

CURRENTS AND COMMUNITIES



An historic 740-mile water trail through New York, Vermont, Québec, New Hampshire, and Maine

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NORTHERN FOREST CANOE TRAIL MISSION:

To celebrate the rich human heritage and diverse natural environment of the Northern Forest by establishing and stewarding a water trail tracing historic Native American travel routes across New York, Vermont, Québec, New Hampshire, and Maine.

OUR APPROACH: In the context of partnering with local communities, honoring Native American culture, and conserving the human and natural heritage of the region, we will serve travelers and benefit neighboring communities by:

- Encouraging canoe/kayak travel and recreation
- Stimulating economic development by attracting a wide range of visitors to the region's communities
- Improving local access to regional waterways — rivers, streams and lakes
- Enabling travelers to experience the Northern Forest's full range of diverse landscapes, from working cities to towns to farms, forests and mountains
- Supporting community-based services and local arts, education and environmental programs that educate and inspire residents and visitors alike
- Enhancing quality of life by creating opportunities for people to reconnect with place



Waterway Work Trip volunteers and stewardship interns at Highgate Falls, VT

Ah, Youthful Energy

NFCT enjoyed a spectacular summer of Trail projects and youth discovery.

Interns: We had a very successful stewardship field season in 2009, thanks in part to the enthusiasm of a great crew of young interns! Our Summer Stewardship Intern Program expanded to include a Field Supervisor, three-person Roving Crew, two-person New York Crew (thanks to special support from the Adirondack Watershed Alliance), and a utility man who went where needed. This gave us the opportunity to offer five Waterway Work Trips (WWTs), and several volunteer opportunities in New York working with the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Raquette River Corridor Project. We accomplished important projects, made a lot of new friends, and made our Trail even better. See pages four and five for photos and details.

Youth: As for youth discovery, we are thrilled to report that NFCT again hosted a very successful Northern Forest Explorers program in 2009! Thanks to funding from SmartWool and the Davis Conservation Fund, we provided four weeks of programming during which a total of 44 Explorers, aged 10–14, from Rangeley, Stratton, and Jackman, Maine had a chance to spend a week paddling, camping, and learning about the natural world just outside their classroom windows. The program materialized through a collaboration of the best sort. The Trail itself provided an unparalleled experiential classroom: the NFCT

“You learn about your friends, yourself, and nature, all on this trip.”

— quote from a 2009 Northern Forest Explorers participant

organization secured funding and hired an intern to assist with trip leading; Adventure Bound provided high quality guiding; and our school and community based partners recruited participants; and the kids—the kids!—provided energy, enthusiasm, and hope...the best ingredients of all. Additional thanks to the Natural Resource Education Center (NREC) who provided the initial inspiration and partnership that got this program off the ground in 2008.



Young “explorers” got in touch with the woods and waterways in their own backyards this summer.

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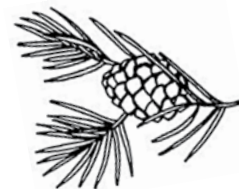
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From the Executive Director



Dear Members, Supporters and Friends,

The word “expedition” has always been a favorite of mine. Its meaning encompasses both intention and possibility, diligence and adaptability, goal-setting and boundless hope. A visual online map of the word (see visualthesaurus.com) links expedition to a fascinating range of terms, from sashay to expeditiousness to journey.

I was fortunate this summer to take a week-long expedition with family and friends on the Allagash Wilderness Waterway in Maine. We traveled north from Chamberlain Bridge to Allagash Village, paddling hard, eating well, and always appreciating the journey. I think my 7-year old son may even have sashayed along a rocky beach one afternoon. It was a true and good expedition.



Kate and family canoeing the Allagash Wilderness Waterway, August 2009

As I snug back into my desk at this transition from NFCT's field season to our “off” season, I realize that the work of NFCT is also a true and good expedition, and it is in our interest to see it that way. All of what makes an outdoor expedition work applies to an organization as well: planning thoughtfully, choosing good companions, gathering information from experts, coordinating preparation, traveling light, and adjusting to unexpected circumstances.

