



Kennebec Messalonskee TRAILBLAZER

Winter 2007

Messalonskee Stream Trail, Phase 2

Blazings.... KMTrails hires Don Sproul as its first Executive Director.

Don fits the bill perfectly. He has been working with non-profits for years. His goal is to fully involve the Board of Directors and the public in the development of our trail network and to further the use of the trails by the entire community. He brings a wealth of experience in fundraising, grant writing, and a great personal interest in projects that benefit people.
more Blazings on page 2



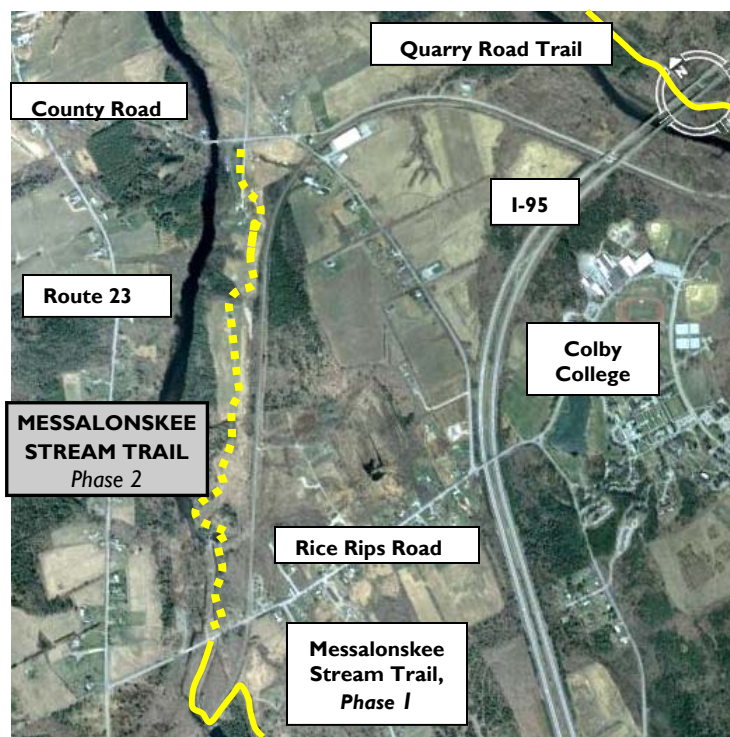
KMTrails Mission:
Our mission is to promote, create, and help maintain recreation and fitness trails along our waterways connecting the communities of Waterville, Winslow, Benton, Fairfield and Oakland.

The Messalonskee Stream Trail in Oakland is immensely popular. The parking lot at its southern end, off KMD, is often full to overflowing, and more cars are beginning to use the parking lot off Rice Rips Road.

So now it is time to build another trail, as an extension, from Rice Rips to the County Road. Phase II trail planning is already in the works. The air photo

gives a pretty good idea of where it will go: from Rice Rips next to the 10-foot diameter black penstock that carries water from the dam, to the surge pond at the power house, then across another wooden bridge over a gully, around the surge pond, then along the edge of the woods by the power line, or down next to Messalonskee Stream. It promises to be as magnificent as Phase I.

The Town of Oakland, with characteristic enthusiasm, has agreed to match money that is expected to be awarded from the State's Recreational Trails Fund. Landowners have once again been exceptionally generous in offering the use of their land. Some of the public is already using a parallel ATV trail just because the terrain is too good to miss.



Air Photo and Route of **Messalonskee Stream Trail, Phase 2** in relation to Messalonskee Stream, neighboring trails, paved roads and other features.



A SHORT HISTORY**1996**

Idea of riverside trails floated at REM's Community Catalyst.

1999

Waterville Rotary Community Project.

2000

Kennebec River Trail Committee formed.

2001

Applied for feasibility funding.

2002

Scope of project expanded to 18 miles of trails. Incorporated as Kennebec Messalonskee Trails.

2003

Feasibility Study complete, Phase 1 and 2.

2004

Trail Construction begins on North Street Recreational Area, Benton-Winslow rail bed and South End Island.

2005

Rotary Centennial Trail from Benton to Winslow completed!!

2006

KMT segment designated as part of East Coast Greenway.

2007

Messalonskee Stream Trail officially opened on National Trails Day in June.

New Thomas College Trail

The Maine Conservation Corps' team has completed its work. A most difficult terrain has now become accessible with pathways through the woods, steps down the steep slopes, and bridges across gullies. The trail leads to a promontory overlooking the confluence of the Kennebec River and Messalonskee Stream, and opens up a little known section of the campus to the public. Thomas College is scheduling an official opening for Spring 2008. Come celebrate with us!

Winslow Trail planned from Head of Falls to the Town Office.

A new trail route, scheduled for construction in 2008, will go from the Two-Cent Bridge around the Winslow Town Park to Benton Avenue. Despite the difficulty of the terrain, it will be wheelchair accessible. Railroad rails at the bridge entrance will be shimmed to allow for bike access. This trail will connect Winslow residents who live between the rivers with downtown Waterville across the historic Two-Cent bridge. It will also connect Waterville residents with the network of trails being planned around the Winslow Recreational Fields behind the schools.

Quarry Road will become a Trail

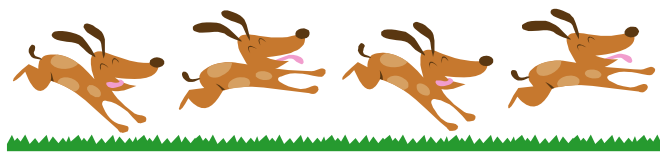
Quarry Road used to serve purposes that are now long gone. It once led to the Waterville Rock Quarry where, apart from rocks, the only fossils in Central Maine were found. It was used as an alternative route to Main Street when the hill was too icy for winter traffic, and it once led to the Colby Ski Slope before that memorable facility was abandoned several decades ago.

