



Franklin & Bellingham

RAIL TRAIL COMMITTEE

2019 – Year in Review



Grove Street trailhead in Franklin, MA

OUR MISSION

The Franklin & Bellingham Rail Trail Committee (FBRTC) is a volunteer advocacy group dedicated to the development, maintenance, promotion and financial support of the Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) as a multi-use, universally accessible recreational path.

FBRTC is a recognized 501(c)(3), working in partnership with the local communities, federal, state and local governments.

2019 Highlights



Prospect Street, Franklin MA - Tunnel Rendition

Funding Approved for Prospect St. Tunnel in Franklin

In the late summer of 2019 funding for the Prospect Street tunnel in Franklin has been approved in the amount of \$1.3 million to be funded from the Department of Conservation

and Recreation's (DCR) Trails Capital Project. The project went out to bid in December of 2019 and we expect it to be completed by the end of the summer 2020.

[Read more on our website](#)

Group Walks and StoryWalk(R) on the SNETT

Our volunteers have organized monthly group walks throughout the year on various sections of the SNETT in Franklin and Bellingham. These walks have been attended by over 100 people and many four-legged friends. During the monthly walks, attendees can learn more about the trail history and nature surrounding the SNETT.

In June and October we have held a pop-up StoryWalk(R) featuring the books *Get up and Go* by Nancy Carlson and *The Golden Acorn* by Katy Hudson, respectively. Children and their families would stroll the SNETT rail trail, while reading pages of the books installed along.

To stay up to date on our happenings, please follow us on our NEW [website](#) or [Facebook](#) page.



December 2019 group walk.

Fundraising and Grant Writing

During the year we have held several fundraising events - The Pour Richard's Fundraiser in January brought a nice crowd of people and in excess of \$400 was raised. Our main fundraiser of the year was our Franklin Fives Road Race held in May. We have hosted over 80 runners and walkers and raised over \$1,300.

In 2019 the FBRTC has applied for a grant with the Mass Cultural Council/Franklin Cultural Council for Interpretive Signage. We expect a decision by the end of January 2020. Committee members were also actively working on a grant application for trail improvements near Spring Street (Franklin, MA). This grant will be submitted in January 2020.

Trail Stewardship

Our trail stewardship efforts include education, support and trail maintenance of the SNETT rail trail. Our volunteers have participated in several community events (Strawberry Stroll and Harvest Festival held in Franklin, MA) to raise awareness of the rail trail, latest developments, and events held. The FBRTC maintains several kiosks on the trail and provides maps and brochures year-round residents and visitors of the trail.



Fall Clean Up 2019

We hold 2 major clean up days each year (spring and fall). The spring clean up was concentrating on the trail from Grove Street to Prospect Street (volunteers removed fallen trees and branches after winter and picked up trash). Our fall efforts were focused on the section between Lake St (Bellingham) and Prospect St in Franklin (we were removing debris from the drainage ditches along the trail to improve water flow and drainage and to minimize mosquito breeding in the area).

Trail stewardship starts within our communities - over the years we have worked with the local communities, organizations (such as Franklin Downtown Partnership, Franklin Cultural District, or the Franklin and Bellingham Libraries etc.), federal, state and local governments to bring awareness of the trail, the state of the trail and to help secure funding for trail improvements.

Looking ahead

We are looking forward to what 2020 has to bring - the tunnel completion under Prospect Street, new partnership for our road race in May with the Tri-Valley Front Runners, our January fundraiser at Pour Richard's, many more group and StoryWalks(R) along the SNETT and much more.

If you would like to learn more about us and our work, please join us for our monthly meeting. The meetings are held at the Franklin YMCA on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm. We would love to see you.

Wishing you a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year! See you on the trail or at one of our events!

Sincerely,

The Franklin & Bellingham Rail Trail Committee



[Franklin & Bellingham Rail Trail Committee](#)

P.O. Box 68
Franklin, MA 02038