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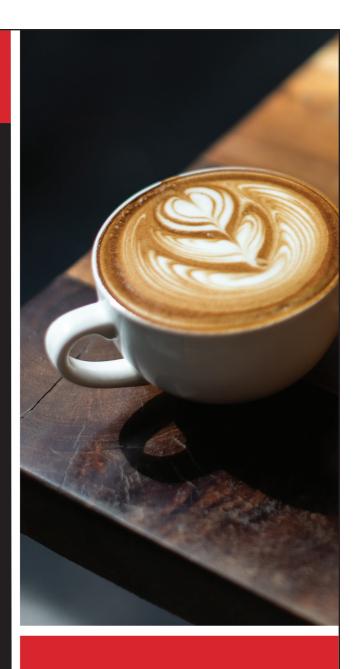


144 Main Street **STOWE**

53 Lower Main Street MORRISVILLE

Waterbury Train Station WATERBURY

42 Church Street **BURLINGTON**



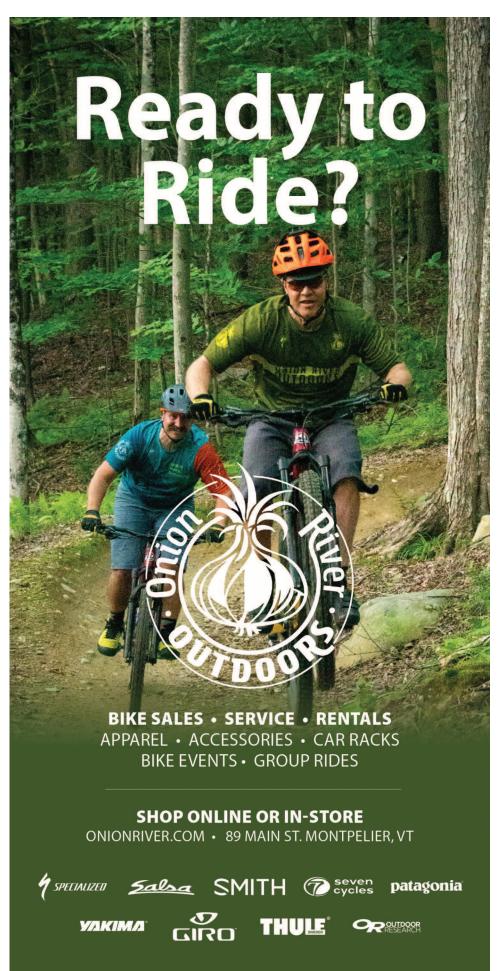
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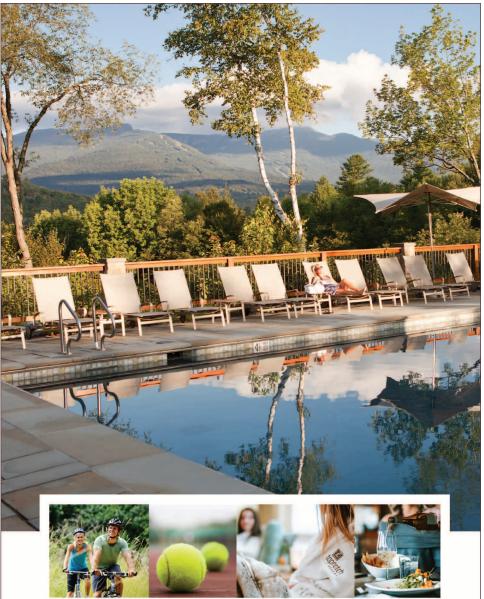
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RESPECT THIS GIFT

Riding trails on public or private lands is a gift, not a right. That hiker we just passed? She might own the land we're riding on. With every ride, let's remember to be grateful for the landowners and others who make it possible.

PROTECT NATURE

Enjoy nature, don't ruin it. Keep on the trails. Erosion is our single highest impact when we're out riding. Skidding causes erosion. Cutting corners can cut off access. Riding muddy trails messes it up for everyone. If we see animals, don't bother them, remember them. Pick up trash, pack it out, carpool here and back.

CARE FOR OTHERS

We share the trails with others, and they have the same rights and responsibilities as each of us. If someone needs help, we help. If someone needs encouragement, we share our enthusiasm. And if it's going to make the situation better, we dismount. Be nice, yield to others, and give a smile.

BE THE EXAMPLE

Being aggressive has no place in mountain biking. We know our limits, and we ride within them. Beyond the ride, let's park where we're supposed to, keep the tunes to a dull roar, and leave the IPAs for après somewhere else. Reckless behavior? A simple, polite call out will do.



FILE PHOTO



2025 RIDE

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Photo courtesy of Stowe Trails Partnership

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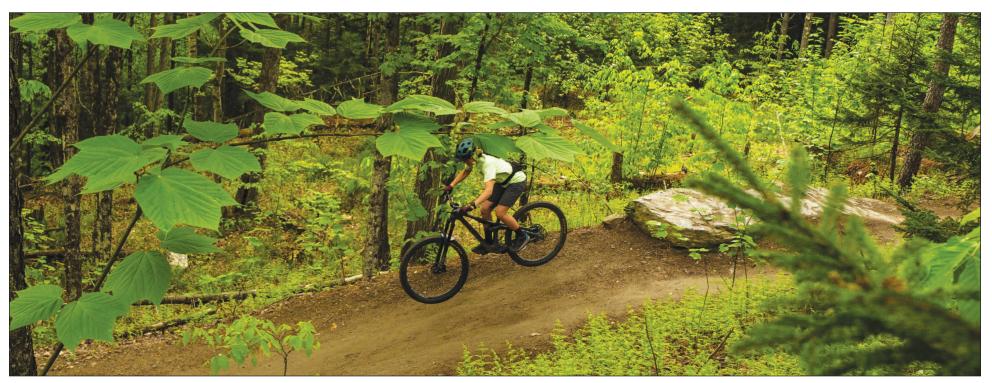


PHOTO COURTESY OF STOWE TRAILS PARTNERSHIP

Artificial intelligence still can't compete with nature

Lucy Nersesian

I spend anywhere from 8-12 hours a day during the week behind a computer. Between my job, extracurricular activities, and just life, that's a lot of screen time — not even counting TV or streaming video.

