



M-D-T-S NEWSLETTER February, 2003

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Trail blocked north of Apollo Park. See page 2 for details

M-DT WORK PARTY -- 9:00 a.m., Sunday, March 16

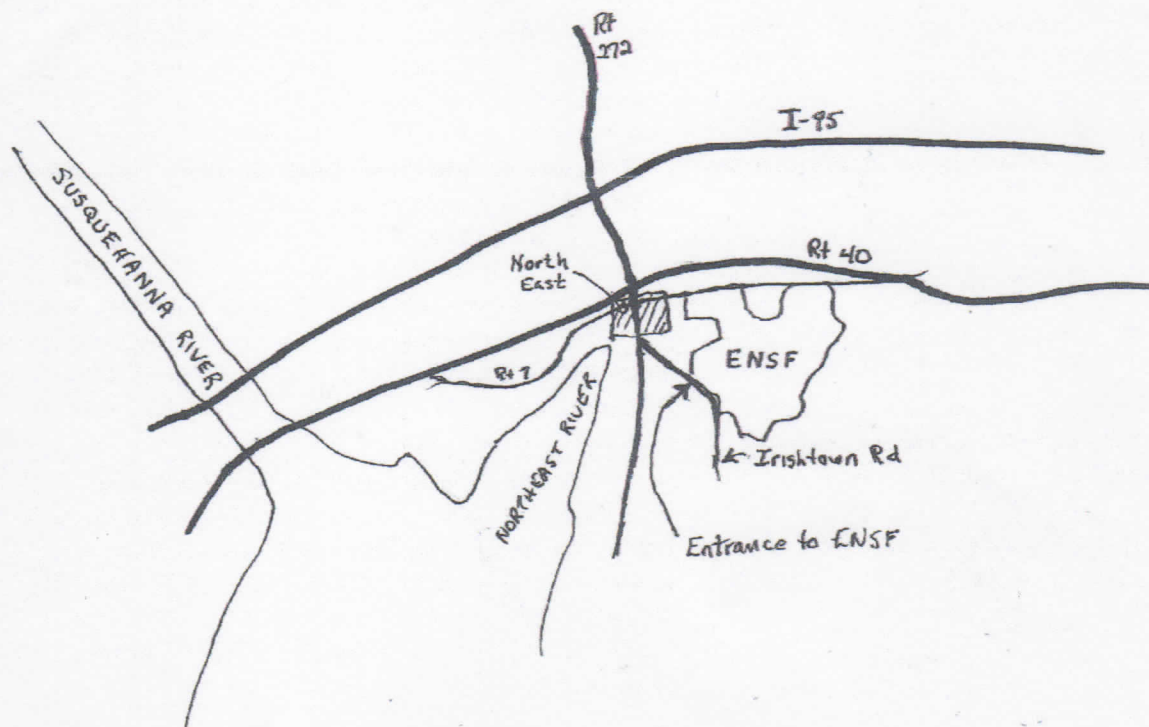
M-DTS MEMBERS' MEETING -- 1:30 p.m., Sunday, March 16

Work Party: Meet in parking area by the maintenance building just inside and to the left of the entrance to Elk Neck State Forest on Irishtown Road east of the town of North East.

There are several relocations to clear and blaze including a lengthy one in the beaver problem area. The terrain is relatively flat except for a steep slope on one side of the stream. Blazes on the eight miles of the M-DT in the forest need refreshing. Note: *Blazes in ENSF are blue and white* which makes it even more of a challenge. Equipment needed: clippers, loppers, chain saw, mattocks, small saw, several paint set-ups (blue, white and a brown-out paint). All workers should bring: work gloves, eye protection, lunch and water. There will be opportunities to hike parts of this pleasant section of the M-DT as we work.

Members Meeting: We will assemble in the parking area as above at 1:25 pm and drive to an appropriate location.

Directions: The town of North East is in Cecil County, Maryland and can be easily accessed from I-95 or US Route 40. Exit to the south on MD Rte 272. 1.3 miles south of Rte 40, turn left on Irishtown Road. Proceed 1.7 miles to the entrance to Elk Neck State Forest on the left.



MASON-DIXON TRAIL SYSTEM INC

President Jim Hooper
[REDACTED]
Vice President..... Jim Denny
[REDACTED]
Secretary & Newsletter Editor... Yvonne Blades
[REDACTED]
Treasurer..... Mary Bleecker
[REDACTED]
Director - Pennsylvania Timothy Schmidt
[REDACTED]
Director - Maryland..... Anthony Belfiglio
[REDACTED]
Director - Delaware..... Robert Bennett
[REDACTED]
Trail Coordinators:
Western Section:..... Ron Gray
[REDACTED]
Central Section..... Pat Wolf
[REDACTED]
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
[REDACTED]

Thereafter, the annual fee is \$5.
Life membership is available for \$250.