Since those times it has fallen into disrepair and is now impassable. Soon it will be restored and renovated as a bicycle and pedestrian trail. The trail will lead to a 100-acre parcel that Colby College is generously donating to the City as part of a land swap. It will also include winding trails through the woods, and a planned cross-country ski route if all goes according to plan.

The first application for funding of the renovation of Quarry Road has been submitted to the Maine Department of Conservation's Recreational Trails Fund. Construction could begin as soon as the summer of 2008. Later there will be more fundraising and more construction as different portions of the planned trail system becomes a reality. Eventually it will connect with the Messalonskee Stream Trail in Oakland.

Dogs are Welcome....

A lot of people are finding that our trails are great places to take their dogs for a run. The trouble is that dogs, wonderful companions though they are, come with two potential problems. One is that they poop wherever it seems best to them, so their human companions must either train them to poop off the trail, or get used to carrying a plastic bag to pick up the offending offering. The Oakland Messalonskee Trail has plastic bags at the KMD parking lot for those who forget. Second problem is that dogs not on a leash can be offensive or downright scary to fellow trail users. So please keep control of your dog – it is important that you respect others who may not be as fond of canines as you are.



**Consider KMTrails for your
2008 planned giving!**

**More blazings....
continued from page 1**

Rotary Centennial Trail Maintenance. Agreements have been developed with the Towns of Benton and Winslow for routine maintenance of the Rotary Centennial Trail. Twice per year, Benton will mow the weeds that sprout through the superhumus surface. Winslow will use their bush-hog to cut down the year's growth of brush in the fall. Poison ivy will be sprayed to remove it completely from the trail sides. Trail users are already remarkably good at throwing downed twigs off the trail, and keeping it free of trash.

Discovering Our Trail System

A Message from President Peter Garrett



I bring glad tidings: more and more people are discovering our trail system. As you may have noticed, the parking lot off Kennedy Memorial Drive (KMD) for the Messalonskee Stream Trail in Oakland is almost always full on weekends, sometimes to overflowing. Not only are local folks using the trail, but we get visitors from Gardiner, Pittsfield and elsewhere. Time to build more trails, you say. That is what the other articles in this newsletter are about.



One of the items that helps people find and navigate on trails is signage. We have focused first on the obvious signs, those along the road that tell people where a trail starts, and where to park. There are now signs like that for the Rotary Centennial Trail starting in Benton, and along KMD and Rice Rips Road in Oakland. More will come as more trails open.

Next come the distance markers. We have chosen 1/4 mile units – that's what people seem to like. I have met some folks who want to walk just a mile, so they'll be able to reach the 1/2 mile mark and then turn around.



At important trail heads it is helpful to have information kiosks. There's a lovely one at the KMD access point in Oakland, and there will soon be one at the trailhead in Benton. Such kiosks can present a lot of useful information including maps of the trail system, a list of those who made the trail possible, trail etiquette, and other material of importance. Soon we will be setting up trail-user log books at kiosks so that you can give us your thoughts and suggestions (as well as compliments) about the trail in writing while you still have them in mind.

Along some routes it is useful to have directional signs to clearly indicate the trail path. There are several tricky turns on the Messalonskee Stream Trail where such signs are very necessary. The trail has white blazes on trees, on which the Fire Department has painted red crosses, blue diamonds, etc. Those additions are for your safety. Should you need rescue for some reason, call 911 and the Oakland folks will ask you: "What was the last sign you saw on the trees?" They will then know just where to find you!

Next year we will be placing historical interest signs at key locations on the trails, such as the site of the former axe factory in Oakland, or at the trails-end rail bridge abutment in Winslow where log runs on the river were once quite a sight.

All this is for your enjoyment so that you will keep coming back for more, and share the glad tidings with your family and friends!





Kennebec Messalonskee Trails

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Upcoming Events.....
Join us for our Annual Meeting April 16, 2008
Details will be available on our website
www.kmtrails.org

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Want to Help? Join a committee!

Let's face it. KMTrails' all-volunteer Board of Directors has all they can handle. We need your help by serving on a committee. Most committees meet once every other month. Some are seasonal. Some are called upon on an as-needed basis. Basically, we need people with talents in particular areas to do some things the Board can't. If you want to make a difference in Greater Waterville, contact us about joining one of these committees:

Fundraising and Budget

From events like National Trails Day to grant applications, we need people with experience at raising funds to help us find the resources to build this network.

Publicity

Generating this newsletter, maintaining the website, and getting the word out - help us project our image.

Maintenance

Now that we've got some actual trails, we need people to monitor

them, report problems, and sometimes pick up a rake, shovel, chainsaw, or post-hole digger to keep our trails beautiful, even as we keep building. Think something's wrong with the trails? Help us fix it!

Membership

Sign up new members, keep records organized, develop new benefits of membership, and handle correspondence.


National Trails Day

It's our biggest event of the year and we want it to be joined by others throughout the year. Want to help?

Whether you love to be outdoors, or you're happier at a desk, we welcome your skills and talents.

**Come walk with us.
Come bike with us....**

**Come join us!
Call 873-6443**

 We are a dynamic group with momentum. Show us your support by becoming a member! All contributions are tax-deductible.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

___ \$25 - Membership and Sponsor One Foot of Trail

___ \$100 - A Long Stride

___ \$250 - Leaps & Bounds

___ \$1,000 - Going the Extra Mile


Other \$ _____

In-Kind (specify) _____

Make checks payable to *Kennebec Messalonskee Trails*

Donations may be sent to:

KMTrails, P.O. Box 2388 ,Waterville, ME 04903



Visit our website: www.KMTrails.org