

Friends of the Northern Rail Trail Off Bike Ride Tour to Supporters

Ride to showcase how funds are used

Press release

Don't you just love the Northern Rail Trail in Merrimack County, wending its way from a cornfield in Boscawen to the Danbury Country Store? Thirty-two miles past a river, two lakes, a pond, and even a covered bridge. And isn't it great that it connects to an equally beautiful portion in Grafton County, all the way to the Connecticut River? Almost sixty miles of bicycling right in your backyard, as long as your backyard is in either Merrimack or Grafton county.

But when you get the annual fund-raising appeal, as you write your check, or donate through your credit card, does it ever cross your mind "What do they use this money for? I thought the trail was finished?" And while the fundraising letter explains that the trail needs to be maintained, it's hard to visualize the logistics and labor that go into maintaining a year-round recreation trail.

Well, if one picture is worth a thousand words, then one bicycle outing should be worth at least as much. Ac-

cordingly, we're organizing the First and possibly Annual What Are the Friends of the Northern Rail Trail Doing With My Donation? Bike Ride. It's not a fund-raiser (although we never turn down donations). It's a way for us to point out all the things it's so easy to take for granted unless they're not attended to. And for you to ask questions like "Where do the picnic benches come from?", or "How do you decide where to put gravel?"

So we're inviting everyone to join us on Saturday, September 22nd at 11:00 AM. Rain or shine. we're going to start at the Potter Place parking area in Andover (milepost 104), and head north for approximately four and a half miles, past Eagle Pond. It's not a race. We'll be stopping at bridges and culverts that suffered from heavy rain damage in the last year. You can bike half as long as you'd like to, and then head back to Potter Place as the spirit moves you. Bring a snack or lunch for a post-ride get-together at the Potter Place Picnic Area.

No RSVP is required. Just show up with your preferred method of non-motorized transportation, and spend some time learning about the trail, and the people who love it.

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The cool nights are a constant reminder that the summer season is coming to an end and fall will soon be upon us. Despite the season change, NH Fish and Game and the U.S. Forest Service urge homeowners, campers, and the rest of the public to continue to be vigilant and responsible in bear country. The peak period of conflicts between bears and humans is June and July, however, bear activity in and around human-occupied areas can continue through August and occasionally September.

This time period coincides with the peak tourist season and a time when many residents and visitors are recreating outside in bear habitat. "Campgrounds are full, restaurant dumpsters are overflowing, and human-related food attractants remain abundant across the landscape. When these conditions exist, bears will exploit these feeding opportunities," said Andrew Timmins, Bear Biologist with NH Fish and Game.

The root cause of most annual bear-human conflicts is birdfeeders, garbage, and inadequately secured chickens. Despite ongoing educational efforts, these attractants remain numerous on the landscape, thereby perpetuating conflicts. August represents a period when campgrounds are busy, particularly in the White Mountains, which can result in conflicts. When camping, it is critical that all foods be stored so that bears cannot gain access. Foods left on picnic tables and in coolers at the campsite are easy targets. Bears quickly learn that their mere presence causes campers to move away, making these attractants easily accessible.

Campers and hikers can avoid conflicts with bears by maintaining a clean campsite and storing food, garbage, and aromatic items, such as toothpaste and other toiletries, out of reach of bears (not in your tent!). If car camping, keep all food and coolers in a building or vehicle with the windows closed. If camping at a remote site, bring rope to properly

hang these items, or use bear-resistant canisters, available for rent at no charge at all White Mountain National Forest Ranger Districts offices (www.fs.usda.gov/whitemountain).

"We want to emphasize the importance of proper food storage, so that not only you – but future campers to the campground – will have a positive experience," said Marianne Leberman, White Mountain National Forest Recreation Program Leader. "Be considerate of future campers and wildlife, since it only takes one food reward to embolden bears to return to the source."

You can help by following the guidelines at www.wildnh.com/wildlife/bears. Talk to your friends and neighbors and encourage them to help prevent conflicts with bears.

Fish and Game recommends that people take the following actions to reduce the chances of a bear visiting your home or campsite:

Stop all bird feeding by April 1, or as soon as snow melts.

Clean up any spilled birdseed and dispose of it in the trash.

Secure all garbage in airtight containers inside a garage or adequate storage area, and put garbage out on the morning of pickup, not the night before.

Don't leave pet food dishes outside overnight.

Clean and store outdoor grills after each use.

Do not leave food, grease, or garbage unsecured around campsites.

Store food and coolers in a closed vehicle or secured area while camping.

Finally, never intentionally feed bears!

If you have questions about bear-related problems, you can get advice by calling a toll-free number coordinated jointly by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services and the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department: 1-888-749-2327 (1-888-SHY-BEAR).

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has ever known. And if you don't believe this then I would encourage you to go live for a while in any other country in the world to become enlightened to this fact, as I have. And for those who wish to "fundamentally transform" this country from the Constitutional Republic established by our ingenious founders less than 250 years ago, into something else, I beg you to leave and go find what you are looking for elsewhere!

With this said, and if you agree with me, then I would ask you to please vote to send Eddie Edwards to Washington D.C. to represent us in CDI! Eddie's early life story was difficult but inspiring, and an example of the American Dream! Eddie has all that it takes to do the job... just look at his resume as a Veteran, a Police Commissioner, a

small business owner and a NON POLITICIAN!

But most importantly I know without a doubt that Eddie has the honesty and integrity that I, from this day forward, will always expect from my elected officials. I for one will not vote for another candidate who lacks these two essential principles!! Eddie Edwards lives these principles and is the real deal!!

I hope you agree with me about the importance of honesty and integrity that we should expect not only from one another, but also from the folks that we, as American citizens, have the responsibility to send to represent us in our towns, our state, and in Washington D.C.

If you agree then you must vote for Eddie Edwards September 11th for U.S. Congress in CDI!

Liz Gabert
Bedford, NH