



M-DTS NEWSLETTER May 2004

M-DTS WORK PARTY -- 9:00 a.m., Sunday, July 11
M-DTS MEMBERS' MEETING -- 2:00 p.m., Sunday, July 11

Work Party: Meet in the parking area at Apollo Park. We hope to car pool to a closer location to the work site. We will continue work relocating the trail off private property north of Apollo Park. There is much rock work to be done; blow downs to be cleared, brush clearing, clipping.. Equipment needed: mattocks, digging bars, chain saw, small saws, loppers. All workers should bring: work gloves, eye protection, lunch and water.

Members Meeting: Meet at York Hiking Club cabin on Route 425 near Otter Creek.

Directions: From north: From PA Rte 74 east of Red Lion turn left on Burkholder Rd to connect to Rte 425 at New Bridgeville. Go south on Rte 425 about three and a half miles. Turn left on Boyd's Rd and follow it to the new parking area for Apollo Park. To reach the York Hiking club cabin, continue south on Rte 425 for 3 miles. Cabin is on the left on the descent to Otter Creek.

From south and east: Cross the Norman Wood bridge on Rte 372. Turn right, north, on Rte 74 to near Airville; turn right on Rte 425 and follow it about 5 miles to Otter Creek. The York Hiking club cabin is about ¼ mile beyond the bridge on the right side of the road. To reach Apollo Park, continue north on Route 425 about 3 miles and turn right at Boyd Rd. Follow it to the new parking area.

Building a bridge on the M-DT in Elk Neck State Forest, MD

Right: Loading up supplies on the "gator"

Lower left: Deck work on the bridge

Lower right: Hooray it's finished

Left to right: Yvonne Blades, Ron Gray, Tony Belfiglio, Turner Darden, Mary Holmes, Charles Ament, Jim Hooper



MASON-DIXON TRAIL SYSTEM INC

President Anthony Belfiglio

Vice President.....Jim Hooper

Secretary & Newsletter Editor...Yvonne Blades

Treasurer.....Mary Bleecker

Director - PennsylvaniaJames McCoy

Director - Maryland.....Alan Roland

Director - Delaware.....Robert Bennett

Trail Coordinators:

Western Section.....Ron Gray

Central Section.....Pat Yale

Eastern Section.....volunteer needed

The M-DTS Newsletter is published about four weeks in advance of each of the four M-DTS members' meetings/work parties held annually. Submissions are welcomed. Mail or email to editor. (See address under secretary above).

The Mason-Dixon Trail System, Inc. is an all-volunteer, service-oriented association of trail clubs and individual hikers that has as its purpose the use and conservation of the backcountry through the development of new trails in the mid-Atlantic states. The nucleus of M-DTS is the 190-mile Mason-Dixon Trail which passes through historic and scenic areas of Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware.

New members are welcome. To join send \$15 (which includes cost of M-DT maps and patch) to

Mason-Dixon Trail System, Inc
Mary Bleecker

Thereafter, the annual fee is \$5.

Life membership is available for \$250.

Visit the M-DTS web site at:

Membership dues reminder

A dues form is enclosed for those who have not yet sent in their 2004 M-DTS membership dues. We hope you will continue to support the Mason-Dixon Trail System.

TRAIL UPDATES AND ALERTS

No parking at Gaging Station Bridge on Muddy Creek! The area by the bridge has been posted as "no parking" and parked cars have been towed away (Map 5: West to East, Mile 17.3).

Trail closed north of Apollo Park: The trail is still blocked between the rocky promontory south of Cuff's Run and Apollo County Park. (Map 4: West to East - Mile 7.6 to 9.7). About 1 mile of new trail construction is needed to complete the relocation off private land now closed to the M-DT.

Trail updates in North East, MD area:

(1) Warehouse Project Completed: The large warehouse construction project east of Belvedere Rd is completed and is surrounded by a tall chain-link fence. The route for the M-DT lies along a fairly steep slope, planted with grass, between the fence and low lying woods. Hikers are advised to stay high on the slope along the fence line especially towards the rear of the warehouse property where the low lying area is like quicksand! (Map 7: West to East, Mile 5.5+.)

