New South Ridge Easement in Middlebury

The Middlebury Area Land Trust (MALT) is proud to announce that we have accepted a conservation easement on a portion of the lands owned by Middle Road Ventures at South Ridge in Middlebury, VT (adjacent to and south of the Middlebury Union Middle School). The easement transaction was completed on July 13th 2015, and permanently protects 42 acres of important wildlife habitat, water resources, and beautiful scenery.

Charlie Kireker (Managing Partner of Middle Road Ventures) came to MALT with a vision of providing a protected sanctuary for the Indiana bat, along with other wildlife and plants that inhabit the property. The land is located at the end of Middle Road, southeast of South Ridge Village. It also has the potential to serve as an extension of the Trail Around Middlebury, providing a link to the Jeffery Murdoch Preserve, as well as offering the opportunity to access a new trail extension that can connect to Creek Road in the future.

To help celebrate this achievement, local Author Don Mitchell gave a talk at the MALT Annual Meeting, held October 22nd at Lincoln Peak Winery. Don spoke about his involvement with bats and the land, emphasizing the importance of protecting bat habitat such as the land at South Ridge.

Thank you, Charlie, for your vision, perseverance, and inspiration!

Fall scenery of the newly conserved property
Dear Members, Friends and Supporters:

I am writing this as I complete my first full year as MALT’S board President, following in the footsteps and Story Jenks and those before him, all of whom, including me, served together with an incredibly supportive and active board of trustees. This past year saw the addition of several new board members, to round out an already talented, creative and fun group. We are now comprised of a solid cross-section of the MALT community with a diverse mix of expertise and interest. I must say I really enjoy being part of the organization.

After completing last year’s conservation of the Collins Farm it has been relatively quiet on the conservation front. The single notable event of 2015 was our work with the owners of Middlebury South Village to conserve 42 acres of land within the development, which contains important bat habitat and will allow expansion of the TAM to the south and east. Charlie Kireker and his partners were wonderful and generous to work with in bringing this project to fruition.

The TAM trail has been the focus of much discussion and work this past year. Recent national recognition of the trail as a key asset to quality of life in the community (Outside Magazine) confirmed what all of us already knew, and added both importance and urgency to our continuing efforts to establish the TAM Endowment, which will provide a continuing and reliable source of funds from which to maintain the trail. A huge TAM accomplishment this year was the refurbishment of the boat house bridge using outside contractors. You also should have noticed some new culverts, crushed stone and other improvements to the trail, done with the help our summer student intern under the supervision of our tremendous trail boss John Derick.

These are just a couple of the year’s highlights. I want to thank all of you for your continuing support of MALT, in whatever form that takes.

Best wishes for the holidays and the coming year,
Eben Punderson
MALT Board President
MALT welcomes new board members

Will Amidon
I live in Cornwall with my wife Susan and my one year old daughter Pippa. I grew up in Charlotte, graduated from CVU in 1997, and I am currently a Geology Professor at Middlebury College. My research focuses on understanding how landscapes develop over time and using isotope geochronology to date the age of specific features in the landscape. I have a longstanding interest in the Vermont landscape and particularly in promoting land conservation, public access to lands, and responsible development. I am especially interested in protecting the rural character of Addison County as development pressures grow here and throughout Vermont.

Will and his daughter, Pippa, at June Lake, eastern Sierras, CA.

Fall scenery from the newly conserved property on Middle Road in Middlebury.
This has been a busy year on the Trail Around Middlebury...

John Derick

This past spring and summer, we made a lot of improvements to the trail, extensive maintenance to the Boathouse bridge, and yearly work on the Arnold bridge. We hired a company, Big Branch Builders, that has extensive experience with suspension bridges to raise the bridge and level it. After 15 years, it had sagged a little. DeWolfe Engineering inspected the bridges and they are in good shape. Twice a year we put wood preservative on beams and decking, and coat steel cables with grease.

Our summer intern, Allie Aiello, and I spent 2-4 hours a day on the TAM, and Allie often worked more hours by herself on the Trail or making maps in the GIS lab at the college.

