

Stewardship Report for Haile Farm Preserve

This past summer we were able to complete the new Jade Trail on the north side of the Haile Farm property and it is now being used regularly by visitors. Recently we completed a few leftover maintenance tasks including some additional boardwalk sections in some particularly wet areas and a few new sign posts and trail markers. We also added a bike rack at the new Toweset Landing site at the end of Maple Rd and we hope to get a new cedar sign post installed in the next week out there as well. We are in good shape right now on all the existing trails at HFP and Jacob's Point. When spring arrives we will need routine maintenance and trimming along all the trails and we'll send out notices as needed for volunteers to help out.

Spring is really coming too! Today I saw the first spike of a skunk cabbage in the swamp near the beech grove on the Green Trail! Unfortunately I also saw that some invasive multiflora rose plants right along the edge of the swamp are already starting to leaf out, so we know we will need to get the pruners ready pretty soon. We hope to get some professional help in the next month to mow the multiflora along the edges of the meadows behind the Jade plant with funding from the National Resources Conservation Service of USDA, so that should be a big help. We are also hoping for some brush clearing paid for by NRCS at our new Barker Preserve property out on 136.

Coming up in February and March we will be holding some work parties to tackle the following jobs. As always we will break into small groups and masks are required.

- Picking up trash along the Red Trail at HFP
- Removing the remains of a campsite on the Red Trail
- Help in the construction of a kayak rack for the Maple Rd site
- Finish work on the Betty Hallberg Trail at HFP on the southern end of the property. About half of that trail was cut last year and we need to do weed whacking and brush cutting out to the end of the trail at the salt marsh edge.
- Eventually we will be clearing some trails at the new Barker Preserve, but that will probably be later in the summer or fall as we see what restoration efforts will be undertaken there by NRCS and Save the Bay.

Last year we had two of our trail sections adopted by WLCT members for ongoing maintenance, the Saltmarsh Sparrow and Tom's Island overlook spurs. If anyone is interested in adopting another section of trail at HFP or Jacob's Point please let me know. It is such a big help to have members looking out for a small piece of the trail and doing any maintenance that is needed as the months roll by. We have tools and cordless equipment available for your use.

There is one other area where we are looking for volunteer help and that is to become a Steward of one of our properties other than the ones open to the public. if you look at the WLCT website you can see a map of all the properties we own, and part of our responsibility as owners is in keeping track of the conditions at these various parcels of land. We have a Stewardship Program with a goal of visiting each of our properties at least once every 2-3 years and documenting the conditions by taking photos at the property borders and noting the presence of invasive plants,

any incursions from neighboring properties, whether there is litter or other debris present, and whether there is a need for us to take any action to address any issues. Also any suggestions for potential uses of the property and potential for public access are welcome. If anyone is interested in signing up to be a Steward for a parcel, please let me know and we'll get you access to a fillable Stewardship Form that you can complete on your phone and send in for our records along with any photos you take. You don't have to visit often, just once every year or so, just to keep tabs on conditions.

Thanks again for all your help in the past and we look forward to seeing you all again soon.