In 2010, NFCT will be celebrating our 10th anniversary. We have traveled far in our first decade, and we plan to have some fun marking this milestone. But it is just that, a milestone. The expedition continues. And we couldn't ask for a better set of travel companions to continue with us into the next decade as we continue to improve our trail and grow stronger in all of our program areas. We will not always have sunny skies or tail winds. But we will always have boundless hope in the networks of people—who are paddling forward with us.

Warmly,

Kate

Kate Williams, Executive Director

NFCT's 5th Annual Online Auction

www.TheCanoeTrailAuction.cmarket.com

Auction 2009 is our 5th annual online auction and this year it's better than ever! Visit early, donate an item (donations accepted until November 20), and bid often. You'll find regional experiences, boats, books, and more!

November 4–December 4, 2009



QUESTIONS? Kate@NorthernForestCanoeTrail.org



Making It All Happen...



Danny Hale, Executive Director, Vermont ATV Sportsman's Association (VASA)

This season, one of NFCT's most complex projects took place on the Highgate Falls Dam Portage Trail in Highgate, Vermont. We were challenged not only by the terrain and the need to move a lot of material to the work site, but also with an interesting situation regarding ATV impacts on a section of the portage trail. To get a better understanding of the situation and what could be done, we contacted Danny Hale, who quite willingly devoted his time and VASA resources to help rebuild the section of impacted trail. Danny has also committed to working with us to tackle other questions regarding ATV impacts to the NFCT. Thanks, Danny! We look forward to our continued collaboration!



Danny Hale in action

Welcome Indy Rae Roberts!

Many NFCT members and friends remember Jen Lamphere, former NFCT Trail Director. Congrats to Jen, and her partner Kip, now the proud parents of Indy Rae Roberts, born in August of 2009!



Lamphere-Roberts Family



A Hearty Welcome to our new Board Member!

Larry Forcier, Ph.D. has joined our Board of Directors as of June 2009.

Originally from Jaffrey, New Hampshire, Larry has taught and advised in natural resources for more than 40 years. Dr. Forcier has worked at the University of Vermont since 1977 where he has held a variety of administrative positions, including Dean of both the School of Natural Resources (now the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources) and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Prior to joining UVM, he worked on the faculty at the University of Montana. Over the course of his career, he has been involved with a number of scientific, professional, and community organizations at local, regional, and national levels, including the Lake Champlain Basin Program Steering Committee. Larry is particularly interested in interdisciplinary study at the undergraduate level, experiential education, and the application of ecological principles to public policy, planning and management. He and his wife Anne live in Burlington, Vermont. Fortuitously, Vermont also provides the primary habitat for all six of their grandchildren.

Larry Forcier



Gov. John Lynch, Kay, and Gov. Jim Douglas in front of NFCT's Bloomfield, VT kiosk.

Celebrating Our Trail's Heritage

NFCT's Kay Henry participated in a day-long bus tour this October with New Hampshire Governor John Lynch and Vermont Governor Jim Douglas to promote tourism along the Connecticut River. NFCT had the opportunity to share with partners new and old the story of our work to connect people with the beauty and heritage of the Northern Forest Region.

Farewell to Eve

With best wishes as she sets off to explore a new path, we say goodbye to Program Director Eve Komasa. Eve was instrumental in developing NFCT's itinerary and vacation packages, and making important connections with businesses in northern Vermont. She also oversaw this year's Northern Forest Explorers program, and, overall, was an excellent ambassador for the Trail. We wish Eve good luck in her future endeavors!



Eve Komasa

ENORMOUS THANKS TO THESE SUPPORTING FOUNDATIONS

- Davis Conservation Foundation
- Dorset Fund of the Maine Community Foundation
- Horizon Foundation
- Lennox Foundation
- Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund
- Quimby Family Foundation
- Sudbury Foundation
- Neil & Louise Tillotson Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation
- USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program - VT, NH, ME
- Successful Communities Fund of the Vermont Community Foundation
- Vermont Recreation Trails Program



Work Projects Along the Trail



Thanks to the generous support of the NFCT membership and our partners, we had an extremely effective field season! Our efforts were focused on our internship program, Waterway Work Trips, and the installation of three kiosks.

NEW YORK

► **Franklin Falls:** Working with the New York Department of Environmental Conservation we began the first phase of a Permanent Rapids stone staircase project. Our intern crew and WWT volunteers installed 24 stone steps on a steeper section of the trail that was beginning to erode. We used some very inventive ways to transport and place stone weighing up to 500 lbs., including the use of a highline that allowed us to lift and zip-line the rocks into place. Thanks especially to Adirondack Watershed Alliance for their assistance with this project.



