



## Share Your Mass Central Rail Trail Story for Wachusett Greenways' 30 Years

Let's celebrate Wachusett Greenways' 30-year journey toward 30 miles of the Mass Central Rail Trail! Please share your story. What does the MCRT mean to you? How did you discover it? Send photos, stories, poems, songs, artwork to Wachusett Greenways by mail or via our website. How do you connect to the trail? Beginning at our annual gathering June 18 at Trout Brook Reservation, Holden, and continuing through this fall at our new trail section dedication ceremonies, we'll share your stories and your vision.

Thank you to everyone who has helped Wachusett Greenways reach the 30-year mark. Each volunteer, trail friend, donor, member and good neighbor who



**Thank you for all you do! Our favorite place to walk."**

*—Bob and Sharon C., Holden*

## Connections across the Commonwealth

WG participated in two statewide conferences in October. The MassTrails conference in Worcester was full of energy and vision for building new trail connections. The Moving Together conference in Boston offered education and encouragement for active transportation. Site visits and networking were highlights of both conferences.



**Just rode the Mass Central Rail Trail... Lovely. Appreciate all your dedication and hard work."**

*—Ron and Marianne O., Townsend*

cares about the Mass Central Rail Trail (MCRT) and connecting our communities is a gift. We are honored to build and care for the MCRT along the central 30-mile route through Barre, Oakham, Rutland, Holden, West Boylston and Sterling. Working alongside our neighbors to the east and west, let's close the gaps to finish the 104 mile MCRT between Northampton and Boston!

## Pommogussett Tunnel Mural

Artist Margaret McCandless and several volunteer painters developed the Pommogussett Tunnel mural on the MCRT sharing a beautiful vision of nature surrounding the MCRT along Moulton Pond in Rutland. Supporting grants came from Holden, Rutland and Oakham Cultural Councils, local agencies, which are supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.



Wachusett Greenways is following a focused track to complete and steward the central 30 miles of the MCRT with the support of our partners: DCR Division of Watershed Protection, eight Wachusett/Ware towns, MassTrails, regional foundations, businesses and amazing members, donors and volunteers. The eight Towns in our team are Barre, Holden, Oakham, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, Sterling and West Boylston. Wachusett Greenways construction projects will connect the remaining approximately nine miles of the 30-mile MCRT between Barre and Sterling.



**The trail keeps getting better! Thanks for all you do."**

*—Barbara Z., Worcester*

## Mass Central Rail Trail Construction and Stewardship

During 2024, construction continued on the new accessible MCRT route traveling 2.3 miles over the hill in Holden between Manning Street and Wachusett Street (Route 31) at Mill Street. Two MassTrails grants and matching funds from Wachusett Greenways donors support completion of this two-year project by June 2025. This construction expands the completed MCRT section between Thomas St., West Boylston and Princeton St., Holden to a distance of 9 miles. In addition, Wachusett Greenways replaced the failed railroad culvert near Miles Road and Thayer Pond in Rutland to restore access to Miles Road and to preserve the MCRT.

## 2024 Annual Report





**Well made and well-maintained trails bring people health and happiness. Thank you!"**

*—David and Emily H., Weston*

Wachusett Greenways stewards the central MCRT with support from eight towns and the DCR. WG works year round on maintenance between Sterling and Barre including ditch clearing, removal of dead trees, mowing, brush removal, regular patrolling and litter removal, parking lot snow removal, providing all accessible portable restrooms, outreach and hospitality to trail users and trail restoration when needed.



**Thank you for the great job you all are doing."**

*—Marion S., Groton*

Volunteers are the vital spark for WG. We are grateful for everyone who helps keep the MCRT flourishing for everyone to enjoy every day. New volunteers are always welcome!

Thank you to every one of this year's more than 900 donors including 141 new donors. WG supporters come from 118 towns in 19 states. For 30 years, generous WG donors have shared the joy of growing the MCRT.

**Thanks for all the work you do to keep people moving!"**

*—Rich and Janice H., Leominster*

Basic membership from \$5 to \$40 is the foundation for annual operating expenses. Three special Mass Central Rail Trail Funds also sustain us:

- 1) The MCRT Construction Fund helps build new trail sections to reach the 30-mile goal.
- 2) The Dr. Edward P. Yaglou MCRT Maintenance Fund supports large restoration projects.
- 3) The MCRT Stewardship Endowment Fund is a permanent fund; growth from it will help us to grow as MCRT stewards.

#### Contact Us

Mail: P. O. Box 121, Holden, MA 01520

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Call: 508-479-2123

#### Wachusett Greenways Board of Directors



(left to right) Troy Milliken, Colleen Abrams, Steve Chanis, Chuck Snow, Dan Heney, Mike Peckar

**What a wonderful contribution you make to the health and happiness of the community. Thank you."**

*—Marilyn D., Holden*

Next up is our 30th anniversary gathering on June 18, 2025 at Trout Brook Reservation, Holden at 5:30 p.m. We will each bring our picnic suppers and WG will provide beverage and dessert. Bring your favorite trail stories with words, art or photos. We'll also hear updates on trail construction and plans for fall 2025 dedications of the Sterling, West Washacum bridge and of the new MCRT in Holden from Manning Street nearly five miles to Princeton Street.

#### All Are Welcome!

##### Wonderful Trail Users, Volunteers, Members and Donors!

Who enjoys the trail? New residents, families, couples, runners, cyclists, longtime supporters, visitors from afar, new moms and dads with babies and friends, folks who need healing from injuries or illness, and seniors staying healthy. Trail users, volunteers, members and donors connect through the Mass Central Rail Trail!

#### N2B Ride in September

The Norwottuck Network hosted the N2B Ride (Northampton to Boston) in September along the MCRT corridor. Wachusett Greenways welcomed the hardy MCRT advocates in West Boylston to thank them for their commitment to the MCRT and to share a little of Wachusett Greenways' 30 year journey and vision for the 30 central miles of the MCRT.



#### Ready for June 18, 2025, 30th Year Annual Celebration at Trout Brook Reservation

On June 5, 2024, WG held the annual meeting at Trout Brook Reservation, Holden, with a fun outdoor picnic and review of progress in our 29th year. We celebrated a year of expanded trail maintenance, welcoming our first employee, connections with those who enjoy the trail and construction progress.

**Congratulations on 30 years! We are grateful."**

*—Susan P. and Robert S., Sterling*

#### MCRT Float Restoration

"The Mass Central train float is beautifully restored. Thanks to Walter Nutter and company for taking on this project and rebuilding the MCRR engine and coal car. East Quabbin Land Trust is donating storage to WG for the train model, and we are returning it to service for community events and parades along the MCRT.

The Richard and Ruth Spaulding family and Robert Bolton, Holden artist, designed and constructed the original train built to scale 20 years ago."

