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We are a local grassroots nonprofit committed to Natural Resource Conservation

## Connecting Greenways: The Town River Landing Link

Today there is a *Vision* ... and a huge effort across the state to link hundreds of local open spaces – ribbons of green laced together through parks, natural resource areas, and important community features to satisfy a diverse set of environmental, social, and economic needs.

Greenways are corridors of land and water and the natural, cultural, and recreational resources they link together. A riverfront walkway, a bicycle path, an urban walking trail connecting historical sites and neighborhood parks, a wildlife migration corridor, and a series of open spaces joined by trails are all examples of Greenways.

Bridgewater's Master Plan embraces this Vision by creating a Conservation Parkland System (CPS) linking five municipal conservation areas situated along 20 miles of the historically important Town and Taunton Rivers. A sixth parkland– the 35 acre Carver's Pond Conservation Area - could be connected to this CPS by using designated walkways through BSC Campus, and by developing the **Town River Landing**.

NRTB, the Office of College & Community Partnerships at BSC, and the Taunton River Wild & Scenic Stewardship Council have formed a Town River Landing Steering Committee to facilitate building a **canoe launch**, and a **pedestrian bridge** to cross the Town River to the 70-acre Stiles & Hart Conservation Area. The committee is working with the Mass Wildlife Division of Fishing & Boating Access and with the National Park Service's River's & Trails Conservation Assistance Program as well as with town officials, local residents and businesses to complete this dream.

Located on the 2 ¾ acre site of the former DPW barn off Spring Street and behind the Campus Plaza Shopping Center, (See map on Page 8) the Town River Landing in Bridgewater's downtown Central Business District is a key focal point in developing the Conservation Parkland System, a recreation enhancement that will also help to promote local businesses.

The Vision offers a riverside destination and rest stop for people walking through the town village or college campus, with safe parking for canoeists and kayakers using the river. Several shops, restaurants and the local Cable TV Studio are now located here, and there are many other possibilities to rehab the area. The MBTA station and Waterford Village are right around the corner.

Residents – all volunteers - have been working at this plan for years. The **Town River Landing** will connect people to each other, and to their historical, cultural, and natural world for generations to come. It will also connect Bridgewater to an awesome regional network of recreational opportunities.

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## What Are Our Recent Accomplishments?

Formed in 1998, here are a few of the accomplishments of this all-volunteer organization:

- ✓ Worked with town officials to **acquire** Iron Works, Stiles & Hart, Tuckerwood, and the Wyman Meadows Conservation properties – **160 acres**
- ✓ Raised funds for the development of park designs and management plans for Bridgewater's current public Conservation Areas – Carver Pond, Iron Works, Stiles & Hart, Tuckerwood, Wyman Meadows, and Titicut
- ✓ Brought SCA AmeriCorps volunteers to town to construct walking trails at parklands
- ✓ Pioneered the 2004 State legislation that **preserves 425 acres** at the Old State Farm
- ✓ Supported the 44-mile, federally funded Taunton River study - a regional process to nominate the Taunton for a Wild & Scenic designation and put it under protection of the National Park Service
- ✓ Coordinated nature hikes and parkland explorations for annual Massachusetts Biodiversity Days in Bridgewater
- ✓ Raised a voice for a balanced approach to growth, encouraging town officials and developers to preserve open space as part of development plans

### Partnership with BSC

Last November college students helped land trust members with a clean-up at the Town River Landing, and in April 2006 NRTB facilitated a joint Earthday Project between the College & Community Partnership Office at BSC and the town's Parkland Stewardship Council to have students involved with seasonal cleaning and trail maintenance at many of the town parklands. The shared energy and knowledge of these three combined groups form a great, ongoing partnership to care for the municipal Conservation Parklands.

#### Extra! Extra!

Public Hearing  
Bridgewater Conservation Commission  
Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2006; 8:00 PM  
To permit construction of a Canoe Launch  
at the Town River Landing

### Current Focus and Projects:

The Board nixed its traditional Christmas events this year in order to focus volunteer time on *hands-on* projects that support the municipal Conservation Parkland System (CPS), that facilitate development of the Town River Landing, and that complete the 3 Canoe Launches Project with Bridgewater's Rotary Club.

