

A scenic landscape photograph of a hillside with autumn foliage reflected in a pond. The hillside is covered in trees with vibrant autumn colors, including yellows, oranges, and reds. A small tower or structure is visible on the peak of the hill. The foreground shows a body of water, likely a pond or lake, with reeds and lily pads. The sky is clear and blue.

Community Partnerships: Building Access, Audiences, and Engagement

Berkshire Natural Resources Council

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About BNRC





Making Change – from the Inside

- Priorities: capacity growth, + community programming, + access to land and nature, and connecting towns to trails.
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Access & Belonging: focus & committee
- Dedicated resources



Community Influences

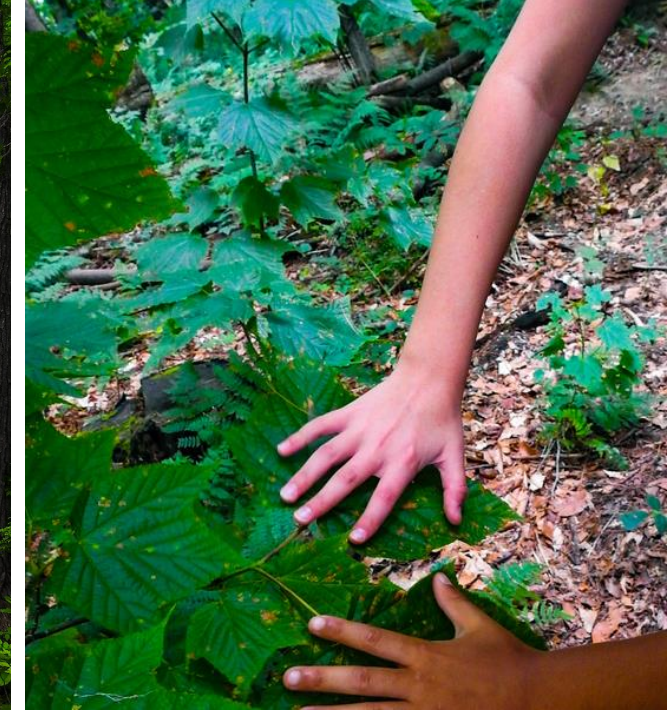
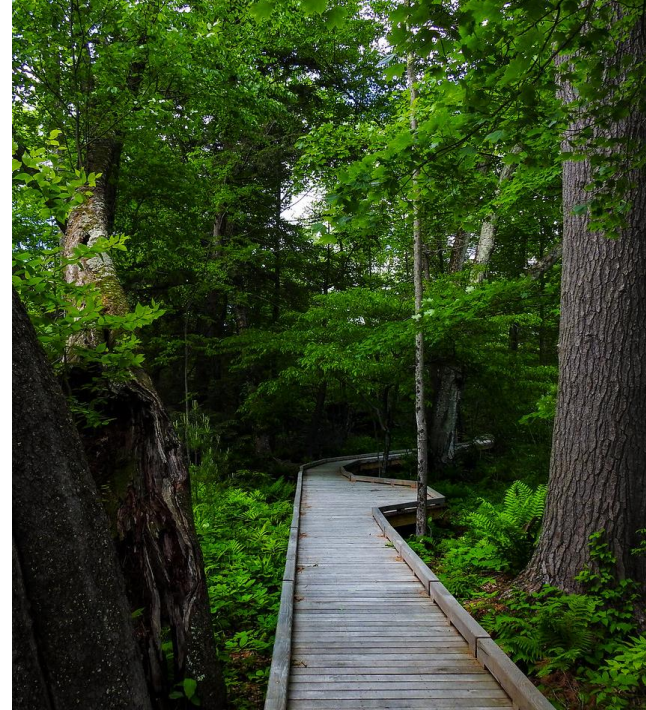
- Beginner-friendly experiences & needs
- Developed our partnership approach
 - Expanded experts & leaders
 - Taking care with feedback



Community Conservation

Expanding access to the outdoors

- Accessibility at BNRC Reserves and Beyond
- Engaging Activities on BNRC Reserves and Beyond