We moved a lot of gravel into Battell Woods with a DR power wagon that was donated. The DR will haul about 3 wheelbarrows worth of gravel and you do not have to push it.

One of our bigger projects was gravel and culverts in Wright Park, thanks to the Middlebury College Mountain Club, Diversified Occupations (D.O.) at MUHS, Matt DeBishop, and Kirk Fiske (who probably gets way too many calls from me). Thank you, for hauling gravel to remote spots and mowing.

We also did a lot of work to the North Gorge Trail from Morgan Horse Farm down through the woods, culverts by Matt and gravel by us. And thanks to Bill Roper for paying for this project.

The dry gravel path along the fence line from the parking lot on Morgan Horse Farm Rd is thanks to Monument farms for trucking 18 tons of gravel for us, and to JP Carrara for donating the gravel.

In the spring we had a work day on the Blue Trail with board members and friends of the trail, when we rerouted part of the trail out of a corn field and in to the woods, and put in a 25 foot boardwalk over a drainage.

On another work day, we routed the trail in Otter Creek Gorge to a gentler slope and an s-turn and moved a footbridge; hopefully this is better. With volunteers, we covered roots with gravel in the south end of Battell Woods this summer. Thanks to all who helped.
Summer also saw the students and leaders from the Counseling Service school removing brush; those pesky buckthorns from Wright Park. This fall on Fridays, we have the D.O. students working on gravel projects and boardwalks and side hill work in Jackson.

I want to thank Lydia Fox who I met on the trail one day in summer and who monitors the trail, pushes a wheelbarrow when needed, and helped with the TREK.

And Allie, we could not have done the work this summer without her. Allie also represented MALT at the North Country Trail Conference in the finger lakes area of New York and presented a program on how the TAM will be a connector between the ADK's and the Green Mountains. Finally, I want to thank Al Stiles who will soon retire to California. He has been a tireless volunteer to MALT. Before MALT existed, he was building trails in Wright Park, and spreading the word about this gem of land unknown to most.

Middlebury’s Emerald Necklace
Victoria DeWind

The Trail Around Middlebury (TAM) has been called Middlebury’s Emerald Necklace - 18 miles of open fields, riverbank walks and forested trails over Chipman Hill, down to the Otter Creek Gorge, past the beautiful College garden to the ledges in Battell Woods. The gems that make up this necklace offer so much to this community with diverse natural beauty. And with the use it gets, it is always in need of care and maintenance. John Derick has for many years generously overseen its care and, with the help of many citizens and school groups, has kept these gems in good shape for all to enjoy. During the warmer months several work days take place to clear trails, reroute them out of muddy spots or fill with gravel and repair the bridges and stiles. I was able to help on some of these trail days and assure you it is satisfying work to take an hour or two to polish these gems. MALT appreciates and welcomes all who can set aside a bit of time - tools, snacks and comradery provided - to keep our necklace looking its best and give us access to the special places that Middlebury has to enjoy. Work days are posted on the MALT web site - www.maltvt.org - or call the MALT office at 388-1007. Please consider joining us to keep the TAM open and at its best.
TAM Intern Report

Allie Aiello

As the Middlebury Area Land Trust intern this past summer, I worked closely with John Derick and Carl Robinson to maintain the trails and bridges that make up the Trail Around Middlebury (TAM). Working on the TAM this summer really opened up my eyes to the wonderful town that Middlebury is and the beautiful area that surrounds it. Along with maintaining the trails, I made some adjustments to the current TAM map for reprinting this winter. Some of the adjustments include the re-route on Chipman Hill and the re-route near the college garden, as well as picnic table and viewpoint markers.

At the end of the summer, I went to the North Country Trail Conference in the Finger Lakes. The North Country Trail officially spans from North Dakota to New York. MALT hosts the possible Vermont chapter of the North Country Trail, and so I went to the conference to talk about the proposed route that goes from the Crown Point Bridge in New York to the Long Trail. This route connects to the TAM at the Blue Trail and finishes on the TAM at Rte. 7 South (if you start in the west). Unfortunately, Congress has yet to pass the bill recognizing Vermont as part of the North Country Trail, and there was wide range of optimism at the conference as to whether the bill would be passed in the near future. It was great to see people at the conference being recognized for the hard work on the trail (a lot of it being volunteer) that can often go unnoticed by most trail users. I also had opportunity to talk with people who had turned what I had done over the summer into careers with National Park Service and Forest Service. And as an overall plus for the summer I found new places to venture to in Middlebury and around the country!

