



SPRING NEWSLETTER 2003

Volume 12 Number 1

OUR GOALS

To create a 30-mile network of multi-use trails within Greater Portland.

To serve as a public advocate for the protection of and access to natural places within the region.

To encourage the participation of neighborhoods, schools and the business community in trail use and stewardship.

Trail Building

Fresh outlook for 2003

BY BOB KRUG

FOR PORTLAND TRAILS, 2002 WAS A YEAR OF ACQUISITION. We raised an impressive amount of money – more than one million dollars – and spent most of it to acquire land of incalculable benefit to present and future residents of the greater Portland area. We will continue in an acquisition mode through 2003, since we need an additional \$465,000 to realize the full value of the opportunities that these newly acquired properties offer. But even as we continue our Capital Campaign, the central focus for 2003 will be trail-building. Here is a preview of some of the projects that will be going on this summer:

Presumpscot River Preserve. We have contracted with the Maine Conservation Corps (MCC) to construct a four-foot wide unpaved trail that will connect Oat Nuts Park to the new PRP trailhead and then continue through the Preserve down to and along the river. The trail will feature several bridges and boardwalks to protect the fragile ravines and gullies that run through the property. The MCC crew will be on-site for eleven weeks and will be responsible for the heavy construction. There will be a Volunteer Workday on June 14 (see Events Schedule). The PRP will be open to walkers throughout the construction period. Roger Berle is the PRP project manager.



Photo: Phil Poirier

Frost Street. This project will connect the Fore River Trail and Audubon Fore River Sanctuary to the Capisic Pond Trail. This short, but very important link in the trail system, will be built by PT volunteers. The first Volunteer Workday is scheduled for April 26 (see Events Schedule). Tom Jewell and Jaime Parker have been overseeing this project.

Thompson Point. This trail will connect the end of the Fore River Trail to the Portland Transportation Center (the combined bus and train station) along CMP easements. This project is part of a larger scheme to link the Portland Transportation Center to the Portland street network. A Volunteer Workday is scheduled in May (see Events Schedule). Tony Donovan is the trail project manager.

Starbird Lane. This short trail will connect a small planned development and the surrounding neighborhood to the Fore River Sanctuary. The exact route is not yet established. The developer has provided \$7,000 to support construction. At least one bridge will be involved; we hope that MCC will be able to do that construction. Volunteer Workdays will be scheduled [continued on next page]

Creating a connection to the Presumpscot River Preserve.

Trail Building

[continued from front page]

later in the year and will be announced in the June newsletter. New trustee Tim Prince is our project manager.

Hall School. Students, teachers, parents, and neighborhood volunteers plan to complete the section of this trail that links the school to Capisic Brook. Construction of an “outdoor classroom/viewing deck” will be the major activity for the spring and summer period. While future plans are not firm, the vision is to ultimately connect this trail to the Capisic Pond Trail. Clarkson Woodward and Laura Newman are managing this project.

So, as we look out at our snow-covered world, we know that spring will soon be here and summer will inevitably follow. It is time to check the condition of your shovels, rakes, wheelbarrows, work gloves, and other implements of construction. It is going to be a busy summer of trail building and we need you. We hope to see all of you on the trails-to-be. Think Summer. Think Trail Building. Mark Your Calendars. 🌿

TWO GREAT CHOICES!

10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Guided Walk of the Harborwalk Trail

Discover this 6-mile trail connecting South Portland and Portland. Join the East Coast Greenway and the City of South Portland at 10:30 a.m. for a ceremony marking National Trails Day in the State of Maine. We'll be celebrating the opening of the Pleasantdale Walkway, a new section of the South Portland Greenbelt. The ceremony will be held near the intersection of Broadway and Evans Street in South Portland. The guided walk will begin after the ceremony. Together, we'll walk to Bug Light to eat a picnic lunch (bring your own) and then board the water taxi at 1:00 pm to the Maine State Pier in Portland (approximately \$8 dollars per person). Then we'll walk back to South Portland through the Old Port, over the Casco Bay Bridge, Thomas Knight Park, and Mill Creek Park, to the start. Call us at 775-2411 for more information and to sign-up.

