FRIENDS OF UPTON STATE FOREST NEWSLETTER

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Happy New Year! Despite the uncharacteristic mild weather in January and February, you know winter is not over. Winter is likely to rear its head with a number of snowstorms before spring has sprung. In the meantime, what a wonderful time to go out in the forest and enjoy peaceful and quiet walks by yourself or joined by family and friends.

It was a busy year in the forest as well and the Friends sponsored a number of programs enjoyed by many. Here's a recap of the highlights in 2019:

- **Beaver Program** – In March, FUSF sponsored a program on Beavers presented by Kathleen Regan.
- **Park Serve** – In April, FUSF was interviewed on Upton Cable TV to educate folks about Park Serve Day; on Park Serve Day, volunteers cleaned up trails and spruced up the CCC camp area.
- **FUSF Annual Potluck Supper & Business Meeting** – in May, FUSF held its annual potluck supper with a program on Tornadoes in Upton.
- **EMC/Dell Volunteer Day** – in June, volunteers helped clear trails and cleaned up the CCC camp area.
- **Read Around Town –** in July, FUSF participated in this children's program sponsored by the Upton Library.
- **Trail Clearing** - in October, BSTRA and FUSF volunteers cleared trails in the Warren Brook Area.
- **MRA Half Marathon** - in November, their annual run was held with approximately 200 runners.
- **Hikes** – in June, hikes in USF were sponsored by DCR and FUSF.
- **BSTRA Trail Rides** – in October, BSTRA held their annual Big Pumpkin Ride, and in July, their annual Luau Ride.
- **Improvements to Middle, Park and Loop road –** thanks to contributions by BSTRA and a matching funds grant, water bars and riprap was installed on Loop and Park road and a bridge installed on Middle.
- **Bill Taylor Receives *"Upton Citizen of the Year Award"* –** our FUSF president received this award for his many contributions to Upton including FUSF.
- **Friend of the Year Award to BSTRA** – FUSF nominated BSTRA for the DCR ***"Friend of the Year Award"*** for their contributions to trail maintenance in USF.
- **Upton Heritage Day** - in September, FUSF sponsored a Friends educational table.
- **Owl Program** – In November, FUSF sponsored a program on live Owls presented by Kathleen Regan.
- **Archaeological Dig** - in November, DCR sponsored an active archaeological dig.

And it's that time of year to **RENEW YOUR FRIENDS OF UPTON STATE FOREST MEMBERSHIP!**

If you haven't already done so, please take a minute to renew your 2020 FUSF membership. Your membership helps us publish our quarterly newsletter, provide educational programs and contribute to the cost of maintaining trails in USF. A Membership renewal form is at the end of the Newsletter.

President Bill Taylor

FUSF Presidents Letter 2020-02-29

There is one new open-space property in Upton and another planned for later this year, and both will be connected to Upton State Forest and extend the reach of the Forest's trails. These are a 70-acre parcel named the Bonner Natural Area that abuts the western section of Upton's Whitney Conservation Area and a 48-acre parcel off of Mechanic, Fowler and Warren Streets owned by the Robertson family. The Bonner Natural Area was gifted to the Metacomet Land Trust last September. Later this year, Upton, through its Conservation Commission, and the Department of Conservation and Recreation will purchase a Conservation Restriction from the Robertson family. The property will remain private property but the Conservation Restriction will protect the land and will include easements for the public to access to parts of the property for fishing (Warren Brook runs through the property) and trails.

The Robertson property abuts the Pratt Hill section of the Upton State Forest across Warren Street (near the gate to the steep gravel access road off of Warren Street) so trails on the Robertson property will connect to Upton State Forest trails. Trails on the Bonner Natural Area will extend the trail system that exists on Upton's Whitney and Warren Brook Watershed Conservation Areas and that connect with the Upton State Forest trail system through the connection with the Forest's Rabbit Run trail. Both properties may offer opportunities in the future to extend the trail network. The trails do not exist yet and I expect that Upton's Land Stewardship Committee will seek volunteers to help clear trails and to build and install trail structures on these properties at some point.

This summer I will be leading some hikes intended to highlight the connections between Upton State Forest trails and trails on other public properties. These connections offer the opportunity to experience different parts of the area and for extended rambles. I hope you will join me.

In 2019, volunteers contributed 371 ¾ hours to benefit USF – WOW! Thanks to all of the volunteers.

FUSF Board of Directors

Bill Taylor, President
Joyce Sandvik, Vice President
Mary McManus, Secretary
Chris Scott, Treasurer
Agnita Knott, Membership
Members-at-Large

- Alisa Bernat
- Suzanne Nicholas

New Trail Crossing Signs

Thanks to the efforts of Suzanne Nicholas, new trail crossing signs have been installed on Westboro and Southboro Roads. These will alert oncoming cars and trucks that hikers, cyclists, and horseback riders may be crossing these streets to continue on the USF trails. This is a great safety improvement. If you've had the opportunity to cross Westboro Road in particular, you know that traffic can be heavy and speedy.

Coming in the Spring

Bridges to be repaired on Hopkinton Springs Trail in the Spring thanks to the contributions of FUSF and BSTRA for materials.

