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Eastern Trail Alliance Newsletter

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Spring/Summer 2014

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2014 Maine Lighthouse Ride Filling up Fast!

By Bob Bowker, MLR Chairman

With six months still to go until the 2014 Maine Lighthouse Ride, the popularity of the ride is obvious — about 400 riders already pre-registered for the September 6 event. Riders represent over 20 states, including South Dakota, California, Colorado, Tennessee, Missouri, Texas, and Michigan. This year we also have riders from the United Kingdom and Canada. And let's not forget our local folks, with strong contingents from Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. We plan to continue to build on the success of last year's 10th anniversary ride, which sold out at 1,000 riders three weeks before ride day. In response to the continuing surge in demand, we are increasing our rider limit to 1,200 riders this year. Anyone want to wager when the sellout date will fall?

The Maine Lighthouse Ride committee has already started the planning process for the 2014 ride. Despite our gaining a lot of experience in developing this event over the past 10 years, there is a lot of work to be done to prepare for Ride Day, including organizing rest stop food, making arrangements with our host, Southern Maine Community College, ordering tents and Porta-Potties, purchasing t-shirts, marking the routes, and at times managing complex

coordination with communities along the ride. Among the more demanding tasks is organizing our wonderful cadre of volunteers who are directly responsible for the great success of the Maine Lighthouse Ride.

We are also devoting considerable time to examining the MLR's future shape and purpose. The lack of federal, state and local funding for continued construction of the Eastern Trail has prompted the Eastern Trail Alliance to consider alternative funding sources and ask some serious questions. Would it be possible to transform the Maine Lighthouse Ride into an event that would generate enough revenue to help towns pay for new trail construction? The concept would be similar to the Trek Across Maine, Dempsey Challenge, and the MS 150, in which riders would be required to raise money in support of the Eastern Trail. Now, we have consciously kept the MLR's entry fees low, even considering this year's modest increase. But we do not know how many people would be willing to "go to bat" for the Eastern Trail and raise an additional \$100 to \$200. Would we lose our out-of-state riders who travel to Maine each year specifically for this ride; would we risk changing the character of the ride? ETA trustees are discussing these and other questions, and we welcome your input as members.

However, at least for 2014 we will continue the current, highly successful format, with the expectation of 1,200 happy riders!



2013 Maine Lighthouse Ride

(Photo by Jim Bucar)

2014
Maine Lighthouse Ride
Saturday Sept. 6
25, 40, 62 or 100 miles
Register at



www.EasternTrail.org

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President's Letter

Volunteers Needed!

If there's one thing that's been constant since I attended my first Eastern Trail Alliance meeting, it's been the M&Ms. Oh, no I guess that's not true – there was quite a lapse for a time, now that I think about it. Fortunately, however, volunteers have not lapsed, and a couple of handfuls of these energetic, inspired folks continue to work at making the ET what it is and what it will become. Tom Daley, Maggie Warren, Mac Sexton, Larry Glantz – when the ETA Vol Hall of Fame is called to order, these are but a few of the many who will be in attendance. And I'll bet, if asked, every one of them would agree that the experience was an enriching one. "We volunteered, we spent time with equally motivated people with common interests, we achieved, we made things happen." All that and more.

So, dear readers, may we ask that you take that to heart and ask "not what the ETA can do for you, but what you can do for the ETA." Most, if not all, non-profit organizations must rely on volunteers, and we've got some wonderful opportunities for those who'd like to meet others in southern Maine who like to walk, to bike, who like trails, who like meeting people who like to walk and bike and use trails...and so on:

Trip Leaders: Lead an outing along the Eastern Trail. Pick dates and times that are convenient for you. It's a great way to meet other supporters of the ET! Lead a walk, bike ride, cross-country ski, snow shoe or bird/wildlife exploration along either on-road or off-road sections from South Portland to Kittery. Full moon walks have become favorite outings, departing from Southern Maine Medical Center in Biddeford, and the Pine Point Road parking lot at the Scarborough Marsh. I've always wondered how

a new moon walk would go...

Exhibit Hosts: ETA is invited to host a table and tell our story at countless local events, from universities to businesses to health fairs, and many more. ETA has a small group of experienced volunteers, but still we are unable to respond to many such requests and opportunities. To learn more about how easy and how much FUN this can be, volunteer to help out at one of ETA's planned exhibits .

