

Report of the Open Space Committee

Since its inception in 2003, the Fremont Open Space Committee has worked in conjunction with the Fremont Conservation Commission, the Board of Selectmen, and the residents of Fremont to ensure that Fremont's rural past as well as Fremont's future is properly protected.

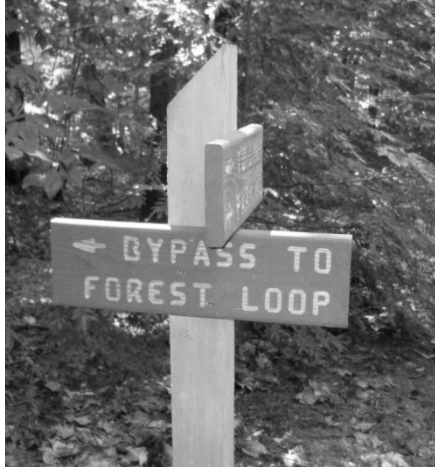
In 2011, the emphasis continued to focus on maintaining, enhancing and promoting the open space in Fremont. These activities built upon the work done in previous years by many resident volunteers.

- The largest accomplishment of 2011 was the development of a trail system in the northern sections of the Oak Ridge Town Forest. Oak Ridge North is accessed from Tavern Road, about 3/4 mile south of North Road. There are over 2 miles of hiking trails, with four entrances along the Class VI portion of Tavern Road. The trails are a mixture of logging roads and foot paths, and cross a diverse mixture of habitats and geographies. Bobcat, beaver, hare, deer and moose are all present, to name just a few. A new trail map is under development for Oak Ridge and will be available in 2012.
- Glen Oakes was not ignored with the addition of a new trail segment and signage, and new Town Forest Ordinance signs along the southern entrances at the power lines. The new trail segment is a short 75 yard link between the Homestead and Forest Loop trails. It allows hikers to avoid the seasonally wet area on the western segment of the Forest Loop trail. This is accomplished by using the first part of the Homestead Trail off of the Link trail and taking the "Bypass" over to Forest Loop.
- In March, the Full Moon Snow Shoe hike brought 18 diehard hikers into Glen Oakes. Unfortunately, there was no snow and the full moon stayed hidden. Thus, it became the first "flashlight" hike!
- Our second annual Fall Foliage hike was held in Oak Ridge "North" in October. This was the "grand opening" of the new trail system developed in the northern half of the Oak Ridge Town Forest. About 20 hikers braved the challenge that is Tavern Road and were treated with a great hike. Of special note was the large bobcat spotted bounding across the forest floor.
- Late October brought a surprise snow storm. Numerous volunteers put in over 25 man (and women) hours cleaning up the fallen branches across the trail systems.

The Fremont Open Space Committee will continue to study new opportunities to further protect special areas in Fremont. We plan on offering additional activities and encourage residents to take advantage of the wonderful open spaces that belong to all of the residents of Fremont.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis Howland, Chair
Fremont Open Space Committee



Glen Oakes BYPASS trail sign - no more wet feet!



Oak Ridge North Trail Signs - Which way to go?



Fremont Fall Foliage Hike 2011 - Happy hikers about to experience the new trail system in Oak Ridge North.

Photos Courtesy of Dennis Howland