Coming in the Summer

Hikes in USF with President Bill Taylor this summer. Come on out and get to know some trails you may not be familiar with. Dates will be available shortly.

Did You Know?

In January, you probably saw on the news about Bill Johnston, a master falconer, who was rescued when he fell through the ice in Westborough's Cedar Swamp while flying his falcon. But did you know that Bill was one of the founding father's of the Friends of Upton State Forest? Thanks Bill, for your contributions to FUSF and we're glad you're safe.

Looking for Something to Do?

DCR sponsors a number of programs and events throughout Mass State Parks. Follow this link to see their calendar of events.

http://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/dcr/massparkspublic#/main/Calendar/

People Often Ask….

Why horses can poop on the trails but your dog can't

By Bob Falcone @HikingBob

You've seen the big piles of horse poop on your favorite trails, often right in the middle of the path. They're big and ugly and no one wants to step or ride through them — yuck. Meanwhile, you're packing poop-scoop bags and hauling your dog's waste along to the nearest trash can. It can get you to wonder, if horses can poop on the trail, I can leave my dog's there too, right? Well, wrong, and for good reason.

Since horses don't eat meat, or anything derived from meat, horse poop is relatively "clean," with so few bacteria, parasites or viruses that the Centers for Disease Control says that instances of **humans getting sick from contact with horse manure is rare**. On the other hand, your dog poop is very toxic, with all manner of bacteria.

While horse manure breaks down rather quickly, dog poop sticks around a lot longer. It gets into ground water and spreading fecal coliform bacteria, which can make life miserable. Bacteria can also get into reservoirs and contaminate water supplies, which then has to be treated prior to being delivered to our homes.

So, do everyone a favor and pick-up after your pooch. And don't worry about the horses.

A Great Read

Bellingham resident Marjorie Turner Hollman has published the 2nd edition of her book, "More Easy Walks in Massachusetts"

Related News

http://www.mass.gov/lists/the-citizen-forester-newsletter
http://www.MassLand.org
http://www.hopkintontrailsclub.com
https://uptonma.myrec.com/info/activities

Save the Date! – March 20th

FUSF is sponsoring a program by Susan Thomas from the Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Program who will be presenting the ***History of the Blackstone River***.

When: Friday, March 20th
Where: Upton VFW
Time: 1 hour program starts at 7:00 PM

Detailed flyer is attached. Please join us.

Calendar of Events

March
3/20 – *History of the Blackstone River,*
7 PM at the Upton VFW

April
4/22 – 50th anniversary of Earth Day
4/25 – Park Serve Day – USF - volunteers welcome

May
5/15 – Annual FUSF potluck supper and program – 6 PM, Upton VFW - bring a dish to share

Summer
Hikes with Bill Taylor – dates coming soon

September
9/26 – BSTRA Pumpkin ride – no parking at the headquarters

October
10/25 – BSTRA Luau ride – no parking at the headquarters

Be sure to frequent our **Facebook Page** for great nature pics, local info on our environment and announcements of future events.

Board of Directors meetings – 3rd Monday of each month @ 7:00 PM
in the 1st floor conference room at the Upton Town Hall.

Watch for future programs and events as our calendar for 2020 unfolds!

FUSF Merchandise for Sale

Visit the FUSF store on our website to order tees, sweatshirts, caps, vests, and tote bags. Go to www.friendsofuptonstateforest.org

Available at amazon

Do you shop Amazon? You can help support FUSF by using AmazonSmile Charity Lists and selecting FUSF when you order. A percentage of your order will go to FUSF. THANK YOU

FRIENDS OF UPTON STATE FOREST
PO BOX 258
UPTON, MA 01568-0258

NEW MEMBERSHIP ----- MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL------ (check one) (Please Print Clearly.) (Information is for Friends of Upton State Forest only.)

Date_____

Name:_____
(For family membership please put two names)

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____State_____Zip code_____

Telephone: _____E-mail _____

Would you consider being a member of one of our committees? Please circle your choices.

Auditing	Fund Raising	Newsletter	Refreshments	Trails Committee
Education	Historic Resources	Program	Resource Inventory	
Events	Membership	Publicity	Telephone Committee	

What is your interest? Circle all that apply. (Please use the reverse for comments, or to tell us, if you wish, of other organizations, you belong to that support these interests.)

Bird Watching	Horseback Riding	Orienteering	Snowmobiling
Cross Country Skiing	Hunting	Open Space Preservation	Trail Running
Hiking	Letterboxing/Geocaching	Photography/Art	Wildlife Watching
Historical	Mountain Biking	Snow Shoeing	Other (what?)

Membership Categories: (Prices effective through 12/31/20) (Circle one)

Family of 2 adults & children (under age 18) ---------- $37.50
Individual ----------$25.00
Senior 65+----------$12.50
Student full time with current student id ----------$12.50

Additional Donation Amount: General Fund or Special Fund?
Anonymous? Yes--- No--- Memorial or Honorarium?
Name of person being recognized?

(* Please note: There is a $25.00 charge for returned checks.)

Below this line is for office use only:
Payment: Cash Check # Amount paid: Category: Year Paid:
Cards issued by: Newsletter address entered by: