

Greenwords:

Enjoy Rhode Island greenways and blueways next summer

It's time to get out our bicycles, roller blades, walking and running shoes, and ring up our hiking friends because spring will soon be here and the Greenways Alliance is expanding Rhode Island Trails Day to become Rhode Island Trails Month. Rhode Island's 2006 very wet, very cold, National Trails Day will be an even bigger (and hopefully drier) celebration this year. We invite all trail and bicycle groups to join us and plan an event to be highlighted in September.

Also, we are especially excited to announce our new partnership with the Rhode Island Blueways and Greenways Project. With this new relationship we will be able to create an expanded choice of events. June is Rhode Island Rivers Month with events scheduled on all our rivers and streams. We will provide links on our web site to take you to a schedule of their events along with our regular calendar of greenway activities.

If you travel along our greenways regularly, you are certainly aware of the increased popularity of our splendid linear park system. A web of greenways may soon be connected across Rhode Island when the Providence Bike Plan is completed.

The GARI newsletter, *Trail Mix*, is in its 6th year of

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Project to define blueways and greenways

By Meg Kerr

The Rhode Island Blueway project will define paddling trails with clear information for paddlers, convenient access sites and portages, and will promote the conservation of the land and water through which they travel. Can we link with Greenway efforts in 2007?

The Blueways project began in 2006 with a series of meetings with paddlers, planners, trails advocates and state agencies. The project



Mayor David Cicilline escorts Long Trail Paddlers as they leave Providence.

became public on April 25th with a Blueways Design Workshop at Slater Mill in Pawtucket where people came together to identify existing and potential paddling routes, access sites and portages. Participants also

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The North South Trail: Off of the roads and into the woods

By Ginny Leslie

Participants in this year's Trek 16 of the North South Trail will be spending more time hiking in the woods, thanks to continuing efforts to get additional segments of the 78-mile trail off roads.

On March 10, the first day of the annual hike of the entire state, hikers will enjoy a new trail segment in Burlingame State Park in Charlestown. The Day One hike, just over 11 miles, begins at Blue Shutters Beach, heads north on East

Beach Road, crosses Route 1 and then continues north on Klondike Road. In past years, hikers passed the entrance to the Burlingame State Park Campground and entered the woods after staying on the road for a short distance. Now, the North South Trail enters the Campground at its main entrance, then goes into the woods to the left and runs along the top of a ridge.

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publication, and our memberships and corporate sponsorships have increased.

We can thank the Rhode Island Department of Transportation for creating our bikeways. While you are wiping down your bike and conditioning your running shoes, take a few minutes to write the new director at RIDOT to remind him of the history of commitment to greenway development and encourage him to complete bike access to all our bridges and the Jamestown Bridge in particular. If you live in Providence, keep pressure on the officials to complete the promised system of signed bike routes through the city. That plan has languished in the Providence Planning Department for over 10 years.

The Narragansett Bay Wheelmen granted \$5,000 to GARI to “aid in the encouragement of the building, maintenance and use of bicycling ways in Rhode Island.” The funds will be used to partner with groups wishing to hold trailside events, clean up day expenses, and other such uses that will encourage and facilitate bicycle use. Information for organizations wishing to partner with us will be on our web site soon

Lastly, GARI wishes to extend a hearty thank you to the members of the Rhode Island Trails Advisory Committee. The TAC voted in January to again support GARI with a \$6,000 grant to offset the printing and distribution costs of Trail Mix. We look forward to bringing you information about this group's activities, and the trail projects they review, in the coming year.

Sue Barker
GARI Chair



University of Rhode Island Students working to improve greenway advocacy

Four students from URI's one-year MBA program have teamed up with GARI in an effort to assist the organization in its continuing mission of greenway advocacy. The four graduate students hope to attract more members and raise additional funds to promote GARI's mission.

The students performed a stakeholder analysis, which involved studying any entity that has an interest in either the success or failure of the organization. For the purpose of this study, students investigated government organizations, local businesses, individuals, transportation authorities, and local residents from areas where proposed greenways would be located. From this research, they determined which stakeholders

are in favor of greenway advocacy, those which are stakeholders against the construction of greenways, and how potentially helpful or harmful these groups could be. Now that the stakeholders have been identified the students are in the process of formulating a plan utilizing these organizations to help GARI's mission of advocacy for greenways around Rhode Island.

