

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 & Spa**, 700 ch. Ripplecove, Ayer's Cliff, **Saturday, April 25, 2020 at 10am**. Registration, with coffee and donuts served, at 9:30 a.m. Meeting agenda available on our website.

*The Tomifobia Nature Trail is owned and 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, skiers and birdwatchers 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*

## 2019 Highlights

**January** - Two young adults were successfully employed for trail maintenance through the *Canada Summer Jobs Program*. The board agreed to pay them \$15.00/hr plus a small travel allowance.

**February** - Three new grant programs applied for were not successful. However the existing MRC Coaticook grant through Stanstead East of \$8,283 was extended through 2020.

**March** - More local businesses joined the *Trail Partnership Program*, for a total of 11 partners with a couple more pending. Trail member, Michel Durand presented to the board the findings of the 2018 inspection of trail culverts done with fellow member, Mike Grayson. A \$5,000 grant for a land art project was approved by MRC Memphremagog from their *Cultural Initiatives Program*. An additional \$3,000 from Ogden and \$1,000 plus volunteer time from the Sentiers Massawippi was added to support the project.

**April** - The bid for the 8.1 acre lot adjacent to Ch. Cassville was not successful and was awarded to an immediate neighbour. The second property comprising of 1 acre of mostly wetland is still under consideration. The *Carnaval de la bicyclette de SERPAC* event was cancelled due to bad weather, they would like to try again in 2020. 40 members attended the 2018 AGM at the Ripplecove Hotel & Spa.

**May** - The river embankment on private property adjacent to the trail, at KM 0.4 at the north end of the trail was badly damaged with a number of trees pulled out by high water. A meeting was held with Mme Vanasse, the



Riverbank damage

landowner near KM 0.1, to discuss a solution to snowmobile traffic in this area. She generously offered to allow the snowmobile trail to pass on her property adjacent to Ch. Boynton (west side). A group of volunteers planted additional trees at the KM 16.6 site of the major trail washout in 2015.

## Projects for 2020

- Resurface trail KM 0 to KM 10, estimate \$20,000
- Riverbank repairs at KM 6.1 (69 meters of damage) and at KM 6.7, estimate \$60,000
- Culvert repair as required
- New railings on bridges #1 & 2
- Finish shelter at Ch. Laflamme
- Repair beaver fencing
- Design wildlife pedestals and signs
- Support other organizations requesting trail usage
- Meetings with municipalities, ministerial offices, MRC's, CLD and COGESAF

**June** - A letter was addressed to the *Sûreté de Québec* (Coaticook) authorizing the issue of tickets for unauthorized vehicles on the trail. Trail director Mike Sudlow, made a presentation to the board reviewing the route to Magog through Sainte-Catherine-de-Hatley. This was to assist the MRC Memphremagog *Committee de Vélo* to further investigate the link. Trail President Ray Banham, was invited to the Annual General Meeting of the Foundation Massawippi, a well planned and financed organization. We have communicated with this group in the past to see if there was a way we could work together. The main difference is they have walking trails around large sections of Lake Massawippi whereas the Tomifobia Nature Trail is a multi-functional trail, however both organizations share the same philosophy.



New shelter

**July** - Extension of the parking lot and culvert at KM 0.7 completed for 6 more vehicles. The town of Ayer's Cliff opened a small bike rental station in Tyler Park. Contractor Sam Tremblay, commenced construction of a picnic shelter at the Ch. Laflamme parking, and should be completed for Summer 2020.

**August** - Board members visited a mock-up of a large metal sculpture proposed for the land art project. At the same time various locations were visited for possible installation. This project is presently on hold pending engineering certification, additional funds (est. \$20,000), municipal and insurance approval.

**September** - We were reminded of an expanding Hogweed problem at some locations along the trail. Serge Mailhot, a dedicated volunteer, has offered to help remove it in Spring 2020.

**October** - On Oct. 29th a flash flood washed out several sections of the surface on the north end of the trail between Ch. Curtis to Ayer's Cliff. The board is presently working on a new mission statement for the trail. Concrete cones were installed at both ends of the wooded grove near Route #141 to prevent snowmobiles from entering.



Trail Washout

**November** - New brochures were designed and printed. Two potential vacancies to be filled on the board, if interested please contact us!

**December** - A second flood in early winter has resulted in additional trail damage. We still have the Spring thaw to monitor but already have extensive repairs to perform.

## Contact Us

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