Recently, a lot of that time has been overtaken by artificial intelligence. There are now dozens of ways I'm going to be 1,000 percent more productive, and they seem to change every 24 hours. I can now vibe code an app to help plan an epic vacation, spin up a virtual agent who will take on all the menial tasks I do at work, or write a one-pager that I can share with my leadership, proving we need this new AI tool to do our jobs more effectively. It is, quite frankly, exhausting.

The antidote? Head outside.

There is no doubt that technology has changed the world, usually for the better, but after spending most of my day behind a screen, I most look forward to being outdoors. I am immensely grateful for having the privilege of living where I do and having access to so many ways to enjoy nature. Whether it's walking in my neighborhood with the dogs or going for a hike, an early morning run or a mountain bike ride, the options are seemingly endless. And none of it is AI-generated.

The birdsong filling the woods right now is from real, live birds. The vibrant springtime neon green from all the trees and undergrowth wasn't created in Midjourney or Dall-E; Mother Nature does a far better job. The smell of summer rain? You know it, and I have yet to find that smell recreated successfully anywhere, let alone digitally. The bounce of soft loam — whether you're on foot or on a bike — brings a smile to anyone who remembers it from last season.

What's also very real is the time and effort to make these spaces available for the public. There is a broad network of dedicated individuals, both paid and not, who do the heavy lifting to ensure that we have places to go to be "analog." Our town officials, employees of local non-profits and other organizations and dozens of volunteers make our digital decompression time possible.

Stowe Trails Partnership is obviously a part of this network, though we do not act alone. Our partners, including the Town of Stowe, Stowe Land Trust, and von Trapp Family Lodge & Resort, and others, work together to conserve open spaces, provide habitat for wildlife, and create opportunities for recreating outdoors.

The most recent conservation of the Adams Camp Connector is a prime example of what happens when we work together. To be fair, AI was involved in some manner here, even if only for sending out digital newsletters.

To have amazing outdoor opportunities, we need safe, and fun, ways to explore. What AI can't do is build or maintain trails. For that, we mostly rely on volunteers to give us some of their time — time they could spend doing other things. We hire real humans with machines for any work our volunteers can't do, like smooth

out miles of berms, because a lot of good digital decompression involves getting some air.

We have all heard the phrase "outside is free." In many ways, yes, it is. However, chances are that most of the ways you are experiencing the outside is paid for — whether with time or money — and usually in the most subtle ways.

Is the puddle that was there during the last rainstorm no longer there? Someone probably moved some dirt to create better drainage. The brake bumps are gone? There was a machine out there this spring taking those out. Are there pin flags out in the woods? Keep your eyes out for a new

trail in the future.

As we get deep into another summer season, I hope you'll help us support this invisible network of real humans. Whether that means renewing your membership, making a donation, joining a committee or volunteering on the trails, every bit allows us to strengthen our connection to the outdoors.

Hopefully by this time next year, AI will be doing the laundry and cleaning the garage — so we can all spend more time outside.

Lucy Nersesian is president of Stowe Trails Partnership.



JOIN OR RENEW your membership with Stowe Trails Partnership, which would not exist without its members. Whether you are a mountain biker, dog walker or another type of trail user, membership dues are crucial to the trails that the group maintains and builds. It's easy to sign up or renew at stowetrails.org.



Dreaming of a lifestyle to fit all seasons? Let us guide you there.



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Stowe Trails Partnership celebrates silver anniversary

Kenzie Brunner

Hello from Stowe Trails Partnership, and happy 2025 riding season!

This year marks a huge milestone for Stowe Trails Partnership, as we celebrate our 25th anniversary. That means a quarter century of community, trails, building, and having fun with our 1,000-plus members and nearly 100,000 annual visitors to our trails. I am thrilled to join the Stowe Trails team as the new executive director, as of December.

Stowe Trails Partnership began as a small group of dedicated individuals focused on ensuring public access to legacy trails throughout Stowe and Waterbury. During the organization's first year, the annual operating budget was just \$70, and board meetings were held over spaghetti dinners at home.

Today, we are fortunate enough to have an operating budget of over \$200,000 (and an office), which we stretch further thanks to our volunteers, sponsors, and community members.

In 2025, we're excited to make some

of your favorite trails even better and add some new mileage to our 38-plus miles of existing singletrack. These projects include refreshes of some of our most popular trails, such as Charlie's, Cady Hill Connector, and Eagle Ridge; refreshes of some of our most remote trails like Callagy's and Split Rock in Sterling Forest; and ensuring all our existing trails are as climate resilient and sustainable as possible.

In addition to tackling existing trails, we're excited to break ground on new projects, like the Stowe Village Inn Connector, our first dedicated beginner entrance into Cady Hill; the second half of Serenity and Adrenaline, the first directional double black trail in our network; and continuing to push the new trail in Lot 5, the Adams Camp Connector.

We believe making fun and progressive mountain bike trails is more important than ever. With the winters getting shorter and the growth of mountain biking as a sport, our community depends on recreational assets like the trails we are fortunate enough to manage.

Not only are these assets important for locals, but they are just as important for visitors. Recently, the Trust for Public Land reported that mountain bikers spend, on average, \$416 per visit, most of it on food, lodging, travel and equipment.

We couldn't do this without the support and collaboration of land access partners like the Town of Stowe, Stowe Land Trust. Vermont Land Trust, von Trapp Family Lodge & Resort, and so many more. These access partners are gracious enough to work with us to provide public access to recreation from the heart of Stowe, into the mountains and down toward the rivers.

In addition to access partners, collaborative organizations to which we

belong — like Vermont Mountain Bike Association, Northern Forest Center's Bike Borderlands Collaborative, Vermont Outdoor Business Alliance, and Vermont Trails and Greenways Council — make it easy to work together and create the recreation landscape we wish to see in New England.

We couldn't provide pristine trails without our 80-plus sponsors and 1,000-plus members. Though our trails are all public access, membership and sponsorship dollars help us maintain

Kenzie Brunner

and build these assets. Basic maintenance of our trails costs between \$600,000 and \$1 million, which we offset with over 2,000 volunteer hours annually. Your support is more important than ever to ensure we can continue taking care of Stowe's trails for the next 25 years.

Thanks for the last 25 years. We'll see you on the trails this summer.

Kenzie Brunner is executive director of Stowe Trails Partnership



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Rick and Hardy collated riders around the 'Bakery 500' trails (Now Cady Hill <u>Forest)</u>



Stowe Mountain Bike Club was Born The First Year's budget was just \$65.25





SMBC hosted the 1st Leaf Blower Fall Classic in 2011



2000, Riders went to a VMBA meeting and decided advocacy was the way to ensure access to their favorite trails



Adams Camp was conserved in 2004,
 and SMBC soon became the stewards
 of mountain bike trails on von Trapp
 Family land.



