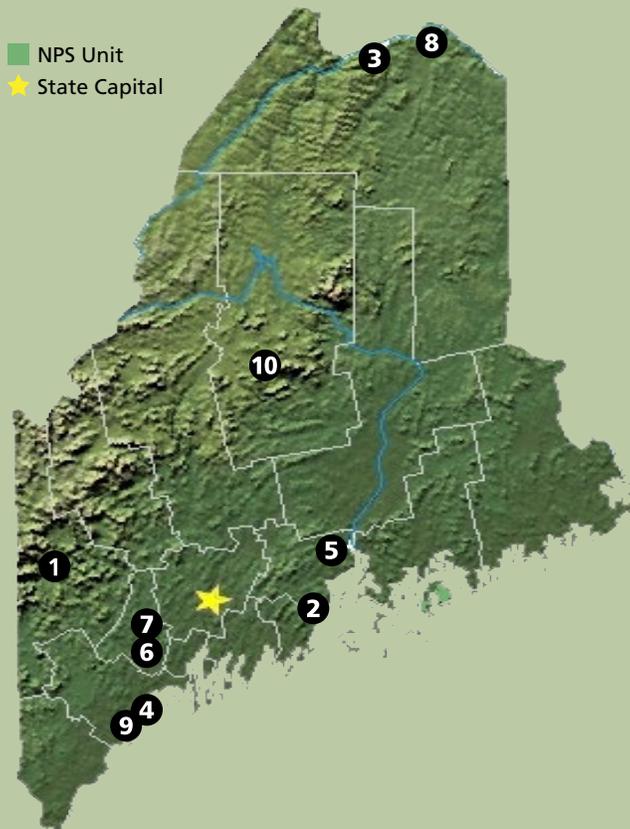




Work day on the West Side Trail. Photo: Kent Simmons

PROJECTS AND PARTNERS 2015



Find out more about each project starting on page 2.

Recent Successes

West Side Trail

Combine an extra wide utility corridor with an extra talented volunteer group, shake with partners and a lot of ingenuity and sweat, and you get the West Side Trail!

Four years ago, volunteers from the Town of Yarmouth revived a grand vision for a nonmotorized offroad trail along the entire west edge of town. That vision has been a rapidly unfolding reality. First envisioned in the 1988 Yarmouth Public Access and Recreation Plan, West Side Trail was intended to be the longest trail segment in the Town. Almost entirely in the wooded corridors of the Central Maine Power (CMP) right-of-way, it is well on its way to forming a continuous trail from the southern tip of Cousins Island to the northern border of town. A license to build the trail was obtained from CMP in 1991 but the size of the project and the rugged terrain were more than the Town was willing to take on. That changed in 2010 when the Yarmouth Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee formed an alliance with a number of healthy lifestyle and outdoor advocacy organizations that together had the expertise and energy to raise funds, reach out to the public, and build the trail.

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ABOUT US

The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program is the community assistance arm of the National Park Service. Program staff provide technical assistance to community groups and local, state, and federal government agencies working to protect natural areas and water resources and enhance close-to-home outdoor recreation opportunities. We help communities plan, organize partnerships, and achieve on-the-ground success on projects they initiate.

Current Projects



Bethel Pathway. Photo: NPS/Burnham Martin

1. Bethel Trails

Project Partners: Mahoosuc Pathways,
Town of Bethel
NPS Contact: Burnham Martin
Location: Bethel
Congressional District: ME - 2

Project Goal

Extend the Bethel Pathway, first to the west and then to the east, and begin planning trails on the Bingham Forest.

NPS Role

Help move the trails towards completion with support for permitting, fundraising, trail layout, and management planning. Help Mahoosuc Pathways improve and strengthen the Oxford County Conservation Corps.

2. Camden Riverwalk

Project Partner: Town of Camden
NPS Contact: Julie Isbill
Location: Camden
Congressional District: ME - 2

Project Goal

Create a 2-mile shared use recreational trail along the Megunticook River through neighborhoods and downtown.

NPS Role

Assist with work planning, landowner contact, public engagement, and fundraising.

3. Fish River Greenway

Project Partner: Fort Kent
NPS Contact: Burnham Martin
Location: Town of Fort Kent
Congressional District: ME - 2

Project Goal

Finish the Fish River Greenway Loop and begin improvements to mountain bike and Nordic trails as part of a larger vision to improve walking and bicycling in Fort Kent.

NPS Role

Assist with organizing the project, recruiting volunteers, and identifying funding sources.

Current Projects cont.

4. Freeport Outdoor Recreation Area

Project Partner: Town of Freeport
NPS Contact: Burnham Martin
Location: Freeport
Congressional District: ME - 1

Project Goal

Create a trail plan for 290 acres of town-owned conservation and recreation land.

