



# ESSEX COUNTY TRAIL ASSOCIATION

Preserve, Maintain, Respect

Fall 2020

## A View from the Chair

Dear Friends,

As I write this fall is upon us, bringing warm sunny days, cool nights, the gorgeous hues of turning leaves and some of the best weather of the year for outdoor recreation. We're experiencing a significant drought, but the lack of rain has given us many chances to be outdoors and spend time safely with friends and family. The sunny days have also enabled the trails to be used more frequently than ever, including by folks outside our immediate area who come to Essex County for the unique opportunities its trails offer. With many of our regular activities not currently possible, we're getting outdoors in record numbers.

ECTA typically has several annual events that are an important source of funding for our trail work. After initially postponing or cancelling all of them this spring, we've been able to modify some of these events so that they are in line with COVID-19 restrictions and public safety, and host them in a reduced form. In doing so we've found that there are some advantages to virtual events that we may incorporate in our future planning. For example, last May we had all of our town wide trail maps converted to GeoPDFS, enabling us to publish them on the AvenzaMaps app, where they can be used free on the trails for navigation and route tracking with a smartphone. We wanted to have an event to promote it, but couldn't do anything traditional due to state restrictions, so the Trif-ECTA Trail Challenge was created—three categories of challenges over an eight-week period with participants choosing when, where and how to achieve their goals. Unlike our other trail events that are meant for specific trail users on a single day, this trail challenge was for individuals, families, and all activity types, skill levels, and ages. The feedback from the participants was very positive. Many said it was the first time they had done anything like this. The ability to pursue a goal in one's own way is appealing, and likely will be even after we're no longer restricted.

Thank you, friends for your ongoing support. We could not do what we do without you. Stay well, and hope to see you out on the trails.

Peace and good health,

*Martha*

Martha Sanders  
Chair, Board of Directors



Photos by Mark Liptak



## Trail Etiquette

By Stacie Capotosto, Outreach Coordinator

Trail use has increased since the spring as more and more of us are enjoying the outdoors. Some of our visitors are new to exploring the trails and may be unsure of what to expect, or what is expected of them. With this in mind we have updated the Trail Etiquette page on our website: [ectaonline.org/trail-etiquette](http://ectaonline.org/trail-etiquette). Many "rules of the road" of trail etiquette may seem obvious, like leave no trace, obey all posted signs, and pick up after your dog and dispose of the waste properly. But some rules, especially how to behave around horses, may be less obvious to the uninitiated. Greet passing trail users and politely speak up if you can be of help. Be courteous from your bike as you approach a walker to let them know that you are passing on their left. Ask the oncoming biker to slow down and say hello as they approach your horse.

We are all out on the trails doing what we love, so please be friendly and safe! During this time always carry a face mask. No need to wear one while you are off on a trail by yourself but it is important when passing another group of trail users or while in a more heavily trafficked parking area.

Refresh your knowledge by checking out our Trail Etiquette page and please email the office if we missed anything. Remember, share the trails. If we don't share, we all will lose. Thank you!



Photo by Mark Bappe



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*Director of Trail Management*

Stacie Capotosto,  
*Outreach Coordinator*

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## Thank You to Our Volunteers

Thank you, volunteers!

Our work at ECTA would not be possible without the many people who give their time generously—our trail stewards, volunteers, advisors, and board of directors. Because we have a very small staff we are able to keep our cost of operation low and can fund more trail work as a result. Due to the diligence of our team of almost 50 trail stewards we are able to keep an eye on hundreds of miles of trails. Our dedicated volunteers join in on trail project days, and help organize and assist with the events that provide a significant portion of our annual income. Our advisors are there to provide guidance when needed on a wide variety of topics, and we have a wonderful and talented group of people on our board. Thank you, all!





## SUSTAINING CORPORATE SPONSORS



Photo by Jess Yurwitz

## Looking Ahead

ECTA's primary focus is on maintaining, protecting and preserving the network of trails in the six towns that we serve. Fortunately we've been able to continue this work since March, although in a reduced capacity. As we continue to socially distance and suspend in person gatherings, we're relying on our digital media presence more and more to keep in touch and share information. We're gradually updating the content of our website—updating maps and adding new trail areas, new photos and trail videos. Starting next year we intend to recommend specific trail routes, provide route maps, and suggest the best types of trail activities for the routes. All of us at ECTA are hoping to see our annual events return in 2021 better than ever! We're considering ways to do this, as well as possibly adding some programs to our roster when we are able to do so. We're looking forward to resuming in person meetings, celebrations and gatherings, whenever that becomes possible. Please watch for updates on social media and at [ectaonline.org](http://ectaonline.org)!