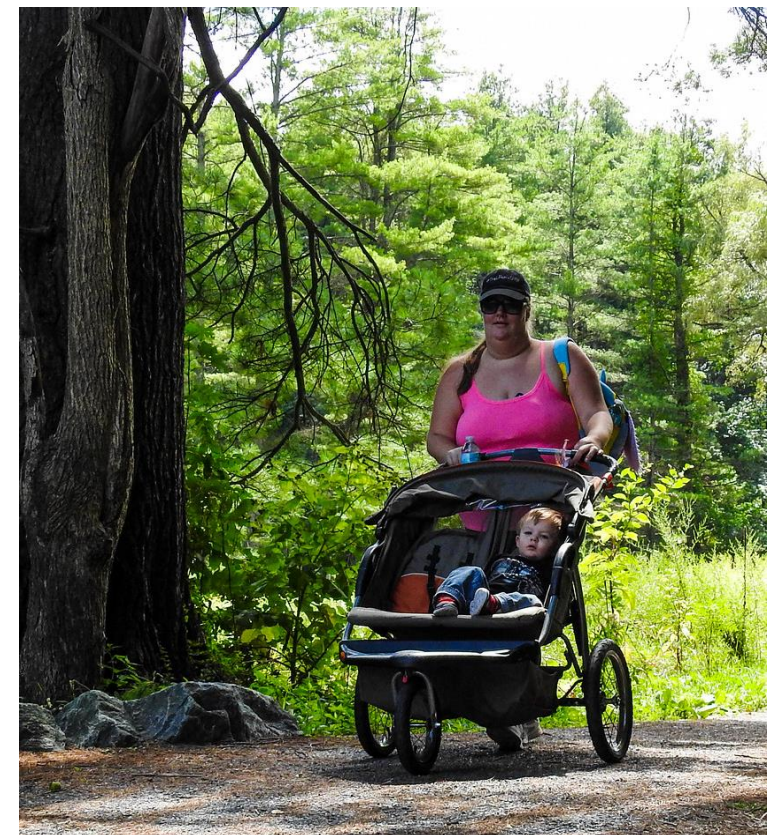
Accessibility at BNRC Reserves and Beyond

Expanding access to the outdoors

- Berkshire County Trails for All brochure
- Language Access
- Everybody Can Hike resource



Unpaved  Trails For All



Accessibility at BNRC Reserves and Beyond

Berkshire County Trails for All

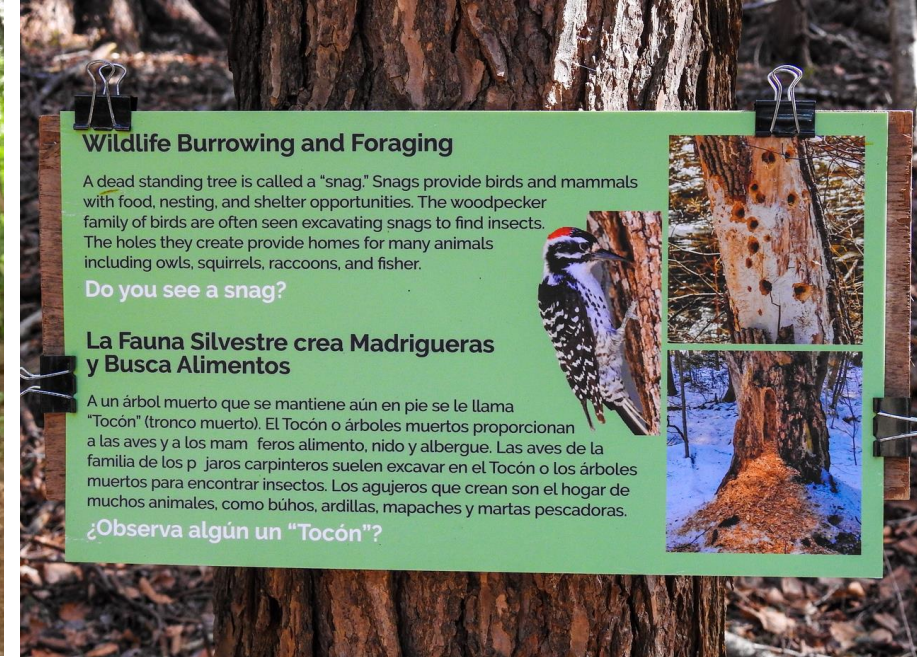
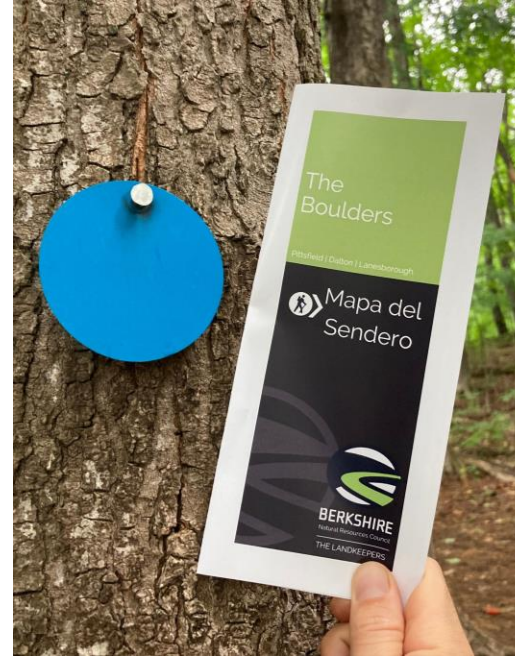
- Community support & interest
- Partnerships
- Guide development
- Takeaways
 - Importance of accessible trails
 - Information sharing to the public and partners



