

**Greenwords:
Paths are special
places in winter**

With snow and ice coating your window, it may be hard to remember how much we enjoyed using the trails and greenways in Rhode Island last summer. Wintertime is still a good time to explore the trails, by bike if the weather warms a bit or anytime by foot. Just bundle up and head out - a brisk walk can be very invigorating! Of course, many of the bike paths are excellent for cross-country skiing with moderate snow.

Winter also is a quiet time on the trails and often a better time for those who relish a feeling of being alone in the great outdoors. Since last summer we have added new miles to our trails. Don't wait until spring to explore them.

The South County Bicycle Path now extends from the Kingstown Amtrak Railroad Station almost to the Narragansett Line. Currently it ends at Route 108 in Wakefield. It passes through lovely wetland areas that change with the seasons and provide wildlife sightings all through the year. We hope this bike path will extend all the way to Narragansett Bay.

The Ten Mile River Greenway has two miles open beginning at the Kimberly Ann Rock Athletic fields located on Ferris Avenue, behind the Thompson Elementary School in East Providence, and terminating in Slater Memorial Park at Armistice Blvd. in Pawtucket. It is easily accessible from Providence.

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New segment of Blackstone Bike Path set for spring debut

The sense of dismay users of the Blackstone Bike Path may have been feeling given a two-year closure of the bike path in Lincoln should be eased this spring when a new 1-mile segment of the path opens in that community.

Greenways effort loses dedicated supporter

Those connected with bike path advocacy and development were saddened this fall by the unexpected passing of a dedicated individual who not only helped complete a section of the East Coast Greenway through his town, but helped to make sure those using the path don't forget the history of the area.

Adelbert A. Hackenberg Sr., 64, died of a heart attack on Oct. 3. After meeting someone for the first time and giving his Christian name, he would often chuckle and say "just call me Hacky."



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The R.I. Department of Transportation is putting the finishing touches on a new stretch of bike path immediately south of the main parking lot for the path on Route 123. The path segment actually begins north of the existing parking lot near the bike path and immediately takes riders over the Pratt Dam on a dramatic, curved, six-span bridge over the river and a rapids area. The path then turns south and hugs the northern edge of the river before crossing over a bridge on Mendon Road using a widened sidewalk. Next, the path takes riders through the former Lonsdale Drive In before ending at John Street.

"We don't like to end bike paths in the middle of nowhere," noted Lambri Zerva, principal civil engineer. "It's a pretty logical terminus where many people can get on."

DOT reused the stone supports for the former railroad bridge to build the new bike path bridge. Because there was no deck, DOT was able to

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Greenwords

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The Blackstone Bikeway will soon open a new stretch of greenway beginning just north of the parking area at John Street in Lincoln and continuing south through the former Lonsdale Drive-In. We have all watched the building of a new steel truss bridge on the existing cut stone abutments and piers of the Pratt Dam across the Blackstone River and eagerly wait for the day the bridge will be open to the public (See story on page 1).

Until spring comes again we invite you to join the leaders in your community mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter to bring bike friendly accommodations to your town. Let's make Rhode Island bicycle and pedestrian safe from border to border and all around Narragansett Bay.

Sue Barker GARI Chair



Trail Mix is the quarterly newsletter of the Greenways Alliance of Rhode Island (GARI).

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Blackstone Bike Path expanding

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pour a hard surface instead of using a wooden or manufactured wood deck. That approach has been used in the re-decking of other old railroad bridges, most recently on three spans along the Coventry Greenway.

The new segment was a costly one, estimated at \$4.5 million. The brunt of the cost was involved in the bridge, but a number of culverts were added and there was some environmental clean up issues to deal with.

Just prior to the winter shut down of construction, most of the work had been complete. Among the finishing touches are landscaping and railings. Most of the landscaping work should be complete by the time DOT is ready to dedicate the new section.

