



Connecting Communities

Along Our Trails 2015

IN PETERSHAM – FEBRUARY 7



**SATURDAY
FEBRUARY 7
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
SNOW DATE
SUNDAY
FEBRUARY 8**

**FREE & OPEN
TO THE PUBLIC.**

SIGHTS, SOUNDS & STORIES OF THE SWIFT RIVER RESERVATION

Winter is the perfect time to explore nature and less-travelled places. Get to know Petersham's landscapes and its unique history during this snowshoe hike of The Trustees of Reservation's Swift River Reservation (SRR). Noted local naturalist and historian, Bob Clark, will provide fascinating insights to the property and its history! Children are welcome! Choose part or all of the day's events — its up to you!

Morning Hike – 10:00 am to Noon

Hickory Hill Hike on Slab City Tract at Swift River Reservation

Bonfire Lunch – Noon to 1:00 pm

Slab City Tract (Bring your own lunch to enjoy around the fire!)

Afternoon Hike – 1:00 to 3:00 pm

Nichewaug Tract Hike at Swift River Reservation

Harvard Forest – Fisher Museum – Open from 1:00 to 3:00 pm

Full descriptions of these hikes follow.

Organizers & Contributors: Organized by Dick O'Brien, life-long trail steward, hiker, professional trail designer/builder, and former SRR property manager and Bob Clark, Chair of Petersham Conservation Commission, life-long Petersham resident, active trail steward with support from The Trustees of Reservations, Fisher Museum/Harvard Forests, and the Town of Petersham.

Dog Policy: Dogs are allowed on these hikes, but must be on leash at all times.

RSVP and Contact Information: Pre-registration is NOT necessary for this event. For questions and weather plans, contact Dick O'Brien at 978-537-2377 or dobrien578@gmail.com.

Connecting Communities is offered by the Montachusett Regional Trails Coalition and Freedom's Way National Heritage Area, in collaboration with trail stewards, land trusts, community leaders, historical organizations, naturalists, and volunteers, and provides free trail-inspired events.



Freedom's Way National Heritage Area
works in partnership with
The National Park Service

ALONG OUR TRAILS 2015

MARCH – Westminster, MA

APRIL – Gardner, MA

MAY – Groton, MA



HIKE DESCRIPTIONS

Hickory Hill Hike

10:00 am – Noon Spectacular views await while traversing the trails and old roads of the Slab City Tract of SRR. Meander through snow-covered meadows, follow old roads through forests of towering pines and hemlocks alongside the Swift River, climb wooded hillsides to a spectacular vista atop Hickory Hill. This loop hike treks across the former Ames farmstead, runs along the Swift River, ascends the hillside to Harvard Forest's Hickory Hill overlook and then back down to the trailhead. Along the way, we will hear about the effects of the 1938 hurricane, local conservation visionaries, and the heritage of Pirate Valley and Slab City. At the end of our hike, a bonfire and lunch await!

Difficulty: This 1+ mile hike is Moderately Strenuous.

Directions to Slab City Tract: From the Intersection of Rts. 122 & 32 in Petersham, take Rt. 122/32 south for 2 miles to Connor's Pond. Entrance and parking are on the right.

Bonfire/Lunch

Noon – 1:00 pm Gather in the Meadow at Slab City where Trustees staff will have a robust bonfire going around which we can enjoy lunch and socialize. Hot chocolate and marshmallows will be available, but attendees are responsible for their own lunches.

Nichewaug Tract Hike

1:00 – 3:00 pm Hike out along the ridge of Swift River Valley to a stunning scenic vista and back. Hear Bob Clark's interesting history of the valley, its impact on the landscape, and the creation of the trail network. Enjoy one of the most stunning, but little-known scenic vistas in the region. Return back to parking area to conclude.

Difficulty: This 1+ mile hike is an Easy to Moderately Strenuous.

Directions to Nichewaug Tract: From the Intersection of Rts. 122 & 32 in Petersham, take South Street for 0.9 mi. Turn right onto Nichewaug Road and proceed 0.6 mi to entrance and parking on the left.

Fisher Museum

Harvard Forest - 1:00 – 3:00 pm The Museum's main exhibit displays twenty-three internationally acclaimed models (dioramas) portraying the history, conservation and management of central New England forests. Don't miss the second floor display on the impact of the 1938 hurricane. Visit harvardforest.fas.harvard.edu/fisher-museum to learn about their trails and programs.

Directions: Located at 324 North Main Street (Rt. 32). From Rt. 2, take exit 17. Take right off exit ramp. Go three miles south on Rt. 32. Harvard Forest is on left.