



# ESSEX COUNTY TRAIL ASSOCIATION

Willowdale State Forest

Preserve, Maintain, Respect

Spring 2023

## A View from the Chair

Dear Friends,

Spring is a very busy season for us! We're making plans for this year's trail work and have several projects lined up, two of which are funded by grants we've recently received. Carol Lloyd, our Director of Trail Maintenance and Management, has been working on easements and documenting trail connections, in addition to prioritizing and overseeing trail projects. See her report on pages 4 & 5.

We've updated all of our town wide trail maps! With roughly 450 miles of trails in Ipswich, Hamilton, Wenham, Topsfield and West Newbury, this was a large undertaking. Our maps are available in several formats, including through a free phone app. See Outreach Coordinator Stacie Capotosto's description of our maps and where to find them on Page 3.

We have a busy schedule of trail events planned! Each year we host trail events for all types of trail users, such as runners, horseback riders, bird watchers, mountain bikers, and new this year, dog lovers! We added a canicross event on March 25th that we hope to make annual, Tails for the Trails, a 5k race held at beautiful Pipestave Hill Recreation Area in West Newbury. These events are an important source of funding for our trail work, and with each event we introduce new trail enthusiasts to the outstanding trail networks in our area. Our biggest event of the year, and a fun gathering outdoors under a big tent at Groton House Farm, is our annual Summer Solstice Party on June 17th. This is a great opportunity to support ECTA while enjoying great food, live music, and fantastic silent auctions items, in a gorgeous field setting.

As always, we're so grateful for the support of our wonderful volunteers and trail stewards, who are generous with their time and enable us to put on events and handle overseeing such a vast area of trails. We equally grateful to our sponsors, members, and generous donors, who provide us with the funds we count on to do our work. It's because of each of you that we are able to do all that we do! Thank you!

See you on the trails!

Martha Sanders  
Chair, Board of Directors



Photo by Keith Sullivan

## Tails for the Trails, by Deb Hamilton

On March 25, thirty-two runners plus their canine teammates completed a scenic 5k cross country course at ECTA's first West Newbury trail event. Each competitor wore a waist belt attached by a bungee leash to a harnessed dog. The well marked course started atop Pipestave Hill, streamed across open fields, then circled down to the Mill Pond, around the Town Forest, and back through the equine jump fields to the finish line.

From huskies to hounds, sheepdogs to corgis, the competitors were enthusiastic and cooperative, and came from as far as Maine and Connecticut. The top 11 teams all finished in less than 20 minutes! Winners included:

- Mens: 1st—Dan West and Mae, 2nd—Brett Rickenbach and Rosie, 3rd—George Stevens and Miles.
- Women: 1st—Larissa Bifano and Luna, 2nd—Kimberly Murphy and Wolfie, 3rd—Savannah Bernardino and Rory

Participants were rewarded with soup and snacks provided by Coastal Greengrocer, and winning teams received prizes donated by the Essex County Co-op, the Natural Dog, Nooksack Racing Supply, and New England Running. Race sponsors included Institution for Savings, Mayer Tree Service, Ipswich Ale, and the Natural Dog. Sweet Paws Dog Rescue also brought adoptable pups, and spectators enjoyed cheering on their favorite canicrossers in a beautiful setting. All agreed that this was a terrific event and should take place annually.



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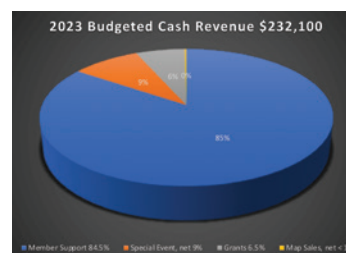
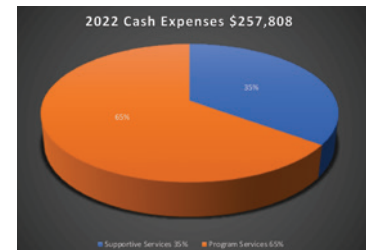
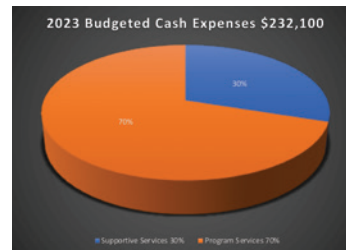
Kate Day  
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## Financial Report 2021 and 2022

ASSETS	2022	2021
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$95,424	\$43,832
Accounts receivable, net	2,791	3,101
Unfunded Deposits	8,834	45,514
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>107,049</b>	<b>92,447</b>
<b>Other Assets</b>		
Investments at Cost	647,079	615,187
Unrealized Gains (Loss)	(22,517)	125,734
Total other assets	624,562	740,921
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$731,611</b>	<b>\$833,368</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable—general	\$1,126	\$4,705
Total current liabilities	1,126	4,705
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>1,126</b>	<b>4,705</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>		
Unrestricted	714,701	812,879
Temporarily restricted	15,784	15,784
Total Net Assets	730,485	828,663
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$731,611</b>	<b>\$833,368</b>

## A Message from Chris Pulick, Treasurer

Generous support from our members, sponsors, and donors has continued to keep ECTA in good shape financially, enabling us to do our trail repairs and maintenance on an ongoing basis. In 2022, like so many others, we experienced a reduction in the value of our investments, but we continue to stay in the black operationally while completing a large list of planned trail work. I would personally like to thank you all for your support, it's very much appreciated.



