

2020 State of the Trails

Commission members and volunteers accomplished significant trail maintenance and upgrade projects in 2020. We thank our volunteers and community partners from the Greenway, ASLPT, DPW, Elkins Fish and Game and Colby-Sawyer College. Our 30 miles of trails have been a very popular outlet during the Covid pandemic. We had over 15 walkers complete the Hiking Patch, a banner year!

Here are some of our activities:

- In partnership with the Greenway, we built a 40-foot elevated walkway on Cocoa's Path, we replanked the Great Brook Bridge above the Lower Cascades and with DPW's help, constructed water bars on the Bunker Loop.
- We constructed and installed a truss bridge at the southern end of the Lyon Brook Trail. DPW completed culvert work on Brookside Drive and improved the trail crossing.
- On the Kidder-Cleveland-Clough Trail we installed a viewing platform and bench overlooking the beaver meadow. High water continues to plague sections of this trail.
- We added the Hole-in-the-Wall cutoff to the KCC Extension Trail and dedicated a bench to Joan Cobb.
- With help from CSC students, we rebuilt a bridge on the Webb Forest Trail.
- Clark Pond trails continue to be popular. In 2020, we replaced two more of the original bridges in this network. With DPW's help, we expanded the parking area. Special thanks to our Clark Pond trail stewards Jeff Troxell and Rick Davies.
- Philbrick-Cricenti Bog hemlock boardwalks installed over ten years ago are reaching end-of-life. We replace or repaired over 30 boardwalks in 2020. The work will continue in 2021.
- We completed replacement of the elevated boardwalk on the Messer Pond Trail and added a bench overlooking the pond and a teardrop loop.
- At Phillips Memorial Preserve, our dedicated stewards John Kiernan and Nick Martin reblazed, cleared downfalls and worked on view enhancements.
- "You Are Here" maps were added at strategic intersections.
- We constructed waterbars on the Morgan Hill Trail.

In the on-going, in-progress and future category:

We are excited to work with ASLPT to resurrect and build a trail network on the recently-acquired Messer Farm property. In partnership with Elkins Fish and Game, we will be building an observation blind overlooking the Kidder-Cleveland-Clough beaver meadow. Bridge and boardwalk repair and replacement will continue at Philbrick-Cricenti Bog and other trails, as needed. When water level challenges are overcome, we will complete rehabilitation of the Kidder-Cleveland-Clough Trail. We will be updating and printing a revised version of the Footpaths map. Forestry activity in the Webb Forest has temporarily closed portions of the Morgan Hill and Great Brook Trails. Once the harvest is complete, we will look at adding a trail that connects Quaker Path in Wilmot to the Great Brook Trail via new logging roads.

The right-of-way work on the power lines along the Town's north boundary has impacted several of our trails. Eversource has done their best to keep the trails passable and we will reconfigure as needed once the work is complete.

Thank you for your support of our lovely trail system. Enjoy! Please report any trail problems or ideas to:

Mark Vernon

mtvernon@tds.net.