



# CURRENTS AND COMMUNITIES

## The NFCT Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2009



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

### A Community Trail

It's an inside joke around here to refer to winter as our "down time." In truth, our waterways may be frozen during the winter months, but our work continues apace. Why? Because our water trail is inseparably a *community trail*.

Our mission, and the work through which we deliver it, extends across four seasons as we collaborate with communities along our route. Together, we implement programs that position the Trail as a real contributor to the vibrancy of the places through which it passes.

For paddlers — many of you — our efforts result in improved resources and services for enjoying great experiences along the Trail. The enhanced tools and approaches we created this past winter include:

- ◆ Website Trip Planner with a growing list of services along the NFCT, plus new ease of use features;
- ◆ Itineraries and packages that reduce your planning time, leaving you more time on the water;
- ◆ Info on local paddling races and community events — as much as we are able to list.

To begin planning your NFCT experience, visit [www.NorthernForestCanoeTrail.org](http://www.NorthernForestCanoeTrail.org) and select "Plan A Trip" or "Calendar of Events." Please, send us your feedback so that we can continue to improve and expand the resources available to you. Happy planning... and paddling!



One of the many businesses participating in our community economic development program.



Be it inns, restaurants, gear retailers, guides, ... or floatplanes, you'll find services along the NFCT on our Trip Planner!

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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

**Contributing to Vibrant Communities:** Our Community Economic Development Program is the centerpiece of the efforts described here. With support from a number of sources, including the USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program, we work directly with a variety of businesses along the Trail who are positioned to support paddlers *and to benefit from an increase in paddler visitation*. Our 2006 Baseline Economic Impact Study (available on our website) showed that the average paddler group surveyed spent \$215 per trip in local communities along our route — not insignificant. We hope to sustain and even grow that number by directing paddlers to local businesses, and assisting our community partners in providing the services, itineraries, and packages that attract visitors.

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## STAFF

**Kate Williams, Executive Director**  
**Eve Komosa, Program Director**  
**Walter Opuszynski, Trail Director**  
**Rob Center, Special Projects Consultant**  
**Sandy Tarburton, Membership Consultant**

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info@NorthernForestCanoeTrail.org  
www.NorthernForestCanoeTrail.org



# From the Executive Director



*Dear Members, Supporters and Friends,*



As I write this, spring thaws threaten to flood local rivers. We've been spared so far, but I am jarringly reminded of the power and centrality of water in the life of many communities. We depend on flowing waters for so much, and likewise serve them — for better or worse — by how we manage our watersheds and live on our lands.

My thoughts turn to the power of the paddling experience, of the on-water perspective, to help us understand the interconnections of which we are a part. It occurs to me that the Northern Forest Canoe Trail is increasingly about making these natural interconnections manifest not only in the flow of waters, but also in the shape of our work.

I found this quote by Erich Jantsch in Meg Wheatley's *Leadership and the New Science*, a favorite book of mine: "In life," Jantsch notes, "the issue is not control, but dynamic connectedness." *Dynamic connectedness*. What a compelling phrase! It captures what we strive to accomplish with partners and neighbors as we deliver our mission. To that end, we've recently trained new staff to broaden our connective reach; we've collaboratively expanded our economic and rural youth programs; and with key partners, we've engaged congressional delegations regarding shared regional agendas. As always, we've continued to tap the figurative watersheds of experience, passion, creativity, and vision that further our mission while contributing to a vibrant future for the Northern Forest.

These are not easy times to be a small non-profit. But these are excellent times to be a dynamic player in a region facing great challenges and opportunities. Our thanks — always — to you for your support and encouragement.