In 2012, SMBC worked with the Town of Stowe and Stowe Land Trust to conserve what is now Cady Hill Town Forest



In 2024 STP and SLT work in tandem to conserve the Adams Camp Connector.





2025 holds the start of 3+ new trails and loads of riding!



STP began retrofitting trails for adative mountain bike use in 2020 thanks to Vermont Adaptive and Kelly Brush Foundation



SMBC rebranded to Stowe Trails Partnership in 2017.



Florence was built by Hardy in 2012



SMBC hired their 1st full-time Executive Director; Evan Chismark in 2016



Land conservation

It's all about thoughtful access, not closing land off

Tom Rogers and Kenzie Brunner

Stowe is defined not only by its mountains and valleys, but by a community that values access to the outdoors and a shared commitment to caring for the land that makes it all possible.

At the center of this balance is a long-standing partnership between Stowe Land Trust and Stowe Trails Partnership — two organizations working together to



Tom Rogers

show that recreation and conservation are strongest when they're pursued together. We believe that a well-loved landscape can also be well cared for.

Over the past two decades, this partnership has helped shape some of Stowe's most iconic trail networks. Cady Hill Forest, conserved in 2012 through a community-led effort with the Town of Stowe, now welcomes around 100,000 visitors each year to explore its diverse trails and

forested overlooks — all while protecting wildlife habitat and safeguarding water quality in the West Branch watershed.

Similarly, Adams Camp, conserved in 2004, protects over 500 acres of working forest and open land, and supports a multi-use trail system that connects people to nature.

These places remind us that conservation isn't about closing land off — it's about providing thoughtful, responsible access. Through close collaboration, Stowe Land Trust and Stowe Trails Partnership work to ensure trails are sustainably designed, minimize environmental impact and serve a wide range of users — from mountain bikers and snowshoers to dog walkers and backcountry skiers. Our approach to management prioritizes both stewardship and experience.

Our most recent project, the Adams Camp Connector, continues this legacy — linking trail systems, protecting open space, and expanding non-motorized access in ways that put the health of the land first. Every trail we build is guided by the principle that recreation must support the long-term vitality of the landscapes we enjoy.

Looking ahead, our partnership will continue to grow — not just in miles of trail or acres conserved, but in the strength of the community we're building. In Stowe, conservation and recreation don't compete, they work together.

We're deeply grateful to the landowners, volunteers, donors and trail users who make this work possible. Your support helps protect the places we love and deepens our connection to the land, to each other and to the future we share.

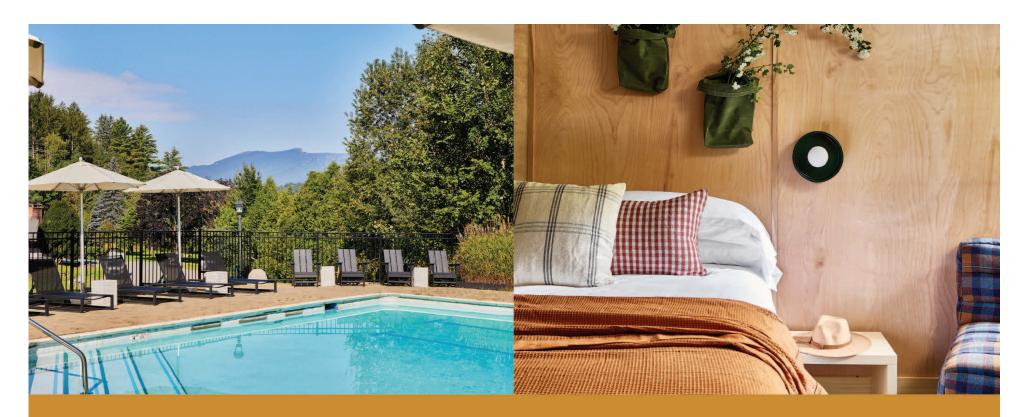
Tom Rogers is executive director of Stowe Land Trust. Kenzie Brunner is executive director of Stowe Trails Partnership.



PHOTO COURTESY OF STOWE TRAILS PARTNERSHIP

12





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PHOTO BY MARK J. CLEMENT

The Driving Range

Vermont's first fully adaptive trail network

Berne Broudy and Bec Wojtecki

With 1,000 miles of mountain biking trails across Vermont, it feels like Vermont has something for everyone. Now, with the addition of the Driving Range to Vermont's trail system, it does.

There is a movement in Vermont to make outdoor recreation more accessible. The Driving Range checks that box while providing fun, challenges and thrills for all riders. The network was designed and built to be fun and accessible to riders on adaptive mountain bikes. With berms, jumps, rock rolls and blue, black and double-black diamond trails, this trail network shows that

adaptive doesn't mean lame, and it lets disabled and able-bodied riders mountain bike together.

Take Double Bogey. Built by L&D Trailworks, this trail features sweeping, steep, loamy berms and a rollercoaster of green schist spines and rock gardens set against a backdrop of massive boulders and towering rock walls. It's the first black diamond trail intentionally built for adaptive riders that we know of. And it gets your heart pounding.

Hotdogger, built by Mountain Trailwerks, has a pro line that leaps and falls down the face of the Driving Range with as many gaps, hips and drops as you can handle. The B-line is just as exciting but with fewer consequences. It dives into steep corners and over tabletops, sweeping through Vermont's green jungle.

Greg Durso, program director for the Kelly Brush Foundation, which partnered with Richmond Mountain Trails in building the Driving Range, vetted the trails during the Driving Range construction.

"Mountain biking has been one of the fastest-growing sports in the country over the last five years," Durso said. "Adaptive bikes give us the physical ability to access the outdoors, but we need trails to use them on. If you have a disability, you often feel excluded. So, to feel included is very overwhelming in

one of the best ways imaginable."

This sense of community is strong at The Driving Range. From the local businesses and organizations that contributed financially to the project; to the 200-plus volunteers who put in more than 6,000 hours of work; to the crowds of friends riding the trails together on two and three- and four-wheeled bikes, the Driving Range belongs to the community that believed in it, built it and shreds it.

The network is off Route 2 in Bolton. Park at the 53-car lot and follow the grass path to the base of the climb. It's a good idea to check trail conditions on Trailforks before you ride.