Photo by Mark Liptak

## COMMUNITY SPONSORS

New England Biolabs  
Hamilton Wenham Open Land Trust  
GAC Runners Club, Inc.  
West Newbury Riding & Driving Club

## TRIFECTA TRAIL CHALLENGE

Salem Five  
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## SPRING FOR THE TRAILS

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## THANKS FOR THE TRAILS

New England Biolabs



## TRAILS REPORT 2020

By Carol Lloyd,  
Director of Trail Maintenance

ECTA completed two big trail restoration and repair projects this summer and early fall.

The first one was the replacement of the 30-year-old bridge (photos to the right, page 4) that crosses the Miles River on the trail connecting Farrington Lane in Hamilton to Fellows Road in Ipswich. This property is owned by Hamilton Wenham Open Land Trust and the bridge was originally built by Tom and Tim Ford. This project was significant for a few reasons. This trail is enjoyed by many types of trail users including walkers, runners, bikers and equestrians, and it's an important link to nearby trails. In addition, this will be one of the only trails open during the upcoming two-year construction period at New England Biolabs. It was necessary to make sure the bridge was safe so that it could stay open during this period.

A big thank you to everyone who helped make this happen!



Photo by Caroline Gregory

Completed bridge near Biolabs.

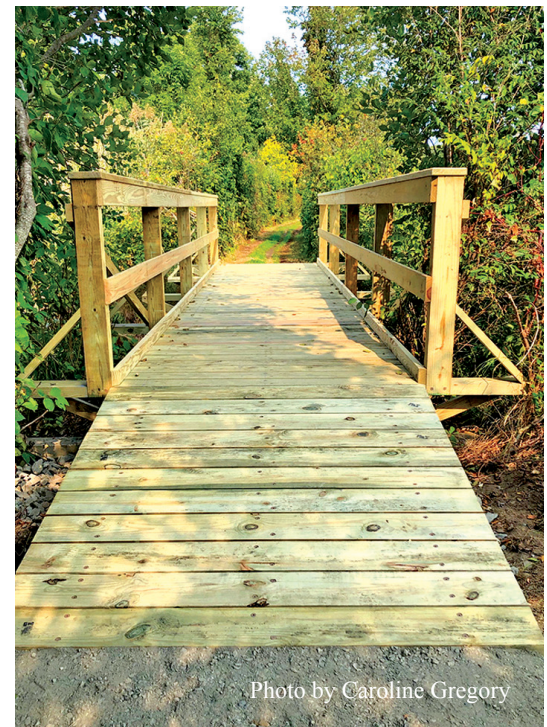


Photo by Caroline Gregory

The above before and after photos show the extent of erosion of the bridge and the newly built replacement. This project was truly collaborative. The cost to replace the bridge was high so we needed to raise the money before we started. We did this quickly with contributions from Biolabs, Tom and Tim Ford, Hamilton Wenham Open Land Trust, Lucia and Don Greenough, and Thomas (Tig) and Caroline Gregory. We needed to get permission from Hamilton's Conservation Commission, and with their approval we were able to do the project under ECTA's Townwide Trail Management Plan.



R.P. Scanlon was our contractor with reconstruction of the bridge taking two weeks. When the old bridge was removed we found erosion that we hadn't anticipated which added unexpected cost and additional time to our schedule. Once the erosion and expenses were addressed the rest of the restoration went smoothly.







For the culvert, we worked with DeRosa Environmental to permit the project. It was originally permitted by the Ipswich Conservation Commission but when the DEP saw that the work would happen in a wetland resource area they

became involved. After some revisions and many site walks, they approved our solution. The above photos show the newly installed large arched culvert, which was only permitted if we recreated some wetlands just downstream. This work was completed by R.P. Scanlon Landscaping, and the work is beautiful. We will have to let some of the plantings mature before we receive our Certificate of Completion, which should be possible in 2021.



All photos by Carol Lloyd unless otherwise indicated

Thanks to Tim Hilton and his family for putting a permanent easement on the trail for equestrian use. This easement goes from the new bridge, along the river and up the hill where you can cross Mill Road into the Winthrop property. A big heartfelt thanks goes out to Tim for completing this project and protecting the trail forever!

The second project was the new culvert on a trail along the Ipswich River. One trail—mainly used by horse enthusiasts—along the river across from the Julia Bird Reservation to the Winthrop property was in desperate need of repair.

This project was comprised of two parts. The first was on Tim Hilton's property. Tim wanted to move the trail upland so that it could be used year round and repair the bridge. The second part of the trail project was just downstream on property owned by Jay and Janet Lingerma. High water often swamped the trail and our goal was to move the trail so that it too could be used year round. The Lingerma's generously gave us permission to work on this section of trail, and it has been a great collaboration!

We moved the trail inland of the river to a little knoll that is dry year round. In order to get from this knoll back to the original trail you had to cross a very muddy area that is completely under water during the Ipswich River's high water period in the spring. Our best solution for this location was to create a culvert.