Let's Meet!

Greenways Alliance of Rhode Island Spring Meeting Schedule

Wednesdays 6:30 p.m. Feb 21, Mar. 21, Apr. 25, May 23, June 27.

Gibbs College 85 Garfield Ave. Cranston, RI 02920

From the north: Take Route 95 south to exit 22B (Hartford, CT, Route 6/10). Continue on Rte 6/10 connector for 2 miles to Rte 10 (left lane). Continue on Rte 10 south for 1/2 mile, take second exit (Cranston St.). At the end of exit ramp, Gibbs College will be directly ahead.

From the south: Take Route 95 north to exit 16. Follow signs to "Reservoir Av" and continue through interchange, onto Rte 10 north. Continue on Rte 10 north for just under 2 miles, take exit for "Cranston Street" (makeshift sign on right side of road for this exit). At end of ramp, turn LEFT onto Niantic Av. Continue on Niantic Av for about 1/4 mile to Cranston St. Turn LEFT onto Cranston Street, and continue for 1/8 mile to stoplight. Turn LEFT onto Garfield Street, and continue to stoplight. Turn RIGHT into Gibbs parking lot.

Trail Mix is the quarterly newsletter of the Greenways Alliance of Rhode Island (GARI).

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Dear Dr. Sprocket,

Dr. Sprocket will answer questions in each issue of Trail Mix.

Dear Dr. Sprocket, I've been reading about all the good things that can come from riding a bike, but I haven't been on a bike since I was a kid, many decades ago. My children rode while they were living at home, but since they grew up and left, I haven't even been near a bicycle. I'd like to begin riding again, but I'm afraid I'll get hurt or, at a minimum, look silly. With the wintry weather we're having, I can't bring myself to go outside and brave the cold to try something new. Is there a safe, sane way I can get back into biking now so I won't look foolish when the warm weather comes?

Frightened in Chepachet

Dear Frightened,

I can understand your apprehension over starting a new activity that can appear to be dangerous. Like most activities that are learned in childhood, cycling skills remain written deep in our brains even if we don't ride for years on end. To reawaken those neural programs, we only have to muster up the courage to get back on a bike and begin. If you haven't been active for years, I recommend getting a physical exam to get an OK from your doctor.

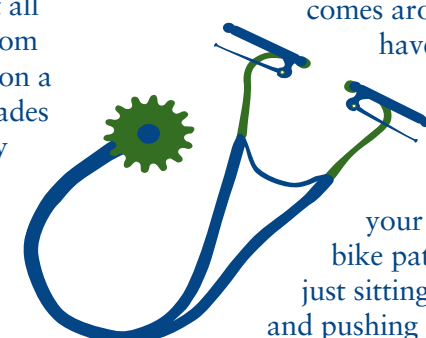
The next step is getting access to a bike. It doesn't have to be a new, expensive model – just one that fits you and is in reasonably good condition. Good sources are family members, friends, or even your kids. For the initial familiarization phase, you can use a bike a little smaller than your correct size: it will allow your feet to reach the ground easily when sitting on the seat. If you are lucky

enough to find a bike your size, it's a good idea to lower the seat so you can reach the ground easily.

Once you've found or borrowed a bike, wait until a fairly mild day comes around. If you have a long driveway or can get both you and your bike to a bike path, begin by just sitting on the bike and pushing yourself forward with your feet. Once the bike gets moving, even very slowly, you'll be able to get the feel of balance. Until that happens, you'll still be safe because your feet will keep the bike from falling. It's also important to get familiar with the operation of the brakes, and spend a few minutes getting started and stopping until it feels natural again.

When you feel confident that you can find the balance point easily and can safely stop, you can use the pedals to move forward. As the bike goes faster, it becomes easier to balance, and if you're able to use the brakes, you'll quickly regain most of the confidence that was an integral part of your childhood. My guess is that one session will bring most of your old riding skills to the forefront.