The project is being done in coordination with a joint project of the state Department of Environmental Management and the Army Corps of Engineers to restore the former drive-in to a wetland area. This segment will offer a first-hand look at their work, a \$2.6 million project to restore the site to its natural habitat. The land was used as a pasture until the early 1950s, when 23 acres were paved to construct the drive-in. The theatre was closed in the early 1980s, but the expansive paved area of the theater, two dilapidated movie screens, a 75-foot tall radio antenna and several other small structures remained. All of these are being removed



and DEM and the Corps will build a 7-acre wetland area consisting of 3.6 acres of emergent and open water habitat and 3.4 acres of scrub/shrub and forested wetlands. Also there will be 13 acres of upland riparian habitat. The existing forested riparian habitat along the Blackstone River was preserved as much as possible.

"Neither project will make the other one obsolete," Zerva said. "We are working hand in hand."

This work sets the stage for the next section of the bike path, moving further south. The path will cross the river on a widened sidewalk before heading through the Lonsdale Marsh on a boardwalk-type system. This will bring the path to the Central Falls line. Getting the path through the densely populated areas of this city and Pawtucket will be the final southern progression of the path, terminating somewhere near Slater Mill.

Construction to the north of the new path segment has shortened the ride on the existing bike path to only a couple of miles. There is no easy detour around this, and those seeking a longer ride may wish to park at a different trail head.

The closure is due to a \$6.8 million project to replace two aging bridges over the Blackstone River and Blackstone Canal on Martin Street. The path has been closed since early 2004 for a total replacement of the bridge and a lowering of the bike path so riders can pass underneath the bridge instead of across it. Edmund Parker, DOT's chief design engineer, said the current construction timetable has the bridge opening to vehicular traffic in Oct. 2006. The bike path may be reopened a bit sooner, perhaps by June 2006.



Help Make Greenways in Rhode Island Happen:

Dear Dr. Sprocket,

Dr. Sprocket will answer questions in each issue of Trail Mix.

Q Dear Dr. Sprocket, As much as I try to keep in shape by walking and exercising during the winter, the intense cold, snow, ice, and frigid winds keep me indoors and almost immobile. How can I stay in shape until spring comes?

Housebound in Harrisville

A Dear Housebound, This winter, like most of those we have had, will be a challenge for everyone. Even the most determined fitness buffs will have to deal with snow-covered sidewalks, icy roads and unplowed walking tracks. It's so easy to break our activity routines, and we're soon in a downward spiral that makes it harder and harder to even think about starting up again. Because winter is a Northeast staple, we need special strategies to deal with it, and attitude is the best place to begin.

Attitude Helpers:

After spending years hating winter, I realized that it came anyway, so I decided to find things about it that I could like. It took some effort at first, but I soon discovered lots of things about winter that were pretty nice:

- > In winter we can see most clearly the symmetry and beauty of the underlying structure of deciduous trees and shrubs, against a clear blue sky or stark white, snow-covered ground.
- > We also are given a more intense awareness and appreciation of the benefits of warmer weather, when we can be outdoors without having to pile on layers of clothing

beforehand. The inverse of this concept is being thankful for having warm clothing to help us deal with the cold.

> We also have a special gift in the anticipation of warmer weather to come, as well as seeing each day get longer as the sun rises higher in the sky.

Another strategy to consider is deliberately limiting the bombardment of negative information that comes from TV "news" programs where accidents, murders, fires, and other maladies of society are given top billing. The cumulative effect of this diet can foul any intention to find and stay focused on the positive aspects of life's situations. I'm convinced that a diet of these messages feed our overall feelings of helplessness and negativism.

Wellness Strategies:

Our bodies were designed for motion and physical activity, and the "normal" everyday sedentary lifestyles we have gotten accustomed to are detrimental to our overall health, well being, and longevity. The more we move, the better we will feel, both physically and emotionally. By being conscious of how we move our bodies throughout the day, we can build in a surprising amount of physical activity that would otherwise be lost.