Accessibility at BNRC Reserves and Beyond

Language Access

- StoryWalk® discovery
- Community conversation
- Translation of trail maps
- Partner working group / stipend
- Identifying next priorities
 - Other resources
 - Events
 - Missing informational piece



Accessibility at BNRC Reserves and Beyond

Everybody Can Hike

- Welcoming / Beginner-friendly guide
 - What to expect
 - How to stay safe
 - Where to go
- Partnerships
 - Working Group
 - Consulting Partners
- Distribution
- Next: video series or PR campaign

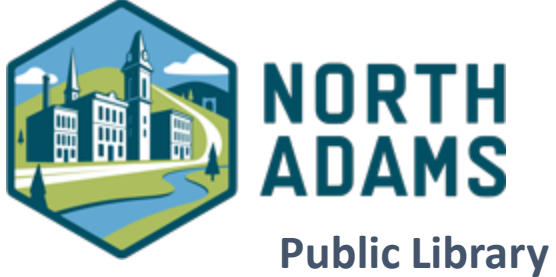


Engaging Activities on BNRC Reserves and Beyond



Enable people to connect deeper

- Self-guided
- In-person hikes
 - Family- and beginner-friendly
 - Established groups
- Online
- Volunteer



Engaging Activities on BNRC Reserves and Beyond

Self-guided Offerings

- StoryWalks®
 - Themes of belonging
- Easy Naturalist Interpretive Signs
- Integration with other events
- English and Spanish language offerings



Engaging Activities on BNRC Reserves and Beyond

In-person Offerings

- Family-focused
 - Berkshire Family Hikes
- Outdoor Gear for BNRC and Partners
- Nature backpacks



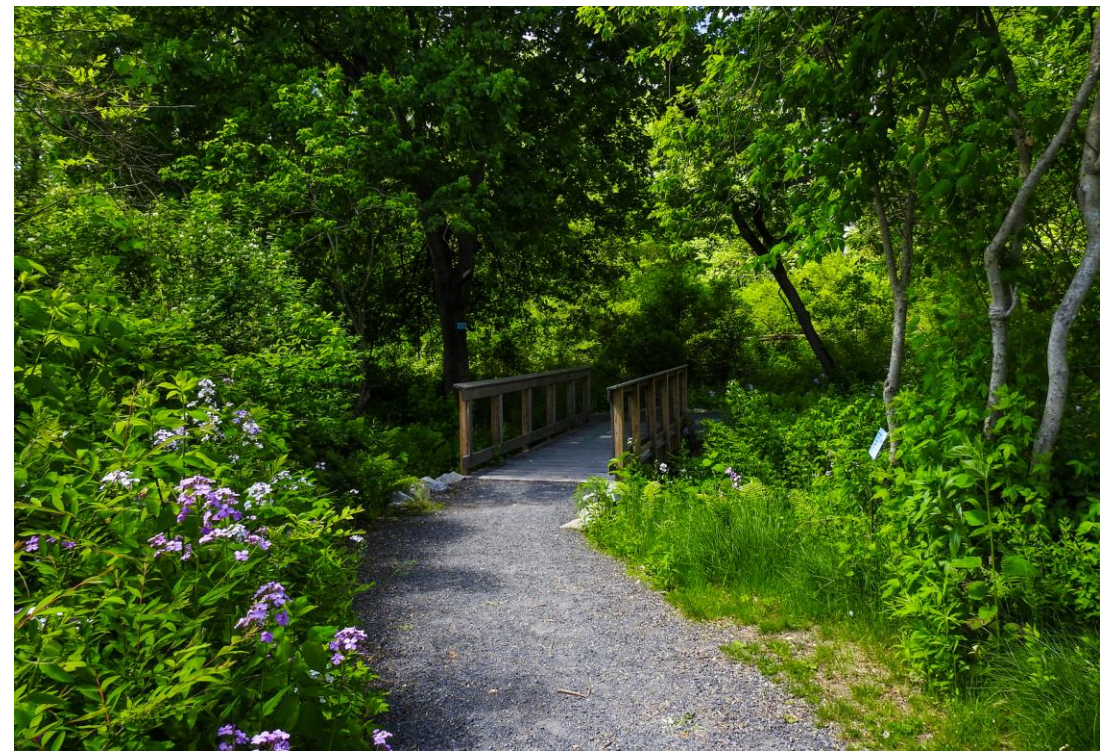
Engaging Activities on BNRC Reserves and Beyond