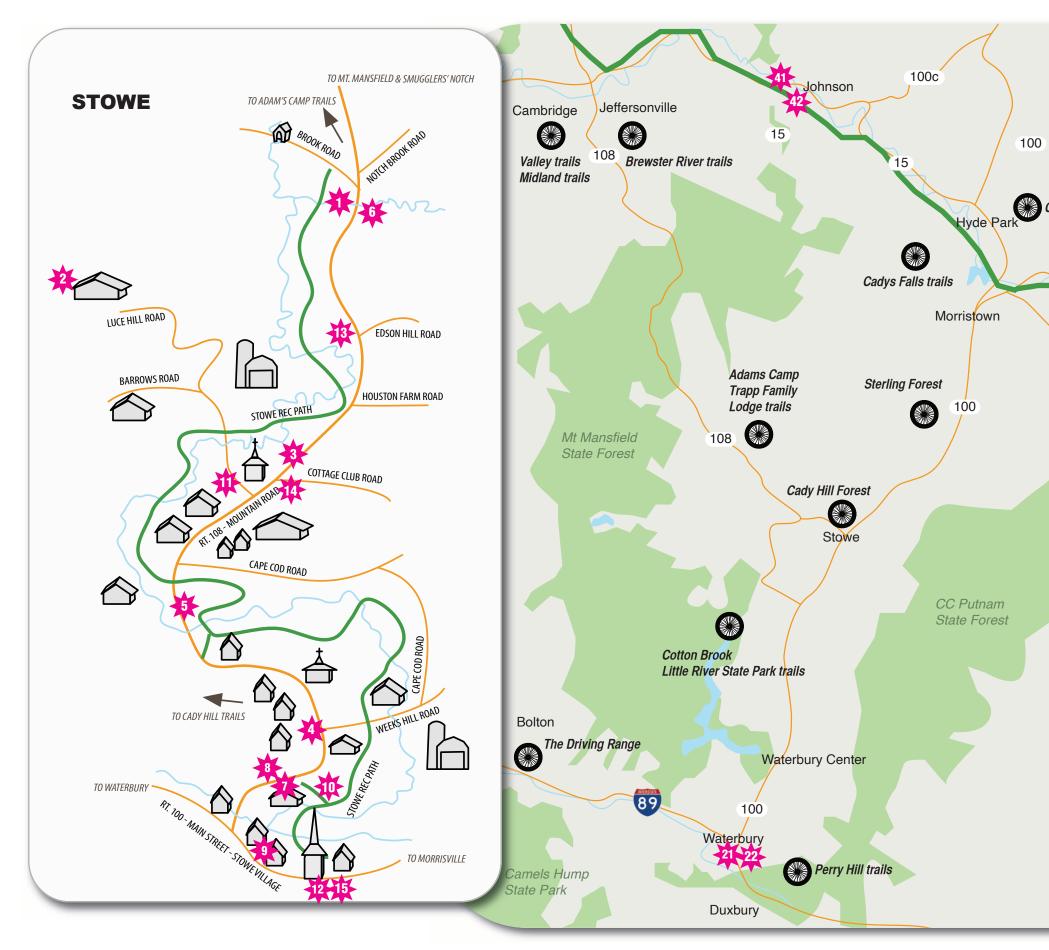
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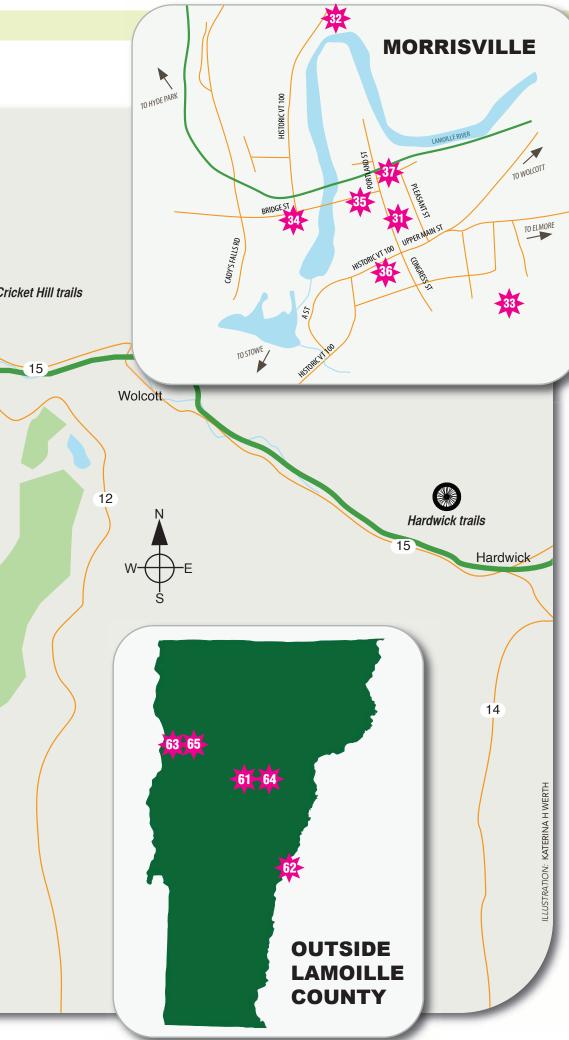
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- 31 Carlson Real Estate
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- 37 Wild Legacy

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- 41 Forget Me Not Shop
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OUTSIDE LAMOILLE COUNTY

- **61 Onion River Outdoors**
- 62 The Prouty
- 63 Black Cap
- 64 Roam
- 65 Catamount Trail Association

MTB TRAIL LOCATOR

STOWE

Adams Camp

Turn on to Ranch Brook Road and park in the designated area (road is class 4)

Cady Hill Forest

Park across from Blessed Sacrament Church

Cotton Brook/Little River

Park at the gate on Cotton Brook Road

Sterling Forest

Take Sterling Valley Road to Sterling Gorge Road.