8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Guided Walk of the Forest City Trail

Explore this 10-mile trail with Tom Jewell as he leads you across Portland from the Stroudwater River to the Presumpscot River. Meet at the Stroudwater Trail parking area at the end of Blueberry Road. A free car shuttle will be arranged. Call us at 775-2411 for more information and to sign-up.

NATIONAL
TRAILS
DAY

Saturday • June 7

Schedule of Events

Saturday, April 26th, 9 a.m. – Noon

Volunteer Work Day: Frost to Riverview

We'll brush out a new trail connection linking the Fore River Trail and Fore River Sanctuary with the Capisic Pond Trail via Riverview Street. Bring clippers, rakes, and shovels, if you have them, along with work gloves and water. Meet at the Maine Orthopedics parking lot at 1601 Congress Street. Downpourdate will be Sunday, April 27th.

Sunday, May 11th, 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Cherish the Children Walk

Join MAPS adoptive families and friends of the MY CHOICE program for a fun stroll along the Eastern Prom Trail, starting at Commercial and India Street. Your participation will help homeless babies in Maine and orphans from around the world. Call 772-3678 for more information.

Saturday, May 14th, 9 a.m. – Noon

Volunteer Work Day: Fore River Trail

Join us to help construct this important section, extending the Fore River Trail to Thompson's Point. Bring rakes, shovels, and wheelbarrows if you have them, along with work gloves and water. Meet at the end of Hobart Street. Downpourdate will be Sunday May 15th.

Wednesday, May 28th, 6:30 – 8 p.m.

Portland Trails Board Meeting

The public is always welcome to join us at our bimonthly board meetings in the conference room of the Casco Bay Ferry Terminal on Commercial Street.

Wednesday, June 4th

Raffle Drawing Party at Flatbread Co.

Come enjoy a tasty feast of Flatbread pizza while benefiting Portland Trails! Flatbread will donate \$3.00 to us for every pizza sold that night. We'll also be drawing the winning tickets for our great raffle at 7:00 p.m., so come join the fun.

Saturday, June 14, 9 a.m. – Noon

Volunteer Work Day:

Presumpscot River Trail

We'll be helping the Maine Conservation Corp crew work on the new trails in the Presumpscot River Preserve. Bring work gloves and water. Meet at the end of Overset Street, off Curtis Road. Downpour date will be Sunday, June 15th.

Thanks to a Great Board

AT PORTLAND TRAILS ANNUAL MEETING in January, we elected two new nominees (Betsy Peters and Tim Prince) to the board, recognized those board members elected last fall (Rich Henry, Janice Mitchell, and Mike Musca), and acknowledged the significant contributions of past board members Jim Cohen, Peter Cooley, John Herrick, Mark Jordan, and Bob Krug. Our board of trustees now numbers 19.

The trustees are the main (though not only!) volunteer reserve for Portland Trails. Our trustees put many hundreds of hours each year into trail planning (Colin Baker), volunteer coordination (Elizabeth Nolan) fundraising (Roger Berle, Bill Sweeney), event planning (Christina White, Cheri Musgrave), newsletter production (Bob Krug and Mike Musca) and good old project management for the bulk of the rest.

We tell potential trustees that Portland Trails has a "working board" meaning our trustees get the work of the organization done! With 25 projects in various stages of construction, planning, or stewardship, there is a lot to do — far more than our executive director and two part-time employees could possibly handle without board members heading up our various projects, events and committees.

So hats off to our board of trustees for the huge effort they each make to build and connect pedestrian and bicycle trails and preserve open space throughout Greater Portland! It has been a pleasure to lead this great group and great organization for the past two years, and I look forward to continuing to work with them and you as Jeff Sommer takes over as president this Spring.



David Littell

DAVID LITTELL
President, Board of Trustees

Join us for Senior Strolls 2003

WINTER IS A WONDERFUL TIME for birdwatching from a cozy room heated with a woodstove; snowshoeing across a moonlit field; or simply making the time to read that good book that's been beckoning. But, it is also a terrific time to plan Spring, Summer, and Autumn events on our trails.