The next task is to obtain a bike that is going to be “your” bike – at least for the next year or two. A local bike shop is the best place for this, because the owner will know which kind of bike will be best for you. It's customary for them to make any changes (seat, handle bars, pedals, etc.) that would make the bike feel right for you, and they'll have all the safety equipment you need (helmet, bell, riding gloves, etc.). While it may seem like a good idea to buy one of those “bargain” bikes that are widely



advertised, most of them are very heavy and cumbersome, and not much fun to ride. The few extra dollars that might be required at a bike dealer will pay you back when you're having fun riding and getting the benefits during the warm weather we'll see in a few months.

Send your Dr. Sprocket questions to righreenways@righreenways.org.

Signs and stripes to appear along the Providence Bike Network

Plans for the future development of the Providence Bike Network have been approved by the DOT and are underway. The improvements will involve installing route markers and signs on target routes in Providence and striping bike lanes along Broadway. The City of Providence Department of Planning and Development conducted a study of the network. It determined that striping lanes for bikes and pedestrians on other Providence streets would eliminate parking in the already crowded and narrow streets. Therefore stripes will only be added to Broadway, however, directional signs that will navigate bikers and pedestrians to the downtown area, neighboring cities and connecting bike routes will be posted. The details of the signs are still being discussed, but the goal is to have share-the-road signs, directional signs, and East Coast Greenway Alliance signs posted throughout the entire system by Bike to Work Day in May. For the next two months the City of Providence Department of Public Works will be accepting bids for signage on designated routes.

Project to define blueways and greenways

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considered safety, signage, publicity and opportunities for linking with other programs like the Department of Health's Health Promotion and Wellness Team.

In September 2006, hardy paddlers blazed the Worcester to Westerly "Blueways Long Trail Paddle" cheered on by RIDEM chief Michael Sullivan, and Providence Mayor David Cicilline. The trip showcased the enormous recreational and economic possibilities that Rhode Island's rivers and bays offer to paddlers and local businesses throughout the region.

With funding from the RI Rivers Council, we have begun development of a web site (www.ExploreRI.org) which will showcase access points and paddling routes along rivers and the bay. During the summer, volunteers began collecting information and pictures of access sites in the Pawtuxet River and Salt Pond watershed. We will work with watershed councils throughout the state to complete the inventory of river access sites. Save the Bay has agreed to work with us on Bay access and paddling routes.

Our plans for 2007 include multiple opportunities for partnering with GARI:

ExploreRI.org. From the beginning, our vision was to create a place on the web where water and land trails could come together. We would like to talk with GARI about expanding the web site to include information on greenways and hiking trails.

Land and Water Conservation Summit. On March 24, John Monroe

with the National Park Service River and Trails program will give two talks at the Land and Water Conservation Summit – one is on Blueways the other is on creating hiking trails.

Blueway Workshop. On April 28 we will host a Blueway workshop and mini-boat show at Slater Mill in Pawtucket. The day will combine short presentations with time for working together on challenges and opportunities. We hope GARI members will attend and help link the Blue to the Green!



Paddlers approach Fort Getty.

Rivers Month. In June, we will be working with watershed councils to celebrate RI Rivers Month with paddling events on many of the state's rivers. We would be delighted to publicize GARI events at the same time!

Tourism packages. Throughout the year, we will be working with outfitters and hospitality partners to create commercially viable day, overnight, or weekend packages. The packages can include boat rental and lesson, paddling route information, accommodations, restaurant, and car shuttle. All packages will emphasize safety and target beginner/intermediate paddlers. Hiking trips could easily be linked to the package to create additional outdoor experiences for RI's tourists.

The Blueway effort is coordinated by a small group of dedicated people. For more information about the effort, contact Meg Kerr at megkerr@cox.net or by phone at 714-2313.

Connecting the DOTs

Long-awaited bike path segments coming to fruition

By Charles St. Martin

Bike path development can be a lengthy process from the initial concept to the ribbon-cutting ceremony, and the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) is hoping to move a few much-anticipated projects forward in the coming year.

