



Connecting the Wachusett Communities with Trails and Greenways

From Your Wachusett Greenways Directors

Thank you to everyone who continues to support Wachusett Greenways and to enjoy the Mass Central Rail Trail! We are so grateful to you during this challenging year. Your membership is more important than ever. Your year-end gifts for the Mass Central Rail Trail Construction Fund and the Edward P. Yaglou MCRT Maintenance Fund will help us keep the commitment to build more of the rail trail and to steadily maintain the trail. Please consider a gift by donating [online](#). Volunteering and sharing encouraging words are the fuel that keeps Wachusett Greenways growing.

Our best to each of you for 2021. We hope to see you on the trail!

*Colleen Abrams, Christy Barnes, Rich Barry, Steve Chanis, Troy Milliken, Mike Peckar
and Chris Ryan*

Listen to these voices of our trail friends in 2020...

"I love this place so much! I love one special place where the sky opens up like this." (and the young girl raises her two hands high).

"Yay, Daddy!" (and the little child riding on his father's shoulders reaches down to hug his father's neck).

"I love the Mass Central Rail Trail- Thanks to your volunteers!"

"THANK YOU for being the most beautiful place to be in the moment (heart)."

"This place has brought me such joy and peace and fun this crazy year."

"We are blessed to have the rail trail. Thank you."




Baby's first MCRT hike

Review 2019 at Our Virtual Annual Meeting

Tuesday, Dec. 22

On Tuesday, December 22, from 5:30 to 6 PM, we'll hold the Wachusett Greenways Annual Meeting by Zoom. Please register [here](#). This anticipated annual meeting reviewing 2019 and celebrating our 25th anniversary was postponed from May. Our December 22 meeting will bring you greetings from the WG Directors and the election of board members and officers.

 Forward to a Friend

Wachusett Greenways 2019 Annual Report

25 Years of Partnerships to Connect our Communities

Wachusett Greenways (WG) thanks the partners who have brought us to 25 years of connecting our communities with trails and greenways. Thank you to every WG member, donor and volunteer, eight central Massachusetts Towns, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the United States Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, Mass Office of Travel and Tourism, Worcester County Sheriff's Department Community Service Program, each legislator, many local foundations, several regional schools and colleges, several non-profit organizations and businesses.



Each of Eight Towns Participates



All eight partner towns -- Barre, Holden, Oakham, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, Sterling and West Boylston -- contributed toward Wachusett Greenways operating expenses and care of the Mass Central Rail Trail in FY20. Wachusett Greenways is deeply grateful to the citizens, select board members, town administrators and manager each town for their encouragement and for their enthusiasm for the Mass Central Rail

Trail.

Reached the Goal of 1,000 Wachusett Greenways Donors

A record number of 1,004 donors contributed to WG in 2019, including 160 new members. Donors came from 126 different towns and 24 different states. 513 of the WG donors made gifts to Wachusett Greenways' MCRT Construction Fund. Nearly 200 volunteers of all ages served in 2019!

Stretching Across the Commonwealth

Twenty miles of the treasured Mass Central Rail Trail (MCRT) are open and being cared for by WG and our partners. Now we are working to complete the remaining 10 miles of the central 30-mile section of this prized multi-use trail for recreation, transportation and health. Year-round neighbors and visitors benefit from the MCRT between Sterling and Barre, the section under WG stewardship. To the east and to the west of our region, the Commonwealth and others are constructing new sections of the MCRT along the 104-mile corridor between Northampton and Boston.

MCRT Construction and Restoration Progress

Many vital Mass Central Rail Trail construction projects advanced in 2019 through the DCR Recreational Trails Program and the new MassTrails Program grants with Wachusett Greenways, including:

1. Phase II to restore the section in West Boylston at Thomas St. to I-190.
2. Phase II of new construction of the 0.8 mile section in West Boylston along old Pleasant St. between Rt. 140/Beaman St. and Prescott St.
3. Phase I of reconstruction adding an accessible-grade bypass for the connector section in Holden between River St. and Manning St.
4. Phase I of temporary deck repair of the bridge in Sterling at the Quag/West Washacum Lake in preparation for renovation or replacement of the bridge.
5. Phase I planning for reconstruction of the trail for accessibility at Whitehall Rd. in Rutland.
6. Phase I of design for new construction of the 1.9-mile section in Holden from Mill St. to Princeton St.

The DCR solicited design and engineering for the new bridge connection at the Rt. 140/Beaman St. causeway in West Boylston in 2019. Progress was interrupted when anticipated design cost exceeded the funds allocated. The Commonwealth and Wachusett Greenways will continue to seek an effective plan for completing this key MCRT connection.

Projects which WG is working to advance in 2020 include a MassTrails grant proposal to reconstruct the MCRT in Holden between Manning St. and Rt. 31 at Mill St. with accessible grades and the MCRT connection in Rutland at Miles Rd.

Gratitude for MCRT Stewards



Wachusett town Departments of Public Works and WG volunteers mowed trail shoulders to maintain the MCRT. WG trail patrollers removed parking-lot litter, checked portable toilets, and removed downed branches. WG trail volunteers removed dead trees and cleaned drainage ditches. WG also hired snowplowing for the River St., Holden, parking lot.

Reaching Out

WG volunteers participated in the Moving Together Mass DOT conference in Boston, the biannual MassTrails conference in Leominster, and the annual Mass Land Trust Conference in Worcester. WG also participated in UMass Med School's Earthday Celebration, Sterling Celebrates!, and Holden Days. Greenways directors continued to collaborate with other Commonwealth groups working on rail trails. Greenways held hospitality days at the MCRT, welcoming new members and volunteers.



21 Miles Road, Rutland

Greenways kept tools here for trail maintenance and tended the vegetable garden shared by volunteers and visitors. Doug Hagman Landscaping generously donated mowing and leaf removal. Sentry Oil contributed heating oil.

Outdoor Events

WG provided outdoor events each month. Volunteers led walks, bicycling, canoeing and other outdoor adventures.



Saying Goodbye

Two amazing Greenways friends passed away in 2019. On February 19, **Ruth Spaulding** passed away. Ruth was the Springdale Mill Committee Chair. She led the annual September celebration at the mill site and rallied her whole family to help. She offered warmth and hospitality to all, and she is greatly missed. On December 12, **Ed Yaglou** passed away. Ed led the way to connecting our community with trails for more than two decades. He envisioned the Mass Central Rail Trail, led the MCRT Task Force, and created the MCRT logo now being used across the state. Ed encouraged others to serve and to lead. The Edward P. Yaglou MCRT Stewardship Fund is now established in honor of his special way of helping to sustain a community.



Mass Central Rail Trail


Every Member and Volunteer Counts!

We invite you to become a member or contribute [online](#), or by mail at:
Wachusett Greenways
P.O. Box 121
Holden, MA 01520

A gift in any amount counts you as a member, and you will receive the Wachusett Greenways Guide, which includes a map for the region's trails and greenways. Volunteers are always welcome!

Wachusett Greenways Board of Directors

Colleen Abrams, Chair
Troy Milliken, Treasurer
Michael Peckar, Secretary
Christy Barnes
Richard Barry
Stephen Chanis
Christopher Ryan

 [Forward to a Friend](#)

**Watch for our next e-Connector coming in January
with more news from 2020 and
new volunteer opportunities.
Please be safe!**

STAY CONNECTED:



