

ASHUELOT RAIL TRAIL PROJECT UPDATE 2021:

The town received a USDA grant this year for improvements to the Ashuelot Rail Trail in the amount of \$26,321. There's an in-kind match of \$1,124 that is given by volunteer work. Two years ago the town set up a capital reserve fund for restoration of the rail trail and voters have contributed \$10,000 per year. About \$3,000 of that money will go toward work with this grant. One section near the Tannery has already been restored and a parking area was created on the Tannery property for people to access the rail trail in all seasons. There are 2 more sections to restore by June of 2022. Also, for 2022, Winchester has been informed they will also be receiving an RTP grant from the state for further improvements on the rail trail in the amount of \$23,655 with a match of \$4,593 for an additional 3 areas restored. The north bridge on the rail trail was redecked and new handrails installed by volunteers with funding by the state and the town rail trail fund. There are plans to redo the South bridge in the coming year. Facts produced (UNH) have shown that rail trails bring in tens of thousands of dollars a year of recreation income into towns with rail trails that access their Main Streets. While it is known that in NH most rail trails are owned by the state, the state offers little funding for improvements. Between private donations, town funds and grants funding, the Ashuelot rail trail will soon be a destination area for tourists as well as a great recreation asset for our residents by offering safe hiking, biking, cross country skiing, horseback riding and snowmobiling. Our natural features such as Forest Lake, Ashuelot River, Pisgah State Park and the Ashuelot Rail Trail are all part of an economic engine for the Town of Winchester.



North bridge repairs finished spring of 2021



Parking off Recycle way done by owner June 2021



Trail heading north from Tannery



Parking area at the Tannery for all seasons

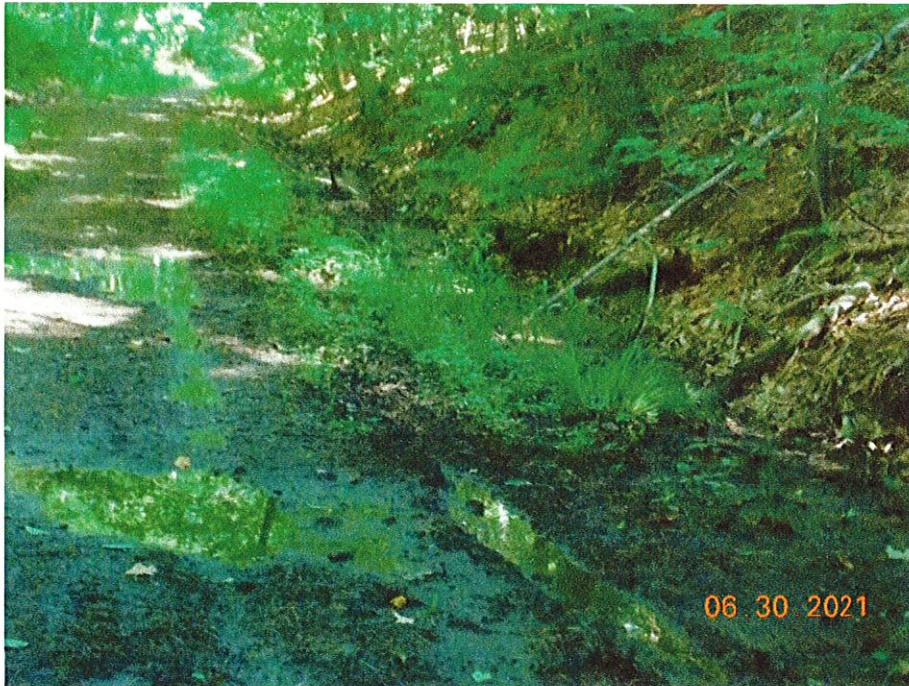
Work to do in 2022



South Bridge work – deck and railings



Off Back Ashuelot Road drainage



Off Back Ashuelot Road drainage



Trail stability, widening and surface improvements off Old Westport Rd.