



Walking while quietly observing, is to discover the beauty that surrounds us.

Annual General Meeting

Members and friends of the Tomifobia Nature Trail are invited to our Annual General Meeting, at the **Ripplecove Hotel**, 700 ch. Ripplecove, Ayer's Cliff, **Saturday, April 27, 2019 at 10am.** Registration, with coffee and donuts served, at 9:30 a.m. Meeting agenda available on our website.

The Tomifobia Nature Trail is managed by Sentiers Massawippi, a non-profit organization, by and for its members and for the community. Only with the help of donations, and with the work of volunteers, can we maintain the trail and the organization in good order, and ensure its future. We invite you to renew your membership so that we can protect this jewel of our region and permit walkers, cyclists and skiers to benefit from it for years to come. As a member, you are allowed to vote at our annual meeting, thus having a say in the future of the trail. You will also receive our newsletters and, if you wish, participate in our activities as a volunteer or become a board member. My thanks to all of our members for their dedication and our trail sponsors and volunteers for their contributions. Happy Trails!

- Ray Banham, President

2018 Highlights

January - A relatively quiet time for trail work. Jake Jackson continued to clear the new entrance parking area with his truck. Cross-country skiing commenced with skiers breaking their own trails. An early thaw resulted in some minor flooding. Two gates were ripped down by snowmobilers at ch. Stanstead and ch. Cassville.



Broken gate

February - Keith Baxter, George Foster and Jacques Racine attended Foundation Massawippi meetings in North Hatley to review possibilities of working together and to gather private funding ideas. This group has several walking trails in North Hatley. Some flooding on the trail, ch. Boynton just north of Cassville at KM 7 also inundated.

March - Keith Baxter and Ray Banham attended a MRC Memphremagog presentation on applying for local development grants. These grants require working with municipalities to complete the applications. Further work required with Ogden.

April - MRC Coaticook grant applied for \$8,283 to be released through Stanstead East. This was to increase the parking area and build an entrance park with information signs. \$5,468 has been received to date, balance due on completion of project.

May - Work started to extend the parking area at KM .07 (at the new entrance park).

June - Launch of our new website! New site includes trail news, volunteering and donation information, photo gallery and more! *Frontier Animal Society* held their annual dog walk. There were 80 participants this year. Work began on the replacement of railings on bridge #3 and replacement of railing outer support beam on bridge #4. A culvert repair was required at KM 8.3. A town council meeting was attended to discuss further cooperation between Ayer's Cliff and Sentiers Massawippi.

July - New, more prominent signs were installed on both sides of the route 141 bridge to encourage trail users to use the trail under the bridge. Work on the new entrance park commenced (photos and more details on our website). George Foster and Ray Banham inspected the west side of the Doré marsh to record the extent of the invasive Common Reed (Phragmite). This was in conjunction with a pending study and potential removal by COGESAF.



Invasive Common Reed



New bike station

August - Ch. Dubé KM 18 trail surface repaired at farm crossover with improved drainage system. A bike repair and pump station was installed by Ayer's Cliff opposite the library in Tyler Park, for the convenience of trail users.

September - Request for grants and donations sent out to municipalities. Mike Grayson and Michel Durand performed a culvert inspection along the trail and

prepared a report. *FCC Agri Spirit Fund* application did not work out this year, but will be applied to again next year.

October - Plans for the ch. Laflamme shelter discussed with a contractor. Several trail members and directors helped COGESAF remove Japanese Knotweed on shoreline of the Tomifobia river. At KM 10.1 triangle park, 5 rotten trees and fallen branches removed adjacent to the pathway. Mike Crook and Maitee Cantin made a presentation on behalf of the merchants association of Ayer's Cliff re: ideas and cooperation for the trail.

November - Positive feedback regarding new rest areas built in 2017 continue to be received. Jocelyne Rochon and Ray Banham applied for a grant from *MEES (Ministère de l'Éducation et des Études Supérieures)*, to improve facilities and nature education along the trail.

December - *Newport Parks and Recreation* requested a letter of support from *Sentiers Massawippi* for a grant from *Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative* for a new park and an extension of their bike path from Newport to the border at Stanstead.

Projects for 2019

- Doré spillway and river bank repair
- Install new railings on bridge #1 & #2
- Finalize rest areas and shelter
- Repair culverts as required
- Installation of *Land art* displays
- Install wildlife pedestals and signs
- Continue cooperation with trail groups
- Meeting with municipalities, ministerial offices, MRC's, CLD, and COGESAF.

Contact Us

Tomifobia Nature Trail
P.O. BOX 1502,
Ayer's Cliff J0B 1C0

(Registered charity
133444166 RR001)