As a private organization committed to Land Preservation and Natural Resource Conservation, NRTB will put added effort into programs aimed to bring greater awareness for the municipal CPS, its volunteer Stewards and its Parkland Stewardship Council (PSC), to foster a *connection* between the community and their Open Spaces, to *challenge* the community to *understand* and take *pride* in these special places, and to ultimately *care* and *protect* these irreplaceable Conservation Parklands and connecting Greenways as part of the town's heritage.

## What is the Natural Resources Trust of Bridgewater?

### NRTB's MISSION

*The Natural Resources Trust of Bridgewater works to acquire and preserve the natural resources and wildlife areas in the Town of Bridgewater and abutting communities. It strives to maintain the rural character and charm of the town, protect the river corridors and wetland areas, preserve open space and wildlife habitat and provide recreational areas for the public to enjoy. The Trust will operate in harmony with each town's Open Space & Recreation Plan.*

NRTB is led by a volunteer board of directors, which includes both new and long-time residents of Bridgewater. Committees dedicated to outreach, membership, land preservation, and other functions perform the work of the organization.

The current Board of Directors are: **Bert Anderson, Guy Clifford, Skip Copeland, Hank Estabrook, Bob Frederick (Clerk), Eileen Hiney, Dick Lombardi, Scott Lussier, and Carole Spear.** **Peter Dangoia** is the Treasurer and **Kitty Doherty** is President.

To accomplish great things, we must dream as well as act.

**-Anatole France**

### Highlights from our March 2006 Annual Meeting

- We thank **Allan Knight** and **Fran Jeffries** for their years of serving on the Board of Directors, and we thank **Skip Copeland, Eileen Hiney** and **Bert Anderson** for their willingness to be on our current Board,
- Our Silent Auction under the direction of **Anna Nalevanko** raised \$390.00 and the sale of **Tom Lowell's** print another \$96.00 for our Land Preservation Fund,
- And our guest speaker **Colleen Abrams**, President and co-founder of Wachusett Greenways, is still helping NRTB on our **Town River Landing** initiative. She and two colleagues have met with our Town River Steering Committee to offer suggestions on how to get the Pedestrian Bridge project off the ground.

## Parkland Stewardship Council Coordinator

Bridgewater Selectmen appoint **Don Swarce** as Parkland Stewardship Council Coordinator!!!

Don will be coordinating the activities between volunteer Parkland Stewards, the PSC, the Conservation Commission / town government, and various service groups wishing to help out with construction and maintenance of these municipal Conservation Parklands. Don may be reached through the Conservation Commission at 508-697-0907.

*Nature is just enough; but men and women must comprehend and accept her suggestions.*

**-Antoinette Brown Blackwell**

## Why Have a Land Trust in Bridgewater?

Since the 1970s, more than two-thirds of the farmland, meadows, woods, wetlands and open space in Bridgewater has been transformed – much of it to housing subdivisions - as the community has grown in population. A locally based nonprofit land trust focusing on natural resource conservation helps to ensure that growth and preservation are balanced, and that Bridgewater retains the landscape and natural resources that are important to our quality of life, as well as maintaining a healthy economy.

### NRTB T-Shirt Order Form

Item	Size	Quantity	Price	Total
NRTB Logo Long-sleeve T-shirt	Adult M		\$20.00	
NRTB Logo Long-sleeve T-shirt	Adult L		\$20.00	
NRTB Logo Long-sleeve T-shirt	Adult XL		\$20.00	
			Total	

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

Town/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_



## Artist Tom Lowell

As an ongoing fundraiser, local artist **Tom Lowell and his wife Brenda** are offering to NRTB a 40% donation on the sale of prints of his most recent painting, "Autumn Glow" which illustrates a woodland path on Great Hill in Bridgewater. Please contact **Eileen Hiney** at NRTB for

## Bus Tour

Back by popular demand, NRTB will sponsor a **Conservation Parkland TRAILHEAD BUS TOUR** again in January 2007. Watch the [www.nrtb.org](http://www.nrtb.org) website for details.

## NRTB's Old State Farm 'Trailblazers'

Gloria & Tom Moran, Diana Draheim, Andy & Jim Bunker, Shirley Krasinski, David Flynn and Kitty Doherty are working on a unique project – mapping out potential recreational trails at the Old State Farm - the 425 acres of conservation land that have been preserved in perpetuity under State legislation enacted in 2004.

This is a long-term project involving a lot of hiking through farm fields, meadows and woods, over stonewalls and through wetlands, to discover the best routes to develop into a more assessable recreational offering at sometime in the future. Scenic spots, physical features, unique wildlife areas and plant biodiversity are being noted on GPS to include on trail maps. Keep your eyes on this NRTB project.

