

Annual Report of the Woodland Trails Committee

The selectmen established the Williamsburg Woodland Trails committee to work with interested public and private property owners to enhance trail opportunities in town.

Goals of the committee:

- Improve the system of existing trails in town for all users.
- Respect individual landowner's rights with respect to trails and trail use on their land
- Strengthen the coalition of all trail users (including hikers, skiers, snowmobile riders, ATV riders, bikers and equestrians) interested in maintaining and improving Williamsburg's trails.
- Strengthen the bonds of our community through this effort.

Hall / O'Neil Hill Trail

Beginning in 2007 the Woodland Trails committee partnered with Jr. Girl Scout troop 228 and Mass Audubon to create a trail connecting the town owned Hall Conservation Area with the recently acquired Mass Audubon property, O'Neil Hill. During 2008 the Girl Scouts worked with trails members to complete trail clearing, including a portion on private property. Mass Audubon staff then installed signage. The Girl Scouts constructed and erected a kiosk to display their trail information and maps. Their final task required to earn the Girl Scout Bronze Award was to design a Quest route which uses clues to lead the participant to a letterbox located near the trail. All of the work was acknowledged at the June 21, trail opening ceremony held at the O'Neil Rd. entrance. After listening to speakers from Mass Audubon, Troop 228, and Woodland Trails, attendees were lead on a hike to open the new trail.

2008 Hikes

- First Day Snowshoe Hike at Henhawk Trail
- Full Moon Hike, Feb. 17, cancelled due to inclement weather
- Move it for Meekins Hike, Oct. 26-Trails committee partnered with Meekins Library as part of Williamsburg's Fall Festival to plan and lead the hike.

Trail maintenance

- The committee has developed a needs inventory by assessing maintenance requirements of town trails. A list of volunteers has been developed who will assist committee members in addressing specific projects on these trails.
- Trail maintenance days may be scheduled to allow the public to participate in ongoing trail improvements.

Using Williamsburg's Trails

Copies of the Woodland Trails brochure listing publicly accessible trails in town are available at the Town Office and Meekins Library. These trails may cross public and private property, so users must respect the trails, the property and each other. The Woodland Trails committee requests that all users follow these guidelines when using local trails.

- Please follow all posted trail, use and property signs
- Please respect all trail users. Hiking, skiing, biking, horse-back riding, ATV riding and snowmobile riding are all important trail uses in Williamsburg.
- Please stay on trails
- Please be sensitive to natural and cultural resources. Please remove trash if you find it, and avoid environmentally sensitive areas.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Merritt

Committee members: Paul Jahnige, chair, Gwen Blodgett, John Hoogstraten, Eileen Keegan, Susan Milsom