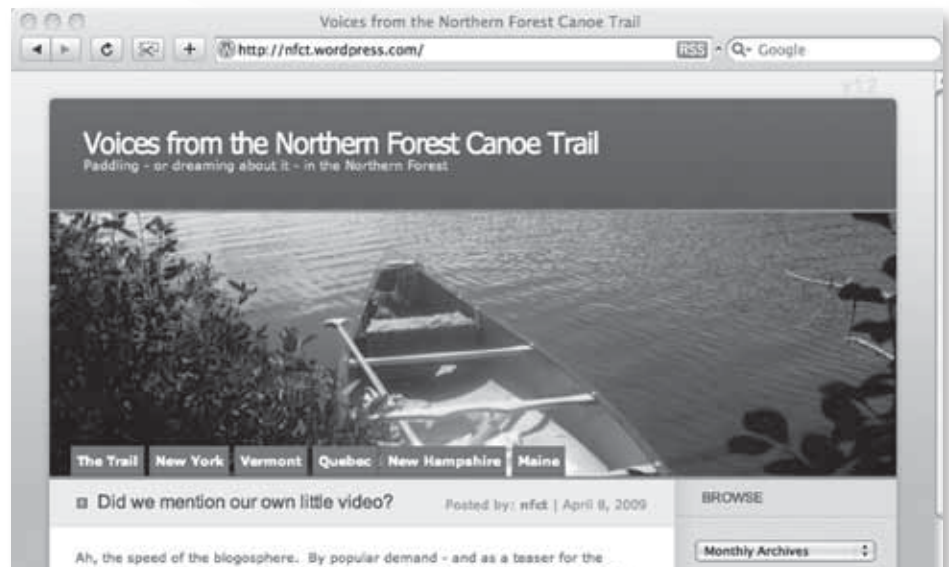
**Trail Fund:** As you'll see in this newsletter, we have lots happening on the Trail this summer! Donate to the Trail Fund to support this on-the-ground waterway work!

Warmly,

*Kate*

Kate Williams  
Executive Director

P.S. Our new blog, *Voices from the Trail*, will launch May 1. Link to it on our website!



# Thank You 2008 Donors



We offer our heartfelt gratitude to the donors who gave generously in support of our mission, our programs, and our day-to-day operations. Each of you makes a real difference, and we thank you!

## Individual Donors

### \$1000+

Stuart A. Fraser  
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### \$500-\$999

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Mr. Peter & the  
Rev. Margaret Gunness  
Larson Gunness & Liana Cassar  
Kay Henry & Rob Center  
Larry Rocke

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## In Memoriam

Elizabeth R. Kiebala in  
memory of Billy Kiebala

## Corporate Donors

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## Grants

Davis Conservation Foundation  
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USDA Rural Business Enterprise  
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Vermont Recreational Trails  
Grant Program

# Making It All Happen

## Father & Daughter NFCT Friends

NFCT is lucky to have a great father-daughter team as colleagues. Bruce Hazard is the leader of a non-profit that NFCT collaborates with; and Phoebe Hazard-Backler is an NFCT economic development field consultant who works with services along Section 7 in New Hampshire. We are grateful for the spirit and expertise they bring to our collective efforts!

**Bruce Hazard** is Director of Mountain Counties Heritage (MCH), a non-profit community development organization based in Farmington, Maine. MCH is the steward organization for the Maine Woods Consortium, an open association of businesses, non-profits (including NFCT), and government agencies



organized around three program areas — landscape resources, community revitalization, and economic restructuring.

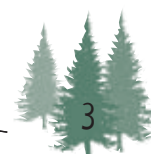
## Phoebe Hazard

**Backler** originally hails from Maine, but her work in outdoor education with Voyageur Outward Bound, the Yosemite Institute, and the Appalachian Mountain Club has taken her to wilderness areas across the country. Phoebe holds a B.A. in History with a Certificate in the Management of Community Organizations. Her on-the-ground work with NFCT has allowed her to explore a long held interest in the blending of natural resource conservation and economic development.



## In Memoriam: Sherry Belknap, 1956–2009

NFCT lost a great friend when Sherry Belknap passed away on January 8, 2009. Area residents, visitors, and trail users alike have Sherry to thank for public access to shore lands, an island, and a campsite at the Connecticut and Nulhegan rivers' confluence, land that Sherry and his wife Darlene sold to the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources so that it could be preserved and managed for public use. Additionally, Sherry was involved in numerous projects aligned with NFCT's mission to honor and conserve the human and natural heritage of the region. We will miss him.





# Work Projects Along the Trail



## Get Involved!

To register, or for more details (such as special lodging discounts for Worktrip participants), visit our website, give us a call, or email [Walter@NorthernForestCanoeTrail.org](mailto:Walter@NorthernForestCanoeTrail.org). Be part of the NFCT experience!

**Waterway Work Trips** A healthy balance of work and play, these trips are a great opportunity to steward the Trail while meeting fellow paddlers.

- **July 10–12: Franklin Falls Portage, New York** — We'll control erosion through activities like tree planting and hardening the trail surface.



Transporting trees to be planted, Franklin Falls Pond, NY

- **July 17–19: Highgate Falls Dam Portage Trail, Vermont** — We'll complete construction of a lumber staircase and rehab a trail section impacted by erosion.
- **July 31–August 2: Connecticut River, Vermont/New Hampshire** — We'll improve a campsite located on the CT River in Maidstone,

VT, and then paddle the CT River performing small stewardship projects along the way, finishing in Groveton, NH. Vehicle shuttles will be arranged.

