

## Pathfinders report on mapping NW Corner trails

BY RUTH EPSTEIN May 14, 2017

GOSHEN — Roads in the Northwest Corner are pretty well delineated, but many trails are not found so easily.

For that reason, members of the Northwest Hills Council of Governments decided to develop detailed maps of the many trails that snake through the area. They sought bids and awarded the project to the Housatonic Valley Association.

Tim Abbott and Ryan Williams attended Thursday's COG meeting to outline what they've done to date. Abbott said they began by identifying those trails the public can access and explore.

"We can add on to that in a format you like by June," he told the members, who are the chief elected officials of 21 area towns.

Abbott said they first looked at large trails they knew about and found them all. Then they focused on which trails would be good for enhancement or expansion, and found eight or nine.

Abbott and Williams also are studying those that have sections, which created questions right away. Abbott noted there are places where no one wants people to go because of privacy, safety or legal issues.



Ryan Williams, conservation project manager for the Housatonic Valley Association, explains the mapping of trails HVA has done for the Northwest Hills Council of Governments.

with COG representatives.

Abbott said this information will be of great value and provide assistance for situations they hadn't considered, such as emergencies that take place on trails.

"We're going to find ways this helps that we can't even imagine," he said.

Contact Ruth Epstein at [kcsruthe@aol.com](mailto:kcsruthe@aol.com).

He also reached out to the for each town.

"It's a work in progress, so tell us if there are trails not on it," he said. "We're always open for more information."

He said they are taking many photographs of trails and incorporating comments made by trail people. He then showed them on the screen how trails can be located and how certain requests can be met. For example, someone can seek to find the closest trail to his or her home by inputting an address.

Abbott said they will be seeking further input. "We're humble," he said. "We know we'll miss some things, but we can always add on."

Barkhamsted First Selectman Donald S. Stein said, "I'm more interested in keeping people off private land than showing where trails are."

COG Executive Director Richard M. Lynn Jr. said the Trails Committee is helping to gather information. It has a broad-based membership comprised of members of land use commissions and land trusts, along