In general, it's necessary to build any activity into your normal everyday routine to increase the chances of doing it on a regular basis. This could be as easy as using the stairs rather than taking the elevator at work or shopping, walking to the deli instead of driving, or

parking further away from the entrance to a movie theater or supermarket. In many of our newer communities few accommodations have been made for pedestrians, so walking is seldom possible throughout the year, let alone in winter. If you face that situation, you might stop by a mall on the way home and walk there.

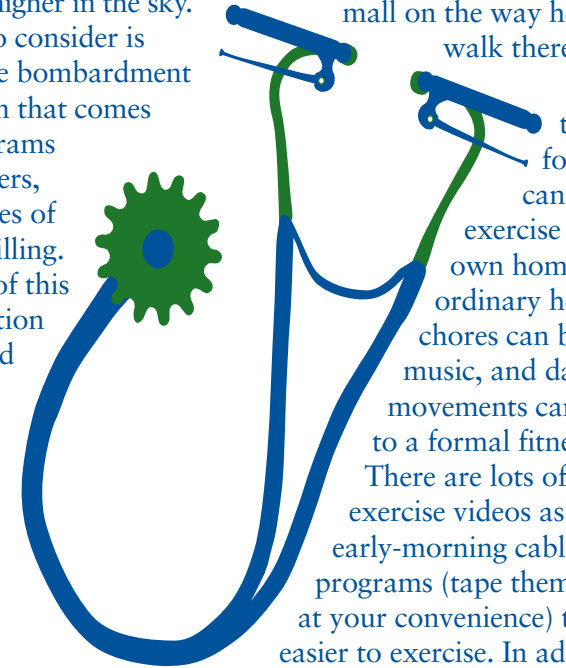
Over the years I've found that I can get lots of exercise right in my own home. Even ordinary household chores can be done to music, and dance-like movements can come close to a formal fitness routine. There are lots of fitness and exercise videos as well as early-morning cable TV programs (tape them for replay at your convenience) that make it easier to exercise. In addition, a few

items (e.g. stationary bike, exercise ball, dumbbells, and hand weights) can be used to get a pretty decent workout when you just don't feel like going outdoors at all – and a routine can be finished in the time it usually takes just to drive to and from a gym.

An unprecedented abundance of resource material on wellness and fitness is currently available from newspapers, magazines, the internet, and even articles from earlier issues of this newsletter (visit our web site at www.rigreenways.org for this).

By putting even a few of these strategies and activities into your life, you will be amazed at how much better you feel, and how quickly spring will come.

Send your Dr. Sprocket questions to rigreenways@rigreenways.org



Join the Greenways Alliance of Rhode Island Today!

The mother of all Rhode Island trails

When one thinks about long-distance trails or trails that cross an entire state, tiny Rhode Island probably doesn't come to mind right away. The smallest state in the union however has a very diverse trail that is quite long in its own right.

Rhode Island may only be 48 miles long by 37 miles wide, but a group of dedicated hikers have identified 77 miles of paths and roads that take one from the Atlantic Ocean in Charlestown to the Massachusetts border in Burrillville. The path is called, simply, the North-South Trail and the North-South Trail Council is its principal advocate and caretaker.

The trail has been on the ground since 1991. The council's main function these days is to oversee the annual "trek," a through-hike generally taking place on six weekends in spring from March until May. These hikes vary in length from 11 to 17 miles, with two-thirds of it in forested areas and a third on local roads.

The annual trek fills up quickly as space is limited. It draws about 75 to 80 people at the start and concludes with 45 to 50 diehards. While many hike all six segments, some people hike just a section or two and return each year to hike a section they hadn't gotten to yet. The event always ends with a barbecue to celebrate the achievement at a park close to the state line.

The roots of a cross-state trail date back to the early 1970s when the R.I. Trails Advisory Committee came up with the first proposal for the trail. The idea was to link a trail with the state wildlife management areas in the western part of the state.

