

# Currents & Communities

## Fall 2021



## Ushering in a new era, with gratitude for an indelible legacy

The Northern Forest Canoe Trail stepped into a new role this year, taking over the Adirondack Watershed Alliance race series, which includes the 'Round the Mountain, Celebrate Paddling Invitational, Adirondack Canoe Classic and Long Lake Long Boat Regatta — events long curated and cared for by the McDonnell family.

This represented a tall task for the NFCT's small staff, one that we could not have managed without unwavering support from Brian and Grace, as well as the entire Adirondack paddling community. Every 90-Miler has its challenges: ours were COVID, wind and a steep learning curve. But the



*The McDonnell family at this year's 90-Miler. From left: Royal, Grace, Brian and Amelia.*

**The NFCT extends its thanks to the businesses and organizations that made the 2021 90-Miler a success:**

Adirondack Bank • Adirondack Experience  
Adirondack Explorer • Adirondack Health  
Adirondack Lakes & Trails Outfitters  
Adirondack Watershed Institute  
Blue Mountain Lake  
Central Adirondack Association  
Hornbeck Boats • Hyde Mobil • LL Bean  
Long Lake/Raquette Lake  
Mac's Canoe Livery • NRS • NYPR  
Paul Smith's College • Placid Boatworks  
Raquette River Brewing • Town of Webb  
Tupper Lake • US Veteran's Rowing & Kayaking  
Vert Outdoors • Water's Edge Inn • Zone 3  
Adirondack Frontier • Saranac Lake  
Mustang Survival • Tait Canoe • Werner  
Fountain Square Outfitters • Hotel Saranac  
Rivett's Marine

passion and commitment of the racers, volunteers and community partners made our first time less daunting. As we take a breather and prepare for 2022, we can't thank everyone enough for sticking with us; these events are synonymous with paddling in the Adirondacks and the Northern Forest, and we take our role in shepherding them into the future seriously.

These races bring paddlers together in the spirit of community and competition and they also represent a new source of financial support for the good work our stewardship team does year in and year out. In this newsletter, you'll learn about the projects our crew completed along and adjacent to the canoe trail, from improved put-ins and take-outs to new privies, campsite improvements and so much more.

Don't forget: Our fall auction is another great way to give back and help support our stewardship work, programs and other activities; more information can be found inside.

— Karrie Thomas, Executive Director, NFCT

# Reflecting on a remarkable season

By Noah Pollock, NFCT Stewardship Director

Wow — what a summer! The Northern Forest Canoe Trail stewardship crew and volunteers had an incredibly successful season, completing over a dozen stewardship projects. I am so thankful for the positive energy and enthusiasm of our field coordinator, Phineas Peake, and our stewardship interns: Adam Blachly, Rachel Hatheway and MacKenzie Michaels. What an incredible team to work with! We saw a record number of volunteers join us on our waterway work trips; thank you for giving back. Enjoy this recap of some highlights.

***“To dip your paddle into a river is to connect yourself with all of the people that came before you.”***

— Rachel Hatheway, Stewardship Intern

Thirty stone steps were added to eroding informal trails at the West Greenway Access, a fantastic swimming hole and canoe launch along the Mad River in Waitsfield, Vt. It was great to give back to the community where our organization is headquartered.

Six benches, two tables, 10 routed signs and an ADA accessible mouldering privy were installed at the North Branch Cascades Trail in Elmore, Vt., an increasingly popular summer recreational destination. Along the Lamoille, we installed 10 stone steps and a 20-foot retaining wall along



*Volunteers and Waterway Stewards joined our crew to help improve a portage trail at Maine's Grand Falls.*



*The 2021 NFCT Stewardship Team builds new stone steps at an access to the Mad River in Waitsfield, Vt.*

the Crossing Falls portage, making the carry easier for all.

Eight stone steps were installed at Lawyers Landing on the Missisquoi River, replacing an outdated set of timber stairs, and the East Berkshire landing was enhanced with a floating dock, just in time for a series of community events, including our Missisquoi Paddle-Pedal.

***“A long distance trail brings people together. It's the personalities I've been introduced to that have helped me understand that broader landscape mosaic, stitched by the rivers and lakes of the Northern Forest Canoe Trail. I feel fortunate to have met them all.”***

— Adam Blachly, Stewardship Intern

Ten stone steps were installed along an eroding access path at the north end of Union Falls Pond, NY. The two nearby Bear Point campsites were enhanced with tent pads, stone steps and privies, and are now ready for your next adventure.

Along Vermont's Clyde River, we overhauled four portage trails, adding over a dozen steps and geo-grid and gravel walkways. The crew and volunteers also hauled out several boatloads of trash from the waterway.