## Thank You to Our Sponsors!

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New England Running Company  
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Ipswich Ale Brewery  
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### Thanks for the Trails

by Eric Krathwolhl

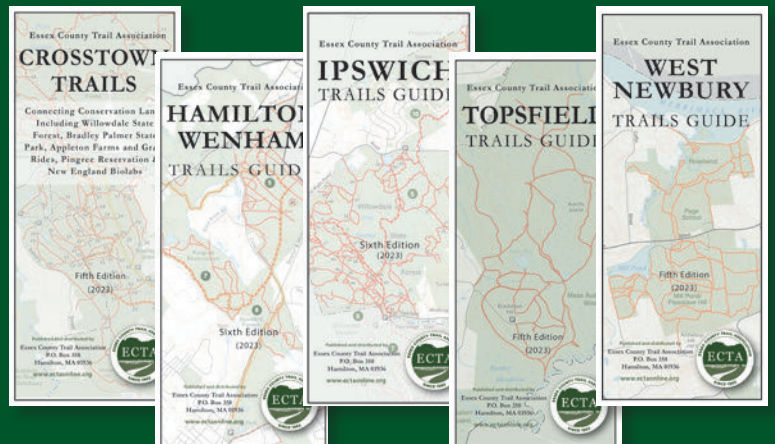
Last November on a brisk but lovely fall day, nearly 200 participants joined us for the 5th Annual Thanks for the Trails 5k Race and Kids' Fun Run the day after Thanksgiving. This is a great community event where families together for Thanksgiving come and enjoy the trails, work off some turkey, and get an early taste of Christmas with the post race raffle give-aways. Notable winnings included a pair of Celtics tickets and gift certificates for great gear from New England Running and Craft Sportswear. Delicious refreshments donated from local vendors were provided, including Zumi's coffee, Jetties' bagels, Russell's cider donuts, and Coastal Greengrocer's hot soup. This race continues the fine tradition enjoyed for years by so many known as Gabe's Run, and in Gabe's memory a portion of the race proceeds was donated to the Gabriel Pacione Memorial Scholarship Fund. Special thanks go to the many volunteers who made this race possible, and our wonderful sponsors: New England Biolabs, Institution for Savings, National Grid, EBSCO, Rich May Law, Cape Ann Savings, New England Running, Coastal Greengrocer, Ipswich Ale, Craft, and Riverside Cycle. For next year, we will hope to attract more people and move the race back a day to the Saturday following Thanksgiving, but with the same beautiful course and fun times!

### Trail Maps by Stacie Capotosto

All our town wide trail maps have been updated this spring! Our Hamilton/Wenham, Topsfield, West Newbury, Ipswich, and Crosstown maps are available as paper maps, digital maps, and GPS enabled maps through the mobile app Avenza.

Our paper maps are available from our Wenham office and several local retailers: New England Running in Beverly, The Natural Dog in Hamilton, Riverside Cycle in Manchester-by-the-Sea, the Ipswich Visitor Center, Wenham Sports Stop, The Bicycle Shop of Topsfield, and the G.A.R Memorial Library in West Newbury. Visit our website to view images of all our maps. Through our Trail Maps page you can view and print these maps.

Each of our five town wide trail maps are also available digitally through the Avenza Maps mobile app to be used for navigation via GPS. Both the Avenza Maps app and our digital maps are free. Through Avenza Maps, our maps can be downloaded and used on your mobile device anywhere, without a cellphone signal. You can also record your track's distance and time. Instructions on how to download and use Avenza can be found on our website's Trail Maps page as well. Go exploring with confidence!



