



Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

Date: 10/2/2025
From: Commissioner Stewart
Re: Bi-Weekly Report

Updates on Departmental Priorities:

STATEWIDE FIRE BAN IS IN EFFECT

The heavy rain last week helped provide short-term relief, but drought and precipitation deficits are still well entrenched. The National Weather Service said we will need approximately 9-11 inches of rain in the next 30 days to eliminate the precipitation deficit, which is highly unlikely. Big thanks to the DOT for sharing this message on their roadside signage!



The 2025 NH Governor's Arts Awards happen every other year. This year we will present awards to artists and organizations who were nominated by their communities on October 8th in the Executive Council Chamber at the State House, with Governor Ayotte.

TRAM UPDATE: The engineering firm selected to design a replacement for the Cannon Mountain aerial tramway had its contract approved by Governor and Council on September 17. Shea, Carr, and Jewell, Inc. of Boulder, Colorado, also known as SCJ Alliance will be on site at Cannon Mountain starting Monday, October 6 to assess the structural condition of the two existing landing bays and the three towers of the existing tramway. Their goal is to assess how much of the existing tramway infrastructure can be incorporated in the new tramway. They will be closely inspecting the steel work and the concrete foundations of the Valley and Summit stations and the three towers. There may be intermittent stoppages of the tramway operation to allow inspectors to climb the towers to gauge the degree of steel deterioration and the condition of the bolted connections. Information gleaned from this field work will establish the baseline condition of the tramway and allow design of a new tramway system to go forward over the course of the winter. The current tramway is scheduled to close to the public at the end of October.

Media Interactions and Events:

- Distributed press release, [Second NH Frank Lloyd Wright house named to National Register of Historic Places](#) (Oct. 1).
- Distributed press release, [New Hampshire State Parks announces foliage traffic initiatives in Franconia Notch](#) (Sept. 29).
- Distributed press release, [Structural analysis begins on Cannon Aerial Tramway](#). (Sept. 25).
- Distributed press release, . [Drought conditions lead to increased wildfire risk in New Hampshire](#) (Sept. 22).
- The Union Leader is planning a story about extra special items at the NH State Library and sent both a reporter and photographer to speak with Commissioner Stewart and Administrator of Library Operations :: Assistant State Librarian Mindy Atwood. Story is expected to run in mid October.
- NH Magazine has been in touch about writing a short feature about the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in New Hampshire, including the camp located at Bear Brook State Park. We are working on scheduling a tour of the CCC collection that is on site at Bear Brook and anticipate the article to appear in early 2026.
- Forest Ranger Katie Baughman was the guest for two segments of WMUR's "Grow it Green," [Ways to properly contain and extinguish campfires](#) and [Fire safety tips for lawns and gardens](#). She's a great spokesperson for the Forest Protection Bureau and we're looking forward to more to come!
- 10/3 Conway Branch Rail Trail Advisory Committee, 9am Center Ossipee
- 10/3-26 Harris Brown Raptor Observation, Miller State Park
- 10/3-5 State 9 Racing, Bear Brook State Park
- 10/4 NIHAA Bass Fishing, Wellington State Park
- 10/4 Run for Resilience, Wallis Sands State Park
- 10/5-6 Rockfest Half Marathon, Hampton Beach-Main Beach
- 10/8 Moving Mountains filming, Mount Washington State Park
- 10/10 Wentworth Coolidge Commission, 10am Mansion
- Oct 14 State Parks Advisory Council Meeting, Tram Summit
- 10/15 Adaptive Archery, Bear Brook State Park
- 10/17 Mountaineering Drill: RING, FNSP – Lafayette Campground
- October 3rd, the Conway Branch Rail Trail Advisory Committee will be interviewing potential consultants to prepare an engineering assessment and management plan.
- The Bureau of Trails staff will be participating in the **New Hampshire Snowmobile Association's (NHSA) Grass Drags and Watercross** annual event on October 10-12, 2025, in Fremont, hosted by the NH Snowmobile Association, where over 45,000 people attend this 3-day premiere snowmobile event. This annual event serves as an important fundraiser for the NH Snowmobile Association and brings together snowmobile enthusiasts for some unique competition. The event hosts several vendors where riders can stock up on gear and prepare for the upcoming season. The Bureau of Trails event trailer will be there, and staff will be interacting with the public over the 3-day event.
Additional information can be found here: <https://slednh.com/nh-grass-drags-and-watercross/>
- Oct 23 National Association of Counites Meeting, Tram/Peabody

Legislative Interactions:

Joint Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules:

Federal Government Interactions:

Executive Council Interactions:

In Case You Missed it:

On September 16th, the Division of Forests and Lands, Forest Management Bureau hosted a field tour for the Nash Stream Forest Citizen's Advisory Committee. Over a dozen members of the committee joined North Regional Forester Maggie Machinist, Forester Todd Caron and FMB Administrator Will Guinn to visit two dam reconstructions – Trio Pond and Little Bog Pond, both wooden crib dams built during the early log driving years. The group also visited two recently completed forest management areas where managers discussed harvesting goals.

