

# Mad River Path Association



University of Vermont  
&

The Mad River Path Association

Presentation by:

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# Outline of Presentation

- Research Methods—Our areas of focus
- Overview of Eight Case Studies
- Suggestions Regarding...
  - Membership
  - Fundraising
  - Events
  - Partnerships



# Overview of MRPA

- Membership - currently 340 members
  - Increasing membership but high attrition
  - Mail, e-mail, word of mouth
- Events/Fundraising
  - Mad Bash – May, live music, flatbread, seasonal kick off
  - Siptember Fest—music, beer tasting (1<sup>st</sup> annual)
  - Mad Dash – September, Foot race
- Grants
  - To pay for grant writers position
  - Rec. District Grant for operating costs/executive director
  - Maintenance
  - Easements







# Research Methods

- Interview Mad River Path Association (MRPA) Members—  
Understand fundraising, structure, history, membership, grant writing and event strategies
- Investigate other path/trail associations in VT and across the nation—focusing on membership, fundraising, grant writing, community partnerships, and events
- Use our interviews and research to provide recommendations to further the success and development of the MRPA

# Areas of Investigation

- Membership
- Fundraising
- Events
- Partnerships







# Hudson Valley Rail Trail

- Lloyd, NY—2.37 mile town owned recreation path paved and crushed stone—mixed use path.
- Fundraising
  - Solicitation of Businesses
  - Publicity & Advertising in return for pledge
  - Tickets to events
- Partnership with Local Artist
- Membership
  - Rolling
  - Face-to-face recruitment
- Events
  - Low technology
  - Held on path
  - Coordination with other non-profits





# Northwest Vermont Rail Trail Council

- Location: Northern Vermont—State owned, spans 26.4 miles through 8 towns—multi use, snowmobiles, maintenance vehicles permitted. Support from VT Agency of Transportation & Regional Planning Commission
- Community Engagement
  - National Trails Day Events
  - Photo Contest
  - Regional Marketing
- Regional Planning Commission
  - Secure state funding—VTrans & Dept. of Forestry, Parks & Recreation funds
  - Regional Coordination—between towns
  - Regional Marketing





- Provided Incentives for Membership
  - Annual guide to trail
  - Newsletter/Electronic Newsletter
  - Member Discounts (at local retailers)
  - Programs and Events
- Membership Year
  - Calendar Year: expires 12/31
  - Purchases after Labor Day include the following year
- Payment
  - Payment/Transaction information handled by third party
  - Primary payment method—credit card



- Membership

- Offer options for the indecisive
  - “White” Season – December through March
  - “Green” Season – April through August
  - “Harvest” Season – September through November

- Community Engagement

- Important for Tourism: Heavily community/business supported
- An established routine for trail maintenance allows for consistency in volunteerism and community support. *“The first Sunday of every month (June-October) we meet at the Darling Memorial Park at 9:00 am for a day of trail maintenance.”*



# Trading Path Association

Preserving Our Common Past



- North and South Carolinas and Georgia
  - Native American Villages
- Focuses on on preservation of and education about the path
  - Creates unique grant and partnership opportunities: cultural organizations, school, boards of education, historical preservation societies
- ‘First Sunday’ hike every month
- Board members give public talks about the path: schools, meetings, social gatherings, you can reserve a speaker for your function
- Facebook and Twitter pages





- Ontario, Canada
- Promoter of opportunities for residents to live active and healthy lifestyles
  - Grants: Ministry of Health Promotion and Ministry of Tourism and Recreation
  - Partnerships: Trails for Health, Trans Canada Trail, Health for Life
- Developed Lesson Plans for Schools
- Podcasts available for download on website



- 500 acre, year round, multi-use facility
- Membership
  - Seasonal Rates
  - Early Bird Discounts
- Events
  - Weekly Races
  - Eco-Conservation Camp





- Winter-Use path that runs the length of Vermont (~300 miles)
- Organization
  - 2 full-time employees, 1 part-time, 1 AmeriCorps
- Membership
  - 1800 members (~83% returning members in 2008)
  - Annual
  - Incentives
- Events
  - Race to the Top
  - Ladies Nordic Expo
- Easements



# Membership

- Individual Membership

- Rewards booklet
- Event Invitations/Discounts
- Newsletter Subscription

- Business Membership

- Offer a tiered system for sponsorship and advertisement
- Tangible and intangible benefits

# Membership

- Reinstate Newsletter
  - Offer one mailed newsletter and three emailed editions
  - Reduce print and mail costs
- Promote Health Incentives
- Implement Discussion Board
  - Online Social Networking
  - Valley Futures Network



# Fundraising

- Silent Auction/Raffle
- Sell Ad Space
  - Online
  - Membership Envelope/Pamphlet
  - Newsletter