Volunteer Coordinator: All new volunteers who step in to help ETA, need a "veteran" to stay in touch with them, to provide information about how ETA tries to set and accomplish its goals, to connect them with trustees, fellow volunteers or office staff.

Born to Sell? We have a very popular product – it's about 21 miles long today, and will be about 60 miles long when complete! -- that we'd like you to sell to local businesses and foundations or to seek out sponsors for the Eastern Trail and for the Maine Lighthouse Ride. We'll provide printed material, facts and the how's and why's and when's of the ET's history, its future, and how partnering with the ETA can be a winner for all involved.

For more information, call Carole Brush at the ETA office in Biddeford at 207-284-9260, or send e-mail to ETA@EasternTrail.Org. We'd love to have your help!

President Bob Hamblen



Leave it to the Beavers

By Joe Yuhas

Prior to and on October 13, 2013 (a Friday!) heavy rains covered over half a mile of the Biddeford section of the Eastern Trail with impassable flood waters. Reluctantly, we closed the trail, an unprecedented action. The ET website and ET Facebook page immediately relayed to trail users that we had informed Unitil and Biddeford's department of public works and city manager that the section of the trail would be closed until further notice.

As a further complication, an event had been scheduled on that section of the trail for the following day. As you might imagine there was concern about how long the trail would be

closed. But even more perplexing, was the question of how and why the flooding occurred. The trail had been open for over three years and had not flooded after many periods of prolonged heavy rains. What had changed?

The answer was *Castor canadensis*, i.e., beaver, that industrious engineering rodent, the only other mammal besides humans that commonly alters its habitat to make it more suitable. Looking back, earlier in the summer many users of the Biddeford section of the Eastern Trail had noticed beaver activity in the vicinity of the 23¼

(Continued on page 3)

What's the Economic Impact of the Eastern Trail?

By John Andrews

Who uses the ET? Where do users come from? What does the average visitor spend on ice cream? Boots? Bicycles? Lodging? Beyond a little casual knowledge— I've met cyclists on the ET who came from Vermont, New York and Quebec just to bike the ET— we have no measured data. We intuit that these users must benefit local economies, but we haven't yet quantified those benefits. How can we measure them? What have others done?

Carl Knoch, Northeast Trails Development Manager for the Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC), wanted to answer these questions for a Pennsylvania trail. He electronically counted users and asked hundreds of Pennsylvania trail users to answer self-mailing questionnaires. With the results, he began to measure the trail's economic impact, learning how many people



Mounting a Counter on a Tree

used the these trails, where they came from, and what they spent RTC has subsequently applied Carl's methodology to dozens of trails and published the results, all the while evolving a better, more refined methodology.

This season, thanks to a generous grant from Kennebunk Savings Bank, ETA will be applying Carl's methods to measure the economic impact on the local communities of the off-road sections of the ET from Kennebunk to Scarborough. The process has already begun: Canadian-made infrared electronic counters are being tested; and self-mailing surveys are being printed. ETA plans to publish its economic impact study at the end of 2014. And you can meet Carl Knoch, who will be the feature speaker at ETA's annual meeting on May 15.

(See a related article on page 6.)

Leave it to the Beavers

(Continued from page 2)

mile marker. That area, not far from the Arundel line, is marked by a culvert which passes beneath the trail with a broad open area along the trail. The wetland area there attracts many waterfowl and wading birds; with close observation, minnows can be seen feeding beneath the surface of the water. And a beaver family had evidently taken up residence.

I remember noticing the increasing number of branches and small trees being added to the edges of the impounded water on the opposite side of the trail early in the summer. Although I had



Beaver Work

(Photo by Jim Bucar)

without seeing the beavers themselves, since they generally avoid humans and are nocturnal in their habits. Clearly, as the work progressed the water level on the upstream side of the trail inched its way upward. Apparently the beavers had also blocked the culvert, compounding the problem. By the first week of September the water level had risen nearly four feet and spread over an extended number of acres. The heavy rains did the rest: the force of all the impounded water washed out a large section of the trail.