Special thanks to our colleagues Corey Clark, Chief Engineer and Charlie Krautmann, Civil Engineer at the Department of Environmental Services, Dam Bureau for co-hosting our visit to the two reconstruction sites!



The Bureau of Trails District 1 staff have completed the installation of the Depot Camp Bridge, and Indian Stream Road has reopened on the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters property. The repairs caused by the catastrophic July 2024 rainstorm to the road network are now complete.

It was ***CHEERS*** to **50**, at the Annual New Hampshire Highland Games & Festival, this past September 19 – 21 at Loon Mountain Resort in Lincoln, NH. This three-day celebration showcases the sights, sounds, and spirit of Scotland through traditional heavy athletics, live music and entertainment, food and drink, cultural activities, and more. Director Adele Scicilia attended, representing the DNCR.

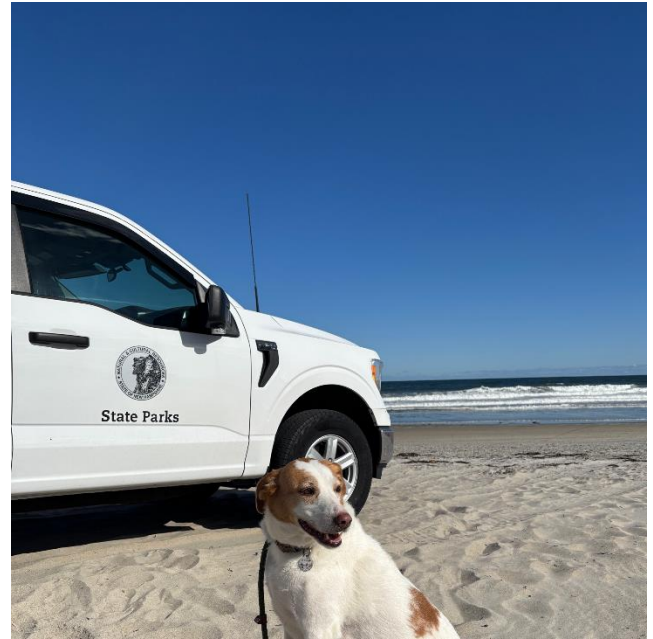




Check out this Hawk Release atop Pack Monadnock at Miller State Park!

AND...A friendly reminder that leashed dogs are now allowed on the beach!

This is Maggie. She's a good girl.



A SPECIAL REPORT FROM THE DIV OF PARKS AND RECREATION VOLUNTEER PROGRAM:

State Parks volunteers have been busy!

Between September 4-8th, the DNCR partnered with the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests to host the 19th annual Monadnock Trails Week.

Over 50 volunteers came out to Monadnock State Park over the 5 days and dedicated 775 hours to making improvements to trails and trailhead areas. Four major project areas were focused on as well as general trail maintenance across 8 trails and dozens of picnic tables in the HQ area were given a fresh coat of paint.



NH State Parks hosted a level-1 maintenance training for new Monadnock Volunteer Trail Crew members, a Veterans/Military affinity crew tackled erosion and mud on the Royce Trail, a Women's Affinity crew, a crew of employees from REI in Bedford NH, and we were grateful to have the members of Trailwrights donate a Saturday to the cause.

But that's not all! Work continues on the Restore the Ridge project in Franconia Notch. On State Park land, professional trail crew members working for the World Trails Network came back for a week to make up rain-days lost in the summer session on the Old Bridle Path. Appalachian Mountain Club and their partner crews SCA-NH and Vermont Youth Conservation Corps continue work on the Old Bridle Path up above on USFS managed land, and the sustainable relocation of the Falling Waters Trail is making steady and solid progress towards completing the loop trail by the end of 2026.

Over 20 volunteers working with the Rumney Climbers Association and Pawtuckaway Climbers Coalition – led by volunteer Jed Piatt – put in two days of volunteer effort on September 6th and 7th to officially open access to a popular climbing area in Pawtuckaway State Park. 4 bog bridges were built on site and other trail tread was hardened and improved with the goal of focusing recreational user impacts and keeping climber access sustainable.

Last but not least, the Northeast Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA) Southern Chapter hosted its annual Bear Brook Boogie event at Bear Brook State Park. 80+ participants attended the event this year with the goal of encouraging responsible recreation among the mountain bike community and providing an opportunity for new and novice mountain bikers to learn more and join guided rides throughout the Parks vast trail network.

A lot of effort and attention from our Parks and HQ staff goes into these projects and events, so I want to give special thanks to Dee Dee Hanson, Ed Pinsky Sr., Andrew Pacuk, Dave Richardson, Tara Blaney, Will Kirkpatrick & Mary Shotton, and Christy Pacuk for their diligent work behind the scenes to keep everyone safe and operationally compliant.

Written by Andrew Crowley