- **August 7–9: Attean Pond, Maine** — We'll improve campsites on the pond and transport lumber to be used as bog bridging across the length of Attean. If you like lake paddling, this is the trip for you!

For more details see "Get Involved" at [www.NorthernForestCanoeTrail.org](http://www.NorthernForestCanoeTrail.org). Trips have small fees that cover meals for the weekend.



Volunteers building a picnic table, campsite near Groveton, NH



Interns and volunteers work side-by-side to build Trail amenities.

## National River Cleanup

Due to increased success as a weekly event, American River's National River Cleanup has become a year long event! To organize a cleanup on an NFCT waterway, start by visiting: [www.americanrivers.org](http://www.americanrivers.org). Then let us know so that we can spread the word!

## State-by-State Stewardship News

### New York

- Thanks to support from the Adirondack Watershed Alliance, we're proud to devote two Stewardship Interns solely to our New York section! Projects will include work at Franklin Falls, and a variety of other erosion control, campsite rehabilitation, and portage trail efforts.
- A kiosk, created with support from SUNY College, will be installed in Plattsburgh. Check our website for news of a dedication event in 2009.

### Vermont/Québec

- A kiosk will be installed in Enosburg Falls, near the Bridge of Flowers and Lights, and in Island Pond, near the dock and gazebo. Check our website for news of dedication events in 2009.
- A river clean-up is scheduled for May 16 along the Missisquoi River between Richford, VT and Mansonville, Quebec. Sign up on NFCT's website.

### New Hampshire

- Our Roving Stewardship Intern Crew (the three interns not in New York) will tackle a variety of small but important projects along the NFCT in New Hampshire.

### Maine

- Our Roving Stewardship Intern Crew will brush out the portage trail and address erosion control issues at Spencer Stream, and then lead the Attean Pond Waterway Work Trip.

# Hot on the Trail!



## The Adventure Continues

**"Dude, you would love the canoe trip! I just went and you should go." — quote from a 2008 NFE participant**



2008 Northern Forest Explorers



NFCT is proud to announce the second summer of Northern Forest Explorers (NFE). Thanks to funding from SmartWool and the Davis

Conservation Fund, NFE will offer four week-long programs for youth grades 5th-8th from the western Maine communities of Stratton, Jackman, and Rangeley.

Participating kids will paddle NFCT segments running practically through their backyards. A range of experiences await them on the water: navigating rapids, exploring flora and fauna, camp cooking, learning along with their peers as they build new abilities. After a week of making memories, these Explorers also will go home with heightened awareness of the natural world, a connection to place, and the confidence and self-reliance that come from practicing outdoor skills.

We continue to offer this program for two reasons: in many recreational destinations, resident youth don't have the opportunity to explore the unique places outside their classroom windows; and, *kids need outdoor places* — a growing body of research shows that their social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual development depends on it. (Source: Richard Louv, *Last Child in the Woods*, Algonquin Books, Chapel Hill, NC, 2005)

In future years, we plan to extend NFE to other NFCT sections, leveraging the full length of our Trail for the benefit of local youth. Stay tuned for reports of this year's program, and expansion plans for 2010!

## NFCT STORE

Need a cap or map for your Trail adventures? Perhaps a colorful pictorial to commemorate your journey? Find all this and more in our online store at [www.NorthernForestCanoeTrail.org](http://www.NorthernForestCanoeTrail.org).

## NFCT Staff Outnumbered by Interns

NFCT is thrilled to engage seven interns this summer — two more than in 2008, and more than three times as many as in 2007! Five Stewardship Interns will devote sweat equity to the physical creation and maintenance of camp-sites, portage trails, and access points. A Youth Program Intern will provide meaningful waterway experiences for kids living in Trail communities. A Program Intern will spend critical office time helping to administer behind-the-scenes processes crucial to our success as a small non-profit.

We're also excited to welcome back Noah Pollock as Field Coordinator, a role piloted in 2008 that served NFCT well. Noah's extensive knowledge of the waterways and communities, as well as his background in trail work, will continue to be invaluable as he coordinates the projects of the Stewardship Interns and Waterway Work Trip volunteers.

NFCT thanks the Adirondack Watershed Alliance, and the Quimby Family Foundation for supporting these endeavors by interns — endeavors that are at the heart of delivering NFCT's mission while supporting the development of budding young professionals.