Fortunately, the story does have a happy ending. First of all the scheduled event— the NF Walk— was relocated to the Thornton Academy section of the trail with little problem. Then Biddeford public works and Unutil responded immediately; in five days, including work over the weekend, the trail was again passable. The two agencies hauled in rock and rebuilt the trail over an extended length. The beaver dam was breached and the culvert cleared. And what about the busy beavers? The whole family was gently trapped and relocated to a friendlier home.



www.EasternTrail.org

About the ETA

We are citizens of southern Maine, hikers, bikers, X-country skiers, birders, and other outdoor enthusiasts, dedicated to creating, enjoying and maintaining the Eastern Trail.

The ET will be a four-season trail suitable for both transportation and recreation. It will connect Casco Bay in South Portland with Kittery on the NH border and the ten other communities in between.

Eastern Trail Alliance Staff

Carole Brush
Executive Director

Scott Marcoux
Communications
Coordinator

Larry Glantz
Web Coordinator

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www.EasternTrail.org

Eastern Trail Parking Areas:

Please show courtesy to our neighbors. Do not park on private property or impede traffic flow.

South Portland:

- Bug Light Park
- Wainwright Field Complex (off Highland Avenue)

Scarborough:

- Black Point Road (on Eastern Rd spur south of Black Point Road)
- Pine Point Road (at ET crossing)
- Old Blue Point Road (Cemetery parking lot)

Old Orchard Beach:

- Milliken Mills Road (on the shoulder)
- Old Cascade Road (two spots only)

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10th Anniversary Scarborough Marsh Groundbreaking

By John Andrews

Do any of you remember the old waste water pipe bridge over the Dunstan River that meanders through the marsh? I'm sure you remember its replacement, the Eastern Trail Bridge that carries trail traffic while supporting both that pipe and the Granite State Gas Pipeline. I doesn't seem possible, but ten years have already passed since the May 19, 2004 groundbreaking ceremony took place a few weeks after the accompanying photo was taken.

We've made unbelievable progress since 2004, enough to prove the "Lenny Ruthazer Principle," named after a wise engineering



Old Bridge



Bikers on New Bridge (Photos by Jim Bucar)



Scarborough Marsh Bridge Ribbon Cutting

manager from my past life. Lenny asserted that "You will always *over* estimate what you can accomplish in a year and very much *under* estimate what you can accomplish in ten." Lenny, I wish you could know how right you were! As we of the ETA consider the future of the Eastern Trail, we will do well to keep hearing his words.

SETA is alive and thriving!

By Joe Yuhas

The Southern ETA group has gained gratifying strength and numbers since last summer's community displays and presentations. Those activities were designed to spread the word of the Eastern Trail and increase support at the grass roots level. Our awareness program showcased the far reaching benefits of the existing trail, as well as the benefits that will follow as the off road trail is extended to and through Wells, the Berwicks, Eliot and Kittery to connect with NH at the Memorial Bridge.

Since fall, SETA members have been meeting on a regular basis to explore and increase the effectiveness of our awareness program. Many new faces have been added to the group, increasing the pool of talent and imaginative ideas to accomplish our goals.

Ann Kendall came up with the idea of our sponsoring a trail ride which would follow the on road section of the ET (also known as U. S. Bicycle Route One). For the last few months we have been researching that project, developing possible routes, checking with town officials and, with the help of some of the Maine Lighthouse Ride's experienced leaders, studying the details that have made that ride so successful. After hitting a roadblock on our initial choice of date for the event, we decided that we would

instead initiate a series of smaller monthly rides over the summer. Rather than try to bring off a major trail ride with all it's details in a short period of time to plan and execute it, we'd work up to that project. The monthly rides will also give us a chance to become familiar with the route in hopes that we will be ready to host the Spring on the Trail next year.

In Ann's words, "We have decided to start slowly to build awareness and interest in the Eastern Trail by having a series of rides— Discovering the Eastern Trail— to be offered once a month for groups of about 20 riders." The first ride is planned for June 14th from Kittery to Vaughn Woods and could return along the scenic River Rd. Each ride will continue up the Eastern Trail with rides on the second Saturday of each month until we get to the off-road section at the Kennebunk Elementary School.

The rides will be around 20 miles in length, allowing for travel at a moderate pace, emphasizing safety and the pleasure of bicycling along the trail. We plan to stop occasionally at points of interest and concentrate on features of local historical or natural significance. Each ride will have a leader, a sweeper and a support vehicle to assist with breakdowns if necessary.