Visit the M-DTS web site at:
[REDACTED]

\$ Your 2003 M-DTS membership dues are now due \$

TRAIL BLOCKAGE NORTH OF APOLLO PARK

There is a trail blockage between the rocky promontory, south of Cuff Run, and Apollo County Park (Map 4: West to East - Mile 7.6 to 9.7). This is a temporary blockage while M-DTS negotiates with the new land owner (or, if necessary, relocates the trail).

TRAIL RELOCATION AND RESTRICTIONS DUE TO SECURITY CONCERNS

1) Relocation at Conowingo dam. (Map 6: West to East: Mile 9.4 - 10.2). The M-DT now crosses Rte 1 into the former site of Conowingo Village, climbs uphill, curves left, passes a house and water tower then turns right on Shuresville Rd and left at Shures Landing Rd to reach Fisherman's Park by the river. The relocation is marked with blue blazes.

2) Restrictions in Peach Bottom area - between Lay Rd and Burk Rd (Map 5: West to East: Mile 24.9 - Mile 26.4). Those wishing to hike in this area must call ahead to [REDACTED] 8-5 pm weekdays, at [REDACTED] state time you will be there and the number and names of individuals. Hikers must carry photo ID and may be stopped by armed guards or state police.

ADDITIONAL TRAIL ALERTS (Cecil County, MD)

M-DT at Stony Creek (Map 7: West to East: Mile 9.2) There is a metal gate across the telephone cable right of way that M-DT follows through this area. It is on the west side of the creek and the ROW there has become overgrown with brambles. We suggest walking around the brambles and go to cross the creek. Note: This is a wet foot crossing on slippery rocks.

Townhouse development near North East Creek (Map 7 relocation: West to East: Mile 10.6 to 10.8) The M-DT follows the cable ROW through the completed parts of this development - a route for the trail was included in the plans. Construction is underway on the last stage of the development - nearer to North East Creek.. Make your way down towards the creek and pick up the trail again as it heads downstream along the creek.

Trail flooded in Elk Neck State Forest: High water levels plus beaver activity have necessitated a lengthy detour marked with blue ribbons (Map 8: West to East - Mile 5.9)

Access to woods near Elkton (Map 8: East to West: Mile 2.1) The route for the M-DT from Continental Dr into the woods has been cut off by new home development. A new route will be developed from the pond on Melbourne Boulevard.

TRAIL MAINTAINER NEEDED

One or two volunteers are needed to maintain the M-DT from the east gate of Elk Neck State Forest in Cecil Co, MD to the top of Iron Hill in Delaware (Map 8: West to East: Mile 8.2 to 16.0; Map 9: West to East: Mile 0.0 to 3.5).

Please contact Yvonne Blades at [REDACTED] for more information or to volunteer.

MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 10, 2002 MEMBERS' MEETING

The meeting took place at the York Hiking Club cabin at Otter Creek following a work party at Apollo Park. Those present were: president Jim Hooper, secretary Yvonne Blades, treasurer Mary Bleecker and Ron Gray, Joyce Miller, Alan, Timothy and Jesse Roland, and Turner Darden. Lou and Sarah Tateosian, Mark Arbogast and Bernie Frick were present for the work party.

The minutes of the August 18, 2002 Members' Meeting were approved as circulated (Gray, Bleecker).

Treasurer's Report

Mary Bleecker presented the treasurer's report which covered the period from August 18 to November 9, 2002. The income was \$90.00 from new memberships, \$5.00 from a membership renewal, \$48.00 from sale of map/guides, \$14.00 from sale of patches and \$2.99 interest for a total of \$159.99. Expenses were: \$9.54 for trail maintenance, \$25.00 KTA dues and \$25.00 donation to the Central Pennsylvania Conservancy, \$5.00 rental of YHC cabin, \$199.00 for purchase of 500 stamped envelopes and \$97.44 for the September '02 Newsletter costs for a total of \$360.98. The balance in the checking account as of November 9, 2002 is \$4591.45.

Trail Reports

Western Section - Western Terminus at Whiskey Springs to Lock 12

Coordinator: Ron Gray

- Ron Gray reported that the blazing is good between the western terminus and Gifford Pinchot Park
- There is a new owner of the property north of Apollo Park. He has complained about ATV use and trash. The Mason-Dixon Trail is now blocked there until we have an agreement with the new owner or we relocate the trail. A relocation would be a challenge involving side hill construction on rocky terrain.
- A hard working crew today with mattocks, pulaskis etc. finished the trail improvement project on the M-DT through Apollo Park. The new grip hoist was again put to good use to move large boulders. This section of trail had been very rocky and hazardous. It is now much improved. Joyce, Sarah and Yvonne clipped and cleared the trail south from Wilson Run to the Safe Harbor dam viewpoint.
- Posts are needed to mark the M-DT through the Gladfelter tree farm. (Map 4: West to East: Mile 12.9)
- The climb to the Urey Overlook still needs work.
- Yvonne Blades reported that there is a tree across the trail just south of the Otter Creek Campground, and several more on the section along Furnace Run. Clipping is needed.
- The gated roadway the M-DT follows down hill in State Game Land 181 has been improved and the culverts cleared. There is a large tree across the trail about 15 feet before the junction with the bypass trail.
- The viewing area by Holtwood Dam has been fenced off.