# TRAIL MAINTENANCE SPRING 2023

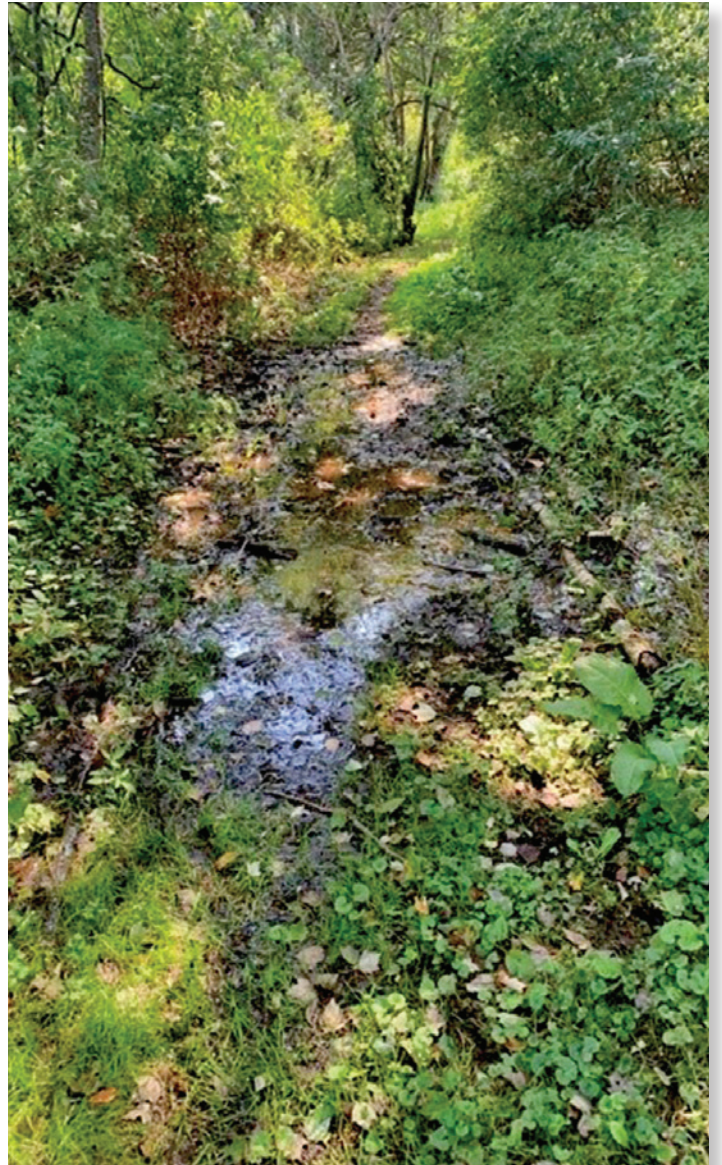
By Carol Lloyd, *Director of Trail Management and Maintenance*

**SPRING HAS COME EARLY THIS YEAR! IT HAS BEEN A REAL TREAT TO WALK THE TRAILS AND SEE THE FLOWERS AND ALL THE GREEN IN MAY! WE ARE PLANNING SOME GOOD PROJECTS AS WE HEAD INTO THE DRIER SUMMER MONTHS.**

## **Gardner Street Trail**

The trail starting from Gardner Street along the Miles River to the Ford Bridge was previously owned by HWOLT and has recently been transferred to Greenbelt. It is currently the only trail connection going past Biolabs. As a result, it has received a lot of use and the trail is showing it. There are two big mud spots at the Gardner Street end that get bigger with rain and use. ECTA was able to

permit this project under the Townwide Trail Management Plan. We also received a Mass Trails Grant to do the work. The work will consist of removing some of the mud then adding fabric to stabilize the trail and tailings and pack on top of that to keep it dry year-round. We hope to be in there as soon as the ground dries out. Stay tuned for the after pictures!



## Ford Bridge Beaver Deceiver

As you continue down the Gardner Street trail, you will come to the Ford Bridge that we replaced in 2021. Soon after it was replaced, a small beaver dam appeared. It continued to grow over the years. Last fall we noticed that the water level on the downstream side of the dam was 1-2 feet lower than it was upstream of the dam. Trails were starting to get wet at times when there wasn't a high water event. We had Skip Lisle of Beaver Deceivers International look at it and it was clear that it needed a flow device to manage the water level. Again, we were able to permit it as part of the Townwide Trail Management Plan and money was raised for the device. The work will be done sometime in the next couple of months.



## DCR's Gordon Hayden retires

We recently learned that our dear friend Gordon Hayden is retiring. Gordon has been a Park Ranger for DCR at Bradley Palmer and Willowdale for the past 51 years! He has been a wonderful partner and will be missed greatly. Gordon is the one we would call when trees fell on trails, when we needed help with a project, when we had any questions at all. Always cheerful, always kind, and if he didn't have an answer to a question, he would find it. You always felt as though you were Gordon's highest priority even though you knew he had 10 other things going at the same time! Gordon was a wonderful steward of the land and a great friend to ECTA. We thank him for his help over the years and wish him the best in his next chapter.

## Warren Weld Bog Bridge — Completed

Warren Weld Reservation is a property in Essex off Apple Street that is owned by Essex County Greenbelt. Its trails are open to all passive recreation and are used regularly by the public. There was a section of trail that had become very wet and was impassable during high water periods. It borders a large wetland. The beavers in this wetland had dammed the outlet which raised the water level. We took a good look at this trail to determine the best fix. One solution was to install a beaver deceiver to lower the water and dry out the trail. Another solution was to build a simple bog bridge. Because the wetland was so beautiful and thriving, we chose option 2 as the best solution. We worked with Greenbelt on this project. We were able to permit it under ECTA's Essex Townwide Trail Management Plan and Greenbelt put the bog bridge together. It was the perfect solution and keeps the trail users dry year-round.



## 2022 CONTRIBUTORS

Dear ECTA Members and Supporters,

We acknowledge below the many donors and sponsors who have given beyond individual and family memberships in support of ECTA. Their generosity makes it possible to fulfill our mission. Our heartfelt thanks to all.

List as of December 31, 2022  
Our apologies for any omissions.

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 Alison Kenney  
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Essex County Trail Association  
P.O. Box 358  
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Photos by Mark Liptak



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