



2021 Accomplishments / 2022 Goals



Caring for a New England Treasure

The 215-mile New England Trail (NET) includes portions of four largely contiguous trails: the Mattabesett, Menunkatuck and Metacomet Trails in Connecticut and parts of the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail in Massachusetts. Designated as a national scenic trail in 2009, and marked with blue blazes in Connecticut and white in Massachusetts, the NET has something wonderful to share with everyone.

The principal trail stewards of the NET are the staff and volunteers of the Connecticut Forest & Park Association (CFPA) in Connecticut and the Western Mass Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) in Massachusetts. They are assisted by the National Park Service (NPS) in managing, protecting, restoring and caring for this scenic New England treasure. For more information, including guides and maps, please visit www.newenglandtrail.org.

View from Farley Ledges in Erving, MA,
via Hike 50 Challenge participant Debra
Sayles.



NEW ENGLAND TRAIL

2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Total Trail
215 miles

Caring for the Trail
275 CT Volunteers
361 MA Volunteers
636 Total Volunteers

Giving Time to the Trail
7,069 volunteer hours

Valuing Volunteer Time
\$201,749

Hike50 and Hike100 Challenge
1,000 + Participants
170 Challenges Completed
12,550 miles hiked in 2020

“A challenge well worth taking if you have any affection for the outdoors or a great place to just spend the day if you want to escape the asphalt. The supertrail feel in a long trail package.” - Gary M. Jr. of Norwich, CT



NEW ENGLAND TRAIL
www.newenglandtrail.org
www.nps.gov/neen



Sunrise from Mount Holyoke via Craig Bowen

What's New? Let's Reflect...

- **NET Trail Asset Inventory:** Over the summer, our Communications Assistant Lydia Jankowski, walked the duration of the NET in MA and documented trail assets such as bridges, water bars, signage, and parking areas using a digital survey system. With the data, NET staff and volunteers will be able to better prioritize trail maintenance projects and qualify for funding through the National Park Service facility management system.
- **Trail Census:** In partnership with the CT Trail Census at UCONN, the first trail user count and survey on the NET is being conducted at the Mount Higby trailhead in Middletown, CT. This data will better inform us about user trends, peak visit times, how far hikers travel to the trail, and demographic information.

To Blaze a Trail: 2022 Goals

- We are working to develop innovative projects, programs and partnerships to enhance the trail experience, to cultivate an enduring network of trail volunteers and partner organizations, and to ensure that the NET is accessible, inclusive and relevant for all:
- Develop a land protection strategy for the MA portion of the NET.
- Initiate a historic indigenous survey and community outreach program on the trail.
- Host the trail's first Community Volunteer Ambassador, Kayleigh Moses, to assist with multiple communications projects.
- Transit to trails: Use public transportation to better connect communities to the NET and build new strategies and tools for enhanced accessibility.

Enhancing the NET Experience

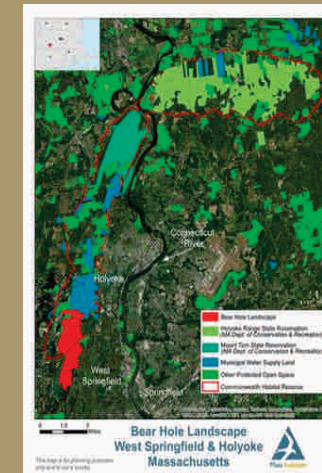
NEW NET APP

The NET is now mobile! We partnered with FarOut to develop a mobile hiking guide that has all the information you need to hike on the NET. The app features the trail centerline, campsites, and major waypoints, all available offline once set up. These features are available for purchase and download via the FarOut app, and a portion of the purchase proceeds will be donated to CFPA and AMC to help support the NET.



PERMANENT LAND CONSERVATION

A huge success in open space conservation on the NET! After more than 10 years of negotiation, the city of West Springfield sold a Conservation Restriction on the Bear Hole Landscape to be jointly owned by Mass Audubon and MA Department of Conservation & Recreation. This massive 1,400-acre landscape, which serves as a critical wildlife corridor extending from central Connecticut to the Holyoke Range and hosts more than three miles of the NET, is now permanently protected from development. Go check it out!