Central Section - Lock 12 to Havre de Grace Coordinator: Pat Wolf

- Below Bald Hill, a short relocation is needed to move the trail off private property.
- A very tall state police communication tower has been put up on the trail near Rte 1 at Conowingo. Yvonne has blazed a detour route for the M-DT around the tower..

Eastern Section - Perryville to Eastern Terminus at Chadds Ford Coordinators: Cecil Co.- Tony Belfiglio Chester and New Castle Co. - Yvonne Blades

- The M-DT route through Whitaker Woods development, (Map 7: Mile 3.8) has been blazed. Tony Belfiglio has put up signs saying "Foot Traffic Only" where the trail enters the woods.
- Tony and Yvonne Blades have checked and worked on the M-DT from Red Toad Rd through to the town of North East. East of Red Toad Rd the M-DT passes through another new development called North Woods where a corridor for the trail has been left between two rows of houses. Tony and Yvonne cleared away a large tangle of trees and vines across the trail just east of this development. Further along, the trail which follows the cable ROW was blocked by brambles, fallen trees and a locked gate with "No Trespassing" signs. They went around the gate and crossed Stony Creek on very slippery rocks. The section behind the trailer camp was trashy and unpleasant. Tony improved the blazes at the Rte 272 crossing. The trail then passes through a townhouse development and is quite clearly marked in the completed section. Foundations were being put in for the last stage of development

nearest North East Creek and the eventual route for the M-DT was not clear. Tony and Yvonne made their way down to the creek and picked up the M-DT again as it follows the creek downstream. They cleared the trail along the creek and freshened blazes.

- Margit Pruett and her Conservation Corp crew have cleared blow downs on the M-DT in Elk Neck State Forest. They have received a grant to work on the stream crossings. There is a beaver problem again on the M-DT in the forest. The area was bone dry in August but now the original crossing and our first detour route are flooded. An alternate detour route has been flagged.
- Tony and Yvonne explored the area near Grays Hill in Elkton for a possible relocation of the M-DT. The trail passes through nice woods before descending to the fish ponds but new home construction has made access to the woods a problem. They found a possible route but it involves a stream crossing and a fairly steep descent.
- Work is underway on the new Cobblestone Recreation Area in Newark (Map 9: West to East, Mile 4.4). The M-DT will follow a paved walkway around the west side of the recreational fields.

Other Business

Cecil County, MD: Yvonne Blades visited the Cecil County Planning and Zoning Office in Elkton regarding problems with new development impacting the M-DT. Anthony DiGiacomo, the principal planner, said his office checks the ADC map of Cecil Co. for existing trails before approving new development. The developer has to provide a route for an existing trail.

The Grays Hill area, however, is under the City of Elkton jurisdiction. The Director of Building and Zoning in Elkton said they do not check for the presence of existing trails before approving development. He suggested accessing the Grays Hill area from the retention pond on Melbourne Blvd.

Iron Hill Park, DE - New Castle County is developing a new master plan for Iron Hill Park and is asking for citizen input. M-DTS has reminded the county that the M-DT passes through the park and provision must be made for our trail in the master plan. A map of the present route of the M-DT in the park has been forwarded to the project's landscape architect. Some relocation of the M-DT will be necessary because of construction of the new Iron Hill Museum.

Information for those traveling the trail at Peach Bottom. During Emergencies, the power station is required to notify transients of problems; this is normally done with a siren system and through Emergency Alert Stations which provide information on what action should be taken. Signs informing hikers of this system will be posted along the trail.

Loppers - It was suggested that we provide M-DT trail maintainers with loppers. Ron Gray recommended Fiskar "powergear, bypass" loppers which are lightweight and durable. Jim Hooper will buy 6 Fiskar loppers from Wal-Mart. They cost about \$17.00 each.

Next Meeting - Date and place to be announced.

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HIKING OPPORTUNITIES

Brandywine Trail End-to-End Hike, Saturday, April 12, 2003 - 36 miles in one day! The Wilmington Trail Club's 41st annual hike of the Brandywine Trail starts at the Horseshoe Trail at Ludwigs Corner and ends at Brandywine Creek State Park near Wilmington, DE. Cost (includes bus, food and trail guide) is \$12 for members of WTC or CCTC and \$14 for nonmembers. For a registration form send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to [redacted] email for electronic copy [redacted]

34th Biennial Appalachian Trail Conference - the hiking event of the year. The ATC conference will be held in the White Mountains of New Hampshire at the Waterville Valley Resort from July 25 to August 1, 2003.

Hiking in the Canadian Rockies - The Skyline Hikers of the Canadian Rockies, a non profit hiking organization, will hold five, 6-day camps in July and August 2003. The campsite this year is in White Man Pass in British Columbia, just west of the Continental Divide and Banff National Park. The area offers a variety of ridge walks and peaks plus trails in the valley floor. Tent accommodation and meals are provided. A choice of hikes is offered each day. For a brochure, call Yvonne Blades [redacted] or email [redacted]