The state Department of Environment actually drew up plans for the

path, but it got shelved for some reason, noted trek organizer Ginny Leslie.

Then in the early 1990s, a representative of the National Park Service's River and Trails program attended an Advisory Committee meeting and offered to help with a trail or river project in Rhode Island. They looked to the old plans for the North-South Trail as a likely subject, and ran with it.

One tactic that was used to get things off the ground was the initial trek, with a group of people just walking the trail. Over the next few years the trail became more permanent as slightly different routes were explored.

"We had a basic idea of where it was going to be," Leslie recalled.

Today the path is pretty well set, although occasionally some land may



be added to a wildlife management area or some other land recently put into a conservation status might be used to get the trail off a road segment. In the early days of the trail, Leslie worked as a planner at DEM and published quarterly newsletters about it. The council at one time met monthly, but as the trail route became solidified, there was little left for the

council to do except to organize the trek.

The council currently is looking at addressing maintenance issues by developing a tool loaning program. Member Al Pointe has been speaking with members of the University of Rhode Island's Outing Club about their possible involvement in it. Pointe envisions that individuals or groups such as Boy or Girl Scout troops could volunteer to maintain a stretch of path. Although the details haven't been worked out, Pointe said a volunteer could be responsible for a three to five mile section and routinely walk the path and report issues such as erosion or blown-down limbs that block the path.

"Something like this would be very helpful," he said.

A great deal of information about the trail can be found in "The North South Trail: A Guide for Traveling Across Rhode Island for Hikers, Equestrians, and Mountain Bikers," a book published by Charlestown resident Cliff Vanover. He lives just three miles from the path and after many excursions hiking in Connecticut and using guide books on trails there (and finding maps of Rhode Island trails lacking in detail), he thought it would be appropriate to have a

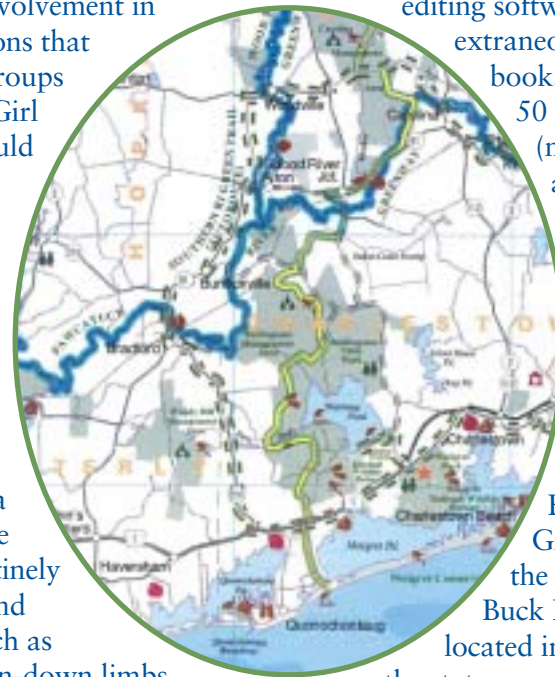
detailed guide about the North-South Trail.

During his research for the book, he walked the entire trail while rolling just the wheel and front fork of a bicycle with a computerized speedometer on it. He also scanned topographical maps and used digital editing software to remove extraneous information. In the book, he identifies more than 50 access points to the path (mostly parking spots) and always gives directions from the intersection of two main roads.

Vanover's favorite part of the trail is when it runs through the Arcadia Management Area in Exeter and West Greenwich. He also likes the George Washington and Buck Hill management areas, located in the northwest corner of the state.

"With Arcadia, you really can't go wrong," he said. "It has a varied topography, you go through different kinds of forests and go by a whole lot of outcrops and glacial features. It's a beautiful place."

