

Cross Vermont Trail Association

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crossvermont.org

December 2, 2022

Dear Friends,

Amazing – we are celebrating the first year of the Cross Vermont Trail Winooski Bridge being open to the public! **Since the ribbon cutting last June, a steady stream of people have enjoyed the bridge and the first 1.5 miles of new trail leading to it.** Every day we see trail users of all ages, all speeds, walking, biking, tail wagging – and a lot of smiling. The bridge has also gotten attention in the larger world, including "Project of the Year" at the 2022 Vermont Bike-Ped Conference.



Winooski Bridge Ribbon Cutting June 4, 2022.

Over 70 people gathered on the bridge (it held!) and cheered as the large red ribbon was cut with lopping shears. More seriously, we dedicated the bridge to the memory of Esther Salmi and Tom Smith. "Their commitment to fitness and respect for the environment live on in those who appreciate the outdoors."

You can help us keep the momentum going. Ambitious work is planned for the year ahead, and **we need your support.** *Thank you to those who have made a recent donation to CVTA!* If you haven't given already, please consider making an end-of-year gift to **power our progress** into 2023.

Right now – with your help - we are working to:

- Build many more miles of trail on either side of the Winooski Bridge - up to the U-32 School and on across East Montpelier from the Montpelier Bike Path to the Montpelier & Wells River Railtrail east of Route 14. The remainder of the Winooski Bridge trail project is being completed and opened in phases over the course of 2022 - 2024.
- Secure permission from additional landowners to keep moving the Cross Vermont Trail route off of the road. In 2022 we closed on four additional permanent trail easements, and are looking ahead to many more.
- Provide leverage to community partners to achieve our larger vision of joining together local paths into a logical network connecting villages, schools, and wild natural areas. There is a snowballing of interest, and local support, to complete the Cross Vermont Trail in all parts of the state. Just a couple of 2022 examples: the Town of Groton has begun a major upgrade to the railbed including working with CVTA to find ways to move the trail completely off road; Village of Wells River committed significant seed funding to jump start CVTA to work with landowners on potential trail routes from the regional school to the village.
- Maps and signs all along the trail route will be getting a long due reboot next year, with a special focus on improving accessibility and inclusiveness. In 2022 CVTA has joined with a group of similar small conservation organizations in Vermont to pool our resources and start to come up with nuts and bolts best practices to make sure the land and trails we help care for are inviting and functional for everyone.

After many years of quietly laying a base foundation, **CVTA is now rising up to meet the challenge of being a sustainable* organization.** We will be capable of providing well maintained, accessible outdoor recreation and safe off road transportation for the long haul. **To reach this sustainable level, we need help from loyal supporters like each of you** who believe in our mission.

Haven't Read our 2021-2025 Strategic Plan? Here it is in a nutshell:

Increase off-road trail mileage
***Build** capacity sustainably

Expand awareness of our work
Leverage partnerships

CVTA Executive Director Greg Western is busy working alongside volunteers to take care of what we've built together AND he is talking with a wide range of land owners and town trail groups to plan for building more off-road trail. **Trail stewardship, trail building and strong community relations are the DNA of the Cross Vermont Trail Association.** Thank you for believing in us!
Please help us continue, your support is vital.

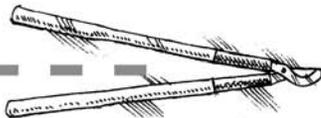
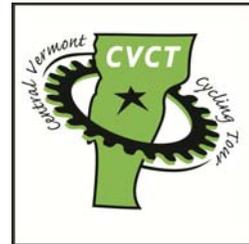
Happy Trails!

Rose Paul, Board Secretary

Mike Thomas, Board Chair

Registration is OPEN for the Central Vermont Cycle Tour – "an original gravel grinder" - June 25, 2023 @ bikereg.com/cvct.

And stay tuned for details of other 2023 events, including Groton Forest Trail Run and the Fall Foliage Ride. We look forward to seeing you out on the trail!



Your donation builds more trail.

We invite you to be a **2023** contributing member of CVTA with a donation of any amount.