In South County, a land-swap agreement was completed in December that will clear the way for the next leg of the William C. O'Neill (South County) Bike Path to be constructed. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Town of Narragansett agreed to the exchange which gives the town 1.5 acres in exchange for a 15.4-acre parcel that will be added to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's John H. Chafee National Wildlife Refuge. It is those 1.5 acres that will allow the bike path to follow a new route to Mumford Road in Narragansett.

The agreement took four years to complete, and was initiated after local residents objected to the originally planned alignment. Because the land-swap was not completed, RIDOT halted work on design plans so it did not expend funds on a new alignment that may or may not have been feasible. Now that the land-swap is complete, RIDOT can move forward to bringing the plans to the 90 percent design stage and apply for permits, explained Managing Engineer Robert Smith.

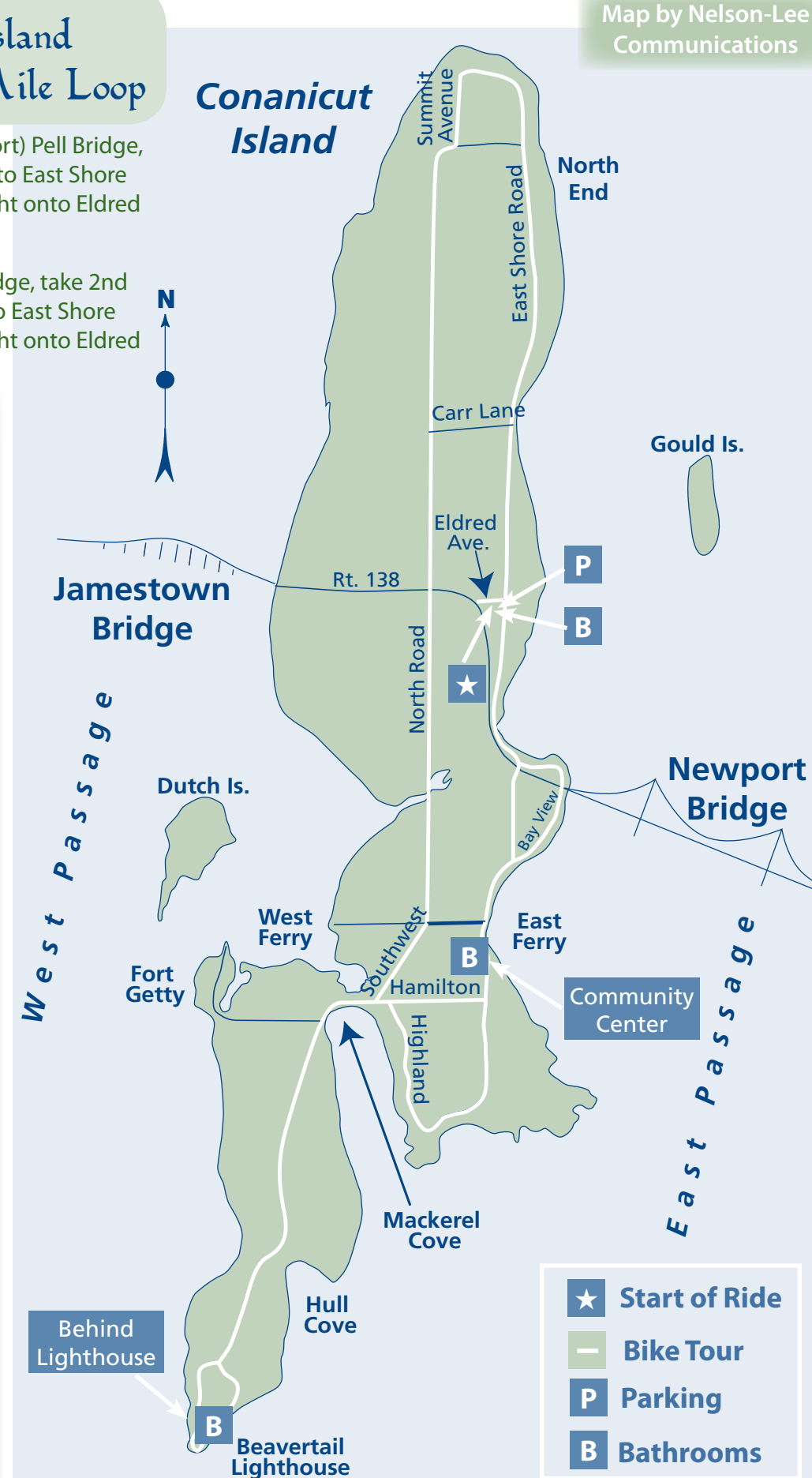
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Jamestown, Rhode Island Bike Map for 20 plus Mile Loop