(2) More Development! Map 7: West to East, Mile 8.9. Just east of the development of North Woods, land clearing has taken place and the M-DT was obliterated by downed trees, shrubs, etc. Tony Belfiglio, with chain saw, has attempted to clear the trail through this area but there is no guarantee the trail will remain passable during whatever construction is going to take place there. The developer is required to leave a route for the M-DT.

M-DT Relocation Near Chadds Ford

Map 10 East to West

- 0.6 mi Pass below pond on right. Turn left on trail leading towards RR tracks.
- 0.7 mi Cross RR tracks, bear left, then turn right down slope and meander along game trails through overgrown field. Turn left across a wet area at multi-trunk tree; proceed across floodplain to bank of Brandywine Creek
- 0.9 mi Turn right along the Brandywine
- 1.1 mi Cross ditch - caution muddy bank - then turn right, away from the Brandywine, through brush
- 1.2 mi Reach stream, bear right, climb to RR tracks and follow to left about 300 ft. Descend right on path to roadway, go left around aluminum gate.
- 1.3 mi Turn right after gate into field etc etc.

Map 10 West to East

- 14.8 mi Jog right at bottom of hill to leave field and turn left on old roadway. Pass around aluminum gate and immediately turn right on path to RR tracks. Turn left on tracks to cross stream, then angle right down slope onto trail in brushy woods.
- 14.9 mi Reach floodplain. Cross a ditch. Proceed to bank of the Brandywine and follow it upstream
- 15.1 mi Turn left across wet area to multi-trunk tree. Then meander along game trails through overgrown field.
- 15.2 mi Reach RR track and bear left
- 15.3 mi Turn right off tracks into woods
- 15.4 mi Turn right; go around pond on lower side and continue through woods etc.

MINUTES OF THE MARCH 28, 2004 M-DTS MEMBER'S MEETING

The meeting took place at the new M-DT bridge site in Elk Neck State Forest following the work party. Those present for the meeting and/or the work party were: president Tony Belfiglio, vice-president Jim Hooper, secretary Yvonne Blades, treasurer Mary Bleecker, and Ron Gray, Neal Watson, Pat Yale, Carl Walbeck, Charlie Ament, Tim Schmidt, Joyce Miller, Turner Darden, Mary Holmes, and Lou and Sarah Tateosian.

The minutes of the October 26, 2003 member's meeting were approved as circulated.

Financial Report for 2003

Rick Maerker has reviewed the treasurer's records and submitted the following summary of the year 2003 financial activity of Mason-Dixon Trail System, Inc

	2003	1994-2003 (average)
Income		
Dues/Donations (114 renew, 28 new)	\$1950.00	\$2291.39
Sale of map/guides (39)	410.00	546.46
Sale of patches	32.00	54.93
Interest	8.50	30.78
TOTAL INCOME	\$2400.50	\$3620.83
Expenses		
Administration	\$ 358.55	465.83
Newsletter	658.95	441.91
Map/guide expenses	\$4.90	739.84
Capital expense - Yost monument	1000.00	125.16
Trail maintenance	255.62	267.08
Patches	370.00	111.20
Donations/Dues	105.00	71.50
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2833.02	\$2222.51

Opening balance in checking account as of 1/1/03	\$4668.45
Total income minus expenses in 2003	<u>- 432.52</u>
Ending balance in checking account 12/31/03	\$4235.93
CD - 30 month	\$3122.12
CD - 24 month	\$4368.35
CD - 6 month	\$3351.06

TOTAL ASSETS OF M-DTS, INC. AS OF 12/31/03 \$15077.46

Trail Reports

Eastern Section - Eastern Terminus to Perryville Coordinators: Chester & New Castle Co. - Yvonne Blades [REDACTED] Cecil Co. - Tony Belfiglio [REDACTED]

- Yvonne Blades reported that a section (about 1/2 mile) of the M-DT (also used by the Brandywine Trail) near Chadds Ford has been closed by a new landowner. We learned of this just 2 weeks before the annual Brandywine Trail End to End hike. Permission was granted to use the section for the End to End hike on April 3rd. H.G.Haskell, son of the adjacent landowner, contacted us and suggested we relocate the trail on the Haskell property along the Brandywine Creek floodplain. Yvonne, and Bill Hardam of Wilmington Trail Club, met with HG and cleared and marked a relocation. It is floodplain - wet in places - but with nice views of the Brandywine. HG also suggested that we relocate the M-DT off Cossart Rd onto their property.
- Turner Darden and three trail workers he recruited from the Wilmington Trail Club have freshened blazes on the M-DT from Newark to Elkton.
- Yvonne Blades reported that a short section of the M-DT has been relocated along the northern boundary in Elk Neck State Forest, however the relocation away from houses, trash, and wet areas that she wanted was not approved. The forest manager, however, did promise to have the trash cleaned up and sections of the badly eroded trail improved.