## Volunteers...

NRTB has unfilled committees and urgently needs new volunteers to work on Membership, Fundraising, and PR/Outreach. The board of Directors offers an **Organization Orientation** for new members and volunteers on Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2006 at 7:00 PM at the BTV Studio.

## Membership...

Even though NRTB is a volunteer-run nonprofit without paid staff or office, the land trust depends on membership dues to cover operational expenses like telephone, printing costs, insurance, etc. Our membership renewals are down this year, partly because of the volunteer turnover with the database and newsletter. Please ... renew now if your dues are due; 'call a friend' and volunteer together.

## Fundraising...

As a gift to the town of Bridgewater, NRTB raised approximately \$30,000 to have the Conway School of Landscape Design prepare basic site analysis and park design for 6 Conservation Parklands, plus had professional consultants develop site-specific Stewardship / Management Plans for each of these sites. These blueprints were approved by the Conservation Commission and accepted by town meeting as the town's CPS guidance documents.

Last year, in partnership with the Town River Landing Steering Committee, NRTB facilitated an arrangement between Mass Wildlife Division of Fishing & Boating Access and the Town of Bridgewater to construct a Canoe Launch at the Town River Landing at no cost to the town; this is another gift of approximately \$35,000 in value.

Now NRTB leadership is asking its membership to 'buy a bridge'... specifically to raise funds through grant awards, special projects and fundraisers to build a Pedestrian Bridge across the Town River at the Landing and connect the Greenway trails between BSC Campus, Carver's Pond, and the Stiles & Hart Conservation Areas. This is an awesome project, a huge undertaking, and will create a wonderful multi-purpose destination in the downtown Central Business District. (See related articles)

## Massachusetts Biodiversity Days at the Old State Farm & Tuckerwood Conservation Areas

Since Mass Biodiversity Days began in 2000, NRTB has served as local coordinator for events in Bridgewater. This year Bridgewater highlighted the Old State Farm. After days of heavy rain and chilly spring temperatures, nature-lovers were blessed with only a slight drizzle as they wandered for two hours through the fields and forests at this property off of Summer Street. With Eileen Hiney as liaison, NRTB was lucky to have Ellyn Einhorn, education coordinator at the Mass Audubon Marshfield office, lead the evening stroll.

## Town River Landing Phase One: Canoe Launch

With input from Jamie Fosburgh and Charlie Tracy (National Park Service) Sue McCombe (Bridgewater State College), Jim Ross and Bill Napolitano (Taunton River Wild & Scenic Stewardship Council), from Botanist Walter Hewitson and Civil Engineer Mike Koska, and with NRTB taking the lead, Doug Cameron and Tony Stella (Mass Wildlife Division of Fishing & Boating Access) received approval from the Bridgewater Board of Selectmen for their Canoe Launch design at the Landing. They next will present their proposal for this 8' wide car-top launch to the local Conservation Commission for an Order of Conditions to allow work on the bank of a perennial stream.

Actual construction should be completed in March or April 2007, just in time for spring use. This is an exciting milestone for the NRTB in their promotion of the Bridgewater Conservation Parkland System and its network of connecting trails; the Town River Landing will become a nucleus of recreational activity in the downtown business district. (Read the history of the Town River and its parklands in the Town River Shoreline Survey at [www.nrtb.org](http://www.nrtb.org))

## Town River Landing Phase Two: Pedestrian Bridge

With 83' frontage on Spring St. and about 400' frontage on the Town River, the Landing encompasses 2 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> acres. The former highway barn has been rehabbed into the BTV Studio, and the Bridgewater's Master Plan calls for user-friendly river access here to help promote the downtown business district with a recreation component, thus the canoe launch, bridge and mini-park idea.

To connect the Landing to the Stiles & Hart Conservation Parkland, the Steering Committee is looking into buying a prefabricated bridge span 8 – 10' wide to cross the Town River. The length of the span will be determined by an engineering study, to find the best location to place the bridge footings along the 400' town-owned riverbank – there is a lot of wetland and flood plane. The formula for total project cost is approximately twice the price of the span, and we will not know that number until we know how long the bridge needs to be. NRTB is now applying for grants to fund this initial analysis, and also starting to fundraise, as every grant requires a 'match.' (All donations willingly accepted!)

