



FNRT members Alex Bernhard and Chris Norris (left) of Andover and Chris' 14-year-old grandson, Ben Norris (right) from New Jersey, had a good six-hour bicycle ride inspecting bridges on the Northern Rail Trail.

Photo: Alex Bernhard

FNRT Members Perform Bridge Inspections on Rail Trail

Board votes to begin repairs

Press release

On August 8, Friends of the Northern Rail Trail (FNRT) members Alex Bernhard and Chris Norris of Andover and Chris' 14-year-old grandson, Ben Norris of New Jersey, completed a survey of the condition of all the bridges on the Northern Rail Trail in Merrimack County. The inspection took about six

hours and was performed on bicycle between Boscawen and Potter Place using an old railroad bridge list as a guide.

The crew chose to rate each bridge with an A, B, or C, with C for the bridges in the worst condition. Six bridges were found to be missing railings to the point where they rated a C.

As a result of this effort, FNRT's board of directors voted during its August board meeting to begin repair work on three of the bridges to start.

SRKG Offers Six Hikes This Fall

Two hikes in Andover on Ragged and Kearsarge

Press release

We live in a bit of day-hiker heaven. Fall weekend hikes sponsored by the Sunapee-Ragged-Kearsarge Greenway (SRKG) Coalition are an opportunity to see local peaks and valley woodlands both up close and with expansive views.

The hikes up Ragged and Kearsarge mountains are classic New Hampshire view hikes. Lower elevation walks in Andover, Sutton, and Newbury pass historic cellar holes on old Class 6 roads and show the importance of land conservation for wildlife habitat preservation. A special hike on the Sutton side of Mount Kearsarge will explore 236 acres that the Forest Society hopes to add this year to its Black Mountain Forest Preserve placed in conservation a few years ago.

Sunapee-Ragged-Kearsarge Greenway Coalition hikes are free to the public. Please call the volunteer hike leader to learn starting location and time. Be prepared: bring water, bug and sun protection, and a snack. See SRKG.org for information and membership.

Sunday, September 11: In Andover, a family hike on Trail 10 from Proctor Academy to Winslow State Park. Six miles on easy trails and old roads.

Contact Dave Gardner and Nick Baer at 927-4033 or BudahBing@yahoo.com.

Saturday, September 24:

From Winslow State Park over Mount Kearsarge to Kearsarge Valley Road on Greenway Trail 11. 5.8 miles. Contact Anne Hewitt at 848-5762 or Anne5762@live.com.

Saturday, October 1:

In North Sutton near Kearsarge Regional High School, a backwoods exploration of a hoped-for 236-acre conservation addition to Black Mountain Forest Preserve on Mount Kearsarge. A relaxed few miles of outdoor education. Contact Dave Anderson at 224-9945 x 335 or DAnderson@ForestSociety.org.

Sunday, October 16:

Over Ragged Mountain from Wilmot to Proctor Academy in Andover on Greenway Trail 9. 6.1 strenuous, rewarding miles. Contact Rosanna Dude at 828-1001 or RosannaLeigh@gmail.com.

Saturday, October 22:

In Newbury on Greenway Trail 14 between Newbury harbor and Chalk Pond. Moderate 4.4-mile woods hike. Contact Lee Carvalho at 735-5719 or LeeCarvalho6@gmail.com.

Saturday, October 29:

From Kezar Lake at Wadleigh State Park in North Sutton via King Hill and New Hampshire Audubon Sanctuary to Chalk Pond in Newbury. Contact Nathan Richer at 763-2127.

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from The Fells parking lot.

As you pass through a forest of beech, sugar maple, and white birch, you will see evidence of former settlements in stone walls and cellar holes, so there is no rush. Take your time; there's no prize for rushing, and you might be surprised at what you can see along the trail.

At the top, looking west, the views of the south end of Lake Sunapee are terrific, and if you time it right, you can watch the beginning of the sunset before descending along the same path.

Another rewarding hike is to the summit of Mount Major (1,786 ft) near Alton Bay on Lake Winnepesaukee. The large parking area for the trailhead is 2.4 miles south of the junction of New Hampshire Routes 11 and 11A. It is 1.5

miles to the summit via the Mount Major trail, but there are several options for routes up and down.

After scrambling over some rocks, you arrive at a vast, open space with spectacular 360° views of the lake and surrounding forests. The hike itself will probably take about 2.5 to 3 hours, but allow a good amount of time to enjoy your time at the top.

If you are more comfortable heading out on a guided hike, consider joining one of the walks sponsored by the Sunapee-Ragged-Kearsarge Greenway (SRKG) group. A bonus of joining one of these hikes is the opportunity to meet other hikers.

If you have observations, photos, or questions about the natural world of Andover, please send them to Andover-Naturally@gmail.com.



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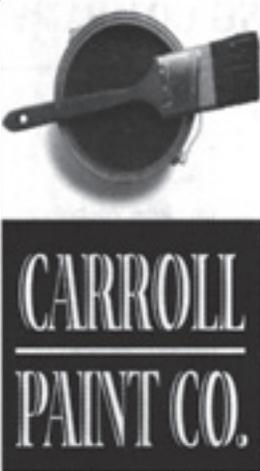
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