
MASON-DIXON TRAIL SYSTEM, Inc.



M-DTS NEWSLETTER September, 2008

The M-DTS in Eastern Cecil County is the Focus of the September 21, 2008 Hike and Meeting

The Iron Hill Museum, just South of Newark, DE on Old Baltimore Pike is the meeting site for both the morning hike and the afternoon members/board meeting. Hikers need to meet between 8:15-8:30 a.m. to shuttle to the start of the 10 mile point-to-point hike from the eastern end of Elk Neck State Forest to the Museum. Bring lunch. The quarterly meeting is scheduled for 2:00 p.m., shortly after the anticipated arrival time of the hikers.

The Morning Hike

The Mason-Dixon Trail from Elk Neck State Forest to the Iron Hill Museum

Map 8 w-e: mi. 8.7 to mi. 16.4 and Map 9 w-e: mi 0.0 to mi. 2.6

The area between the eastern end of Elk Neck State Forest and Iron Hill Park traverses from the Elk River/Chesapeake Bay watershed to the Christina River/Delaware Bay watershed. It has no natural corridor to give it a rustic feel and no notable hills to afford impressive vistas. Yet what this hike lacks in sustained natural environment, it makes up for in the sheer ingenuity of its mostly off-road charting and variety of venues.

Directions: Coming from the north on I-95 take the Del. Rte 896 exit south to cross over I-95 to head away from Newark. Coming from the south on I-95 heading into Delaware from Maryland, take the first exit in Delaware, immediately after the Toll Plaza, onto Del. Rte. 896 heading south. At the first stop light turn right onto Old Baltimore Pike. In 8/10ths of a mile turn right into the graveled entrance to the Iron Hill Museum. The Museum building, a modest former school house, is set back about forty yards from the road and to the right in the grassy clearing, which is the parking area for visitors.

Please note that the entrance to the Iron Hill Museum area is entirely separate from the entrance to Iron Hill Park. On Old Baltimore Pike you will pass two signs to Iron Hill Park. Very shortly after the second sign there will be an "Iron Hill Museum" sign and a right exit lane for the Museum. Setting your odometer when you enter Old Baltimore Pike to measure 8/10ths of a mile and slowing down after the second sign for the park should prepare you for the sign to the Museum and the exit lane for the Museum which come rather abruptly. Additional information may be found at the Museum web site: <http://www.ironhillmuseum.org/directions.htm>.

MASON-DIXON TRAIL SYSTEM INC

President Jim Hooper

Vice President Ron Gray

Secretary & Newsletter Editor.....Robert Bennett

Treasurer.....Rick Maerker

Director - PennsylvaniaRob Campbell

Director - Maryland..... Bo Hopkins

Director - Delaware..... Yvonne Blades

Trail Coordinators:

Western Section.....Ron Gray

Central Section..... volunteer needed

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 193-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

Rick Maerker

Thereafter, the annual fee is \$5.

Life membership is available for \$250.

Visit the M-DTS web site at:
www.masondixontrail.org

Minutes of June 15, 2008 M-DTS Board and Members Meeting

President Hooper called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. at the York Hiking Club Cabin. Members present included Bo Hopkins, Ron Gray, Bob Bennett, Joyce Hooper, Rob Campbell, and Yvonne Blades.

Review of Minutes of the March 1, 2008 meeting as recorded in the May 2008 Newsletter

Ron Gray noted that in the entry under Trail Work in the Western Section the reference to "open run" should be corrected to read "Oakland Run" and that Rob Campbell should be credited along with him in the next sentence for work done. The minutes were passed as revised.

Treasurer's Report

The treasurer's report was accepted subject to audit.

Trail Reports

**Eastern Section – Eastern Terminus at Chadds Ford to Perryville.
Coordinators: Chester and New Castle Counties: Yvonne Blades;
Cecil County: Kevin Jones.**

Yvonne Blades reported that the new 82 acre State Line Woods Conservation Corridor (www.kennettlandtrust.org), which is located in the vicinity of Burnt Mill Road and Old Kennett Pike (map 10: mi.5.6) is scheduled to open for public recreational use in 2009. If the Mason-Dixon Trail is rerouted to include a section of the Preserve, Jim raised the issue of whether trails in the preserve will be designed to include equestrian use, noting the consequence of wider trail corridors than pedestrian use requires. Yvonne noted that she had provided the Preserve administrator with a colored map of our prospective routing for the trail through the Preserve. Presently the area includes only deer trails.

Yvonne noted that at a prior time we had routed the trail along a pipeline in this area, but difficulties with maintenance led then maintainer, Turner Darden, to reroute the trail onto public road. Jim Hooper observed there will likely need to be some discussion with local land owners as part of our feasibility study for this rerouting.

Yvonne reported that [redacted] has been named the State Park's Administrator of the White Clay Creek Preserve, Pennsylvania section. Through KTA (Keystone Trail Association) and other ties, we have benefitted from [redacted] interest in and support for the Mason-Dixon Trail, and look forward to her assistance and support for the portion of the Mason-Dixon included in the Preserve.

