

TRAIL TRACKS

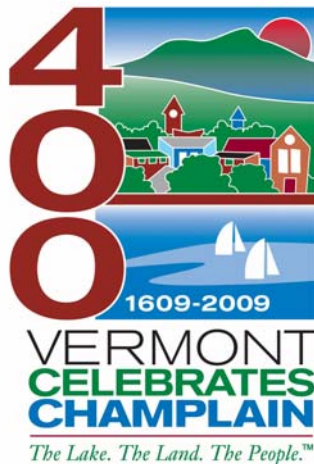


Spring, 2009

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Exploring Franklin County, VT the 21st Century Way

To celebrate the Lake Champlain Quadri-centennial, bicyclists, paddlers and hikers are invited to experience the natural history and beauty of North-western Vermont on informal guided bicycle, canoe/kayak, and hiking outings led by experienced volunteers from the Northwest Vermont Rail Trail Council. Participants will provide their own equipment (bicycle/helmet, canoe/kayak/paddle/PFD) and picnic lunch/refreshments. These outings are free of charge and suitable for experienced bicyclists, paddlers and hikers who would like to become more familiar with Franklin County's natural history and scenic beauty.



Saturday, July 11, 2009 – Bicycle the Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail from St. Albans to Sheldon

Join Don Mueller and Phyllis Tiffany to bicycle along the Rail Trail from St. Albans to The Abbey Restaurant in Sheldon and return. Meet at the Rail Trail parking area in St. Albans (entrance off Route 7 just north of Route 105 inter-section), leaving promptly at 8 am. Distance: 22 miles round trip. Duration: approx. 4 hours. Level of difficulty: easy. Trail surface: crushed limestone (not suitable for narrow or racing tires). Bring your own bicycle/helmet, lunch/refreshments.



Bicyclists on the MVRT in Sheldon

Saturday, May 30, 2009 – Paddle the Missisquoi Wildlife Refuge, Swanton

Dave Stanley will lead participants in a paddle through the Wildlife Refuge into Missisquoi Bay. Meet at 8 am at Louie's Landing on Route 78, a couple of miles west of Swanton. Duration: approx. 6 hours. Level of difficulty: intermediate. Approx. 1 mile of open water possibly with waves. Bring your own canoe/kayak, paddle, PFD and skirt, lunch/ refreshments.

Sunday, July 12, 2009 – Bicycle the Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail from Sheldon to Richford

Don Mueller and Phyllis Tiffany will lead participants in bicycling along the Rail Trail from The Abbey Restaurant in Sheldon to Richford and return. Meet at The Abbey parking area on

Route 105; leaving promptly at 8 am. Distance: 30 miles round trip. Duration: approx. 4.5 hours. Level of difficulty: easy. Trail surface: crushed limestone (not suitable for narrow or racing tires). Bring your own bicycle/helmet, lunch/ refreshments.

Saturday, August 15, 2009 – Hike Burnt Mountain in Montgomery Center

Alisha Sawyer and Ken Whitehead will lead participants in a hike up Burnt Mountain (elevation 2,600'), part of the Green Mountain Range, offering fabulous views of Jay Peak, Trout River valley, and Quebec. Meet at 9 am at the end of Rossier Rd (from Route 118 in Montgomery Center, take Route 58/Hazen's Notch Rd. about 2 miles, turn right on Rossier Rd.). Duration: approx. 3 hrs round trip. Level of difficulty: moderate to strenuous. Participation limited to 10 people. Bring your own lunch/ refreshments.

For more information and to RSVP, contact Cynthia Scott at (802) 933-8851 or cynthiascott@pshift.com

New Trail Surface!

**Announcing our
2009
Photo Contest!**

Don't forget to bring your camera with you when you go out on the MVRT this summer. The Council would love to see the trail and its surroundings through your eyes! Photos taken on, of or from the MVRT are eligible and must be submitted by Friday, October 30, 2009.