Trapp Family Lodge trails

Located at Trapp Family Lodge

WATERBURY

Little River State Park trails

Take Little River Road, just west of Waterbury village

Perry Hill trails - WATA

Park at the lot on River Road, off S. Main Street **MORRISTOWN**

Cadys Falls trails

Parking area at the end of Duhamel Road

HYDE PARK

Cricket Hill trails

Park at the lot on Cricket Hill or Lamoille Union High School, Route 15

HARDWICK

Hardwick trails

Park at Hazen Union High School or Green Mountain Tech Center

CAMBRIDGE

Valley trails

Park at Valley Dream Farm, Pleasant Valley Road

Midland trails

Park at Brewster River Park, Canyon Road; or near the intersection of Clif Reynolds and Edwards roads

JEFFERSONVILLE

Brewster River trails

Intersection of Clif Reynolds Road and Edwards Road

BOLTON

The Driving Range

1316 Theodore Roosevelt Highway (RT 2)

MAP LEGEND



RIDE Advertiser



Mountain Bike Trail



Rail Trail







Rules of the road

The League of American Bicyclists' five rules of the road prepare you for safe and fun road bicycling no matter where you ride.

FOLLOW THE LAW

You have the same rights and responsibilities as drivers. Obey traffic signals and stop signs. Ride with traffic and use the rightmost lane headed in the direction you're traveling.

BE PREDICTABLE

Make your intentions clear to everyone on the road. Ride in a straight line and don't swerve between parked cars. Signal turns, and check behind you well before turning or changing lanes.

BE CONSPICUOUS

Ride where people can see you and wear bright clothing. Use a white front light, red rear light and reflectors when visibility is poor. Make eye contact with others and don't ride on sidewalks.

THINK AHEAD

Anticipate what drivers, pedestrians and other people on bikes will do next. Watch for turning vehicles and ride outside the door zone of parked cars. Look out for debris, potholes and other road hazards. Cross railroad tracks at right angles.

RIDE READY

Check that your tires are sufficiently inflated, brakes are working, chain runs smoothly and quick release levers are closed. Carry tools and supplies appropriate for your ride. Wear a helmet.









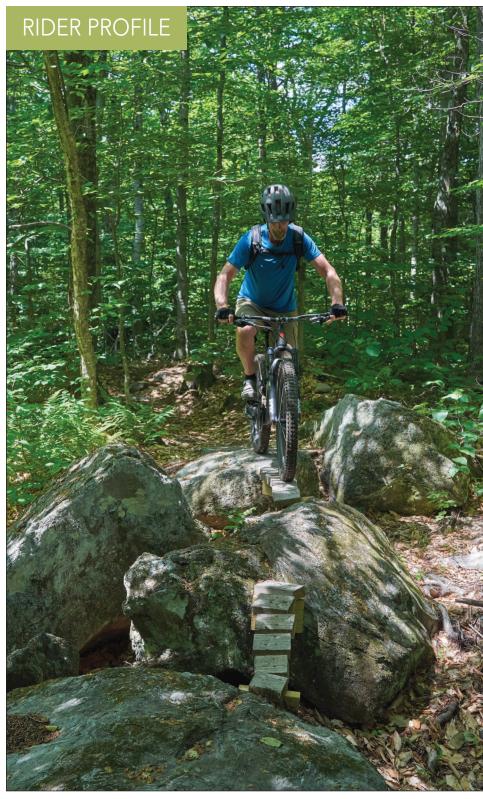


PHOTO COURTESY OF STOWE TRAILS PARTNERSHIP

MARK LEACH has been riding the local trails longer than many riders have been off training wheels. The Stowe resident got into mountain biking in his late 30s, proving it's never a bad time to pick up the sport.

Name: Mark Burleigh Leach (aka G by the grandkids)

Age: 65 How long have you been riding moun-

tain bikes? 25ish years

What is your favorite trail in Stowe and why? Kimmer's, because of its old school flow that requires focus to ride well.

If you could ride anywhere in the world, where would it be? Wherever my family is riding.

What is your favorite trail snack? Apres ride beer (I don't really do trail snacks).





Vermont's vast mountain bike trail network

RIDE staff

Witnessing the sheer ubiquity of mountain bikers whipping through the singletrack, powering through muddy back roads, getting tricky on pump tracks or bombing down snow-free ski resort trails, it might be easy to forget that, just 30 years ago, these knobby-tired riders were considered persona non grata at a lot of places now embracing the sport.

Sorry, powder hounds, but Stowe has long changed from being a ski town and is now a four-season play place, with summertime the busiest season of them all.

It could be argued that mountain biking over the past decade has brought as many outdoor recreationists to town as skiing. Plus, throw some fat tires on a bike and you can power through the snow, thus eliminating the need to garage your two wheels all winter, a versatility that cannot be said for winter sports — try donning your skis in July and tell us how that goes for you.

Mountain bikers of yore illicitly cut rootand-rock-filled trails through the area woods in the 1980s and '90s, laying the foundation for today's highly engineered — faster and safer — routes. Yesteryear's scofflaws are today's respected ambassadors to the woods.

The sport is no longer an exclusive club, as kids, older adults and people with physical disabilities are all able to access the woods, whether it's through improvements in equipment or changes to land use policy.

Welcome to summer. Welcome to RIDE. And remember, be nice to each other.

ADAMS CAMP

Location: Stowe

Getting there: Just past the Matterhorn on Stowe's Mountain Road, up Ranch Brook Road. Follow doubletrack to parking area. Other access from Stowe High School and Brook Road.

Miles of trails: 14

Singletrack or doubletrack: Eclectic mix of doubletrack, singletrack and flow.

Maintained by: Stowe Trails Partnership Shared use: Hiking, trail running, snowshoeing, Nordic

Description: A 513-acre conserved property with 7 MTB trails. The property sits next to the Ranch Valley, a historic winter recreation area. It provides access to private trails owned by Trapp Family Lodge that require a pass to ride. stowetrails.org.

CADY HILL FOREST

Location: Stowe

Getting there: On Mountain Road across from the Town and Country Resort, three-



PHOTO COURTESY OF STOWE TRAILS PARTNERSHIP

Serenity and Adrenaline is one of the marquee trails in the Adams Camp trail pod, part of the overall Stowe Trails Partnership network.

quarters of a mile from Route 100 in the center of Stowe. A second access is through the Cady Hill Road substation.

Miles of trails: 11 miles

Maintained by: Stowe Trails Partnership Shared use: Hiking, trail running

Description: 23 trails on 320 acres whose diverse terrain, great views, easy access from the town and Stowe Rec Path, catering to just about any skill level has made it the flagship trail network of the Stowe Trails Partnership and one of the most ridden trail networks in the Northeast. stowetrails.org.

STERLING FOREST

Location: Stowe

Getting there: At the end of Sterling Valley Road

Road.