Bob Bennett reported that a new volunteer group, Friends of Iron Hill Park, has been formed in conjunction with the reopening of the Park, following a period of closure during which the New Castle County Division of Parks and Recreation instituted policies and upgraded conditions to revitalize this historic and geologically unique natural area. The Friends Group should prove a valuable resource in helping to maintain the significant portion of the Mason-Dixon Trail included within its boundaries.

Central Section – Havre de Grace to Lock 12 :

Coordinator: Bo Hopkins

Bo reported that there may be some federal grant money available to fund trail construction between Lapidum and Havre de Grace, but the State of Maryland is concerned that sensitive landscape in the proposed area may make it inappropriate for a trail.

Bo informed that the Quarry on the north side of Rte. 40 bridge from Havre de Grace (map 7) has a new owner. While we may be able to get permission for the trail to go through it, the issue remains one of liability, and securing a trail through there will require a multi-group effort. Harford County Council member, [REDACTED] wants a multi-access trail. Ron Gray noted that there is a small drainage area that needs crossing. Bo suggests that the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership (www.susquehannagreenway.org/greenway) and the Maryland Park Service take the lead in charting a route through or around the quarry, with our being a supporting group in the effort.

On moving more of our trail in Susquehanna State Park off road, Bo noted that [REDACTED] our contact person with the State Park Office, reports that a relocation of this kind within the Park is in progress.

Ron Gray noted another area in the Park referred to as Spur Six (map 6, e-w, 4.2.mi.), includes an unpleasant fall line section of trail for which we seek a rerouting. The planned new route will be easier to sustain, but its construction will involve some fancy rock work. A relocation is also planned in the vicinity of Rock Run (mi. 5.5 e-w).

Ron also reports that Exelon [maps 5 and 6] is in the process of seeking renewal of its license for its Conowingo Hydroelectric Station and needs public support. Its administration may be amenable to requests from the Mason-Dixon Trail System for trail needs to enhance its case for renewal.

Bo communicated the following items from Dave Linthicum regarding the trail section from Conowingo Dam to the State Line: Sections south of the line in the Broad Creek Scout Camp Ground (Map 6, e-w mi.18.5) that were temporarily closed for work being done in the area, reportedly have been re-opened recently, though their current status is unclear. Sections south of Broad Creek are seeing continued ATV use. The descent off of Bald Hill (Map 6, e-w mi. 16.9), an endangered Serpentine Barren, is eroded in places and over grown in others. Overgrowth continues south of there near Indian Lake Christian camp. Conditions south of Glen Cove need to be checked.

Bo announced that he will be leaving the area in January to enroll in the graduate program in Recreation and Park Management at Frostburg State University. His work for the Mason-Dixon Trail has been invaluable, and we express a heart-felt thanks for his contributions and wish him much success in his coming endeavors.

**Western Section -- Lock 12 to Whiskey Springs:
Coordinator: Ron Gray**

Jim Hooper prefaced discussion with two short items of information:

Kayakers and fishermen in the area of Muddy Creek are seeking the establishment of a parking lot at the gauging station.

~~_____~~ a friend to the Mason-Dixon, may be a resource in her new job with the Fish and Boat Commission.

Ron Gray received word that the section of the trail in the area of Three Mile Island is frequently flooded. Also, Ron noted the report of the trails supervisor for York County Parks that Apollo Park has doubled in size and a new parking area has been opened to accommodate an increase in users. The new area is crossed by a power line. Bank side erosion poses a problem for the trail in the Apollo Park area.

Jim Hooper reported that he recently gave a presentation about the trail to local land owners, and he attended a constructive meeting held by the York County Parks, that is working on a master plan. The effort of York County to declare eminent domain for three parcels in the defunct Larchmont Farms is still in litigation. Jim expressed hope that township officials will walk through the property and lend support to the County's effort.

Jim reported that the Pennsylvania Archeological Conservancy is the potential owner for a site next to Klines Run Park and that the property would be an attractive one for relocating the trail in this area.

Regarding the game lands ~~in the~~ Rte 242 ~~area~~, Jim reports that the administrators recently have shown a more cordial reception to our interest in routing our trail off Rte 242 and through the area than they had to our previous proposal several years back. The game lands would afford approximately five miles on road where there is little housing.

Jim noted a recent Keystone Trails Association meeting that addressed the matter of diplomacy when seeking to obtain trail protection. Persistence in seeking a desired routing and working with other organizations that share the given interest are essential for gaining desirable land protections. KTA also raised the question, "If a section of trail is abandoned, should abandonment include the obligation of restoring the trail to its pre-trail condition?"

Other Business and Announcements

T-Shirts: Rob Campbell received twenty-four shirts to have available for friends, supporters, and users of the trail in his area. Nine shirts were donated to administrators of allied organizations. We currently have twenty-seven shirts still in stock from our most recent order [<http://www.masondixontrail.org/tshirts.htm>].