One of the activities we are currently developing is our Senior Strolls. Last year, we hosted a "walk/talk" in June on the Eastern Prom Trail, and, in August on the Stroudwater Trail. Both were well attended and participants encouraged us to continue.

This year, we plan to host a Senior Stroll every month, beginning in May and continuing through October. We have a number of ideas for strolls: a history-oriented stroll, a plant identification stroll, a stroll centered on trail geology, and possibly, a stretching/yoga, and a bird identification stroll. Each of our trails offers a different outdoors experience as well as the opportunity for a different topic. Please call or email us (heidi@trails.org) with topic ideas that you may have. And, of course, we welcome you as a volunteer and/or a participant on our Senior Strolls.

— by Christina White

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EDUCATION & COMMUNITY OUTREACH COORDINATOR

Laura Newman

DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT

Heidi Wilde

Annual Meeting 2003

BY CHERI MUSGRAVE

THE MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY WAS the setting for Portland Trails' 11th Annual Meeting, held Monday January 27th. Frigid cold did not deter the more than 120 people who came out to hear about Portland Trails' successes in 2002 and goals for the upcoming year. As there wasn't a seat left in the house, many stood throughout the entire evening to hear guest speaker Howard Reiche and Portland Trails staffers and trustees report on our goals and recognize the many people whose efforts have helped to turn those goals into reality.

Portland Trails president, David Littell, opened the meeting with a clear statement of our long term goal as an organization: to create a 30 mile network of trails that would make it possible for anyone in Portland to leave their car behind and walk or bike to school or work. At 14 miles, we're almost halfway there.

Roger Berle reported on the success of the "Preserving the Presumpscot" campaign. We exceeded our goal of raising \$487,000, which along with the funds from Land for Maine's Future, totaled more than 1 million dollars. This substantial accomplishment was made possible by the efforts of a hardworking fundraising committee, some generous donors, and a very successful effort by Executive Director Nan Cumming in obtaining grants for this project. The Campaign continues as we hope to raise funds for the purchase of more property that would serve as a trailhead and parking for the new Presumpscot River Preserve.

David Littell presented the annual Kay Wagenknecht-Harte Trailblazer Award, which honors of someone who has made a significant volunteer contribution. This year's recipient is Jim Cohen, past PT president and board member. Jim was integral to the structural organization of Portland Trails. A bench will

be placed in Jim's honor on the trail of his choice. David then introduced new board members Betsy Peters and Tim Prince. They were unanimously elected, as were all of the board members up for reelection.

Guest speaker Howard Reiche, whose family sold one parcel of Presumpscot riverfront property to PT and donated two others, gave a short informative history of the river. Years ago it was traveled by Native Americans coming to the sea to fish from their winter hunting grounds. The river was also an access point for early settlers from Portland to Falmouth. Three hundred and fifty years ago the river was dammed in an effort to industrialize it. Mills were built and their waste helped to pollute the river so badly that the clamflats were killed and there was no fishing possible. The 1960s brought the beginnings of a cleanup effort, and now the fish and other wildlife have returned. Since the dam was removed last fall, it's as if we've stepped back in time 350 years. Howard reminded us that we are now the "largest landowners on the Presumpscot River" with the responsibility to preserve its now healthy state. He presented us with a challenge and a hope that "in 50 years he can drive over the Allen Avenue bridge, look up and downstream, and have it look the same as it is today."

Nan Cumming and Elizabeth Nolan wrapped up the evening with our Annual Volunteer Recognition Awards, honoring 22 people who contributed in an exceptional way in 2002. Nan also announced Bruce Hyman as the winner of our crossword puzzle contest. He won prizes donated by Cadillac Mountain Sports' North Face store and the Banff Mountain Film Festival. Special thanks go to Woodard & Curran, our generous sponsors for the evening, and to Handmade Desserts, who provided the delicious refreshments. ☺



Betsy Peters



Tim Prince

photos: Phil Poirier

NEWS FROM MILE 0.0

◆ **Cadillac Mountain Sports'** new **The North Face** store has selected Portland Trails as its non-profit partner. That means that Portland Trails will receive 10% of each year's profit from the new downtown Portland store.

