



FOA Funds New Accessible Connector Trail on Cadillac Mountain Summit

On March 17, Friends of Acadia and Acadia National Park broke ground on a new accessible East-West Connector Trail at the summit of Cadillac Mountain. Funded by Friends of Acadia, the project will create a safe, accessible pedestrian connection between the summit's two parking lots and visitor areas while helping protect the mountain's fragile native vegetation.



The new trail will be suitable for wheelchairs and strollers and will allow visitors to more easily and safely enjoy the entire summit. Modeled after the Ocean Path, the paved trail will run parallel to the summit road and be separated from traffic by granite coping stones, making it safer and easier for people of all ages and abilities to experience Acadia's highest peak.

[>>Learn more about the project on our website](#)

Winter/Spring Issue of Acadia Magazine Out Now

The winter/spring issue of Acadia magazine is arriving in mailboxes this week with stories highlighting [Acadia's mosses](#), [spring waterfalls](#), and the soon-to-open [Acadia Gateway Center](#). Read about the [great strides happening in the Great Meadow](#), including the Hemlock Path's new raised boardwalk that improves the way water moves in the wetland; learn intriguing things about [loons and the work of MDI Loon Monitoring Project](#); see the [unique impacts of Outdoor Classroom grants](#) at two Maine schools; and hear the sweet story of one Acadia-lover's [75-year \(and going!\) relationship with the park](#).



[>>Join us as an annual member](#) to get the next issue in your mailbox, or [gift a membership](#) to someone who loves the park!

Join Us for Earth Day Roadside Cleanup on April 25!

There's still time to register for the 25th annual Earth Day Roadside Cleanup! Each April, volunteers rally on the roadsides of Mount Desert Island and Trenton to clean up what the winter left behind.

Gather your family, friends, coworkers, or any other roadside-cleaning enthusiasts you know – or feel free to join us on your own. [Please register by April 17 on our website](#). If you have any questions, please contact Stewardship Manager Brian Sale at brian_sale@friendsofacadia.org.



[We're gearing up for another season of volunteer opportunities](#), so, if you can't make it to Earth Day Roadside Cleanup, never fear!

Advocacy Update

On April 2, Friends of Acadia joined the National Parks Second Century Action Coalition and 36 other conservation and tourism organizations in a letter to Members of Congress urging increased funding above the prior year's enacted level for the National Park Service (NPS) in the Fiscal Year 2027 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bill. The request



responds directly to significant staffing losses and mounting operational needs across the agency. The coalition's letter also calls for bill language to restore staffing levels to FY 2024 benchmarks, before the loss of approximately 4,000 employees.

FOA continues to advocate for federal funding and staff levels that enable the NPS to meet its mission of protecting the nation's natural and cultural resources.

Help Park Staff Manage Invasive Plants by Becoming a Backyard Scientist

The Backyard Scientists program is looking for volunteers located on MDI and in surrounding communities to monitor the phenology, or seasonal timeline, of plants in Acadia and more southern climates.



Volunteers will be provided with a pair of potted shrubs of the same species — one plant from New Jersey, and one from Maine. Spending just 15 minutes a week monitoring plants of the same species from two different regions is a powerful way to assist Acadia's resource managers and scientists in determining if the more southerly plant could help outcompete invasive plants. Managing invasive plants is one of the park's biggest natural resource efforts because non-native plants can be detrimental to native vegetation, affecting habitats and wildlife communities.

If you're interested in becoming a Backyard Scientist, please email Acadia National Park Community Volunteer Ambassador Lauren Knierim for more information at laurenk@friendsofacadia.org. To learn more about Acadia's 35-plus-year invasive plant management program, [check out this recent article in Acadia magazine](#).

Harden Farm Construction Update

Construction at the 56-bedroom Harden Farm campus is well underway. Phase 1 buildings are nearing completion and moving into finishing work. Phase 2 is ahead of schedule, with two of the four buildings already framed and roofed, and

interior walls roughed-in. Roofing is now underway on the third building, and the floor on the fourth building is ready to be poured as soon as there is a break in the weather. We expect both Phase 1 and Phase 2 buildings to open for the 2027 season.

This new housing at Harden Farm will help the park recruit and retain the seasonal employees needed to maintain trails, support visitors, protect natural resources, and keep the park running smoothly.



Carriage Roads Closed for Mud Season

Starting March 19, the National Park Service closed Acadia's carriage roads to all users until further notice to protect the roads during spring thaw, also known as "mud season." During this period, warmer weather and wet conditions soften the carriage roads and make them susceptible to damage.



[>>Learn more about why this closure is so important for the carriage roads in this video](#)

Volunteer in Acadia: We Have Something for Everyone!

Friends of Acadia has tons of opportunities for you to get out in the park and make a difference:

- **Volunteer Drop-In:** If you like getting your hands dirty, but also struggle with long-term commitment, [check out this half-day drop-in program](#) that cares for Acadia's trails and carriage roads all season long. [Have a group of five or more](#) who would like to volunteer? We'd love to have you (we have lots of space for groups in July and August)!
- **Save Our Summits Hikes:** Help Acadia National Park's efforts to restore native vegetation by hiking up Penobscot or Sargent Mountain with a bag of soil. Hikes run Wednesdays and Fridays June through Sept, weather permitting. [Registration opens June 8 and is required for all participants.](#)
- **Wild Gardens of Acadia:** If you dig plants AND people, you might blossom as a [volunteer at Wild Gardens of Acadia](#). During the summer and fall, volunteer docents greet visitors at the Wild Gardens of Acadia, which showcase the park's native flora. It's an excellent way to expand your knowledge about the Wild Gardens and share it with curious visitors.
- **Membership Table:** Love spending time outdoors and connecting with people? [We need volunteers at our membership table](#) under the veranda at the Jordan Pond House to welcome visitors, share the mission of Friends of Acadia, and encourage membership sign-ups and donations. If you enjoy engaging with people and have a passion for Acadia, we'd love to have you join us!

Upcoming Events, Park Openings, and Save the Dates:

(Friends of Acadia events in **bold**)

- April 15: Park Loop Road opens to vehicular traffic
- **April 25: FOA's Earth Day Roadside Cleanup volunteer event**
- May 14: Healthy Acadia's Cultural Fusion Fest
- May 20: Vehicle reservations required for Cadillac Summit Road
- **May 21: Pints for a Purpose speaker series begins**
- **June 13: Wild Gardens of Acadia Plant Sale**
- **July 8: FOA Annual Meeting & 40th Anniversary Celebration**
- **Aug 8: FOA's Annual Benefit & Auction**



Until next month,

Eliza Worrick



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Digital Marketing Manager

Header Photo: Two visitors head out in a canoe on Jordan Pond in Acadia National Park (Yehyun Kim/Friends of Acadia/NPS).



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