



TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH Trails Sub-Committee

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Northborough Trails Committee – 2008 Annual Report January 5, 2009

The Northborough Trails Committee's (NTC) formal name is the Trails Subcommittee of the Northborough Open Space Committee. Arthur Cole founded the Trails Committee in February of 2001 under the auspice of the Open Space Committee. The Trails Committee's mission is to develop and maintain a viable recreational trail system in Northborough on public and private property by utilizing volunteers from the community. During the 2008 calendar year we had a busy year with our administration, new trail development and construction, and stewardship of existing trails. Some highlights of our years activities are described below. The NTC encourages everyone to enjoy the Town's resources and to participate in NTC activities. Checkout the NTC website for other information about the Northborough trails network at: <http://www.town.northborough.ma.us/ntrails/index.htm>

Mt. Pisgah

The Northborough Trails Committee has agreements with the Northborough Conservation Commission, MassWildLife, and private property owners in the Mt. Pisgah region to perform the services of volunteer trail stewards for the recreational trails on those lands. The Mt. Pisgah area has had an increase in recreational users over the last few years due to word of mouth and news publications about this seemingly remote and beautiful land that makes up the Mt. Pisgah corridor. Due to the increased use of the Mt. Pisgah conservation land the NTC will continue to monitor the trails for needed maintenance and improvements, but feel free to contact me about any concerns or suggestions. The Mt. Pisgah area received extensive tree damage due to the December 2008 ice storm, so on December 26, 2008 NTC volunteers spent the day cutting and clearing trees and limbs from the trail network, although due to snow cover we'll have to finish some of the cleanup in the spring because of some limbs being buried in the snow.

The Mt. Pisgah North View is located in Berlin on private property and over the last several years the view to Boston has become overgrown with trees. In December 2007 the NTC was granted permission by the private property owner to cut trees in order to restore the view. Most of the cutting was done by spring 2008, but now it appears some trees need to be cut back again, so we'll plan to do it by spring 2009. The Mt. Pisgah South View is in Northborough, and also on private property. The South View has also become overgrown with trees during the last several years and we are attempting to gain permission from the property owner to restore that view too.

The Town of Berlin has a Trailhead to Mt. Pisgah on Linden Street (via the Devine Trail) and during August 2007 the Town of Berlin created an official trail head parking lot at the Devine Trail. The NTC is grateful for this new trailhead parking lot because the Smith Road access has been handling most of the visitor traffic, and we're hopeful this new parking area will

help disperse visitor traffic. See the NTC website Mt. Pisgah map for the Linden St. trailhead parking location and trails leading to Mt. Pisgah from Berlin.

The New Coyote Trail

In December 2007 the NTC obtained our permit from the Department of Conservation and Recreation and approval from the Northborough Conservation Commission to complete the Coyote Trail extension from the south side of the Assabet River in the Yellick Conservation Area to Boundary Street. In January 2008 Eagle Scout candidate Ethan Langer from Troop 101 Northborough took advantage of a week of warm days to complete the first .3 mile section of the Coyote Trail extension from the existing Coyote Trail at the Assabet River to an area behind Goodnow Street in the Birchwood neighborhood. Ethan constructed and installed 112 feet of boardwalk on this section of trail, with funding for the boardwalks provided by the A.M.C. Worcester Chapter. Ethan constructed this portion of the trail as his B.S.A. Eagle Scout Project under the auspice of the N.T.C.. Ethan completed his B.S.A. Eagle Scout Project requirements and he attained the rank of Eagle Scout in the spring of 2008. Congratulations to Ethan!