Driving a picnic table anchor; Maidstone, VT.



Crow bars in action; Permanent Rapids Carry, NY.

VERMONT/QUÉBEC

► **Highgate Dam Portage:** As a continuation of last year's project we installed 14 lumber-cribbed steps, laid 500 feet of gravel, side-hilled a 250-foot section of trail, and worked with the Vermont ATV Sportsman Association to repair 500 feet of Trail that had been impacted by ATV use.



Getting dirty; Highgate Dam Portage, VT.



Laying bog bridging; Attean Pond, ME.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

► **Connecticut River:** Maidstone resident Ray Lovell exemplified the spirit of a New England landowner by offering to share use of his property with the public. Named in honor of a relative that helped instill Ray's love for the property, the Samuel Benton Campsite, with picnic table and privy, was completed by volunteers and interns.



Building an outhouse; Samuel Benton Campsite, VT.

MAINE

► **Attean Pond:** The NFCT intern crew and WWT volunteers worked with the Maine Forest Service to install 15 sections of bog bridging on the Moose River Loop Trail and rehabilitate two campsites at Sally Beach.



New steps; Highgate Falls, VT.

NFCT Blog! NFCT is actively maintaining a blog – Voices from the Trail. Don't miss our musings, including both on- and off-water experiences that you won't hear about anywhere else! You'll find it on our website, where our Web 2.0 page provides links to our blog, as well as our Twitter and Facebook pages.





Hot on the Trail!

Paddlers on the Trail

We love the way paddlers on our Trail keep teaching us what's possible and surprising us with new ideas. This summer, we had firsts, fastest, stand-up paddlers, and probably more superlatives than we're aware of!

Firsts included the first kayak through paddle of the trail, a feat completed by 67 year-old Gil Whitney as a "Bucket List" item. Shortly after Gil finished, Mike Stavola swooped in, also in a kayak,



Gil Whitney had his arm tattooed with a kayak and the words "First to Kayak the NFCT!"

having completed the trail in a super speedy 32 days which we believe is a trail record.* And then there's the curious case of John "Shaggy" McLaughlin who stand up paddled the length of the NFCT in New York.



Mike Stavola

We also love that for many paddlers, NFCT is a more incremental experience. Our friends the McCoy family added the Allagash to their growing list of sections completed (dog Sam had to bow (wow) out of this one). And John Stookey, age 79, completed his section paddle of the entire route, sporting a jacket his son had embroidered with our logo and the words "Geriatric Expedition Team". Stookey intended to complete the Trail before turning 80 and he succeeded!

And for so many others of you, we know there were beautiful sunrises, bracing rapids, the gentle thrill of a heron rising before you, and generally the sweet moments that keep us coming back to the water for more.



John "Shaggy" McLaughlin

Thanks for sharing your stories with us, and please keep them coming—and congratulations to *all* NFCT paddlers, be they through paddlers, section paddlers or day paddlers!

*We didn't set out to keep track of through paddler speeds, so we must note that there may be faster times that we're not aware of.

Interns Made a Difference!



Michelle Davis



Ben Malakoff

NFCT was thrilled to engage *eight* interns this summer—two more than in 2008, and more than three times as many as in 2007! Five Stewardship Interns (Kimberly Hack, Stefan Janjic, Daniel Novak, Sam Perron, and Acadia Tripp) devoted sweat equity to the physical creation and maintenance of campsites, portage trails, and access points. A sixth stewardship intern, Nick Olson, collected necessary data for our application of the Universal Trails Assessment Process (UTAP) to some sections of Trail. Youth Program Intern Michelle Davis provided meaningful waterway experiences for kids living

Calling all paddlers! Winter may be arriving on our doorsteps, but our paddling-season adventures live on in your memories and ours. It's never too late to share your Trail stories and photos with us! Call or write Walter at 802.496.2285 or Walter@NorthernForestCanoeTrail.org. Submit your photos by uploading them through our Photos/Video link at www.NorthernForestCanoeTrail.org.

in Trail communities. Program Intern Ben Malakoff spent critical office time helping to administer behind-the-scenes processes crucial to our success as a small non-profit. We were also excited to welcome back Noah Pollock as Field Coordinator, a role piloted in 2008 that served NFCT well. Noah continued to be invaluable as he coordinated the projects of the Stewardship Interns and Waterway Work Trip volunteers.