Brief Calendar of Trail-Related Events

Spring is finally here! Mark your calendars for the following Eastern Trail happenings and other running, walking and cycling events. Find out more at the websites listed below;

Eastern Trail Alliance (ETA)

www.easterntail.org

Bicycle Coalition of Maine (BCM)

www.bikemaine.org

In addition to events listed below, several groups are holding events on the Eastern Trail. For more information on these and how to apply to host an event on the trail, visit the Trail Events tab on the ETA website.

Ongoing: ETA volunteers lead monthly moonlight walks. Check website for details.

2nd Thursdays: Monthly ETA meeting – time and location posted on website.

Apr 13: BCM's Great Maine Bike Swap - Orono

Apr 26: Scarborough Marsh Earth Day Clean Up, Scarborough Marsh Audubon Center and Eastern Trail, Pine Point Road

Apr 27: BCM's Great Maine Bike Swap – Portland

May 15: ETA Annual Meeting at Old Marsh Country Club, Wells, ME

May 15: Walk for Wishes at Thornton Academy, Saco, ME

May 21: VA2K Walk & Roll, Saco, ME

May 26: Annual Memorial Day Snowy Egret Run, Scarborough ET (Chiropractic Family Wellness Center, Maine Audubon, ETA)

June 1: BCM's Maine Women's Ride, Freeport, ME

June 7: Loop & Lunch Ride: 32-mile, mostly on-road loop ride between Black Point Rd and lunch at Run of the Mill in Saco. Register with Russ Lamer at crankoneta@gmail.com.

June 13-15: BCM's Trek Across Maine, Sunday River, ME

June 14: "Discover the ET" ride - Kittery to Vaughn Woods. (First of a series of monthly rides in southern York County, sponsored by SETA. Rides are about 20-miles long. More information on the ETA website).

July 20: BCM's Maine Lobster Ride, Rockland, ME

Aug 24: REV3 Triathlon, Old Orchard Beach, ME

Sept 6: ETA's 11th Annual Maine Lighthouse Ride, South Portland, ME

Sept 6: 5K Arundel Schools, Arundel, ME

Sept 6-13: BCM's BikeMaine: Week-Long Adventure Ride

Sept 13: NF Walk, Children's Tumor Foundation, Thornton Academy, Saco, ME

Sept 14: Walk to Cure Diabetes, Thornton Academy, Saco, ME

Sept 27: Cycle for Sweetser, Saco, ME, www.sweetser.org

Sept 28: Unite Against Bullying, Thornton Academy, Saco, ME

Oct 5: Community Bicycle Center's Applecycle, www.communitybike.net

Oct 19: Harvest Half Marathon (ET in Kennebunk, Arundel and Biddeford)



www.EasternTrail.org

Eastern Trail Parking Areas:

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Saco:

- Millbrook Business Park (off Route 1)
- Thornton Academy (Clark St shoulder; in TA lot only when not in session)

Biddeford:

- Southern Maine Medical Center (rear lot)

Arundel:

- Town Hall (at Limerick Road and Mountain Road intersection)

Kennebunk:

- Kennebunk Elementary School (rear of lot near kiosk and spur trail)

Additional parking information can be found on the Trail Guide. See:

www.easterntail.org

➔ Trail Maps

Roll into Fall with Up to 9 Lighthouses Be Sure to Register for the 2014 Maine Lighthouse Ride!

The Eastern Trail Alliance is also looking ahead to September, and to our 11th Annual Maine Lighthouse Ride! The ride takes place on Saturday, Sept. 6. Choose from four different ride lengths – 25, 40, 62, or 100 miles – and incomparable coastal scenery. Visit the ET website for the registration link today.

About 400 riders have signed up for the ride so far – another milestone in our 11 years of hosting this event! This year's ride is limited to 1,200 riders and will sell out, so don't wait to reserve your spot. Join up now by registering today!

ETA Holds Annual Meeting

The ETA will once again hold its Annual Meeting at the Old Marsh Country Club in Wells, Maine on Thursday, May 15. Join us from 5:30 - 8 p.m., starting with conversation and light refreshments, followed by our business meeting, guest speaker presentation, and dinner. This meeting is a great opportunity to discuss the progress of the ET with trail supporters from the communities that host the trail, and from neighboring towns.

