



Massachusetts News

PROJECTS AND PARTNERS 2015



- NPS Unit
- ★ State Capital

CURRENT PROJECTS

1. New England National Scenic Trail
2. South Coast Blueways
3. Southern New England Trunkline Trail
4. Taunton River Pathways
5. Mid-State Trail
6. Western New England Greenway

Find out more about each project starting on page 2.

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.

Public unveiling of New England Trail bus sign created by Parks to People, a community art project led by artist Carolina Aragon in collaboration with Smith College art students and an after-school program in Holyoke. Photo: Steve Coughlin

Recent Successes

Art on the New England Trail: Inspiring Community Connections

In Parks to People, a community-based art project, Carolina Aragon, New England Trail artist-in-residence and Smith College visiting lecturer, collaborated with her Art and Ecology students and an after-school group of sixth- to eighth-graders from the William R. Peck School in Holyoke. In partnership with the National Park Service, the goal was to create art and inspire the public to visit the New England National Scenic Trail and local parks such as the Mount Tom State Reservation.

The Holyoke students visited the landscape studies studio at Smith College to create T-shirt designs and joined Smith students on a hiking trip to Mount Tom, accompanied by local geology and botany experts. Later, the group worked together at the Peck School on collages, watercolors, postcards, and maps that were exhibited at the Holyoke Public Library.

“It was wonderful to work with such an enthusiastic and hard-working group of Smith students. From the very beginning they were very interested in creating a tangible project for the public, while being mentors and teachers to the younger students,” Aragon said. “They taught students about art and composition and developed a great working relationship with the students.”

Current Projects

1. New England National Scenic Trail

Project Partner: Appalachian Mountain Club

NPS Contact: Charles Tracy

Location: Massachusetts, Connecticut

Congressional Districts: MA - 1, MA - 2

Project Goal

Provide the best trail experience for all users of the New England Trail.

NPS Role

Assist the Trail Stewardship Council with trail corridor land conservation, natural and cultural resource interpretation, public outreach, and trail management.

2. South Coast Blueways

Project Partner: Buzzards Bay Coalition

NPS Contact: Charles Tracy

Location: New Bedford

Congressional District: MA - 4

Project Goal

Develop a regional vision towards pursuing designation as a National Water Trail on Buzzards Bay in southeastern Massachusetts.

NPS Role

Share NPS experience to build an inclusive coalition and realize a vision for a National Water Trail connected with New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park.



Holyoke students find a salamander on the New England Trail as part of the Parks to People hike at Mount Tom State Reservation in Holyoke, MA. Photo: NPS

3. Southern New England Trunkline Trail

Project Partner: Friends of the SNETT

NPS Contact: Charles Tracy

Location: Bellingham

Congressional District: MA - 2

Project Goal

Improve access to the 22-mile Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) as a multi-use recreation trail.

NPS Role

Share successful strategies for engaging public support and volunteers in the trail improvement projects. Identify funding resources for trail-related facilities.

4. Taunton River Pathways

Project Partners: Taunton River Watershed Association, Fall River Resiliency Preparatory School

NPS Contact: Charles Tracy

Location: Fall River

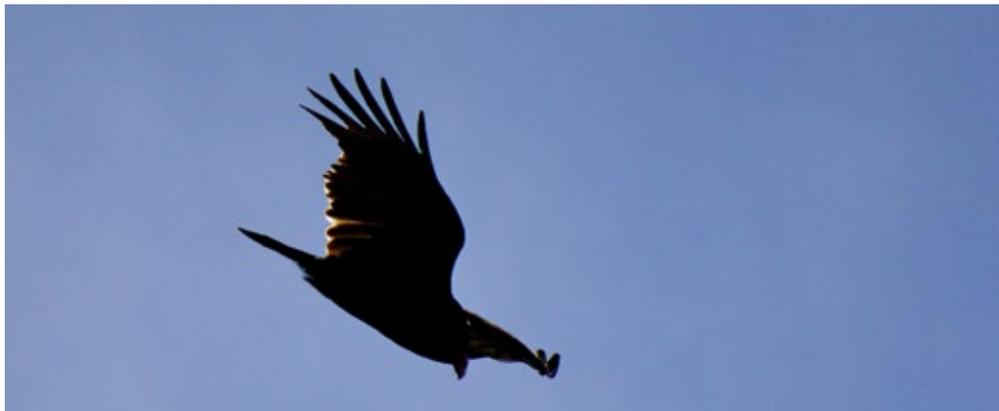
Congressional Districts: MA - 4, MA - 8, MA - 9

Project Goal

Implement Taunton River National Wild and Scenic River Management Plan goals for recreation, outreach, and stewardship.

NPS Role

Assist with completing Taunton River Pathways brochure and trail assessment; launch Wild and Scenic River Ambassadors initiative.



