

Western New England Greenway Bike Tour 2014

The Western New England Greenway is a proposal developed by the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area for a contiguous network of bicycle routes that would connect New York City to Montreal, linking the two great bikeways, the East Coast Greenway to the Route Verte in Quebec Province, Canada. The aim is to enhance sustainable transportation and recreation opportunities by linking the communities along the route in the states of Connecticut, Massachusetts and Vermont.

In 2011 the WNEG came into being following a conference held in Bennington, VT attended by different organizations working on trail development and on and off road bicycle routes along the Western New England Greenway corridor. In 2012 there was a second conference, the inaugural ride along the WNEG in 2013, and the second ride along the WNEG takes place in 2014. The Bennington conferences were very productive, bringing together potential collaborators from the three states! including CTDOT, National Parks Service, Rails to Trails Conservancy, Lake Champlain Bikeways, MA State Parks, Vermont Bicycle and Pedestrian Coalition, Northwestern Council of Governments, to name but a few of the 21 groups represented at the conference.

- **Dates for the 2014 Tour**

Sunday, 20 July - Saturday, 26 July

Start location: Burlington, VT - end location: Norwalk, approximately 335 miles later

- **Route for the Tour**

North/South direction for the 2014 ride, the route takes six nights and seven days of riding through Vermont, Massachusetts and Connecticut. The route links the existing or conceptual trails and routes along the way from New York to Montreal, namely: the Route Verte, the Island Line Trail, the Burlington Bike Path, the Lake Champlain Bikeway, the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail, the Hou Bike Walk Trail, the New Milford River Trail, the Still River Greenway, the Norwalk River Valley Trail, The Merritt Parkway Trail, and the East Coast Greenway.

- **Riders 2014**

1. Bill Davidson
2. Dan McGuinness
3. Cassy McGuinness
4. Tom O'Brien
5. Jake O'Brien
6. Lou Bresee
7. Bruce Lierman
8. Pat Hare
9. Terry Burke
10. Raymonde Burke

The Ride

Sunday, 20 July: Ticonderoga, NY

We ride out of Burlington along the bike path, then from Shelburne through the Charlotte covered bridge, Vergennes and then cross the bridge to New York and so to Ticonderoga.

Monday, 21 July: Fair Haven, VT

We take the ferry back to Vermont, ride rolling hills on dirt roads along Sunset Lake and so to Fair Haven.

Tuesday, 22 July: East Arlington area, VT

We ride the historic D & H Rail Trail to Poultney, East Poultney, Wells, Pawlett and through Dorset, Manchester to East Arlington.

Wednesday, 23 July: Williamstown, MA

We ride the East Road to Bennington, a visit to the grave of Robert Frost and the Battle Monument, and some hills take us to the college town of Williamstown.

Thursday, 24 July: Great Barrington, MA

We ride through North Adams to take the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail to Pittsfield, then through Lee, Stockbridge of Norman Rockwell fame, and down to Great Barrington.

Friday, 25 July: New Milford, CT

From Great Barrington we ride into the Housatonic River Valley, along the river much of the time, a beautiful dirt section along Weatogue Road then Housatonic River Road to Falls Village, West Cornwall with the red covered bridge, Kent and the covered Bull's Bridge to the New Milford River Trail past Sega Meadows to New Milford.

Saturday, 26 July: Norwalk, CT

From New Milford the ride takes us through Brookfield, Bethel, along the scenic Saugatuck Reservoir and so to the final stop in Norwalk, where the WNEG meets the East Coast Greenway.