NFCT thanks the Quimby Family Foundation for supporting these endeavors by interns—endeavors that were at the heart of delivering NFCT's mission while supporting the development of budding young professionals.



From left to right: Acadia Tripp, Sam Perron, Kimberly Hack, Noah Pollack, Nick Olson, volunteer Kathy Duffenback, Daniel Novak, volunteer Brian Castler, Stefan Janjic

Did You Know You Can Give...
gifts-in-kind, matching gifts, bequests, annuities, and gifts of stock all to support NFCT's mission?
Contact Kate at 802.496.2285

Membership Matters!

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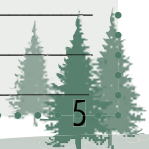
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Trail Connections

Guidebook: The Home Stretch



The presses are running, and we're on track for the long-awaited release of NFCT's official guidebook.

The Northern Forest Canoe Trail: Enjoy 740 Miles of Canoe and Kayak Destinations in

New York, Vermont, Québec, New Hampshire, and Maine will be available in March 2010. It's chock full of information that complements our maps and website tools, including new insights such as an elevation profile of the Trail and a series of "best of" charts to help you pinpoint where you want to paddle. Available through our online store and in bookstores.

Flagstaff Lake: "The Valley Below"

It's just one lake, but many layers of history and experience make it a destination that keeps beckoning you back. The most recent layers include a pamphlet, "The Valley Below," produced by the NFCT and several organizational partners, but really the brainchild of our local partner Duluth Wing. This pamphlet tells the story and provides a map/guide to the history of this dammed lake and the villages that were submerged when the Dead River was flooded in 1949. Go to our website and click on Itineraries to learn more about the pamphlet, and to download the GPS points that you can follow as a companion to the map. Contact Sandy@NorthernForestCanoeTrail.org to request a hard copy of the pamphlet. Special thanks to the Center for Community GIS for their leadership on this project.



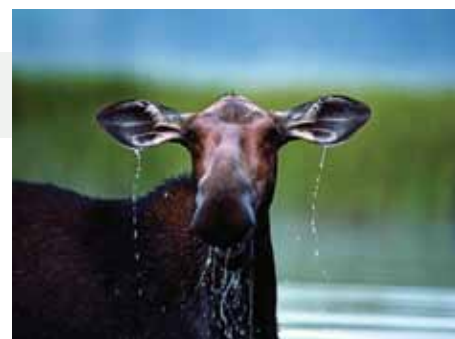
Through Paddling and the Adventures of the Flora Burn

In our feature on page five, we reference a couple of this year's through paddlers: the "fastest" and the "first," etc. Although some stand out in obvious ways, *every* through-paddle is a unique story, and so it is with the adventures of the *Flora Burn*.

Inspired by the 1740's Eastern North American female pirate Flora Burn, for whom they named their canoe, 2009 through-paddlers Morrigan and Mahsa exemplified the level-headedness needed when facing the many challenges that can be encountered on the Trail. Following their adventures through their blog, Twitter account, and over the phone, I was constantly impressed with their ability to access the information needed to make decisions based on their abilities. They seemed to possess the true adventuring spirit, knowing how to balance caution with reasonable challenge.

Morrigan and Mahsa contacted our offices early in their planning. Having never attempted such an extensive canoe trip, they were eager to learn. With guidance from through paddler alumni and other available resources, they struck out from Old Forge on July 19, thinking that summer was just blossoming.

As we all know, the rains came and did not subside for quite a spell. The two felt the effects of the swollen waters as they began their paddle against the current of the Missisquoi River. The



No matter which one you choose, NFCT itineraries and packages can take you to places where you may see moose! See article on page 7. Credit: Clyde H. Smith

river's height was such that sections of the river usually having enough stream-bank available for lining were incapable of being passed. The two assessed their paddling skills and available trip time and made the decision to portage their canoe on Route 105 until conditions improved.

