

BOG-BRIDGING IN THE HUNTING SWAMP – 7/17/2019

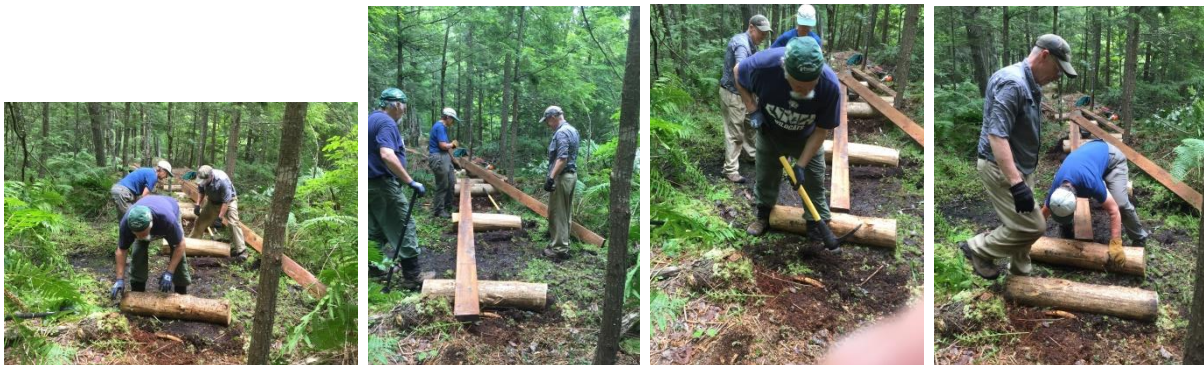
Showers and possible thunderstorms were predicted around ten am the morning of Wednesday, July 17, 2019 when five members of the Loudon Trails Committee agreed to meet at 8:00 am to continue their work on bog-bridging through the Hunting Swamp for what they thought would be just a couple of hours labor before the weather would turn stormy.

Bob Lyons had spent 2 ½ hours the previous day, carrying to the work site the hemlock and spruce logs he'd previously cut and debarked, as well as the hemlock boards that had been stained a week before. He also put in rebar to stabilize the bridge that had been recently built over Pine Island Brook. He, along with Denis Proulx, Deb Eastman-Proulx and Sandy Blanchard arrived at the site to access which small trees would need to be removed if they obstructed the proposed path of the bog bridging.

A few minutes earlier, Martha Butterfield had headed out to the area further down the trail next to the canal to resume cutting shrubs, branches and small trees there. When she heard the sound of a saw and the voices of her companions, she headed back to photograph them cutting and removing vegetation in the way of the path.



After necessary clearing was completed, Bob, Denis and Sandy began setting the logs in position with the contours of the marshy areas and positioning the boards atop them.



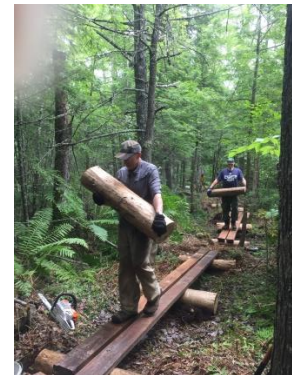
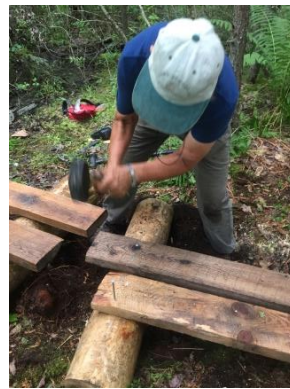
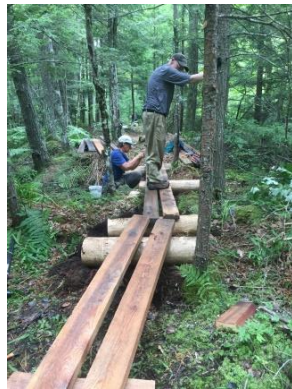
Fortunately, the storms bypassed the area, and work continued uninterrupted.

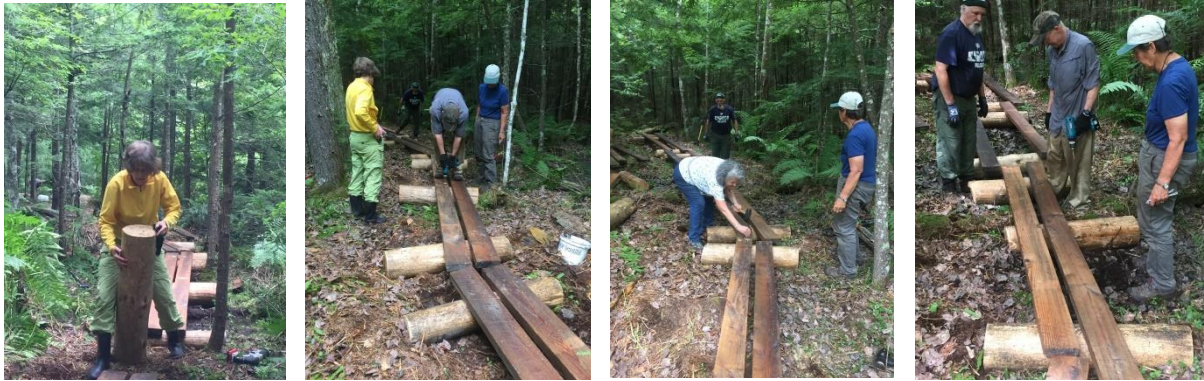


Meanwhile, Deb and Martha returned to the area near the canal to continue working on the trail. Deb used her sawsall to cut large branches, bushes and small trees, while Martha used loppers and a bowsaw. Several times, Martha also hurried back to the bog-bridging site to take more photos of the work the rest of the crew were doing there.



Denis dug out areas of the bog so the logs would fit properly on the marshy, uneven ground, while Bob drilled holes in the boards for spikes and Sandy pounded them in, securing them to the logs beneath them. It took careful planning to make sure the logs and boards were level and each section of three logs and two crossing boards were correctly spaced for ease of walking a foot or more above the wetland areas. Bob and Denis had to frequently pound the logs further into the ground to make them level. After the batteries for Deb's sawsall were depleted, she joined the others in pounding in spikes and moving materials. From 8:00 am to 11:30 am, the group had completed seven sets of bog bridging, creating a long stretch of a safe, pleasing area for easily traversing an otherwise difficult terrain.





It was hot and sweaty working in the swamp that morning because of high humidity and dew point levels, but the sun came out at times, and it showered only occasionally. The work session ended at 11:30 after 3 ½ hours, including Bob's extra 2 ½ hours he'd spent the previous day, hauling logs and boards and stabilizing the Pine Island bridge with rebar, a total of over 22 1/2 combined hours five people worked that week, including travel to and from the site.

Martha Butterfield 7/18/19