Those interested in helping out with trail maintenance can call Pointe at 437-0930 or send him e-mail at rhodewalker1@cox.net. Those seeking more information about the trail or trek can contact Leslie at 781-8117. You also can write to her to receive maps of trail segments by enclosing a \$1 donation and a self-addressed, stamped envelope with double postage to N-S Trail Hikes, 27 Post Road, Warwick, RI 02889.



Mapping project before TAC

How to best get around the state's wildlife management areas has been the subject of recent meetings with the R.I. Trails Advisory Committee as a project create detailed maps of the Arcadia Management Area nears completion.

Paul Jordan, a supervising geographic information system (GIS) specialist with the R.I. Department of Environmental Management, met with the committee during the fall meetings to discuss the project. He noted after the November meeting that 70 miles of trails had been mapped in Arcadia and another 55 miles mapped elsewhere in the state.

Jordan noted that DEM is looking for help in mapping trails, and two members of the TAC, Jim Grimley and Martha Cruciani, volunteered to be trained to use the global positional satellite (GPS) mapping device.

The maps should be available during the winter months at DEM's web site (www.state.ri.us/dem). Other TAC members suggested having the maps posted at kiosks and trail heads and producing them in a book form so people can take them on hikes. The maps also may be published at GARI's web site (www.rigreenways.org).

Among other actions the TAC took during recent meetings in the fall:

- Reviewed the budget for 2005, which will include \$350,000 for local grants. Of this, \$18,000 will be used to fund smaller "materials only grants" the TAC reviews at each meeting. Another \$12,000 in unexpended money from 2004 will be added to this.
- Approved a \$345 grant for an Eagle Scout project at the Crawley Preserve in Richmond. The money will be used to build a kiosk, mark boundaries and blaze two trails.

Transportation bond passage helps greenways

With the passage of the Transportation Bond Referendum (Question 3) on Election Day, the R.I. Department of Transportation (RIDOT) now has the state funds to match the federal funds for all construction projects scheduled to be done over the next two fiscal years. These dollars will not only allow road and bridge projects to move forward but also will go towards completing many of the bike paths in the state.

"RIDOT will also begin to look at the next generation of bicycle facilities that are submitted by local communities, through the Transportation Improvement Program," said Stephen Devine, chief of intermodal planning for

the department. "With the major bike paths nearing completion, and serving as the spokes for our bicycle network, RIDOT will continue to expand the bike system it has established by interconnecting bike lanes, paths, and routes."

The bond passed in November will be used to match all of the major bike projects in Rhode Island including finishing the Blackstone River Bike Path and the Washington Secondary Bike Path (including the Trestle Trail portion at the western end of the Washington Secondary).

Submitted by Dana Alexander Nolf, Chief Public Affairs Officer for the R.I. DOT.

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Curse Reversed Celebration

What does it take to get from McCoy to Fenway? Practice, patience, skill and a winning attitude, even if it's only "up for a cup of coffee," which is what ball players call a tryout. Or you can ride a bicycle, especially if you're over 50 years old and haven't touched a glove since college. Some old timers who still have game rode such a loop from McCoy Stadium to Fenway Park to honor our Red Sox heroes in their first World Series victory since 1918.

Over a dozen cyclists wrapped in Red Sox logos convened on Saturday, Nov. 6 at Ben Mondor Way in Pawtucket. They set out from the farm team's home to a venerated shrine, the oldest surviving venue for major league baseball, opened the same day as the Titanic disaster in 1912. Only four went all around the bases, over 90 miles, a little more than one mile for every year fans had to wait; some arranged to be picked up in Boston or took the T back to Attleboro. Routes were planned to suit everyone's skill and inclination: 10, 25 and 50 milers, no homerun but a base hit.