TAM ENDOWMENT UPDATE:

Our endowment to fund the TAM is growing slowly but surely, and is now up to $80,000. Our goal is $125,000, so MALT is over halfway there! Thank you to our donors!

If you are interested in contributing to the TAM, make sure to direct any donations to “TAM Endowment”.
TAM Trek 2015 Recap

Ben Bruno

The 12th annual TAM Trek event took place on Sunday, September 20. The event was highlighted by a picturesque new start/finish location in Wright Park and timed races for participants looking to test their mettle on the 18-mile full TAM course or the 6-mile course within Wright Park. Cool running weather allowed for some fast times, and volunteers provided terrific support and delicious refreshments at the finish and at aid stations along the course. 81 participants took part in the day’s events, with 36 competitors completing the entire 18-mile full TAM course. A special thanks to our sponsors, participants, volunteers, and TAM Trek Planning Committee for making the day a huge success, raising nearly $5,500 that will be used to maintain and improve the TAM.
Annual Meeting 2015, Lincoln Peak Vineyards

Vermont author Don Mitchell came to our Annual Meeting in October to talk about his experience falling for bats on his farm in Vergennes. MALT voted in new board members and relayed news of a new easement. Board members and staff brought chili, hummus and other dips, breads, pies, chips, cider, tea and candies, and wine was available for purchase.

Thank you to all who came to the event and to those who brought refreshments to share!
FINANCIAL REPORT
FISCAL YEAR OCTOBER 1, 2014—SEPTEMBER 30, 2015

Income
Unrestricted Donations $29,442 24.6%
Grants $5,400 4.5%
Events and Activities $25,659 21.4%
Investment Income $351 0.3%
Project Designated Donations $36,971 30.8%
Endowment $22,091 18.4%
Total $119,914 100.0%

Expenses
Program Services $42,859 45.0%
Management and General $33,330 35.0%
Development and Fundraising $19,049 20.0%
Total $95,238 100%

MALT Statement of Financial Position for Fiscal Year 2014

Assets
Cash and Equivalent $145,215
Notes and Grant Receivable $45
Beneficial interest in net assets held by Vermont Community FDN $150,856
Investments $0
Property $945,654
Total Assets $1,241,770

Liabilities and Equity
Current liabilities $5,197
Net Assets:
Unrestricted $236,290
Temporarily Restricted $54,629
Permanently Restricted $945,654
Total Liabilities and Equity $1,241,770

MALT is grateful for the following foundations for their generous support

Otter Creek Audubon Society
North Country Trail Association
United Way of Addison County
Vermont Community Foundation
Vermont Dept of Environmental Conservation
Vermont State Dept of Forests, Parks and Recreation
Vermont Housing and Conservation Board
Vermont Land Trust
Middlebury College
Town of Middlebury
National Park Service
Upcoming Outings

**Marsh, Meadow, and Grassland Wildlife Walks**

Middlebury Area Land Trust and Otter Creek Audubon Society invite you to join us as we survey birds and wildlife of Otter View Park and the Hurd Grassland.

All walks start at Otter View Park parking lot in Middlebury. Shorter and longer routes possible. The primary walking path at OVP is universally accessible.

- Saturday, December 12, 8am
- Saturday, January 9, 8am
- Saturday, February 13, 8am
- Saturday, March 12, 8am

I want to help preserve the natural beauty of the Middlebury area and maintenance of the Trail Around Middlebury!

I would like to contribute at the following membership level:

- [ ] Benefactor $2,500
- [ ] Friend $100
- [ ] Supporter $1,000
- [ ] Contributor $50
- [ ] Sustaining $500
- [ ] Other $__________

Please provide the following information and mail with your check to MALT, PO Box 804, Middlebury, VT 05753.

Name:

Address:

City/State/Zip:

Phone:

Email:

If you would like to remain anonymous, check here. □