Be it with loppers or axes, computers or camp songs, interns will employ a variety of tools to further our mission in 2009.



2008 Intern Mike Mainer cooking during a Waterway Work Trip

## 2010 NFCT Calendar Photo Contest

Share your best images of the Trail, past or present, to be judged for inclusion in an NFCT 2010 calendar. Photos must be in digital format, high resolution, JPEG, 6MB or smaller. Upload your submissions at the "Photos/Video" section of our website.

**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!

**PLEASE CIRCLE ONE:** JOIN RENEW GIFT

☐ \$500 Champion ☐ \$250 Sponsor ☐ \$100 Benefactor ☐ \$75 Patron ☐ \$50 Household ☐ \$35 Member

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# Trail Connections

## Check Out These Community Events

A variety of events are offered throughout the paddling season on the NFCT and connected waterways. Below we've listed whatever info was available at press time — check our website for updates. See page 8 for a complete event list.

**June 23–28: 2009 Winooski River Sojourn: A Paddle Through History, Marshfield to Lake Champlain, Vermont** — The Winooski River Sojourn is a multi-day paddling trip on the Winooski River, during which participants will learn about this great Vermont resource. The 2009 Sojourn will begin in Marshfield on Tuesday, June 23 and reach Lake Champlain (part of the NFCT) on Sunday, June 28. To register, or for more information, see [www.winooskiriver.org](http://www.winooskiriver.org)

**June 27: GREAT Annual PaddleFest, Stratford Hollow and Guildhall, Vermont** — This annual race and leisurely float of non-motorized watercraft down the Connecticut River starts in Stratford Hollow at the Janice Peaslee Bridge and travels 14 miles to finish in Guildhall, Vermont. The event concludes with a festival on the Guildhall Common that includes food, vendors and musicians. Advance

registration; forms can be picked up locally or requested via email from [greatpaddlefest@myfairpoint.net](mailto:greatpaddlefest@myfairpoint.net).

**June 27–28: Family Fun Days & Flagstaff Lake Race** — This annual event will include a paddling sprint race starting from the South Branch Bridge off Route 27 on June 28. For more information, see [www.eustismaine.com/activities-events.asp](http://www.eustismaine.com/activities-events.asp)

**July 1–5: 2009 Whitewater Open Canoe Downriver Race (WWOCD), Lower Dead River, West Forks, Maine** — Competitive whitewater canoeists will participate in this national race. The downriver race course will be from Spencer Rips to the access road below Lower Poplar Hill Falls. For more information, see [www.wwocd.org](http://www.wwocd.org). This is just past Section 9 of the NFCT.

**August 8: River Day, Northern Forest Heritage Park, Berlin, New Hampshire** — River Day is a day of celebrating the Androscoggin River with activities such as the New Hampshire screening of our Northern Forest Paddlers Film Fest; a canoe and kayak race; a “parade of boats or anything that floats” event; Northern Forest Heritage Park boat tours; seminars, workshops, crafts and games for youth, and food for all. For more information see [www.northernforestheritage.org](http://www.northernforestheritage.org). This is



New York 90-miler. A number of races will take place on NFCT waterways this year! Check them out!

just downstream of our Androscoggin segment on Section 7.

**September 11–13: The Adirondack Canoe Classic: “The 90-Miler”, Old Forge to Saranac Lake, New York** — See [www.macscanoe.com](http://www.macscanoe.com) for information on this “classic” three-day canoe race from Old Forge, New York to Saranac Lake, New York. Registration opens in mid-June.



Birch bark canoe. Photo courtesy of Ted Behne

## Lake Champlain Quadricentennial

### Birch Bark Canoe Exploration, July 14

2009 marks the 400th anniversary of French explorer and cartographer Samuel de Champlain's travels by sail, oar, and paddle to the lake that now bears his name. In one of many celebratory events, NFCT is partnering with the Burlington International Waterfront

Festival to engage citizens in a paddling flotilla on Tuesday, July 14, the exact 400th anniversary of Samuel de Champlain's 1609 arrival to the lake in a fleet of Algonquin birch bark canoes.

Birch bark canoeists from throughout the Northeast will gather for an afternoon-long paddle from Shelburne Bay to Burlington. The paddling public — canoeists, kayakers, and row boaters of all kinds — are invited to partake

in the journey. To participate or for more info, see NFCT's website or email [burlington400@ci.burlington.vt.us](mailto:burlington400@ci.burlington.vt.us). This event will coincide with an exhibit of birch bark canoes at the ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center; see [www.echovermont.org](http://www.echovermont.org) for info on the exhibit.