Bouncing Bambino

Down to their final out, faced with elimination, the 2004 Red Sox somehow evaded the coup de grace by their chief nemesis, the New York Yankees. They battled back from a 0-3 deficit in a best of seven American League Championship Series for the only time in League history, a comeback that will live in legend for as long as the game is played. They won four straight, each a fiercely fought, highly uncertain contest. Self confessed "happy idiots," the squad

treated every strike as if it were their last. Idiots nothing, more like Buddhists verging on nirvana they were so close to existing in the moment. The Sox went on to sweep the St. Louis Cardinals in four for the World Series title and another record, eight straight post season victories. Games weren't pretty, loaded with errors, but whatever had to happen did. They bounced the curse of the Bambino, making underdogs

everywhere believe that someday they may prevail over an evil empire – definitely something worth celebrating.

Urban Excursion

How was riding into a major city, one of the nation's most congested? Exciting fun! Fall is the best season to visit Boston, no heat of summer and sloppy wet of winter and spring. The day was cool and clear, the route suburban, even rural, hardly anything you'd call city. Foliage was still brilliant in spots, bronze oaks and sheltered maples holding out, despite previous strong winds, which left more loose branches than leaves. Arrows painted at turns led past town commons, narrow tree-lined lanes, old statues, river views, colonial reminders, plaque houses (oldest, c. 1710), shimmering ponds, Gillette Stadium, little league fields, college greens, an emerald necklace, and a twisty roller coaster through parks into Back Bay. Turning onto busy Brookline Ave, a mile directly ahead was the famous Citgo Sign at Kenmore Square, behind Fenway



Ride organizers (l to r) Paul Martens, John Satterlee and Alan Barta pause before Paws, the Pawsox mascot.

Park. The epicenter of Red Sox Nation was abuzz with field drainage improvements, souvenir shoppers, snapshots behind the green monster and before the statue of Ted Williams. A pleasant bike path alongside Jamaica Pond led to a segment of Claire Saltonstall's Memorial Route, which goes through an unexpected nature preserve on Boston's southern border. Dedham and Canton presented tiresome climbs and strong headwinds, but the last 20 miles were very flat, just what you need on a late season tour. Even in winter togs, this could be New England's easiest century, tolerable terrain and plenty of services. At once rewarding and a revelation, if one can ride to Boston and back without incident, what's to stop anyone riding roundtrip anywhere?

Inter-city bicyclists may be happy idiots, too, but they're healthier than motorists who cruise the interstate, and see more. Not for novices, such a trip requires time, effort and education. But all it takes to start is a desire, inexpensive equipment and some sage advice. For riding tips visit http://www.nbwclub.org/columns/special/bike-to-work_fa.html.

dedicated supporter

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Everyone did. Hacky was retired from the R.I. Department of Transportation where he had gained a vast knowledge of roads and transportation issues throughout the state.

The leadership he provided as president of the Friends of the West Warwick Greenway helped to place a vintage caboose on the trail and restore it completely. David E. Perry, longtime friend and chairman of the Friends of the West Warwick Greenway, noted that Hacky's first love outside of family was trains and anything historical relating to them.

Just three days before Hacky's death, a representative of Railpace News Magazine visited Perry at his place of work with a complimentary copy of the October issue, which featured a picture and brief description of the newly restored caboose along the bike path.

"Hacky would have been more than pleased to see his efforts displayed in a national railroad magazine," Perry said.

Hacky was one of the original members of the West Warwick Friends of the Greenway. Perry recalled that Hacky said that with all the talk of converting rails to trails, the group ought to find an original caboose and place it along the bike path. He saw it as a fitting reminder for younger people about the rich railroading history in the Pawtuxet Valley. After much searching by Friends members, it was Hacky that located a caboose that was being used at the former Great House Restaurant in Warwick.



Webmaster's Corner

You'll dig new paths coming to Beantown

The Central Artery/Tunnel Project, also known as the "Big Dig," has gotten more than its share of bad press with huge cost overruns and shoddy construction that has resulted in leaks of some of the tunnels. Somewhat lost in the news about the Big Dig is a huge effort to create great new green spaces, walkways and bike/pedestrian paths that should make getting around Boston without a car an easier, safer and more aesthetically pleasing endeavor.