Shank's Mare Open House, August 3-4: Jim noted that M-DTS will have display table in conjunction with Shank's Mare's celebration of its resources and its ties with the

regional recreational communities. Discussion of our part in the event included plans to have shirts available along with pictures and informational material for display and purchase.

Up-dated series of maps: Rob proposed that changes in the trail since the last printing of maps warrants printing a new edition. He will secure the services of Cindy Truesdale of Don Blyler Offset Printing, the printers of the previous two series, and Rob will be calling on Ron, Jim, and Yvonne to assist him in the project. Determination will need to be made regarding how many of each numbered maps within the set will be printed since in our supply of present maps some sections may not need updating. Ron Gray moved that Rob begin the process of setting up the next series of maps and that an allocation of up to \$7,400 be made for this project. Marketing will follow when maps are received. The motion was carried unanimously.

Responsibility when abandoning a portion of trail: Jim noted that KTA has raised the following question regarding trail management. "If a section of a trail is abandoned, should abandonment include the obligation to restore the trail to its pre-trail condition?"

When other groups sponsor hikes on the Mason-Dixon Trail. Joyce Hooper noted that it will a courtesy, when other groups like KTA and the Trail Dawgs are planning events on the Mason-Dixon Trail, that they inform the M-DTS of their event in advance. Details of the "when, where, and how" for such a communication process will be discussed in more detailed in a future meeting.

Publicity for the Trail. The York County Parks produces a Newsletter which is an appropriate vehicle for drawing attention to the Mason-Dixon Trail. Rob Campbell has recently written an article on M-DTS for the publication.

Equipment Purchases for Trail Construction and Maintenance. New equipment for trail construction and maintenance for which money has been allocated, as requested by Bo Hopkins, has not yet been purchased. Forty dollars has been allotted to Tim Schmidt for the purchase of a safety rope.

Donation: Jim Hooper moved that we give a donation of \$100.00 to the York County Parks Foundation, which has been very supportive of our efforts. The motion was moved and passed unanimously.

Tax Status for M-DTS. Jim Hooper recommended that we apply for a 501 © (3) tax deductible status so that gifts to M-DTS will be deductible for the donees. An instance is the Appalachian Mountain Club's providing us with financial assistance in the purchase of a series of tax maps for properties from York County to the trail's western terminus at Whiskey Springs. We need to get such maps for other areas of our trail because they are a great help visually when negotiating trail routing.

Trail Post M-DTS Decals: Yvonne Blades reported that our previous source for producing our M-DTS trail marker decals, the Delaware Division of Parks and Recreation, can still do so, and can produce them in square as well as circular forms.

2008 FINANCIAL PICTURE OF M-DTS ACTIVITY

OPENING BALANCE IN CHECKING ACCOUNT AS OF 12/27/07		\$5383.59
INCOME		
Dues/Donations (108 "old"; 22 "new")	\$1753.00	
Maps/Guides (~85 sold)	\$607.50	
Patches (5 sold)	\$10.00	
T-shirts (11 sold)	\$165.00	
TOTAL INCOME	\$2535.50	
EXPENSES		
Administration		
1/3/08 (printing of new T-shirts)	\$176.00	
1/19/08 (T-shirt mailing costs)	\$4.30	
2/1/08 (reissue of lost check for T-shirt mailing costs)	\$16.42	
2/1/08 (mailing costs for guides to KTA)	\$5.37	
2/1/08 (copying on 9/11/07 & 12/21/07)	\$49.15	
2/19/08 (envelopes & postage)	\$304.78	
3/25/08 (1000 M-DTS brochures)	\$190.00	
5/5/08 (T-shirt mailing costs)	\$2.49	
5/5/08 (maps from York Planning Commission)	\$161.12	
5/29/08 (Feb & May newsletters)	\$188.10	
6/18/08 (use of YHC cabin on 6/15)	\$6.00	
7/6/08 (directory copying & mailing costs)	\$15.42	
7/8/08 (admin. costs & T-shirt mailing costs)	\$10.55	
8/19/08 (T-shirt mailing costs)	\$7.08	
8/31/08 (1000 brochures & mailing costs)	\$200.93	
9/7/08 (September newsletter)	\$152.00	
9/17/08 (postage & labels)	\$104.58	
9/17/08 (copying & mailing 100 brochures)	\$24.80	
Sub-Total	\$1619.09	
Trail Maintenance		
3/2/08 (flagging & paint)	\$43.39	
7/6/08 Ron Gray for maint. supplies	\$16.12	
8/19/08 (sign, saw blade, caution tape)	\$40.30	
Sub-Total	\$99.81	
Donations/Dues		
6/17/08 York Co. Parks Foundation Charitable Trust	\$100.00	
6/18/08 KTA dues	\$50.00	
Sub-Total	\$150.00	
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1868.90	
ENDING BALANCE IN CHECKING ACCOUNT AS OF 9/21/08		\$6050.19
CD — 30-month		\$3933.38
CD — 24-month		\$5088.73
TOTAL ASSETS OF M-DTS, INC. AS OF 9/21/08		\$15072.30