

# Fairfield County

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We had a hot and dry start to our summer here in Fairfield County, but it quickly turned to weeks of rain, high humidity, and greasy rocks and roots. We thank everyone for avoiding muddy trails during this unexpected mud season.



We've been working with the Ridgefield Conservation Commission on 2 new trails. The "Ledges Trail" in Pine Mountain is scheduled to open soon. It will run along the ridge from the existing lookout to the information kiosk, providing a series of excellent views of Bennett's Pond and the valley below. There's also a major project in Hemlock Hills that's just getting started - an old hunting trail will be extended and blazed this fall. We've been doing work at the other Connecticut State Parks on an ad hoc basis. State budget cuts have reduced the ability of CT DEEP to respond to tree-fall so our chainsaws have been seeing more action lately.

Rides - the Ridgefield Bicycle Company Tuesday night and Sunday morning MTB Rides are underway, and we've been participating in the Ridgefield Bicycle Sports Club's "Thirsty Thursday" rides, offering a mountain bike option. Outdoor Sports Center mountain bike rides are happening weekly - there's a new Facebook group "Mountain Bike Group Rides" if you want to join in the fun in the Wilton CT area. Also Dave's Wilton Woods Wednesday advanced "stuntery" rides have been well attended - when it wasn't raining, of course!

Congratulations to Coach Monika and the Fairfield County Youth Cycling Team for a great year. The team placed first in the 2018 CCAP Spring MTB Series! Big thanks to all who helped. Many of our kids also participated in a midsummer CCAP MTB Camp, held at UConn Storrs. This week-long training camp is designed specifically for juniors, and included rides at nearby trail systems and a downhill day at Killington.

Trail School is set for October 21 at the Weston Public Library and in partnership with the Aspetuck Land Trust. Trail school starts at 8am and wraps around 12:30pm. Then, we'll head in for a practical session at Trout Brook Valley focused on sustainable trail design concepts, trail maintenance, and building techniques. In addition, we



Ciaran sends it at Wilton Woods. Photo by John Sweeney



Coach Monika Stokes and the CCAP Downhillers. Photo by Gunnar Waldman

are planning an advanced class in the spring covering more complex topics like trail layout, reroutes, and rock armoring.

—Mike Malwitz