This year our speaker is Carl Knoch, Northeast Trail Development Manager for Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. Carl will update us on the RTC's nationwide accomplishments and take questions from meeting attendees.

ETA

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Welcome to New ETA Members

- Jennifer Bordelon
- Deborah Bowie
- Rita Brown
- Linda Burns
- Al Curran
- Lynn Farnham
- Paula Fines
- Ann Garland
- Charles Garland
- Bob Goodwin
- Linda Hafford
- Paul Hafford
- Bart Haley
- Christine Haley
- Emily Haley
- Peter King
- Eric Oberg
- Nicole O'Brien
- Brian Olmsted
- Suzanne Patrakis
- Marjorie Rosenbaum
- Norman Rosenbaum
- Del Skillins
- Kristine Taylor
- Kim True

ETA

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Joe Yuhas

The ET provides a space for recreation, transportation and socialization for all users. And sometimes it provides a lift when your life has hit some rough patches.

When Joe Yuhas' wife Delpha was going through some intense stages of her illness, she and others urged Joe, her primary caregiver, to take a break each day. Her doctor's office was on Route 1, near Scarborough Marsh. So, as Joe explains, "I would throw my bike in my truck, go to the doctor's to pick up her prescriptions, then ride the trail for an hour or so,"

The exercise, the beauty of nature and the change always helped him find a path back to at least a small sense of balance. Shortly after his wife's death, the dedication of the KAB section of the ET close to his home only reinforced the positive feelings he had about the trail.

It has seemed only natural, then, over the past three and half years for Joe to volunteer more and more frequently for the ETA.

He had already been volunteering for "small tasks here and there" for some time after meeting John Andrews in the parking lot of Saco's Dyer Library. As Joe puts it, "Next thing I knew I was stuffing envelopes." (This is a frequent experience of those who meet JA.) He's still helping with mailings, but he's now also serving as a trustee and trail ambassador, and as a Sag wagon driver for the Maine Lighthouse Ride. He also staffs information booths at such events as school health and wellness fairs, attends community meetings, and gives talks to

By Brenda Edmands

groups about the trail. Whew!

A former head of the life sciences department at St. Francis in Biddeford (later UNE) and biology teacher at Kennebunk High School, where he started their

oceanography program, Joe is really in his element when sharing his knowledge about the natural life along the trail. This is readily apparent when he is leading one of the ETA's increasingly popular full-moon walks/snowshoes/skis. He says the walks "take me back to my graduate school days when I worked as a naturalist for the Columbus, OH, Metropolitan Parks." He also enjoys how the walks are making him brush up some dusty corners of knowledge about birds and plants.

He doesn't know if it's because of his experiences with the ET or not, but recently he began teaching indoors again, too, leading a course in Natural History at York County Senior College.

His favorite natural encounters so far on the ET are baby snapping turtles crossing in front of him and the one beaver he spotted near the site of last year's trail flooding. "It was around 40 pounds," he said. While he acknowledges it probably helped to build the dam that caused the trail damage, from his description you can't help

(Continued on page 7)



(Photo by Jim Bucar)

Wells Seeks Funding for Design of Trail

By Marianne Goodine, Treasurer, ETMD

As we spring ahead and look forward to warmer weather, the Town of Wells is working together with the Town of Kennebunk to continue the trail southward through Wells to the North Berwick Town Line. Wells is currently putting the finishing touches on its Fiscal 2015 budget and will present to the Wells voters at the Annual Town Meeting on June 10 a funding article to "Undertake with the Town of Kennebunk preliminary design of the Eastern Trail through Wells and Kennebunk along the Granite State Gas Pipeline Transmission corridor."

This request for \$30,000 will enable Wells to join the Town of Kennebunk in this first stage—completing an engineering design—of ultimately constructing 7 miles of trail through Wells. To reduce the cost to citizens of Wells, most of the work will be done in-house by the Town Engineer/Planner. If you are a Wells resident I ask that you come to the polls on June 10 and vote in favor of this article to continue the trail southward through Wells and reap the benefits of this unique asset.