Online Offerings

- LEARN! *(with partners for the public)*
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Access, and Belonging *(with partners for partners)*

Volunteer program

- Wild Acres Conservation Area
- Collaboration with the City of Pittsfield

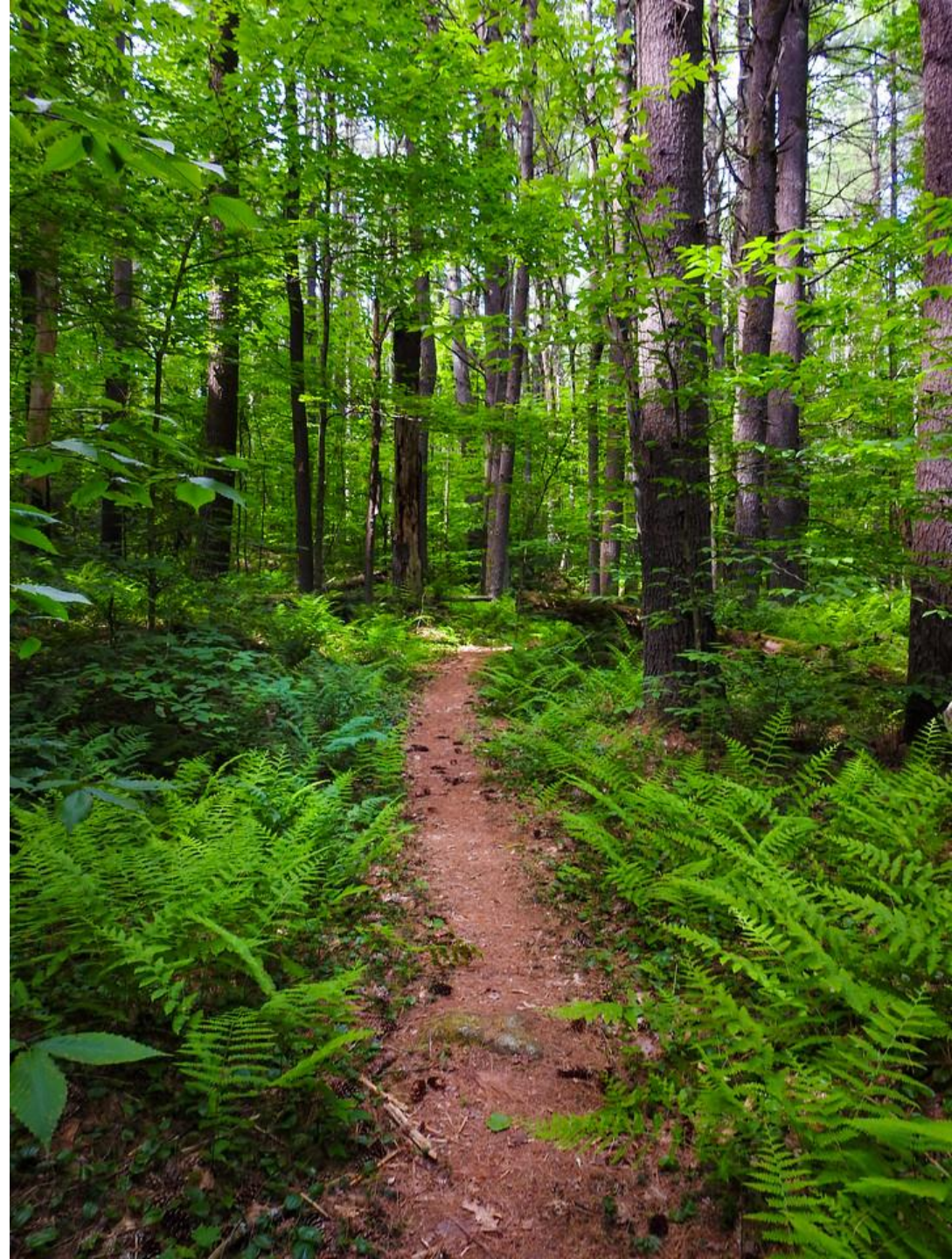


What's ahead?

Community Survey

- Partners
- Individuals

Partner Feedback



Lessons Learned

Establish your touchstones and guiding principles.

- Work at the *Speed of Trust*.
- Listen, listen, listen – and act!
- Be mindful of partners' resources and time.
- Don't force the partnership.
- Consider a framework for the approach.

Be realistic about your resources!

- Scale appropriately.
- Conserve – what uses the most time?
- How many partners achieves the right balance?
- Can you secure consistent funding? If not, consider very carefully



Thank You!

Questions?