Our goal is to divide the bridge project analysis, design, permitting, and construction into manageable segments, and to have the **footings** in place by the end of the 2007 construction season so that people can see the Town River Landing Vision begin to unfold. (See lead article p. 1) Various prefab designs can be viewed on the Internet; what style would you like?

## The Board is Seeking 2 or 3 Special People who would like to plan a MAJOR FUNDRAISING EVENT for the Bridge Fund.

The Town River Landing Steering Committee is still developing the budget for this project, but need to begin fundraising now; the bridge project is estimated to cost approximately \$75,000.

(See related article)

### Bridgewater Rotary Club Partnership to Build 3 Canoe Launches

NRTB is partnering with Bridgewater Rotary Club on a *mammoth* project to construct one river egress / access in each of the 3 Bridgewater. This includes locating the appropriate site, designing the facility in accordance with individual town ordinances, obtaining DEP permits through the local Conservation Commissions, and ensuring sustainability of the new facilities with committed stewards.

Rotary President **Pat Lee** and NRTB Director **Bob Frederick** report that East Bridgewater’s Sachem Rock canoe launch *design* on the Satucket River is finished, and Bridgewater’s canoe launch, which builds on approved stewardship plans for the Titicut Conservation Area on the Taunton River, will soon follow; these proposals can now be brought through local conservation permitting this fall.

The West Bridgewater project has been put on a brief ‘hold’ while site details involving the Town River and the Scotland Street Bridge – due for reconstruction - are worked out.

The Rotary is doing a wonderful job raising grant money and has in-kind volunteer service lined up for actual construction. While this initiative is taking much longer than expected, the river recreation access will be well worth the wait.

### I want to get involved in the Natural Resources Trust of Bridgewater!

- I am enclosing my tax-deductible membership dues, payable to ‘NRTB’
- I am enclosing a tax-deductible donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the ‘NRTB Land Preservation Fund’

Membership Categories

- |  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$15/year                                | Name: _____        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$25/year                                    | Address: _____     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caretaker \$50/year *                               | City, State: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter \$100/year *                              | Phone: _____       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor \$250/year *                             | e-mail: _____      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am interested in volunteering. Please contact me. |                    |

\* Membership includes an NRTB T-Shirt.

Please indicate size:    Adult M    Adult L    Adult XL



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**Land Conservation Now**  
—  
**For the Future**

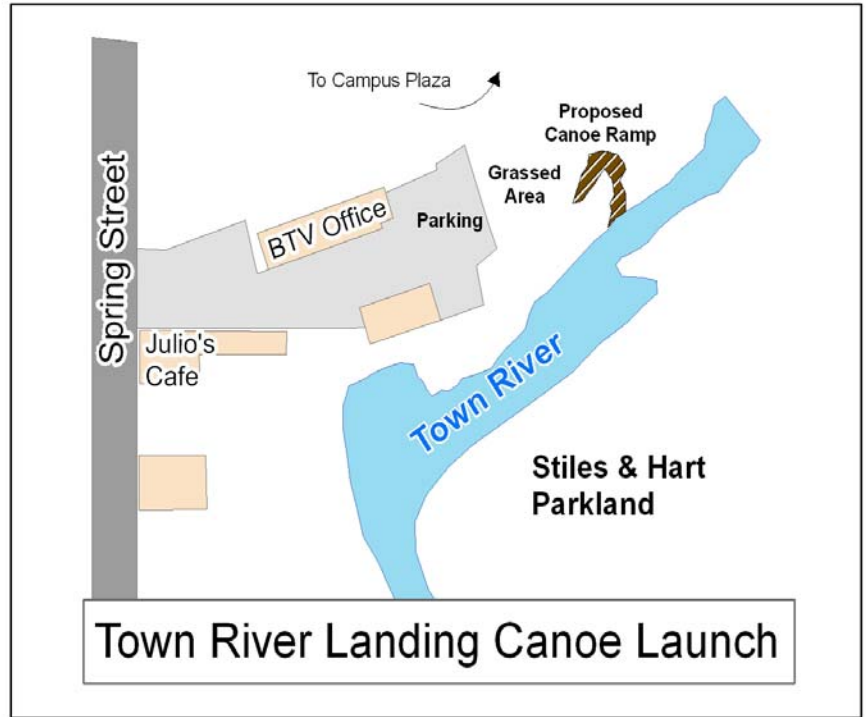
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*We're on the Web!*

*Visit us at:*

[www.nrtb.org](http://www.nrtb.org)

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