NPS Role

Assist with planning a trail system and a stewardship program.

5. Hills to Sea Trail

Project Partner: Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition
NPS Contact: Julie Isbill
Location: Belfast and other Waldo County towns
Congressional District: ME - 2

Project Goal

Create a 12-14 mile section of the Hills to Sea Trail connecting Belfast Bay to Frye Mountain.

NPS Role

Assist with developing a workplan, trail planning, design and construction of segments, landowner contact, public outreach, and identification of funding sources.

6. Lake Auburn Trails Access

Project Partner: Lake Auburn Watershed Protection Commission
NPS Contact: Burnham Martin
Location: Auburn
Congressional District: ME - 2

Project Goal

Create a trail and recreation management plan that also protects water quality for 2,000 acres of watershed protection land.

NPS Role

Assist with development of a stakeholder group and creation and implementation of the recreation management plan.



The trail follows an old road on Freeport conservation land. Photo: NPS/Burnham Martin

Current Projects cont.



Walkers on an old road on watershed protection land. Photo: NPS/Burnham Martin

7. Lewiston/Auburn Urban Garden Expansion

Project Partner: St. Mary's Nutrition Center
NPS Contact: Julie Isbill
Locations: Lewiston and Auburn
Congressional District: ME - 1

Project Goal

Expand access to community gardens in community and school settings.

NPS Role

Help build a model/process/toolkit that allows others to create and sustain community gardens; help assess readiness of specific partners/sites; work with partners to plan and implement new gardens.

8. Madawaska Trails to Riverfront

Project Partner: Town of Madawaska and many others
NPS Contact: Burnham Martin
Location: Madawaska
Congressional District: ME - 2

Project Goal

Create a new trail linking the existing Four Seasons Trails system to historic sites and water access points along the St. John River.

NPS Role

Assist with trail planning and layout, identifying funding sources, and landowner contact.

9. West Side Trail

Project Partner: Town of Yarmouth
NPS Contact: Julie Isbill
Location: Yarmouth
Congressional District: ME - 1

Project Goal

Plan and build a 12-mile mountain bike/snowshoe trail in a power line corridor; complete the trail south of Route 1 and start planning and construction north of Route 1.

NPS Role

Assist with community outreach for the next trail segments, fundraising, building a volunteer corps, implementing signs, and developing the organization.

Current Projects cont.

10. Long Range Management Planning on the Northern Forest Canoe Trail

Project Partner: Northern Forest Canoe Trail

NPS Contact: Lelia Mellen

Location: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York

Congressional Districts: NH - 1, VT -1, ME - 2, NY - 21

Project Goal

Complete a long-range management plan to ensure that the Northern Forest Canoe Trail stays ahead of trail growth by anticipating user impact. This will have a positive impact on landowners and ecosystem, economic, and public health.

NPS Role

Assist with the management plan to further the Northern Forest Canoe Trail as a sustainable resource and to have this plan be a model for other water trails.



Hills to Sea Trailblazers meeting. Photo: NPS/ Julie Isbill

“The Rivers & Trails program has been invaluable in helping us make progress with the Fish River Greenway.”

-Steve Pelletier, Director, Planning and Economic Development, Fort Kent



Consulting the map with a landowner. Photo: NPS/Julie Isbill



Volunteer work day. Photo: NPS/Julie Isbill

We're Here For You.

Could your project benefit
from NPS Staff Assistance?
Contact us to find out.



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2014 Nationwide Partnership Success

3,278.74 Miles of Trail Developed

2,046.25 Miles of River Conserved

9,411.06 Acres of Open Space and
Parkland Protected

Find more information online
at
www.nps.gov/rtca



EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

Recent Successes cont.

The West Side Trail group simultaneously works at the many levels that are necessary to build a sustainable trail passing through many neighborhoods and across challenging terrain. They have developed a system for informing and working with abutting landowners, who sometimes request alternate routes or screening. The involvement of volunteer engineers and leadership by the New England Mountain Bike Association has allowed for sophisticated trail design and construction to navigate slopes, streams, and wetlands. Through Facebook and email, events and volunteer work days are announced. Hundreds of volunteer hours have been logged so far!

All the hard work and dedication have been paying off in the form of the steady and happy use of the trail by mountain bikers, trail runners, dog walkers, and snowshoers. The trail has also become the setting for an annual trail running event and the Christmas Eve walk with Santa! The recent addition of high-quality maps and handmade signs has made West Side Trail even more user-friendly. Locally made kiosks and benches are next.

“The technical assistance program is one of the best things that’s happened to West Side Trail. We started out as a bunch of passionate trail builders and with National Park Service’s help have become a highly functioning trail building organization.”

- Dan Ostrye, Yarmouth Bike and Pedestrian Committee Chair



West Side Trail volunteers. Photo: Amanda Devine