From Aquidneck Island: Cross the (Newport) Pell Bridge, take first exit. At end of ramp, turn left onto East Shore Rd. Head north up East Shore Rd. Turn right onto Eldred Ave., then left into parking lot.

From Mainland: Cross the Jamestown Bridge, take 2nd exit. Follow road round under bridge onto East Shore Rd. Head north up East Shore Rd. Turn right onto Eldred Ave., then left into parking lot.

Miles	Seg.	Total.	Direction
0	0	0	Parking Lot on Eldred Ave.
.1	.1	.1	L on East Shore Rd.
.8	.9	.9	S at Carr Lane
1.0	1.9	1.9	S at America Way
.8	2.7	2.7	S at North Rd.
.8	3.5	3.5	L at Summit Avenue
.4	3.9	3.9	R on North Rd.
1.4	5.2	5.2	S at America Way
.6	5.8	5.8	S at Carr Lane
.8	6.6	6.6	S under Route 138
1.3	7.9	7.9	S at Zeeks Creek
.8	8.7	8.7	S at Narragansett Ave. onto Southwest Ave.
1.3	7.9	7.9	S past Mackerel Cove
.3	9.7	9.7	S past Ft. Getty Entrance
1.3	11	11	S past Hull Cove parking
.9	11.9	11.9	Beavertail State Park Ent.
.6	12.5	12.5	Beavertail Lighthouse
.6	13.1	13.1	Beavertail Park exit
.9	14	14	S past Hull Cove parking
1.7	15.7	15.7	S past Mackerel Cove
.1	15.8	15.8	R on Hamilton Ave.
.1	15.9	15.9	R on Highland Drive
.5	16.4	16.4	S past Blueberry Lane
.8	17.2	17.2	S past Ledge Ave.
.1	17.3	17.3	L on Walcott Ave., at Ft. Wetherill entrance sign
1.0	18.3	18.3	S at Narragansett Ave.
.3	18.6	18.6	R on Bay View Ave.
.6	19.2	19.2	S under Route 138, (Newport) Pell Bridge
.3	19.5	19.5	R on East Shore Road
.3	19.8	19.8	S past Route 138 W ent.
.9	20.7	20.7	L on Eldred Ave.
.1	20.8	20.8	L into parking area



Join the Greenways Alliance of Rhode Island Today!



State House Update

Add your ideas to State Transportation plans.

By Barry Schiller

Is there a transportation project you wish you had known about before it happened? Or do you have an idea of a project in your community that you want but is not happening?

If so, please note there are both laws and a bureaucratic willingness to involve the public in transportation planning. You can influence what happens, perhaps more than you think. In fact, the public participation process is the subject of a State Planning Council public hearing at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 1 in the Blackstone Valley Visitors Center in Pawtucket. Please attend if interested. It is important to note that transportation planning includes bike and pedestrian projects as well as transit and highways. Also coming this spring is the start of a public process to update the state's long range transportation plan, which is an opportunity to advocate for greenway development.

Meanwhile, though I am writing this two weeks before the legislative deadline for filing bills, it seems that thanks to public pressure, Senator Mark Cote has re-opened the "all keep-right-on-bike-paths" issue by filing a bill to repeal this requirement. We are also working to get a sponsor of a bill to enhance bike safety on issues involving helmets and carrying young children on bikes. There will be more details in the next Trail Mix, but for more information on these matters, feel free to contact me at bschiller@localnet.com.

North South Trail

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In the early years of the Trek, both sides of Klondike Road were lined with woods. Over the years, house lots have been carved out and developed on the western side of the road, so the rural atmosphere hikers once enjoyed is now gone.