- At today's work party in Elk Neck State Forest, a sixteen-foot bridge was built across a stream on a trail relocation made necessary by the very active beaver colony. See separate account. The relocation was blazed. The Americorp crew rehabilitated the trail through a low-lying wet area.

Central Section – Havre de Grace to Lock 12 Coordinator: Pat Yale

- Parked cars have been towed from both sides of the Gaging Station bridge on Muddy Creek. This is an important access point to the M-DT. We need to determine land ownership, check tax maps, and contact PECO. It may be necessary to hire someone for a title search.

Western Section – Lock 12 to Western Terminus at Whiskey Springs

Coordinator: Ron Gray

- Ron Gray reported that all hurricane damage has basically been cleared up. There is one blowdown with a big hole in the ground on the climb over the ridge between Holtwood Dam and Mill Creek.
- There is a mile of new trail construction still to be done on the relocation north of Apollo Park. We hope to have access to the work site via Kohler Road which would save the long, challenging hike in from Apollo Park
- Jim Hooper needs to meet with one landowner to finalize the route of his proposed relocation along Klines Run north of Long Level.

New Business

Susquehanna Riverland Preservation Project: Jim Hooper reported on the proposal by York County commissioners to acquire Lauxmont Farms, scenic land overlooking the Susquehanna River, to be turned into a state or regional park. The county will negotiate with the (the present owners who are seeking to sell the land for large scale residential development) but if unable to reach an agreement will probably invoke eminent domain. There is widespread support for the park project among area politicians and residents. Adjacent utility-owned lands are also being considered for potential purchase. Funding is expected to come from state, township, county and federal governments. A section of the M-DT could be relocated off roads into the proposed park.

New M-DTS Maps: Yvonne Blades is making good progress in updating the text for the maps and will soon work with and his photoshop computer program to redraw the maps where needed. She recently collected GPS data of the M-DT and some side trails in Gifford Pinchot State Park. It was suggested that we order the minimum number of maps this time (500?) as relocations soon make them out of date.

Next Meeting and work party: Sunday July 11 at Apollo Park.

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The Bridge-building Project at Elk Neck

This was a cooperative effort with M-DTS, Rick Smith, manager of Elk Neck State Park/Forest, Margit Pruett and her Maryland Conservation Corp crew and an Americorp crew from Perryville. Ron Grey drew up the plans for the bridge and the list of materials required. The materials were purchased by Margit from a grant received by ENSP for projects on the Mason-Dixon Trail in the forest. Also purchased was a "gator" which proved to be invaluable for transporting materials. The MCC crew had cleared blowdowns on the main access trail to the worksite so the gator could get through. The Americorp crew carried the pre-cut lumber the remaining ¼ mile to the bridge site. Ron and the M-DTS group along with guest helper Carl Walbach, and MCC crew member Joe Supik, set to work building the bridge. The bridge was completed about 3 pm and the delayed M-DTS members' meeting was held on site.

M-DT Relocation in Elk Neck State Forest Map 8

West to East

- 5.0 mi Turn left off road and enter woods on gated hunter access trail.
- 5.8 mi Watch for right turn onto relocation (3/04) to bypass flooded area due to beaver activity.
- 6.1 mi Descend to cross stream on bridge. Trail then climbs again and passes through nice woods with views of the beaver wetlands.
- 6.4 mi Turn right on hunter access trail
- 7.2 mi Reach dirt/gravel road etc (was mile 6.7)

East to West

- 9.3 mi Reach dirt/gravel road. Cross road and enter woods on gated hunter access road
- 10.0 mi Turn left on relocation (3/04) to bypass flooded area due to beaver activity. Trail has nice views of beaver wetlands area
- 10.3 mi Descend and cross stream on bridge, then climb up and continue through woods
- 10.6 mi Turn left at trail junction
- 11.5 mi Turn right on dirt/gravel road (was mile 11.0)