Miles of trails: 9 miles with 14 trails

Maintained by: Stowe Trails Partnership, others **Shared use:** Hiking, trail running, snow-shoeing, Nordic, backcountry, horse, snow-mobiling

Description: Sterling trails are part of a giant swath of protected land — 1,530 acres — used by a variety of different outdoor enthusiasts. Unique among Stowe's trail networks due to its remote location and backcountry feel, the trails are challenging, and the setting offers a sense of isolation that can be hard to find these days. stowetrails.org.

LITTLE RIVER AND COTTONBROOK

Location: Stowe

Getting there: Head on Moscow Road towards Nebraska Valley Road in Stowe. When you reach the sharp bend after the turn

to Trapp Hill Road take a left and you will see a parking area and trail kiosk on your right. Parking is also available if you continue on the road on the left before you reach the red gate.

Trails: 4
Total vertical: 2,235 feet

Shared use: Dog walkers, hiking, trail running, horses, snowmobiles, snowshoe, backcountry and Nordic ski

Known for: Post bike swims, fat-bike friendly

Description: From the challenge of the grueling 9-mile Cotton Brook Road climb to farmhouses and orchards and a gentle afternoon stroll to Waterbury reservoir, this place has it all. Connects to trail network in Little River State Park. stowetrails.org and waterburytrails.com.

Continued on next page



TRAPP FAMILY LODGE

Location: Stowe

Getting there: At Trapp Family Lodge,

Luce Hill Road.

Miles of trail: 9 miles of singletrack and 9 miles of doubletrack.

Highlights: Rock Tiger and Woodchuck are perfect for new riders to safely experience the flow and joy of sweet singletrack. For more experienced riders, try the climb up the Cabin — conquer the 750-foot elevation gain on the Lodge Spur, Tapline and Growler combo, which opens the door to all the great riding in the Adams Camp area.

Description: A mix of singletrack and doubletrack. The singletrack is hand built with some of the best beginner friendly trails in the area along with some challenging technical trails. A ride up Tapline and Growler lead to the cabin, a great spot to catch your breath at the trail network's high point.

PERRY HILL

Location: Waterbury

Getting there: River Road. A short distance to the trailhead from the parking area.

Miles of trails: 10 miles of intermediate to advanced, sometimes strenuous MTB trails with 16 trails and 831 feet of vertical

Maintained by: Waterbury Area Trails Alliance

Known for: S'Mores, a masterfully crafted flow trail, and Small Axe, WATA's longest trail

Description: Dramatic downhills and arduous uphills. Some say these technical single-track downhills are the best in Vermont. There is a smorgasbord of options from rock challenges to masterfully crafted flow, to rewarding climbs and family friendly routes. waterburytrails.com.

CADYS FALLS

Location: Morristown

Getting there: Duhamel Road, park on left

just before the nursery. **Miles of trails:** 29

Primary trail type: All mountain and downhill

Shared use: Hiking, trail running, back-country, snowshoeing, horses

Description: Network entrance is on the right at the top of the road past the nursery. A downhill course, trails all end by dumping riders out on The Way Out. Some riders say trails aren't well marked, but it's hard to get lost. There's always The Way Out.

MOBBS FARM

Location: Jericho

Getting there: Parking area off Browns Trace Road.

Miles of trails: 48 trails, total of about 10 miles

Maintained by: Fellowship of the Wheel, Town of Jericho

Shared use: Hiking, trail running, horse, snowshoeing, Nordic, hunting.

Description: Some nice natural, rake and ride trails. Offers a good variety of riding. Includes several rock ledges. Americana is

characterized by steep ascents and descents, technical single track. Lots of different users here

Apres bike: Secret swimming holes!

HINESBURG TOWN FOREST

Location: Hinesburg

Getting there: Three access points: Economou Road, Hayden Hill Road East, and Hayden Hill Road West.

Miles of trails: 17 miles of singletrack and 22 trails

Maintained by: Fellowship of the Wheel **Shared use:** Hiking, snowshoeing, hunting, with occasional permitted use of ATVs and horses on the town-maintained Eagle Trail.

Description: 1,125-acre historic town forest. See old rock walls, foundations, wells, apple trees and other signs of a bygone era. Trails are primarily old-school rake-and-ride and can be quite challenging. Limited options for beginner and intermediate riders. Set in the middle of three contiguous networks, the Hinesburg Town Forest is an excellent jumping off point for some of the longest, most challenging rides in Vermont. "Head up and over to the incredible Carse Hills trails to the south or climb up to the Butternut Cabin at Sleepy Hollow to the north," say the Fellowship of the Wheel folks. In Hinesburg, also check out Carse Hills, which some say offers the best singletrack in Vermont on land nestled between Lincoln Hill and Hollow Road.

HOWE BLOCK: CAMEL'S HUMP STATE FOREST

Location: Waitsfield

Getting there: Tucker Hill Road or American Flatbread parking lot Miles of trails: 13 miles with 10 trails Maintained by: Mad River Riders

Shared use: Hiking, e-biking, trail running, horse, snowshoeing, backcountry, Nordic

Description: Intermediate to expert with a combination of old-school rooty, rocky trails to more flowy, machine-made intermediate trails. Fun and popular. Lots of climbing means lots of fun on the way down.

KINGDOM TRAILS

Location: East Burke Miles: 85 miles, 214 trails Highest trailhead: 1,728 feet

Maintained by: Kingdom Trail Association Shared use: Hiking, trail running, snowshoe Description: Mostly singletrack, but some double and dirt too. Seventy-five percent of the trail is intermediate to black diamond. Trails for all ages and abilities, from technical single track to excavated flow trails, skills parks, pump tracks and mellow double track. The interconnected network allows riders to go from one end of other completely on trails with the village of East Burke at the heart. Parking options outlined on the website, kingdomtrails.org.

Other sources: trailforks.com, fot wheel.org, vmba.org, madriverriders.org.







PHOTO COURTESY OF STOWE TRAILS PARTNERSHIP

Guidelines for responsible trail riding

The International Mountain Bicycling Association launched its Rules of the Trail in 1988 to educate mountain bikers and serve as a pro-bike advocacy tool. The association's guidelines for trail behavior are now recognized around the world.

These rules for responsible riding have been adopted by land-management agencies nationwide because riders' actions have critical impacts on the landscape, trails, animals and other trail users.

Keep in mind that conventions for yielding and passing may vary, depending on regional traditions, traffic conditions and the intended use of the trail.