\$ _____ amount enclosed. *thank you!*

name _____

address _____

email _____

CROSS VERMONT TRAIL ASSOCIATION

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Secure online donation available at

www.crossvermont.org



Cross Vermont Trail HOW WE WORK

<https://crossvermont.org>
802-498-0079

The Cross Vermont Trail Association is a small organization, but with many ways to get the job done. **We often say “CVTA is like a jack knife - lots of tools (in a compact package).”** As we solve a wide variety of trail questions in different locations, and with partners of all types, we can pull from the jack knife the answer that is most appropriate. **When you support CVTA, you are supporting all of the tools we use to meet the needs and fill the gaps - whatever they are - in order to complete the trail section by section, town by town - across Vermont!**



Building big new sections of trail.

Where needed to complete critical links in the statewide route, CVTA is prepared to take on trail construction of any size. These are places that “fall between the jurisdictions” - places where no trail would happen if we did not take the lead.

Stewardship of trails and land.

Mowing, raking, mending - keeping open - trails across the state; also monitoring and caring for land that is open to public. Where the difference between trail and no trail is CVTA signing up to be the local caretaker - we sign up every time. This vital workload increases every year, your annual support keeps us on top of it!

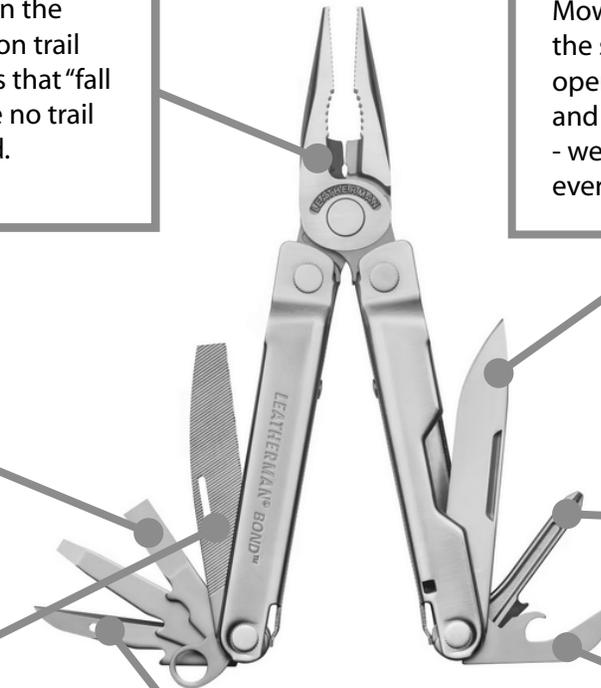
Exploring for more connections.

Our maps, guides and signs highlight local trails and destinations, and identify the best roads that can be used now to connect them together to make longer trips. Updates and expansions of this material are in progress - tell us what you'd like to see included!

Did you know that CVTA is also a landtrust?

We're set up to own land and hold easements, where needed to put together a trail corridor. So far we own 18 easements and properties, permanently protecting 7 miles of trail - and we're just getting started.

The nail file is just a nail file. Honestly, we don't use this one much.



Pulling together true grassroots effort.

Whether it's aggregating hundreds of small donations to match major government grants, or leading pick and shovel work parties to dig new trail, CVTA is a vehicle to convert grassroots effort into meaningful results you can see.

Partner for community trails. Reliable resource for landowners and local governments. In many locations, CVTA's role is to support the lead already taken by landowners or groups on their own trails - joining forces with them to share the burden, adding to their capacity with whichever of our “jack knife tools” is most helpful.

Cross Vermont Trail MISSION & VISION

CVTA's mission is to create and maintain a multi-use trail across Vermont through the Winooski and Wells River Valleys between Lake Champlain and the Connecticut River.

Our vision is public recreation that is inviting and accessible; safe off-road travel to desired destinations; convenient locations for healthy activity; and a permanent greenway for enjoyment of the natural world.

We work by collaborating with landowners, community groups and local governments to foster regional trail networks with the Cross Vermont Trail as the connection among them.

Winooski Bridge Project CONSTRUCTION UPDATES AND SCHEDULE

NOW: The railbed from Gallison Hill Rd to the Winooski Bridge is open to the public, together with the new trail along the river (and beside Route 2) upstream of the bridge, ending at trailhead parking on Route 2 near the waterfall at "Hidden Dam".

NEXT: During 2022 and early 2023 we are completing the trails in the U-32 School Forest, and also additional water access trails.

FINALLY: Starting in 2023 we will build the remainder of the new link in the Cross Vt Trail, connecting from the Hidden Dam across East Montpelier to Route 14.

FUTURE VISION: We are working to eventually increase the off road miles of the Cross Vt Trail route statewide, including a focused effort to establish an off road trail from Montpelier to Groton State Forest. Contact us to learn more!

