

## WALLINGFORD TRAILS WORK GROUP

### SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR YEAR 2025

The Wallingford Trails Work Group (TWG) is volunteer run, and consists of 4 Team Coordinators. We oversee trail maintenance for the recreational trails under the oversight of the town Parks & Recreation Department. All volunteer maintenance is performed by the coordinators and enlisted members of the public, who are culled from the various user groups found out on our trail systems.

Note: The vast majority of our volunteer work occurs within the Tyler Mill Recreation Area, Wallingford's largest public recreational land holding. Other trail systems we maintain are located within Ferguson Woods, Bertini Park, Marcus Cook Park, and Fresh Meadows. Therefore, the bulk of the following work performance occurred within Tyler Mill...

- **TOTAL 2025 TWG VOLUNTEER HOURS: 1,152**
- **TOTAL HOURS DEDICATED TO TRAIL BRUSHING: 93** (Trail brushing consists of the annual 'pruning back' of overgrowth that encroaches on trails. This work is essential, time sensitive, and often needs to be repeated throughout the growing season)
- **TOTAL NUMBER OF FALLEN TREES REMOVED FROM TRAILS: 63**
- **INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE/IMPROVEMENTS:**
  - FOOTBRIDGES:** Two footbridges were repaired, while one deteriorating footbridge was completely demolished and rebuilt.
  - MAPBOARDS:** The concept of Mapboards was introduced this year. 12 Mapboards were constructed and mounted within Tyler Mill, while 3 Mapboards were constructed and mounted within Ferguson Woods.
  - FIELD MARKERS:** The concept of Field Markers was also introduced this year. These are enlarged, colored metal trail blazes mounted waist high on metal posts. Field Markers are utilized where trails run along field edges. (Replacing outdated wooden 4 x 4 posts)
- **TYLER MILL TRAIL SYSTEM BLAZE REDISIGN:** Several issues dictated a trail blazing revision in the Tyler Mill Recreation Area. These issues included multiple, unconnected trails of the same color, as well as sections of trails blazed two different colors. The redesign procedure looked at the entire Tyler Mill trail system as a whole in order to reblaze existing trails into a more cohesive and less confusing unit. To cite one example, 5 different colored trails or trails sections were reblazed into one continuous trail. Note: All of the existing Tyler Mill kiosks, as well as the new Mapboards, were updated with accurate, revised maps reflecting the blaze changes. This reblazing effort was a huge project.

- **JUNE NATIONAL TRAILS DAY EVENT: Over 40 People Participated** (We offered guided hikes and mountain bike tours, with an emphasis on family participation)
- **INVASIVE PLANT REMOVAL EFFORTS:** In the course of fulfilling our mission, we make every effort to remove invasive plant materials encountered during our work parties. Additionally, one of our coordinators, Larry Stowe, focuses much of his time & efforts specifically on invasive removal. This past year the TWG dedicated over **500 hours** towards this effort.
- **TWG MEMBER CERTIFICATION:** Late 2025 saw the recertification of two of our coordinators in the field of **Trained & Certified Sawyers**. Doug Clark & Scott Gray, who are also Trail Managers for the Connecticut Forest & Park Association (CFPA), successfully completed a 2 day recertification under the Sorrenson Game of Logging Program, offered through CFPA. This recertification is valid for three years.
- **PUBLIC INTERFACE:** Additionally related to the mission of the TWG is an ongoing effort to engage with the many users of our municipal trail systems. When appropriate, we stop to ask users we encounter a series of questions. This is to gather public opinion, which is documented and utilized in ongoing and future operations. A sample of these questions is “How often do you use this trail system?” “What do you like and/or dislike about these trails?” “What changes would you like to see?” “What parking and/or access points do you prefer to use?” ...etc. We highly value the opinions of the public users of our properties, and it is apparent that good public relation efforts go a long way. Most users express a high level of gratitude for the dedicated work they see occurring on our municipal trail systems.

Scott Gray ~ TWG Founder & Coordinator