The Connecticut River Samuel Benton campsite was expanded with a new tenting area, privy and stone

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steps to handle increased use. Along the Upper Ammonoosuc, the Frizzel campsite site was equipped with a more user-friendly set of cedar stairs.

We returned to Maine's Grand Falls to improve a quarter-mile of trail, spreading 36 yards — over 100 pounds — of gravel to make the portage more durable and canoe cart friendly. Also in Maine, we relocated three privies along Holeb and Attean Ponds that were at capacity, digging new pits and using teamwork to maneuver the hefty outhouses to their new homes.

Finally, we built two sets of access steps for the Winooski River's Hidden Dam Access, and built a 32-foot trail bridge for paddlers to access the Winooski River during the annual Fiddlehead Slalom Canoe Race.

And behind the scenes, we had dozens of volunteer trail stewards working to keep the corridor in good shape for all. Thank you! Wishing everyone a restful “offseason” — see you next year!

**The NFCT thanks the partners and landowners who made our 2021 stewardship work possible:**

Maine AMC • Maine Huts and Trails  
Brookfield Power • Lake Champlain Basin Program  
UMATR Wild & Scenic Program  
Cross Vermont Trail • Mad River Path  
Vermont River Conservancy Gravity Renewables  
Vermont Fish and Wildlife  
Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund  
Maine Bureau of Public Lands • New York DEC

**It's the people — not just the land and water — who make the Northern Forest Canoe Trail so special. We send our thanks to the individuals who made 2021 a standout season.**

#### **2021 Waterway Work Trip Volunteers**

Courtney Fiala, Chip Kimball, Jeffrey Krisko,  
Mike Zimmerman, Kristen Grant, Peter Roderick,  
Peter Kaurup, Casey Walsh Cady, William Eiseman,  
Anne Eiseman, Philip Gregor, Tim Hille, Glenda Celestino,  
Eric Hanson, Tom Bebee, Kathy Bebee, Thomas Huxtable,  
D.J. Kitzel, Hannah Wigginton, Griff Keating,  
Stephen Magnuson, Cassandra Burdyshaw,  
Gretchen Whitteberry, Justin Illuzzi, Mackenzie Todd,  
Molly Blake-Michaels, Cindy Heath, William, Kenyon,  
Candace Blasé, Bree Carlson, Eric Diven, Jan Reimers,  
Brett Simpson, Joshua Wright, Sam Nijensohn &  
Asa Nijensohn

#### **2021 Waterway Stewards**

Alan Flint, Alex Strong, Andy Bartleet, Andy Capello,  
Beth Barnes, Bill Wright, Brian Castler, Brian McDonnell,  
Chip Kimball, Craig Vonbargen, Erik Townsend,  
Frank Torqutte, Gail Lynch, Jason Smith, Jim O'Malley,  
John Cary, Margaret Curtis, Mary Jean Bland,  
Mike Bartolotti, Mike Lynch, Nick Brainered,  
Pam Mitchell, Peter Macfarland, Ray Danforth,  
Russ Collett, Russ Ford, Sean Klutz, Stacey McCluskey,  
Thomas Huxtable, Tyler Merrian, Walter Opuszinski,  
Whit Whitney, Will Kenyon & Will Robens

## **NFCT Auction, Nov. 15-30**

Our Online Auction features outdoor gear and experiences, donated by generous partners and supporters. It includes everything from canoes to guided trips, art, magazine subscriptions and much more.

People, companies, nonprofits and local businesses all support NFCT through the auction by either purchasing or donating an item or service so we can maintain and provide access to the trail. This year, our auction features a Nova Craft Pal 16' Recreational Canoe, donated by our partners at White Rose Canoe (formerly Newbury Canoe & Kayak).

If you have questions or would like to donate an item, please email [marthe@northernforestcanoetrail.org](mailto:marthe@northernforestcanoetrail.org). View and bid on auction items by visiting **[bit.ly/nfctauction2021](https://bit.ly/nfctauction2021)**. Thank you for supporting the trail — and a special thank you to our auction co-sponsor, Paddling.com!



## NORTHERN FOREST CANOE TRAIL SPONSORS

### CLASS IV



### CLASS III



### CLASS II



### SUPPORTERS



## We Want to Hear from You

With the paddling season in the books, we're looking to collect feedback from NFCT paddlers!

Our Trail Feedback Tool lets you submit on-the-ground data that our stewardship crew uses to improve and enhance the canoe trail. Visit [bit.ly/trailfeedback21](https://bit.ly/trailfeedback21) to provide your input.

We also want to hear your 2021 paddling stories. If you have stories, photos or anything else you'd like to share with the NFCT community, please get in touch with our communications director, Chris Morris, by emailing [chris@northernforestcanoetrail.org](mailto:chris@northernforestcanoetrail.org).

We look forward to hearing from you!