Ready for the trail in Wells (Photo by Jim Bucar)

Joe Yuhas

(Continued from page 6)

feeling that he might be rooting, just slightly, for the beaver.

Joe enjoys the people he gets to meet as well. This winter he led a moonlight walk with a large group on snowshoes, including many Boy Scouts and their troop leaders. He's also been impressed by users he's encountered in warmer times, like the woman from Nova Scotia who was riding the East Coast Greenway (which ET is a part of) all the way from Halifax to Cape

Cod, her bike fully loaded with gear. He also finds it somehow reassuring to see his own cardiologist regularly riding the trail.

He wouldn't say he "necessarily looks forward to having to rescue people" as a Sag wagon driver during the annual MLR, but he admits, "I do find it gratifying" to assist those in need. And though he worries that it sounds "cheesy," he says what he really likes best about helping at the ride is "cheering the riders in as they come across the finish line."

Have we mentioned how very, very lucky we feel to have Joe volunteering for us?



www.EasternTrail.org

ETA Thanks Major Donors

- Biddeford Savings Bank
- Chiropractic Family Wellness Center
- Coastal Healthy Communities Coalition
- Diversified Communications
- Kennebunk Savings Bank
- Miss Fits of Maine
- Peoples Choice Credit Union
- Rev 3 Triathlon
- Revision Energy
- Saco & Biddeford Savings
- UNUM
- York Hospital

2014 Maine Lighthouse Ride Sponsors

A+ Party Rental	Jay Beauchemin	Saco/Biddeford Savings
Atayne	Kennebunkport Bicycle	Scott Dow
Bergen & Parkinson, LLC	Kittery Trading Post	Sooper Dogs & Cats
Biddeford Savings Bank	Michael Boyson & Nancy Grant	Southern Maine Community College
Bowker & Associates	Michaud Distributors	State of Maine - Kettle Cove
Brown Industrial Group	Micro Support Group	Town of Kennebunk
Cabot Cheese	Moody's Collision	Town of OOB
City of Biddeford	New Morning	Town of Scarborough
City of South Portland	North Dam Mill	Walgreen's
Clean Harbors	Ocean Park Association	Woodman Edmands Danylik Austin Smith & Jacques P.A.
Coastal Healthy Communities Coalition	P&C Insurance	York Hopsital
Creative Awards	Peoples Choice Credit Union	York Hospital - Choose to be Healthy
Doyle Enterprises	Portland Water District	
Friendly's Ice Cream	Road ID	
Friends from Hallowell	Rodger's Sports	

Join Us — the All-Volunteer ETA

- \$35 Individual
 - \$50 Family
 - \$75 Trailblazer
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 - \$1000 Lifetime
 - \$250 Corporate
 - \$250 Municipality
- Name _____
- Street Address _____
- City, State, Zip _____
- Email _____

Make check payable to the ETA and mail to our address below. You can also join by visiting our web site, www.easterntrail.org, where you can use a credit card. The ETA is a 501(c)3 nonprofit: your donations are tax deductible.

Eastern Trail Alliance

P.O. Box 250, Saco, Maine 04072
207-284-9260

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Eastern Trail Alliance

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THE EASTERN TRAIL

A transportation-recreation greenway
connecting Kittery to Casco Bay in South Portland

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

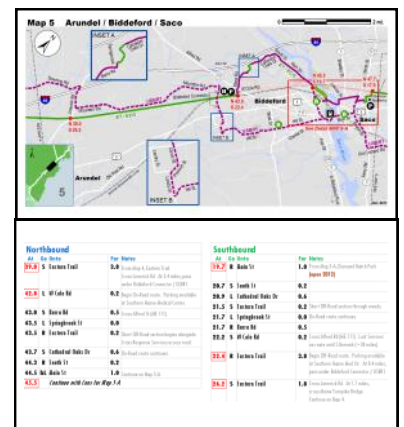
Second Edition available Late Spring 2014:

Up-to-Date Full-Color Guide to the Eastern Trail

Features:

- New Kennebunk-Arundel-Biddeford and Saco to Old orchard Beach sections.
- High resolution, 1 mile per inch scale.
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Join online or invite a friend to join online at www.EasternTrail.org

The Eastern Trail Alliance is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit land trust. Your donations are tax deductible as provided by law.