Keep trails open by setting a good example of environmentally sound and socially responsible off-road cycling. Pledge to ride friendly, prepared, responsibly and lightly.

For more information, visit imba.com.

LEAVE NO TRACE

Be sensitive to the dirt beneath you. Respect your local trail builders and be a good steward of the physical environment. Keep singletrack thay way by staying on the trail. Don't create new ones and don't cut switchbacks. Be sure to pack out at least as much as you pack in.

Do not ride on muddy trails — it causes rutting, widening and maintenance headaches. Ride through standing water, not around it. Ride (or walk) technical features, not around them.

SHARE THE TRAIL

Most of the trails we ride are multi-use. Mountain bikers yield to horses and foot traffic, and descending riders yield to climbing riders. There are some regional differences and unique rules on single-use, directional mountain bike trails — know the code where you ride. Be nice. Say hi!

RIDE OPEN, LEGAL TRAILS

Poaching trails, building illegal singletrack, or adding unauthorized trail features are all detrimental to access. Poorly built features could also seriously injure other trail users. If you believe there aren't enough trails or variety near you, it's time to get involved.

Respect trail and road closures and find

clarification if you are uncertain about the status of a trail. Do not trespass on private land. Obtain permits or other authorization as required. Be aware that bicycles may not be permitted in areas protected as state or federal wilderness.

RIDE IN CONTROL

Speed, inattentiveness, and rudeness are the primary sources of trail conflict among user groups. If you need to pass, slow down, ring a bell or verbally announce yourself, and wait until the other trail user is out of the path. Use extra caution around horses, which are unpredictable.

Obey speed regulations and recommendations, and ride within your limits.

YIELD TO OTHERS

Cyclists should yield to all other trail users unless the trail is clearly signed for bike-only travel. Cyclists traveling downhill should yield to ones headed uphill unless the trail is clearly marked as one-way or downhill-only traffic. Strive to make each pass a safe and courteous one.

MIND THE ANIMALS

When it comes to wildlife, live and let live. Animals are easily startled by an unannounced approach, a sudden movement or a loud noise. Give animals enough room and time to adjust to you.

When passing horses, use special care and follow directions from the horseback riders and ask if you are uncertain. Running cattle and disturbing wildlife are serious offenses.

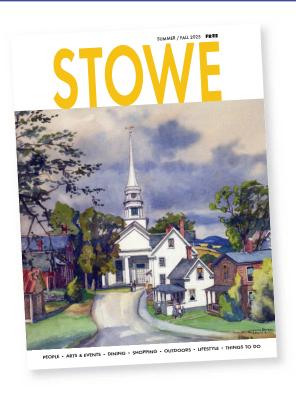
If you want to ride with your dog, first find out whether it's allowed by looking up the leash laws and trail restrictions. Ensure your companion is obedient enough to not cause problems for you, other trail users or wild animals.

PLAN AHEAD

Know your equipment, your ability and the area where you are riding — and prepare accordingly. Strive to be self-sufficient. Keep your equipment in good repair and carry necessary supplies for changes in weather or other conditions. Always wear a helmet and appropriate safety gear.







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RIDE 2025 **23**



No matter what time of year, we riders are loyal to our soil

David Hatoff

Vermont mountain biking is synonymous with our ever-changing seasons, challenging weather patterns, trail conditions and diverse terrain. From rocky and rooty, off camber and steep, to smooth and flowy machine-made trails, it's an ever-changing puzzle that you try and piece together smoothly. The Green Mountain State is a land of constant green laced with lakes, rivers, streams and forests under canopies that translates to lands of perfect soil crafted into some of the finest single track you will ever find, anywhere

The terrain here is sharp and craggy. The forest makes you notice its subtle details, especially when you are slowly turning the pedals on many of the area's toughest climbs.

Patches of lichen reveal clefts of rock that act as natural features for riders on climbs and descents. Trail decay from thousands of riders using the same trails year after year has produced trenches, roots, rocks and alternative lines that make those who made the trails shake their heads in frustration. Past and present floods reshape the landscape and alter the trails' direction and character and strip them down to bare bones revealing decay, wash outs and new blowdowns.

In the summer, it's a constant fight with rain, which, over the last few years, has become more of the norm around here than dry days. We wait for weather windows and for nature's moods to line up, and when they do, it creates the type of conditions that mountain bikers live for: tacky, grippable dirt.

Just enough dampness in the soil makes it "hero dirt" as your tires grip, rather than slip around every turn, berm and corner. The last few years have been a battle for bikers who live for these moments and conditions. Mother Nature has dealt us a bad hand of remnants of hurricanes spinning off the coasts, producing torrential rain events, flooding, windstorms and landslides.

Like it or not, climate change has become a real impact on the mountain bike community here, as trail partnerships and local stewards of their own private trails fight the elements and are constantly rebuilding and armoring trails, putting in new drainage systems, and sometimes rerouting entire laces of single track — it's too large to fix what summer storms have now wrecked.

The "Vermont Strong" pedigree keeps us going and fighting no matter what Mother Nature has in store for us. We can rebuild, overcome and see the shining light at the end of the tunnel, no matter what.

No matter what weather summer brings us, for a few delicate weeks each

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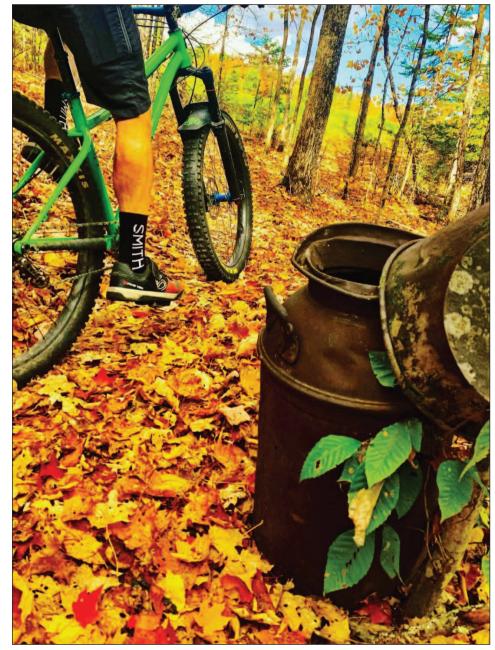


PHOTO BY STEVE GOFF

fall, the trees put on a natural art show in red, orange, yellow and green, putting Vermont on a worldwide stage for all to see, shimmering in picturesque foliage colors that impress even the locals.