Celebrating Hike50/Hike100 Challenge Completions!



“It is so wonderful to have this exciting, varied trail in our own backyard. So close, but still woods, wildlife, and wonders. It is a Western New England gem.” - Steve S. of Feeding Hills, MA



“I love that it is so diverse! Hikes ranging from easy to moderate, some with beautiful views. We can pick and choose what kind of day we would like to have!” - Kelly T. of Fiskdale, MA



Above: Patch design completed for 2021 Hike 50 Challenge by Jonathan Scheel of Open Sky Ideas.

Purchase NET guides at the CFPA Bookstore or the AMC Bookstore.



AmeriCorps NCCC Team (left) completed a relocation project at Lamentation Mountain. CFPA Summer Trail Crew (middle) on their newly-built bridge. MA Volunteer Team constructed a wheelchair accessible trail in Southwick.

Trail Crews and Field Work

VOLUNTEER PROJECTS:

In September, NET volunteers completed two major upgrades to the trail. In collaboration with AMC corporate partner Athletic Brewing, AMC constructed a 1300-foot section of wheelchair accessible trail in Southwick, MA. This new trail will allow for greater accessibility and visibility for the NET in Hampden County. AMC volunteers also constructed a tent platform in West Springfield, MA, increasing overnight connectivity for the trail.

CT volunteers assisted with a 0.4 mile trail relocation in the Rockland Preserve in Madison and on neighboring water department lands. The improved route takes hikers along a pleasant stream and through the rocky interior of the Preserve and eliminates a walk on a washed out woods road.

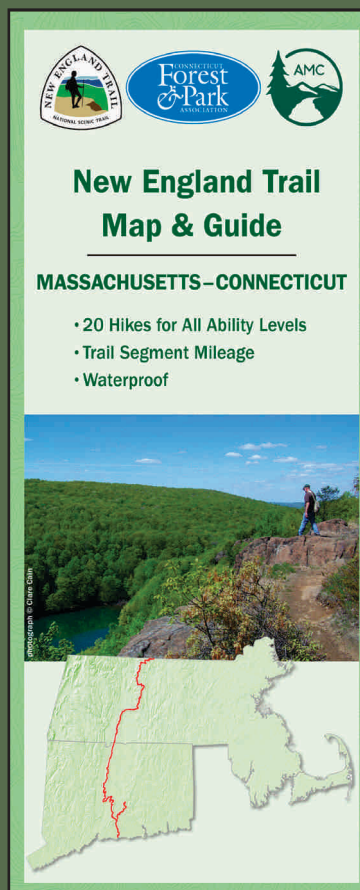
TRAIL CREWS:

In CT, CFPA hosted a 9-member AmeriCorps NCCC team in the Fall. The team assisted with a major relocation at Lamentation Mountain in Berlin & Middletown to improve trail sustainability and built over 1,000 feet of bog bridging in Suffield near the MA border. The team learned trail building & backcountry carpentry skills.

CFPA's Summer Trail Crew worked on a number of projects on the NET as well. They built a native timber bridge on the blue/red Tynan Park Connector in Middletown, assisted with a relocation in the Rockland Preserve, and installed rock steps in Farmington.

MEET OUR NEW AMC STAFF: LIAM CREGAN

We want to give a big welcome to our new NET Coordinator for the AMC, Liam Cregan, who started in September. Liam is a longtime resident of the Connecticut River Valley and comes most recently from working on a Robert Frost Trail initiative for the Kestrel Land Trust that included a GIS-based landowner and land protection status inventory, outreach to municipalities, recommending a Trail Adopter program structure, and gathering support for a successful Recreational Trails Program grant. Prior to pursuing and receiving a Master's degree in Sustainability Science from UMass Amherst, Liam worked seasonally for AMC twice! First as southern New England Trails Field Coordinator, including overseeing the NET Holyoke teen crew, and then as AMC's Appalachian Trail Ridgerunner Coordinator.



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