This new off-road segment is just one in an ongoing effort to get more of the North South Trail into the woods. Last year, the Trail was rerouted from Durfee Hill Road in Glocester to a newly-cut footpath in the woods to the east. And a segment in the George Washington Management Area was changed to run along a narrow trail along a scenic pond rather than on a woodland road.

Veteran hiker and trail builder Al Pointe is the brains and the muscle behind these new trail sections. After identifying trail options on maps and on the ground, Al meets with R.I. Department of Environment Management land managers to explore the possibilities, gets the go-ahead from the Arcadia or Northwest Management Council, then cuts, clears and marks the new trails. He's been responsible for moving the NST into the woods in several locations, and is always looking for more places. "Without Al," reports Ginny Leslie, Queen of the NST and primary organizer of the annual Trek, "the North South Trail wouldn't be constantly improving. The short sections that he's moved into the woods add up to a significant number of miles. His determination to get more and more of the Trail off

roads is something short of amazing. It's matched only by his phenomenal year round trail maintenance efforts. Everyone who uses the NST is greatly indebted to Al for creating new trails and keeping the existing ones in good shape."

North South Trail users are very interested in a major proposal by the Town of Richmond to relocate a couple of miles of the NST from Carolina Nooseneck Road into a new multi-use development planned for an existing sand and gravel operation. The Rhode Island Trails Advisory committee has given the town a substantial grant



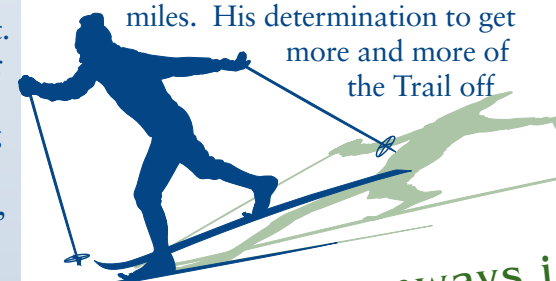
Happy hikers from an earlier North South Trail hike.

to improve the connection between the Carolina and Arcadia Management areas.

Hike the whole state: Trek 16, the annual hike of the North South Trail, will be held on 6 Saturdays: March 10 & 24, April 7 &

21, and May 5 & 19. Hikers cover between 11 and 17 miles per day and go through 8 state wildlife management areas, 1 state park and Douglas State Forest in Massachusetts. Participants meet at the end point of the day's hike, leave their cars, and take a bus to the starting point. A volunteer meets the group along the way with refreshments. The cost is just \$12 per person for all 6 days, and \$5 for a single day.

Advance registration is required and you may sign up at any time. For a Trek Fact Sheet and registration form, call Ginny Leslie at 781-8117. If you'd rather hike the NST on your own, a set of 6 detailed maps is available: send a stamped, self-addressed envelope with at least 63 cents postage and an optional \$1 donation to NST Maps, 27 Post Road, Warwick, RI 02888.



Help Make Greenways in Rhode Island Happen:

Webmaster's Corner

Warm Bike Adventures

Continuing a tradition of armchair traveling in the dark days of winter, the Webmaster's Corner looks to warmer climes for interesting biking adventures. This edition's site is sure to warm the bones – perhaps too much.

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park on the Big Island is a fascinating place, and as is the case with most National Parks, the best sites are found by getting out of one's car and hiking or biking. The park's main website (www.nps.gov/havo) offers a host of information about the area, tips on when to travel and things to see and do.



Drill down in the site a bit and you'll find some interesting maps. One that will raise the eyebrows of readers of this publication can be found at www.nps.gov/archive/havo/maps/bikemap.htm. The map of places to bike in the park is nothing special, but the descriptions of the rides sure are interesting. In some places, one can ride on regular roads, so a road bike would be fine. Occasionally during dry spells, cars may be restricted from some of these roads due to concerns of fire danger, making for more enjoyable rides.