# Supporter News

## Old Town Canoe Teams with NFCT for Raffle



From left to right, John Nemjo, Mountain Man Outdoor Supply, NFCT Founders Rob Center and Kay Henry

Old Town Canoes & Kayaks donated a boat for our raffle at the Northeast Paddlesport & Outdoor Expo in Saratoga Spring, New York on March 6-8th. David Cook of Castleton, New York went home with a new Old Town Cayuga Kayak, and NFCT went home with \$1,100 in donations to support our work!

## NFCT Partnership Publications



This spring, NFCT published two paddler brochures in partnership with Kokatat, the American Canoe Association, and the U.S. Coast Guard: "Wear It! Life Jackets Matter" and "Cold Water Survival." Both will be distrib-

uted through a variety of channels with the goal of promoting smart practices for canoeists and kayakers. You can download the brochures from [www.NorthernForestCanoeTrail.org](http://www.NorthernForestCanoeTrail.org), or send a self-addressed stamped envelope to NFCT.

## Maine Welcome Center NFCT Display



Welcome Center canoe sign

The Maine Tourism Association, Maine's Lakes and Mountains Tourism Council, L.L. Bean, and Hancock Lumber have contributed in part to a great new project — an NFCT kiosk, featuring an actual canoe, being erected in Fryeburg, Maine on May 15th. Check it out the next time you're in southern Maine.

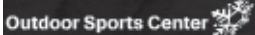
# Thanks to Our Business Members & Corporate Supporters

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Frisky Otter Tours  
Great Glen Trails  
Mac's Canoe Livery  
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Nestor's Sporting Goods  
North Cove Outfitters  
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Ramsey Outdoor Stores

Raquette River Outfitters  
The Birches Resort, Inc.  
The Boat House  
The Coach House  
The Great Outdoors  
The Last Resort  
Cabins and Campground  
The White Wolf Inn  
Tranquility Lodge  
Two Rivers Canoe & Tackle  
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Wekanu

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

## CORPORATE SUPPORTERS

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NFCT Online Auction  
November 4–December 4, 2009

## NFCT 2009 Event Calendar

May	2-3	North Cove Outfitters Paddlesports Demo Weekend	Chester, CT www.northcove.com
	15-17	Adirondack Paddle Fest	Old Forge, NY www.mountainmanoutdoors.com
	16	Missisquoi River Clean Up	Richford, VT to Mansonville, Quebec www.northernforestcanoe.org
June	4	Paddle Film Fest, ME	Portland, ME www.northernforestcanoe.org
	6	St. John River Race	Fort Kent, ME www.fortkentchamber.com
	6	Island Pond Kiosk Dedication	Island Pond, VT www.northernforestcanoe.org
	6-7	L.L. Bean Paddlesport Festival	Freeport, ME www.LLBean.com
	26-28	Flagstaff Lake Family Fun Days & Paddle Race	Stratton, ME www.eustismaine.com
July	27	GREAT Connecticut River Paddlefest	Groveton, NH greatpaddlefest@myfairpoint.net
	tbd	Enosburg Kiosk Dedication	Enosburg, VT www.northernforestcanoe.org
	10-12	NY Waterway Work Trip	Franklin Falls, NY www.northernforestcanoe.org
	14	Birch Bark Canoe Exploration	Burlington, VT www.northernforestcanoe.org
	17-19	Vermont Waterway Work Trip	Highgate Falls, VT www.northernforestcanoe.org
August	2	Vermont/New Hampshire Waterway Work Trip	Brunswick, VT to Groveton, NH www.northernforestcanoe.org
	7-9	Maine Waterway Work Trip	Attean Pond, ME www.northernforestcanoe.org
	8	Northern Forest Heritage Park River Days & Paddler's Film Fest	Berlin, NH www.northernforestheritage.org
Sept.	11-13	Adirondack Canoe Classic 90-Miler	Old Forge to Saranac Lake, NY www.macscanoe.com

**Trail Fund** While along the NFCT, have you breathed a sigh of relief because your portage or paddle was guided by NFCT markers? Maybe you found campsites and convenient access to the water in the Trail community of your choice? These Trail amenities, and the experiences they provide, are made possible by our Trail Fund. Please give to the Trail Fund today, and help make our next stewardship project a reality. See page 4 for inspiration.