Cadillac Mountain Sports' president Matthew Curtis described the new partnership, "Portland Trails was our first choice as the non-profit partner of our newest store because we feel that the mission and core beliefs of your organization parallel many of the philosophies of Cadillac and The North Face...I also hope that our customers realize how much we all benefit from the vision and actions of Portland Trails."

Portland Trails has already received a gift based on the store's successful opening in November. If you haven't visited the store at 543 Congress Street, please stop in and support Portland Trails as you shop for some great new gear!

◆ The City of Portland has created an **Eastern Prom Master Plan Committee** to develop a plan that will guide the city in assessing the park's current condition, uses, potential changes and improvements. Nan Cumming is representing Portland Trails on the committee to assure the popular Eastern Prom Trail remains a key component of the park. The committee will hold several public meetings and workshops throughout the summer to gather input from members of the greater Portland community. These meetings will be widely publicized, but if you'd like Portland Trails to notify you as well, please send us your email address at info@trails.org.

◆ Portland Trails' new **Vision Map** — a beautiful poster-style map showing our long-range plan for future trail building in greater Portland—will be ready for purchase just in time for National Trails Day, Saturday, June 7. The map has been supported by generous donations from the Aristotle Fund of the Maine Community Foundation, Wilbur Smith Associates, and Bernstein, Shur, Sawyer & Nelson.

◆ Portland Trails recently joined in partnership with the Healthy Portland Coalition of the Portland Public Health

Division, Rippleffect, the PROP Peer Leader Program, City of Portland Planning Division, and the Portland Housing Authority to submit a proposal to the **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Active Living by Design** grant program. The mission of our project is to connect the Portland Housing Authority neighborhoods with the rest of the City by creating trails and other bike/pedestrian improvements and to foster a culture and an environment that supports physical activity as an element of daily life. While this partnership is initially focused on PHA neighborhoods, it will ultimately expand its scope to include all neighborhoods in the City of Portland.

◆ A few years ago Portland Trails received generous funding from the **Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund** to build our trail along the Fore River. This spring the MOHF will support the construction of the Presumpscot River Trail. The MOHF has been supported by sales of specially-designated lottery tickets since 1996. Seventy-five cents of every dollar spent for these tickets

support open space preservation, habitat conservation, and trail building throughout the state. But slow ticket sales have forced the fund to reduce the number of awards it can give this year. So, if you enjoy playing instant lottery and want to support Maine's natural resources, make sure you buy "Campfire Cash" or the new version of these tickets, "Catch a Winner." Good Luck!

◆ The **Maine Voices Project** is inviting people of all ages and writing levels to tell them, in an essay of 500 words or less, about special places in Maine that they cherish, or about people who taught them to value and save our land and water. Maine Voices wants to know how the places people consider special have shaped them, what they have taught them, how they've nurtured them, or how they've given them joy or solitude. Deadline for submission is April 21, 2003. Email essays to mainevoices@tw.s.org, fax to (207) 725-1014, or mail to the Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance, 14 Maine St., Suite 416 Brunswick, ME 04011. For more information, call Sarah Cecil at 207-729-6333.

Portland Trails will be sponsoring a workshop on transforming schoolgrounds this summer thanks to a \$2,500 grant from the Leonard C. and Mildred F. Ferguson Foundation.



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What a fun way to support trails!

IN HONOR OF NATIONAL TRAILS DAY, JUNE 7—and to support our own work saving open space and building trails in greater Portland—Portland Trails is holding a major fundraiser this Spring. **Our “Win a Prize/Build a Trail” Raffle will offer 4 great prize packages** that celebrate outdoor sports, travel, and all the great things (like fabulous restaurants!) that Portland has to offer. It's a win/win

NATIONAL
TRAILS
DAY

proposition. You might take home a great prize—but even if you don't you've helped build a new trail near your home! Watch for more information in the mail—or call Portland Trails at 775-2411.

Saturday ■ June 7