As the sun falls away from its summer dominance of the New England skyline, nearly every tree across the region begins to cut its losses. The leaves are too taxing for the food they provide, and the trees, selfish to the last, abandon them to the cold, cutting off the supply of chlorophyll that drugs them into a homogenous shade of green all summer. Soon, the leaves will fall and coat the forest floor, humbly fading into future food for the trunks that abandoned them.

A ceiling of yellow and gold trembles above, still affixed to the poplars, elms

and snow-white birches, until they, too, succumb to the weather. Autumn's blue skies are sharper and clearer than those of summer, and the final two hours of the day invigorate the landscape — crystalline amber light contrasted against black shadows.

On even the most objectively abysmal days, a soaking gray rain will crank the palette to electric hues. When dusted by the odd October snow, there is little room left for thought. There is just instinct and awe, felt to the bone.

Your tires convey every detail of the changing earth underneath. Even in rain, the sheet of maple and birch leaves conceals an impressive grip. Their skin is too thin to separate tire from terrain, allowing

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PHOTO BY STEVE GOFF

Continued from previous page

you to amble on gleefully while the smell of decay hangs in the heavy air.

Then, an interlude of full-day sun dries them to a crinkle, and you bathe in creeks of orange and yellow, feeling but not seeing the trail, a popcorn symphony cracking beneath your wheels. The trail dives into a pool of gold, and boom! Your front rim meets a piece of granite buried in the depths of the leaf litter.

Then it's over the handlebars you go as you meet a pile of roots, sometimes the blow softened by a blanket of birch leave, sometimes not.

But if the gamble pays, well, there's a lode of beautiful memories to mine during the cold months ahead. The wind blowing a spray of dirt across your favorite trail. The fading plumage of fall bordering your tire tracks, still handsome in its darkening shade. A placid afternoon, frozen in November repose, filled with the sounds of bike interacting with

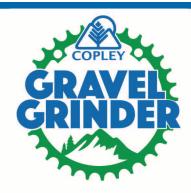
Either way, the snow is coming and spring is many months away. There is no time to waste.

When winter finally comes, everything

is now covered in eternal white. The landscape's imperfections and scars are now hidden. Once spring rolls around, the snow melts and the rivers and streams surge with rapidly running water, bringing once frozen liquid back to life. Waves of grass sheath the hillsides like green lace, spotted with yellow and purple polka dots of plants beginning to flower and bloom. All of nature's smells blend with the intoxicating concoction that embodies spring. If you get your nose close enough to the dirt, your senses smell all the natural aromas that surround you. Depending on the landscape and the tree, you could get a strong smell of pine, spruce, maple or

Then, that cycle of searching for the perfect dirt starts all over again.

The landscape's frugality only serves to highlight the nuances of each season, distilling the experience rather than obscuring or diluting it behind a wall of green. Glimpses of other trails through the ponderosa are just visible enough to pique curiosity. Maybe the next lap you'll find where they go. Only time will tell as the wheels and time keeps on rolling forward.



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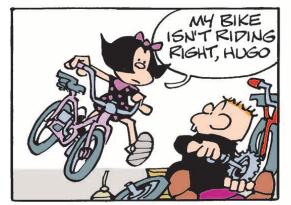
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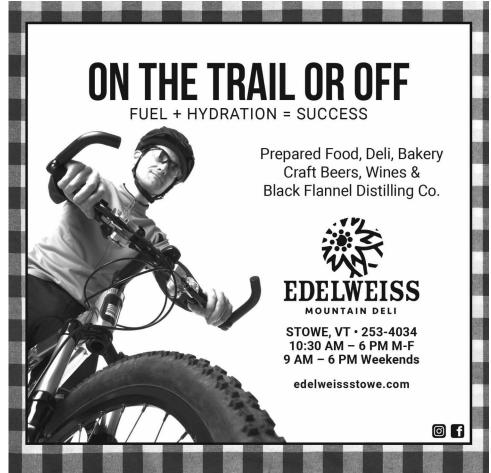








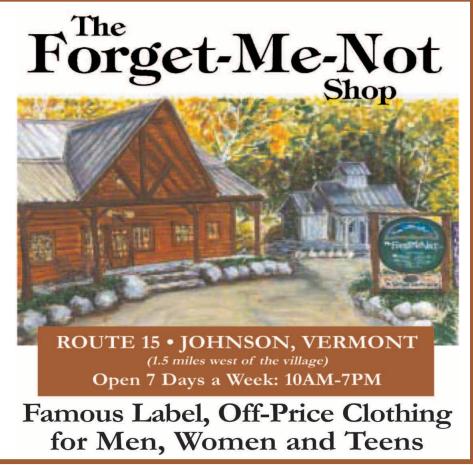












PEDAL POWER

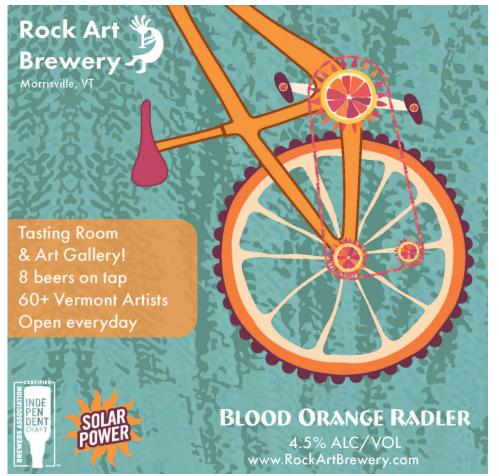


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Cycling strikes a rare balance: it's fun, effective and accessible. It builds strength, boosts flexibility and enhances balance – all while being easy on your joints. Riding a traditional bike also gets you outdoors, where fresh air and natural scenery can work wonders for your mental health.

Whether you're cruising country roads or tackling a local trail, cycling delivers physical and mental benefits that go far beyond the ride. It's exercise that doesn't feel like exercise – and that's exactly what makes it sustainable.















THANK YOU!

Stowe Trails Partnership would like to extend a huge thank you to all the Sponsors, Access Partners, and Members that support and enable this organization to continue building, maintaining, and protecting Stowe's valuable trail network and resource.

Please show some love to our returning and new business Sponsors this year that help support your trails.

Want to become a Sponsor and receive all the related benefits? Visit Stowetrails.org/partners

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Together, we're building a world-class trail network for everyone.

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