This trail work would not have been possible without the generosity of our supporters for which we are so grateful. We received contributions from 10 neighbors, several trail users and a very generous donation from Tim Hilton. It is this type of support that allows us to continue our very important work in these challenging times. Thank you!



## 25<sup>th</sup> Annual EQUINE TACK & PARAPHERNALIA Sale



Photo by Stacie Capotosto



Photo by Stacie Capotosto



Photo by Stacie Capotosto

## 2020 TRI-FECTA Trail Challenge



Photos by Mark Liptak

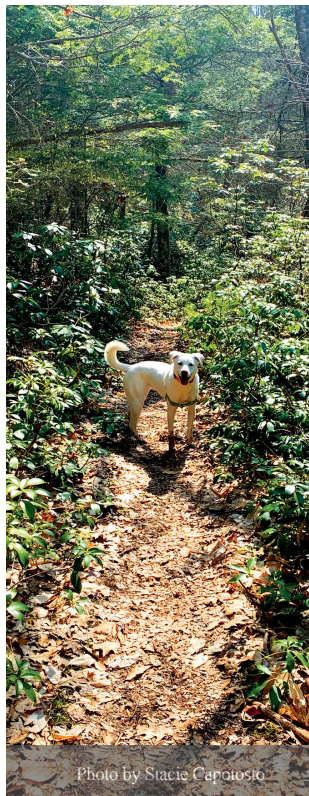
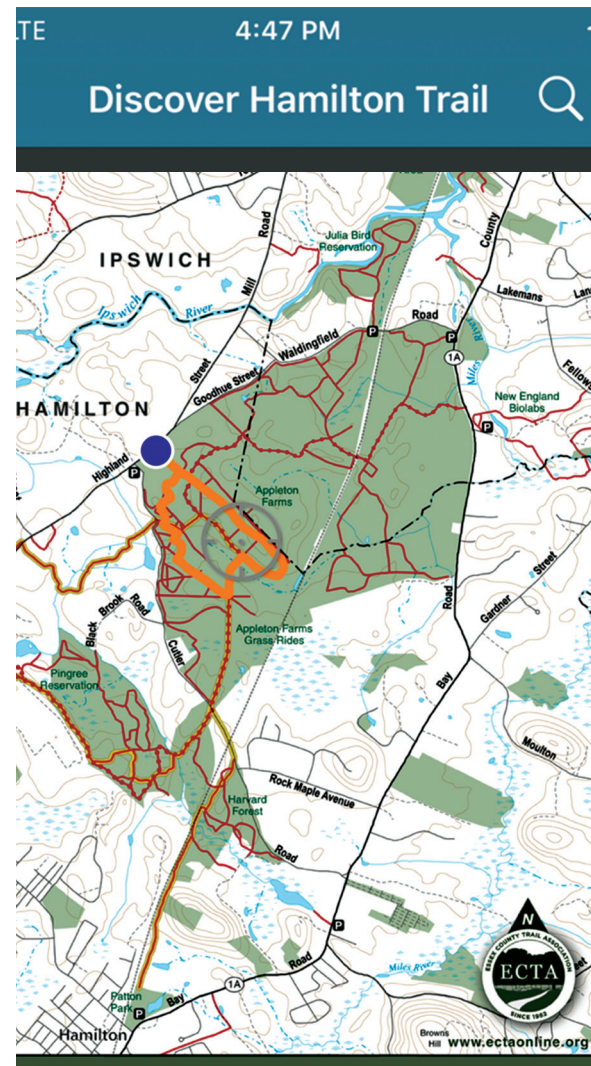


Photo by Stacie Capotosto



42°38.620', -70°51.757'

August 23<sup>rd</sup>  
**SAGAMORE HILL**  
Trail Ride



Photo by Mark Liptak



## 3rd Annual PATRICK KEOUGH Memorial Ride



Photo by Mark Liptak



Photo by Mark Liptak



Photo by Mark Liptak



Photo by Martha Sanders

## 2020 ECTA Events

With provisions for COVID-19 safety in place we've recently held the Equine Tack and Paraphernalia Sale, Run for the Trails Race, the Patrick Keough Memorial Ride, and a guided trail ride to Sagamore Hill. In June we launched the eight-week long Trif-ECTA Trail Challenge—50 mile and 100 mile challenges and a family scavenger hunt style challenge. With the Avenza Maps app available free on any smart-phone, our newly digitized maps could be used to explore local trails and record tracks via GPS. We rely on these events as a source of funding for trail projects and appreciate the generosity of our sponsors and participants! Thank you!



Photo by Martha Sanders

## 16<sup>th</sup> Annual RUN FOR THE TRAILS Race



Photo by Mark Liptak





Essex County Trail Association  
P.O. Box 358  
Hamilton, MA 01936



Photos by Mark Liptak

Visit our website:  
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for ECTA events and updates.



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Please include my new or renewal membership in this contribution at the level checked below:

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