



## Spring 2016 | News on the Trail

It's exciting to see the leaves and flowers coloring the trail.

The Kennebec River Rail Trail (KRRT) is now part of the "Capital to the Coast Trail System" that will connect our trail with the Merrymeeting Trail all the way to Brunswick, Maine. We'll keep you posted on updates and progress.

The next major project for our 6.5 mile KRRT stretch is to finish the two ends of the trail, in Augusta and Gardiner. The Augusta end, connecting the trail to Waterfront Park, may be completed as soon as this fall. The Friends of KRRT organization has been working toward this goal for many years. Watch this newsletter for updates and you can check the website at [kennebecriverrailtrail.org](http://kennebecriverrailtrail.org).

## Race is Coming. Sign Up now.

The 8th Annual KRRT Half Marathan, Half Marathon Relay & 5K races are coming on June 26. Space is limited. Register now at [KRRT.org](http://KRRT.org).

Flat and fast course. Proceeds to go to the upkeep and maintenance of the Kennebec River Rail Trail.



## Animal Tracks | by Dan Albert

Walking on the Kennebec River Rail Trail offers views of many species of animals, one of which is the Bald Eagle. The area supports a healthy population of the bird which has brown plumage until it reaches adulthood at about five years old. The adult birds sport a recognizable white head and tail. An adult bird has a wingspan of up to seven feet and may weigh up to fourteen pounds. Adult pairs keep the same mating partner for life and will find another if their mate dies. The Bald Eagle often has a lifespan up to twenty years.

The population of eagles in the 1700's was estimated at about half a million birds but declined to a level of about 500 mating pairs. The common use of certain chemicals such as DDT as a pesticide after WW2 polluted some of the food sources of the Bald Eagle. The ingestion of the DDT through its food caused the egg shells of the Eagle often to be too thin and would be crushed by the incubating adult bird.

Another cause of death for Bald Eagle is through lead poisoning. The use of lead birdshot for hunting and lead sinkers for fishing contributed to the deaths of our majestic national symbol.

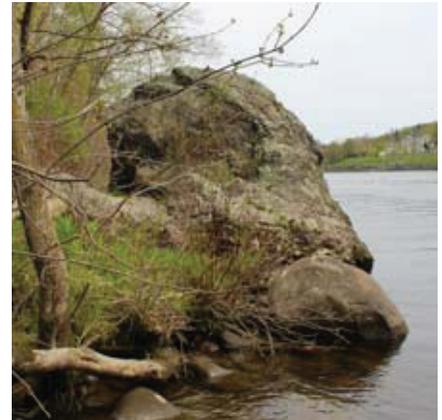
Fortunately, through environmental programs and protective policies, the Kennebec River has seen a transformation in recent decades. The Bald Eagle now thrives in the area and may be viewed often while walking on the Kennebec River Rail Trail.



## Museum on the Trail | “One Mile Rock”

Imagine, 400 years ago, paddling up the Kennebec River, when the waters were wild, not a building to be seen. Landmarks of any kind were very important to find where you were and how to return. You may have noticed the large boulder down at the river’s edge, mid-way between the .75 and 1 mile markers, along the trail just below the granite bench. In the 1620’s this rock became known as *One Mile Rock*.

In the early 1620’s Plymouth Colony settlers began trading for furs with the Abenaki tribes along the Kennebec River. In 1628 the Cushnoc Trading Post, (also known as Koussinoc) was established on a site just south of where we see the old Fort Western in Augusta.



*One Mile Rock* became an important landmark letting travelers know that they were just about a mile from their destination of the trading post. And also, one mile south of the head of tide, the highest point on the Kennebec where the ocean tide effects the river and river travel.

European settlers traded biscuits, grains, fruit, blankets, metal wares such as knives, hatchets and kettles as well as beads and tobacco for the abundant furs collected by the local tribes. A large portion of the furs traded were beaver pelts used in fashionable beaver top hats popular in Europe.

The Cushnoc Trading Post was an ongoing concern for close to 50 years but eventually the venture was abandoned in 1675. The site was rediscovered in the mid 1980’s and the archaeological location was declared a National Historic Landmark in 1993.

*One Mile Rock* is a glacial erratic; a large rock carried far from its native ground and left behind by the ice age glacier that covered this land.

### Trail Condition Report:

**October:** Heavy rain caused two washouts by mile marker 5.0. The Trail’s Board of Supervisors and Maine DOT did a great job to fill in and black top the damaged areas.

**January:** Two trees were blown over blocking the Trail, by mile markers 3.5 and 5.75. The trees were promptly cleaned from the trail.

**McNaughton Brothers Construction** always did a good job to plowing the trail this winter.

An agreement was made with **Farmingdale Correction** to spend one week a month to work on Rail Trail cleanup.

The Kennebec River Rail Trail is in good condition so enjoy it!

The **Friends of the Kennebec River Rail Trail** is a volunteer organization that works to maintain and improve the trail for everyone’s use. We do the small stuff and the big stuff, trimming weeds, fixing fences, as well as planning for our future big trail projects. Importantly we raise the funds to keep it all going. If you’d like to help, we’d love your help.

You can donate or sign up to help on the trail at [KennebecRiverRailTrail.org](http://KennebecRiverRailTrail.org)  
Visit us on [Facebook/kennebec.trail](https://www.facebook.com/kennebec.trail)

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