

Kim Harris

From: Jim Fincher <jfincher2@windstream.net>
Sent: Wednesday, September 30, 2020 3:42 PM
To: Kim Harris
Subject: Trail organization report.

Kim:

We've had a very busy and very productive season. Here's some highlights.

Chautauqua Rails to Trails has had a very busy 2020 in spite of the pandemic. Some of the things we have accomplished are:

We received a grant from New York State to replace a culvert that was collapsing. The cost of the replacement was just over \$80,000. It took just over 4 years to wade through all the paperwork. We have another grant in the works for right at \$1.5 million to replace a large dangerous culvert. That's been in the works for almost 5 years. With the pandemic and the states' huge financial shortfall, we don't know what to think.

We received grants from local foundations and installed a crushed limestone trail in and near Mayville, NY. It will be interesting seeing what snowmobiles and trespassing ATVs do to the surface.

We re-ditched 1/3 of a mile south of Nettle Hill Rd and covered the raw dirt with fine gravel which should do away with the standing water we have been putting up with.

We also Re-ditched 1/4 mile of trail south of Honeysette Rd, and installed a french drain just north of the same road to cure a muddy spot.

A local foundation granted us money to replace the large signs at two of our three trailheads. The new signs reflect a change of philosophy. The signs feature the name of the trailhead on the first line, then the name of the trail segment and finally Chautauqua Rails to Trails. We hope that emphasizes the trail rather than the organization.

We've designed and installed way finding signs and are planning to do more of the same before snow falls.

We greatly improved an old railroad bed near Frewsburg, NY with hopes we can tie it into the local town park and its trails. The problem here is beavers. The northern 1/3 mile used to be a car junkyard, and when the derelict vehicles were removed, the beavers moved in. Right now, about half the area is a swamp with at least 5 beaver dams and water up to 12 inches deep on the old road we hope to use as a trail. Our Dept of Environmental Conservation must give us two permits before we can begin work on extending the trail to a parking area. The pandemic put them so far behind, our patience is being tested. There is a possibility this trail could eventually tie into a trail from Warren, PA.

We started to try to develop a trail from Sherman to the state line by working south to north. The first person we contacted turned us down flat. Not now, not ever. So, we've decided to start near Sherman and work south, hoping we can develop a trail that will take us to the road to Corry.

There's some more action but my fingers are tired. In my 20 years with the organization, we've never been so busy. It makes me proud.

Jim Fincher

Sent from my iPad