# Fundraising

- Offer Vendor Options at MRPA Events
  - Mad Dash/ Mad Bash
- Reinstate Recognition Program for Sponsors/Donors
  - Buy-a-Bench
  - Donate a Trash Receptacle
  - Sponsor a sign



# Events

- Organize Monthly Activity Focused on Community Involvement
  - Themed –Bird watching, biking, health oriented, kids day, etc.
  - Open to Non-members
- Art Lessons on the Path for all ages
- Events that withstand weather—low admission
  - Advertising for rain or shine
  - Technology (sound equipment)
  - Lower entry cost may broaden audience, increase attendance, encourage families
  - Food



# Partnerships

- Network with Other Local 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organizations
  - Co-Sponsor events
  - Cost-Share
  - Broaden Audience
- Further the Relationship with Knoll Farm
  - Incorporate the Path with the Center for Whole Communities retreat program
  - Hold Events that support both organizations



# Partnerships

- Internship Program
  - Capitalize on University Students and the their involvement
  - Offer positions to assist in areas of potential development
- Utilize Facebook and Twitter Accounts
  - Spread awareness and updates between Newsletters

# Trading Path Twitter Account



## Tradingpath

TPA Update for November is on the streets. Go to the website to read it. It announces our Dec FSH will be in Eno River SP, 2PM, 6 Dec.

6:38 AM Nov 17th from web

TPA First Sunday Hike November 1st, 2PM, at 6120 St. Mary's Rd, a bit over 6 Miles east of Hillsborough. There'll be signs on St. Mary's RD

10:40 AM Oct 29th from web

We hope to see you at 811 Lipscomb Grove Church Road at 2 PM today. There'll be signs pointing the way from St. Mary's Road.

8:46 AM Oct 4th from web

Friends, don't forget the TPA First Sunday Hike this coming Sunday. It ought to be a nice day, nice setting, and nice time for all. trm

1:28 PM Oct 2nd from web

October 4th First Sunday Hike: meet @Peter Kramer and

Name Tradingpath

Location Hillsborough, NC, USA

Web <http://www.tradin...>

Bio The Trading Path Association is anon-profit organization founded in 1999 to find and protect landscape artifacts of the 17th and 18th century in southeastern US

4

following

22

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2

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Tweets

13

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# Trading Path Facebook Page

facebook

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Trading Path Association is on Facebook

Sign up for Facebook to connect with Trading Path Association.



Trading Path Association

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Events

Video

TPA is a 501C3 non-profit located in Hillsborough, North Carolina, USA. Its purpose is to find, map, and protect landscape remnants of the contact and colonial era in southeastern North America, on England's first American frontier.

## Information

Category:

Organizations - Non-Profit Organizations

Description:

For friends of the TPA or for those who believe in the mission.

Privacy Type:

Open: All content is public.

## Admins

▪ Steve



Tom Continuing our St. Mary's Chapel study theme, we're going to look at the other end of Buckquarter Creek on this stroll. We'll walk a stone lined and cobbled 18th century roadbed to what we now believe is Fowle's Tavern, a Quaker establishment on the Eno River near Fanny

Click to close this tab; Option-click to close all tabs except this one

Meet at Eno River Park Cole Mill Road par...



### December 2009 First Sunday Hike

Time: 2:00PM Sunday, December 6th

Location: Eno River State Park, Orange County, NC

[See More](#)



November 12 at 10:48am · [RSVP to this event](#)



Tom We will continue to work with FaceBook to find ways to produce albums for our group page. So far, no luck, but I have labelled all of the pics from the FSH as such.

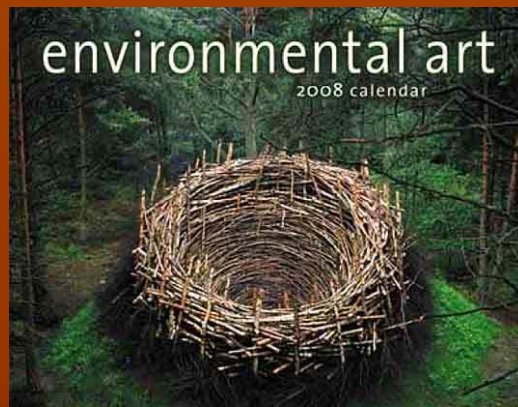
November 4 at 10:37am · [Report](#)



Tom With apologies: until I figure out how to organize an album on our group page, I'll be putting group photos on my personal page but they'll be open to the public there. Bear with me as I learn new tricks but slowly.

# Partnerships

- Partner with Local Artists
  - Create print of prominent feature on path
  - Sharing sales—raise funds in exchange for advertising
- Develop Lesson Plan with Local Schools
  - Incorporate Path into local educational programs
  - Environment, Visual Arts, Geography, Physical Education





# Questions??