Hawk watching on the New England Trail--part of the Parks to People hike at Mount Tom State Reservation in Holyoke, MA. Photo: NPS

Current Projects cont.

5. Mid-State Trail

Project Partner: Greater Worcester
Land Trust
NPS Contact: Charles Tracy
Location: Worcester
Congressional District: MA - 2

Project Goal

Develop and implement a collaborative trail corridor protection strategy for the Mid-State Trail.

NPS Role

Convene trail partners; help develop corridor protection strategy; assist with implementation of early action goals for trail protection.

“The goal of these projects is to create a greater connection to the local landscape and the New England Trail, especially for youth and recent immigrant groups.”

- Carolina Aragon, Visiting Lecturer, Smith College / New England Trail Artist-in-Residence

6. Western New England Greenway

Project Partner: Lake Champlain and Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Areas
NPS Contact: Charles Tracy
Location: Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont
Congressional Districts: CT - 1, MA - 2, VT - 1

Project Goal

Establish a three-state recreational bike route from New York City to Montreal.

NPS Role

Share experience in creating partnerships for long-distance bicycle routes.



Carolina Aragon, New England Trail artist-in-residence, leads Parks to People hike on Mount Tom State Reservation. Photo: Mollie Mercer

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



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Recent Successes cont.

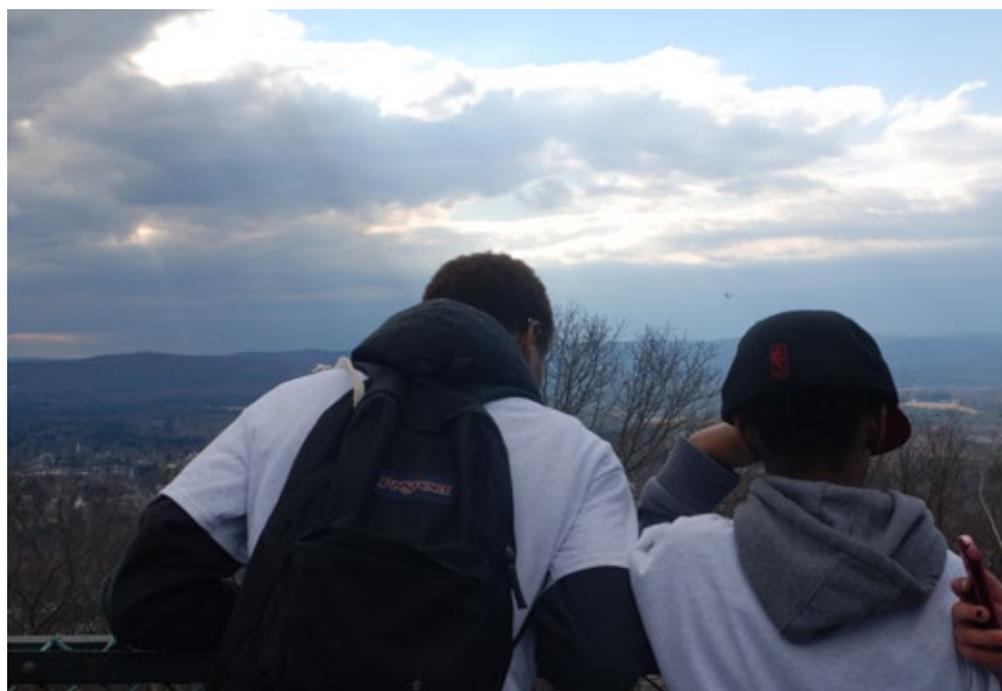
As the 2014 artist-in-residence for the National Park Service's New England National Scenic Trail, Aragon worked with Smith students in the Art and Ecology class to design, develop and exhibit the community-based art project in collaboration with the director, faculty, and students from Holyoke Community College's "Choices" after-school program at the Peck School in Holyoke.

"The goal of these projects is to create a greater connection to the local landscape, especially for youth and recent immigrant groups," she said.

Among the works created during the project were a PVTA bus sign featuring a collage of printed photographs forming the outline of Mount Tom with a bilingual message inviting local residents to visit the New England Trail; a three-dimensional photo installation using student photographs and drawings relating to Mount Tom; maps showing how to get to the park and showcasing seasonal elements of interest; and student-written postcards addressed to Mount Tom, using "Dear Mount Tom..." as a writing prompt.

"Working on Parks to People gave our class the opportunity to experience the ups and downs of a real community-based project. Seeing the tangible results at the final event was hugely gratifying because of all the time and energy that we put into this project."

- Claire Adams, Smith College student



Holyoke students reach the summit of Goat Peak as part of the Parks to People hike along the New England Trail at Mount Tom State Reservation in Holyoke. Photo: Molli Mercer