See our website www.mvrailtrail.com for contest guidelines and entry form, or contact us at (802) 524-5958 for more information.

Some of the federal stimulus funding will be coming to Vermont for transportation projects. Part of this funding will go to highway and bridge projects, and another part to enhancement projects. The Rail Trail falls under enhancement and VTrans plans use some of this money to resurface the entire MVRT! The trail has never been resurfaced in its over 10 years of existence. This is badly needed in many spots along the trail, especially in the Richford area where the crushed limestone has eroded away to the ballast layer, making for a very bumpy and uneven surface.

Plans at present are to add 3" of compacted crushed limestone to the existing surface and to



Ballast coming up through MVRT's crushed limestone surface

regain the original 10' trail width. A piece of fabric will be placed beneath the crushed limestone to prevent the fines from sinking into the ballast layer. The State is working on design documents and preparing the construction bid package. Construction is expected to take place in 2010.



Vegetation is obliterating the trail

UPDATES

2008 Photo Contest Winners



2008 Grand Prize winning photo by Gilles Landry
"Across Missisquoi Rail Trail"

Winner announcements for the 2008 Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail Photo Contest were made last November 20 at a reception held at the Vermont State Police conference room in St. Albans.

Gilles Landry won the Grand Prize for his photo 'Across Missisquoi Rail Trail'. Category winners were Joe Belanger for Scenery/Views, Shelia McKennerney for Trail Users, and Gilles Landry for Trail Neighbors.

Many thanks to our winners and to all of you who sent us such wonderful photos of your MVRT experiences!

Parking Areas

Progress on constructing the parking area at East Berkshire is on hold pending an investigation by VTrans into the presence of coal ash. And in Richford, an assessment is being undertaken prior to purchasing some railroad property which would be used for their parking area. Patience is a virtue!

Those Unusable Bathrooms

You have no doubt been wondering why the bathrooms beside the MVRT at the Franklin Park West housing project are still not opened. Well, the dispute between St. Albans City and the project developer on the amount of the water and sewer hook up fee has still not been resolved. The City wants to charge a fee based on the expected use of a residence. These bathrooms are estimated to use only a fraction of what a residence would use, and only between May and September.

It seems reasonable to the Rail Trail Council that in view of the many economic, health/fitness, recreation, and tourism benefits the MVRT brings to this area of the state, that this fee should be waived. And if not waived, then at the very least pro-rated to reflect actual water consumption levels.

At present, we are awaiting an engineer's opinion on what the daily water usage of the bathrooms would likely be. This figure will then be presented to the City Council for reconsideration of the fee applicable.



Bathrooms located beside the MVRT at Franklin Park West

Friends of the MVRT

Welcome and thank you to our new Friends,

*Brendan Morrison
Allen & Barbara Ploof
Barry Levine
Albert Perry
Dana & Barb Wolcott*

And heartfelt thanks to our faithful Friends of the Trail who have renewed their memberships for another year. Your continued support is always appreciated!

*Jane Williams
Martha Smith
Frances Casey
Dolly MacNeil
Michael LaFontaine
Elizabeth Ensor
Chuck Webb
Grayce Anderson
Linda Lothian
Thomas Smith & Anne McMenamin
Maurice Baker
Marian Fritz
Baird Morgan*

*Edwin Holm, Jr.
Gary & Cindy Rutkowski
Steven Bourgeois
Jim & Colleen Abrams
Northwest Riders
Anne Bowers
Marilyn Takefman & Stan Backman
Madeline McDermott-Miller
David Stanley
Richard & Marie Brouillette
Nini Worman
Mary Brouillette
David Plumb*

Your Friendship represents a valid investment in the future of our families, our businesses, and our communities. Thanks to all of you!

The Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail

Farms, Forests, Fields, and Communities: Come Harvest Our Agricultural Heritage!

Northwest Vermont Rail Trail Council
c/o Northwest Regional Planning Commission
155 Lake Street
St. Albans, VT 05478