In April 2008 N.T.C. Volunteers completed a 1.2 mile section of the new Coyote Trail from Rt-20 near the Jehovah Witness Church to a parking lot on Boundary Street, including a steel girder bridge across the Stirrup Brook. The Northborough Department of Public Works assisted us in creating a trailhead parking lot at Boundary Street and transporting bridge and boardwalk materials to the Rt-20 trailhead. The Stirrup Brook bridge on this section of the trail was built through a donation by Heritage Welding for the steel girders, Delgreco Supply Company for the masonry materials, and with Town of Northborough Community Preservation Act funding for the deck materials. The D.P.W. also resurfaced the Yellick Conservation Area parking lot at Hudson Street, which had become difficult to drive on due to ruts and mud. Also, the N.T.C. sincerely appreciates the support of the D.P.W. in maintaining the trailhead parking areas, including plowing in the winter months. In November 2008 the NTC placed two picnic tables at scenic locations overlooking the Assabet River about .3 and .5 miles from the Boundary Street parking lot. Thank you to Scott Karpuk for coordinating the purchase and installation of the picnic tables, which were purchased with C.P.A. funding.

On October 04, 2008 Troop 101 Eagle Scout candidate Daniel Rowe completed construction of the middle .8 mile section of the new Coyote Trail from where Ethan Langer ended, to the new bridge crossing the Stirrup Brook behind the Jehovah's Witnesses Church, as well as a spur trail out to Little Pond Road. There is no off street parking for the trail from Little Pond Road to the Coyote Trail, so please use one of the parking areas at Yellick, Rt-20, or Boundary Street for trailhead parking. Daniel constructed this portion of the trail as his B.S.A. Eagle Scout Project under the auspice of the N.T.C.. The completion of Daniel's section of the new Coyote Trail linked the NTC's 1.2 mile section to Ethan Langer's section, and finished this beautiful new trail that follows the Stirrup Brook and Assabet River around the SuAsCo watershed land for over 2.5 miles. For more information on the SuAsCo project checkout this link - <http://www.mass.gov/envir/water/watersheds/suasco.html>

The New Algonquin Regional High School Trail

On August 11, 2008 the Northborough Trails Committee received the final approval needed to begin construction of a new trail located on the property of the Algonquin Regional High School, and on November 29, 2008 the trail was completed. (*Currently this new trail does not have a name, but the NTC's application for a name is pending with the A.R.H.S. naming*

committee.) The new A.R.H.S. trail starts at the closed Rt-20 Rest Area on the south side of the road and located on the opposite side of the road from the Jehovah's Witness Church located at 419 Main Street. The trail follows along the edge of the A.R.H.S. property near the Stirrup Brook and travels approximately 1.7 miles to Bartlett Street, with a .1 mile cutoff trail to the upper parking lot at the A.R.H.S.. At the bottom of the cutoff to the upper parking lot the trail travels south onto private property and then out to Bartlett Street. The N.T.C. received permission from the two private property owners between the A.R.H.S. property and Bartlett Street for the new trail, and we installed a 40 foot bridge across the Stirrup Brook on the Waters' property.

On October 19, 2008 B.S.A. Troop 101 Northborough Eagle Scout candidate Steven Coughlin completed construction of the first .7 mile section of the new trail from the Rt-20 Rest Area to a middle point at the A.R.H.S. sewer easement located to the rear of the athletic fields. Steven also built two 12' sections of boardwalk which were installed across two small brooks near the beginning of the trail. Steven constructed this portion of the trail as his B.S.A. Eagle Scout Project under the auspice of the N.T.C.. The north side trailhead is located in the closed rest area on the south side of Rt-20, (on the opposite side of Rt-20 from the new Coyote Trail and the Jehovah's Witness Church) with parking on the east side of the closed rest area in front of the jersey barriers.

On November 02, 2008 B.S.A. Troop 1 Northborough Eagle Scout candidate Jake Vancour completed the second .7 mile section of the trail beginning at the sewer easement where Steven ended and continuing on to the upper parking lot of the A.R.H.S., with a short leg toward Bartlett Street to the Waters' private property line. Jake also built three 12' sections of boardwalk which were installed across two small brooks. Jake's portion of the trail was his B.S.A. Eagle Scout Project and done under the auspice of the N.T.C..

