As the year closes out, burn off some energy on an easy hike and discuss the geology and history of Wachusett Reservoir along with legends and lore of the North Dike and Cemetery Island. For additional information, please contact education staff at Kathryn.Parent@Mass.gov or 774-261-1809.



 Forward to a Friend

STAY CONNECTED:

