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**Mount Washington Valley Trails Association awarded a \$20,000 grant from the REI Co-op**

North Conway, NH - Mount Washington Valley Trails Association has been awarded a \$20,000 grant from the REI Co-op to help support the North Conway Recreation Path. The grant money will be specifically earmarked for the Wetlands Bridge crossing up to Cranmore portion of the path and brings the MWV Rec Path closer to its \$2.3 million fundraising goal.

The mission of the MWV Rec Path, a project of the Mount Washington Valley Trails Association, is to build and maintain multi-use recreation paths within the Valley area that provide residents and visitors alternative community access and opportunities for safe, family-oriented recreation and transportation. The MWV Rec Path Committee was organized in 2008 by a group of volunteers with the specific mission to build a multiple-use, non-motorized recreational trail. Through stalwart work and steadfast fundraising, the MWV Red Path Committee has worked diligently on the permitting and review process with bidding commencing in Fall, 2019 and construction scheduled to begin in Spring, 2020.



Photo: A ceremonial check is presented to the MWV Trails Association. Shown here (left to right): Becca Deschenes, Director of Marketing at Cranmore Mountain Resort , Shannon Hanley, REI North Conway Store Manager, Larry Garland, MWV Trails Association/North Conway Rec Path, Chris Meier, MWV Trails Association/ North Conway Rec Path.

“As an organization dedicated to awakening a lifelong love of the outdoors, we are thrilled to support the work of the Mount Washington Valley Trails Association to connect people and reduce barriers to the outdoors,” said Shannon Hanley, REI North Conway store manager. “North Conway is a community that celebrates people getting outside, and we all benefit from easy access to outdoor spaces.”

*Chris Meier responded by saying, “We are very excited and proud that REI has chosen to include the Mount Washington Valley Trails Association and our North Conway Rec Path Phase 1 project in their community investment grant program for 2019. The funds will allow us to complete a wetlands bridge at the northern end of the project, and connect to the important community node of Cranmore Mountain Resort. We look forward to collaborating with REI toward our common mission of connecting people and reducing boundaries to the outdoors, right here in the Mt Washington Valley.”*

Larry Garland, VP and Chair of the MWV Rec Path Committee, added “*When added to the capital campaign fund, the grant will help close the gap between what we previously raised and what costs are now expected to be.*” The cost for the Wetlands Bridge were covered in original capital campaign, but as always there were cost increases as the project has moved through the construction timeline. The REI Co-op grant will address that shortfall and help the MWV Rec Path committee come closer to their total fundraising goal.

REI’s support for the MWV Rec Path goes beyond this grant. REI will be on hand at the upcoming [Rock the Rec](#) musical event at Cranmore Mountain Resort to support the MWV Rec Path on August 22, 2019. With performances by local artists Riley Parkhurst Project, Rek’-lis, and Shark Martin, tickets are \$12 online in advance and \$15 day-of, and all proceeds will directly benefit the MWV Rec Path. Swing by the many food and product vendors on site, including REI’s bike demo & outdoor adventure tent, to Rock the Rec and learn more about REI’s bikes and programs.

To learn more about the Mount Washington Valley Trails Association and the MWC Rec Path, visit <http://mwvrecpath.org/>. To learn more about REI, go to [www.rei.com](http://www.rei.com).

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