A mountain bike might be good to have too, as some of the trails are off road. Some even run across old lava flows. The terrain is exceptionally hilly,



and on some occasions the suggested rides advise using caution descending hairpin turns or preparing oneself for a difficult climb back up. Due to high elevation and heat, typical precautions against heat exhaustion and dehydration should be taken. Other more unique hazards include the smell of sulfur and volcanic air pollution. Then there's of course the chance that eruptions could cut off certain roads. Fortunately there are "escape" routes – some of them are included in the rides – that are available in case a primary route is impassible.

So the next time you're out scraping the windshield or shoveling through snow drifts, just imagine riding your bike over cooled lava, interspersed with views of hot magma flowing into the sea and tropical rain forests. That ought to warm you up in no time.

Special Thanks to the RI Trails Advisory Council, the East Coast Greenway Alliance Narragansett Bay Wheelmen and the Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council for their generous funding.

Our recent accomplishments

- Worked with other advocacy groups to organize Bicycle Friendly Community meetings and workshops to encourage grass roots trail advocacy and development.
- Represented pro-bike path positions at various public meetings (including submitting letters during formal public comment periods).
- Sponsored and organized the 2006 National Trails Day events in Rhode Island.
- Named the Washington Bridge Linear Park in George Redman's honor.

Get on the trail!

Join the only organization dedicated to statewide advocacy of bike paths and greenway development in Rhode Island. Your membership dues make this newsletter possible and enable us to continue our mission of working with state and local leaders to ensure Rhode Island has an integrated, well-maintained network of alternative transportation and recreation corridors.

Name _____ Annual Membership enclosed

Address _____ Individual \$15

City _____ Family \$25

State, Zip _____ Nonprofit \$50

E-mail _____ Corporate \$100

Telephone _____ Other: _____

Fax _____ Please return membership form with check payable to the Greenways Alliance of Rhode Island to: GARI, 31 Stanchion Street, Jamestown, RI 02835.

Organization _____ Please tell me about GARI meetings by E-mail Regular Mail Neither

www.rigreenways.org

Join the Greenways Alliance of Rhode Island Today!

Winter 2007

Connecting the DOTs

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“We’re looking forward to completing the design and getting the path done as soon as possible,” he said.

Completing the design should take a few months, and RIDOT will then need to submit an application for the necessary environmental permits from the Coastal Resources Management Council. That also should take a couple of months. Assuming no problems in the permitting phase, and funding is available, RIDOT then will begin the advertising, bidding and contract awarding process. The culmination of all three phases means that work probably won’t begin until Spring 2008 at the earliest. Once the project starts, it likely will take one construction season to complete.

The new segment will take the path .8 miles from Mumford Road to the end of the existing bike path at

Route 108 in South Kingstown. The path will pass underneath Route 1, and allow users of the 5.6-mile path a safe alternative to reach Narragansett. A short distance up Mumford Road, riders will be able to access Route 1A, which has been striped as a bike route.

The new path nearly completes the original goal of a bike path connecting the Amtrak station at Kingston Station in South Kingstown to Atlantic Ocean in the Narragansett Pier area. The bike path mostly follows the old route of the Narragansett Pier Railroad, which was established in 1876. The railroad was built to provide freight service to textile mills in Peace Dale and Wakefield and provide passenger service to the resort community of Narragansett Pier.

RIDOT is studying a fourth phase of the path, to make a direct connection to Route 1A at Narragansett Town Beach and the South County Museum. There are no plans at this time to move this segment forward, and an alignment has not been chosen.

In the central part of the state, RIDOT is hoping to advertise in the

spring for a contractor to begin work on paving 1.6 miles of the Coventry Greenway. This part of the Washington Secondary is paved on either side of this segment, and its completion will allow for about 15 miles of paved, uninterrupted riding. The western end of the bike path, called the Trestle Trail, is still under design. This will be built in two phases, the first possibly starting in Spring 2008, and the other following two years later.

In the northern part of the state, work is progressing on getting the Blackstone River Bikeway opened again at Martin Street. The entire project was supposed to be completed last October, but two instances of river flooding in the last two years caused damage to the work site and delayed the project. The bike path portion of the project could be open in mid winter or early spring, depending on weather and river conditions.

The writer is an Information and Public Relations Specialist for the Rhode Island Department of Transportation