On November 29, 2008 N.T.C. volunteers completed the trail from the A.R.H.S. property line to Bartlett Street, which included installing one 12' section of boardwalk and a 40' bridge across the Stirrup Brook. I would like to thank the Department of Public Works for delivering the bridge materials to the Bartlett Street trailhead, and a thank you to Rob Horne and Adam Bradley for working with me to haul all the bridge materials to the brook crossing location and then constructing the bridge. C.P.A. funding was used for purchasing the materials for the bridge. The Bartlett Street trailhead is located about 400' east of Lyman Street, look for a post painted yellow. Posts are also located at the Rt-20 trailhead and on either side of the open grass sewer easement located at the middle of the trail to the rear of the athletic fields. There are also 4 cutover trails connecting this new trail with the existing A.R.H.S. Cross Country Trail, so be careful to follow the new trail blazes which are yellow painted rectangles on the trees. Also, a special thanks to Bob Mihalek and Rob Horne for all their chainsaw work to construct the Coyote and ARHS trails.

Beaver Loop

In October 2008 N.T.C. Volunteers completed a .3 mile trail named Beaver Loop, which is located on D.C.R. land off of the Cold Harbor Trail between West Street and Church Street. The trail starts just after crossing the pontoon bridge from the West Street side, and it ends near the bridge crossing the brook a short distance from Church Street.

Other News

In October 2008 Arthur Cole, founder of the Northborough Trails Committee, resigned as an N.T.C. official. When asked why he created the Committee Art said, "I felt as an adult that I would like other townspeople to enjoy the woods and fields that I did as a youngster riding my bike around town. But I was unable to really do anything about it until I retired." During the last seven years Art led volunteers developing an impressive network of recreational trails consisting of nearly 25 miles, which is now a wonderful recreational asset for the Town of Northborough. Because of a man's vision with boyhood memories, there are now opportunities for others to create their own memories because of Mr. Cole's work and passion for being surrounded by open space in Northborough. After Art told me that he was resigning from his official position with the committee, I said, "Art, you're hooked. Your mind says leave, but your heart won't let you. See you on the trails." Art will no longer be an official on the N.T.C., but he will continue to volunteer working to maintain the Northborough trails network he created, as well as help plan and construct new trails. However, most of his energy will be enjoying the fruit of his work by walking the trails with family and friends. We should all thank Art for his vision and hard work over the last 7 years.

In July 2007 the NTC received Community Preservation Act funding in the amount of \$570.00 to expand the Edmund Woods Historic Interpretive Trail Guide by purchasing MP3 Players. During 2008 an audio guide was installed on the devices, which can be played as you walk the trail and arrive at each numbered interpretive post. The MP3 Players are currently available at the Northborough Library and may be borrowed by using a valid Library Card, or the audio information can be loaded onto your own MP3/iPod type device using a link located on the NTC Website. NTC Volunteers Forest Lyford and Josh Richardson completed the audio guide, with Forest narrating and Josh providing the necessary audio technical expertise. Josh has also been working on a redesign of the NTC website, which has a planned launch date of January 2009.

NTC Funding

The NTC is a volunteer committee without a Town budget, but we need funding to purchase materials for trails development and maintenance, as well as for needed equipment to develop and maintain the trails and associated programs. In 2008 we received \$5,000.00 through the Community Preservation Act, and we would like to thank the Town residents for voting in favor of our request at the annual Town Meeting. The NTC has applied again this year to the Community Preservation Committee for funding to purchase supplies to develop new trails, and we hope the Town Residents will again support our request for funding.

The NTC meets the third Monday of each month at the Police Station and volunteers are always welcome. Don't forget to check out the NTC website and either download the trail maps or stop by the Planning Department for a map packet. Enjoy your Town's natural resources and get outside and take a hike.

Respectfully submitted,
Charles Bradley, N.T.C. Chairman