From their careful planning and information gathering to their smart on-Trail decisions, I think "Captains" Morrigan and Mahsa, and their *Flora Burn*, were a fine example of through paddlers putting prudence and safety before speed and glory.

And so their story brings me to the ongoing question that some of you have understandably asked. How do we define "through paddler" in light of varying skill levels and the unpredictability of weather? As the waters freeze and paddlers rest this winter, we here at NFCT will ponder how we structure our through paddler category; and we will report back to you next spring. Feedback or suggestions can be directed to Trail Director Walter Opuszynski at Walter@NorthernForestCanoeTrail.org or 802.496.2285.



Morrigan and Mahsa and their *Flora Burn*



Check Out NFCT

NFCT's New Itineraries and Packages

NFCT has done great work this year to develop "tourism products"—itineraries and vacation packages—that promote small tourism-based services in communities along the Trail while illustrating the diverse natural wonders found nearby.

For Vermont, four multi-day itineraries, two day-trip itineraries, and the vacation package "Montgomery Marvels" were recently created. The package alone includes a day of guided paddling on the Missisquoi River with guides Montgomery Adventures; hiking at Hazen's Notch; and a ride on the aerial tram at Jay Peak Resort.

For New Hampshire, a series of four travel itineraries and three vacation packages were developed. Lucie Villeneuve, a guide and co-owner of Outdoor ESCAPES New Hampshire, reported that the success enjoyed by our Lake Umbagog National Wildlife



Vermont's Missisquoi River is included in a couple of itineraries and the "Montgomery Marvels" package. Credit: Clyde H. Smith

Refuge Package "set a new record" for her lodging packages.

In Maine, NFCT has partnered with Maine Woods Discovery, a collaboration that has produced richly experiential vacation packages representing Maine's most distinctive, off-the-beaten-path treasures, including several destinations along the NFCT.

Our thanks to the USDA's Rural Business Enterprise Grant program, the Tillotson Fund, and the Lennox Foundation for support of these efforts.

To access our vacation packages and itineraries, or to plan a trip using our online Trip Planner, visit www.NorthernForestCanoeTrail.org. Enjoy!

New NFCT Store Items

The Adirondacks: In Celebration of the Seasons

Mark Bowie presents a photographic tribute to the ever-changing seasons of the magnificent mountains, woods, and waters of the Adirondacks. Hardcover; 144 pages.



Arnold's Wilderness March

In this 18"x36" two-sided foldout map and guide, the Arnold Expedition Historical Society accurately traces the route of Benedict Arnold's infamous 1775 expedition across Maine to storm Québec City. Follow in the expedition's footsteps and paddle strokes.



Thank You Trail Fund Donors

Last spring, nearly 50 members gave a total of \$9,365 to our Trail Fund, in support of along-the-water trail projects. Thank you—your extra giving makes a huge difference!

Thanks to Our Business Members & Corporate Supporters

Thanks to all businesses who have made contributions beyond regular NFCT Business Member dues!

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- Raquette River Outfitters LLC
- Skywoods Canoe Company
- St. Michael's College Wilderness Program
- The Boat House
- The Last Resort
- Tranquillity Lodge
- Wekanu
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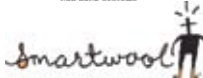
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VERMONT



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NFCT is turning 10!
Stay tuned for how you
can help us celebrate.



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Coming in March 2010: The Official Guidebook of the NFCT!
The Northern Forest Canoe Trail: Enjoy 740 Miles of Canoe and Kayak Destinations in New York, Vermont, Quebec, New Hampshire, and Maine. Available from our Online Store at www.NorthernForestCanoeTrail.org and in bookstores.

You Sustain Us! Donate to the Mission Fund Today!
Every one of us who admires the streams, rivers, lakes (and yes, the portages) that make up the 740-mile Northern Forest Canoe Trail can make a difference. Gifts of \$100 or more will receive a NFCT mug and organic coffee from Green Mountain Coffee!

The Northern Forest Canoe Trail will be auctioning off a number of fun and unique items in a bid to raise money for our organization and highlight our amazing donor partners.

November 4 – December 4, 2009

Visit early, donate an item, and bid often. Boats, books, experiences, and more!

www.TheCanoeTrailAuction.com

Don't Miss NFCT's 5th Annual Online Auction!

Happening Soon...