The center piece of these new parks, which will create more than 300 acres of open space with more than 45 parks and public plazas, is the Rose Kennedy Greenway. The proposed greenway, named for the late matriarch of the Kennedy family, was formally dedicated last summer during the Democratic National Convention.

The new greenway will run the length of the downtown area where an elevated highway section once stood. The Massachusetts Turnpike Authority has a great deal of information on its web site (www.masspike.com/bigdig/parks/index.html) dedicated to the new plans. Also, there are short movies about the project, including a nine-minute

video about the new parks system called "A City in Bloom" at www.masspike.com/html/bigdig/bloom.html.

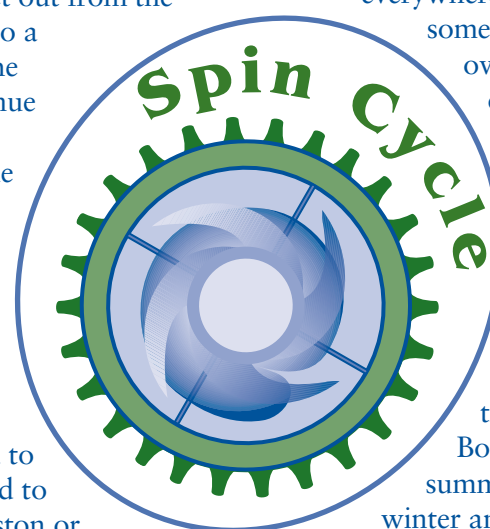
The web page includes drawings and illustrations of what the Kennedy Greenway will look like, with the numerous parks it will connect to. The greenway is about a mile and a half long and encompasses about 30 acres, connecting parks and gardens from the North End to Chinatown. Along with helping to ease the urban blight of the former highway which cut the city off from its waterfront areas, the park will serve as a major north-south corridor for people and cyclists to move through the city. Such travel now isn't pleasant with ongoing construction. Also, bike riding north to south or vice versa through Boston is a risky proposition.

Already Boston has a neat path system along both banks of the Charles River. A complete loop runs about 17 miles, but there are many occasions for crossing back and forth over the river, especially in the less congested western portion. To see a map of this, visit <http://166.90.180.162/mhd/mhd/paths/webcr.htm>.

Another developing path system is called the Boston Harborwalk, which will serve walkers and cyclists. When finished, the walk will stretch about 47 miles using wharves, piers, bridges, beaches and shoreline from Chelsea Creek to the Neponset River. Check out www.bostonharborwalk.com for highly detailed information.

When they are combined, these paths may make a trip to Boston without one's walking shoes or bike feel like heading to an ice rink without any skates.

A bucolic stream crossing on a section of cross-country ski trail at Pulaski Park in the George Washington Management Area in Burrillville.



Get on the trail!

Our recent accomplishments:

> Organized a grassroots effort to support the extension of the South County Bike Path in the face of NIMBY opposition.

> Organized walking and cycling events with organizations including the AARP and the International Rails-to-Trails Conference.

> Developed a cycling map of the Blackstone Valley area in conjunction with the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council.

> Continued to serve as the state representative of the East Coast Greenway Alliance.

Join the only organization dedicated to statewide advocacy of bike path and greenway development in Rhode Island. Your membership dues help make publication of this newsletter possible and will enable us to continue our mission of working with state and local leaders to ensure Rhode Island has an integrated, well-maintained network of alternative transportation and recreation corridors.

Name _____

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www.rigreenways.org

Annual Membership enclosed

Individual \$15

Family \$25

National* \$50

Supporting Organization: \$100

Other: _____

* Dual membership in the East Coast Greenway Alliance and GARI.

Please return membership form with check payable to the Greenways Alliance of Rhode Island to GARI, 31 Stanchion Street, Jamestown, RI 02835.

All GARI memberships expire on Dec. 31 each year.

Winter 2005

Join the Greenways Alliance of Rhode Island Today!