

# *From Spaghetti to Trail:*

## The story of the *Titanic Rail Trail*



National Trails Symposium

17 November 2010

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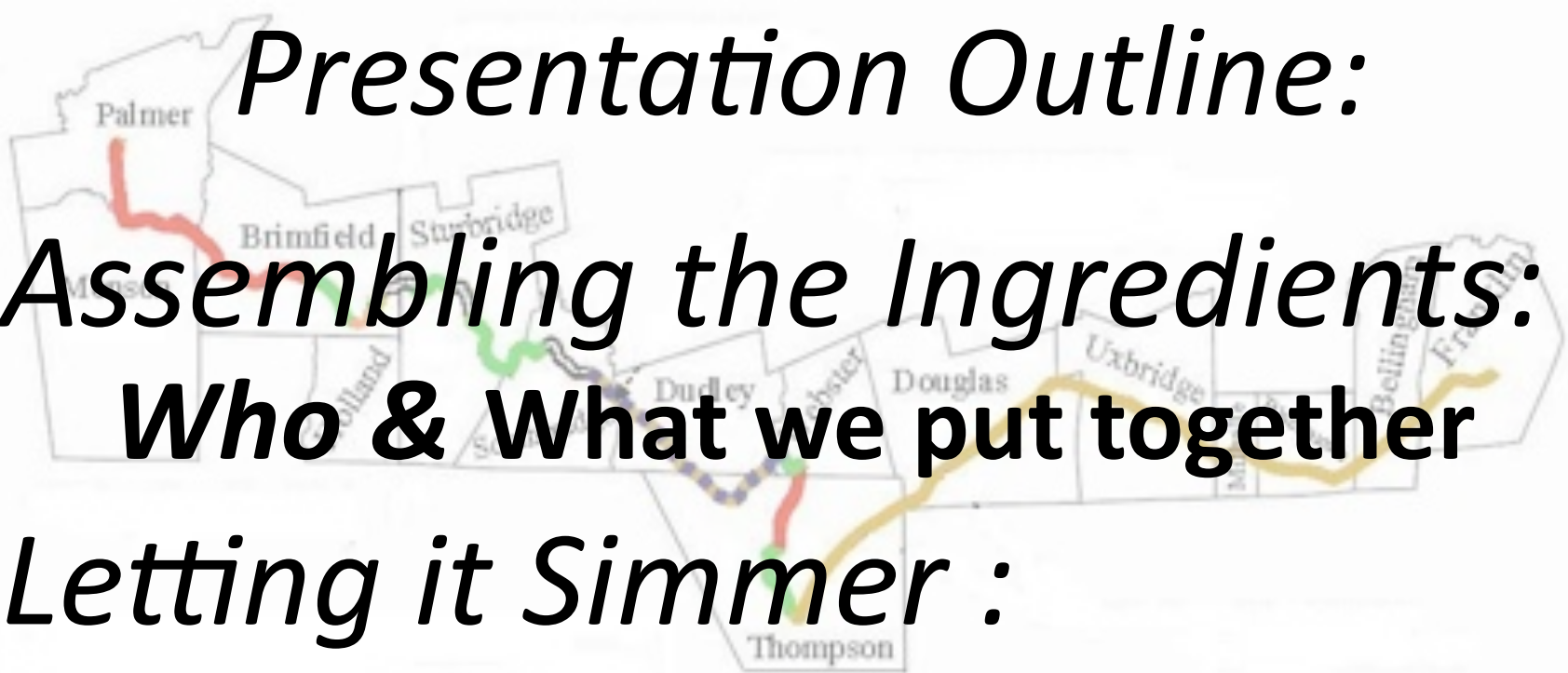


**US Army Corps  
of Engineers** ®  
New England District

# The Titanic Rail Trail

## *Presentation Outline:*

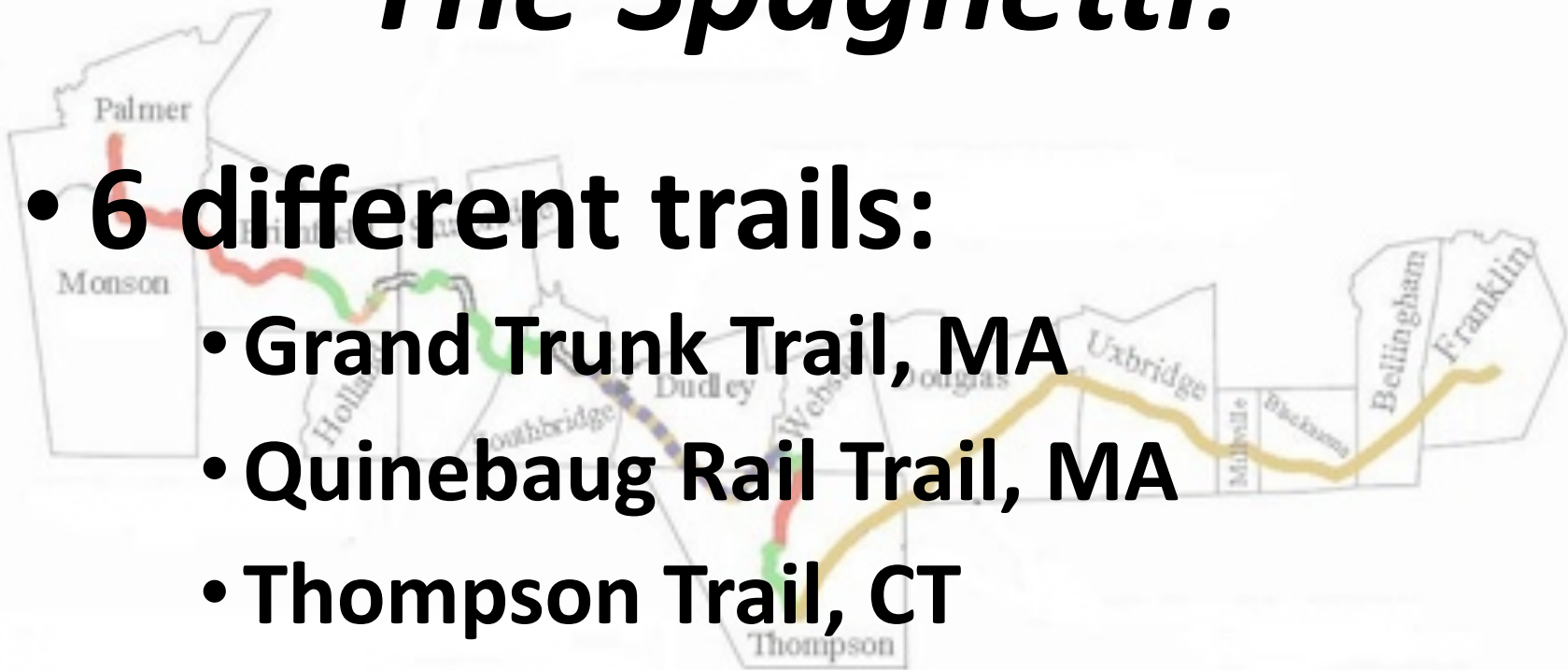
- *Assembling the Ingredients:*  
**Who & What we put together**
- *Letting it Simmer :*  
**How we put it together**
- *When Do We Eat!*  
**When will we be done**




# *The Spaghetti:*

- **6 different trails:**

- **Grand Trunk Trail, MA**
- **Quinebaug Rail Trail, MA**
- **Thompson Trail, CT**
- **Southern New England Trail, MA**
- **Airline Trail, CT**
- **French River Greenway, MA**

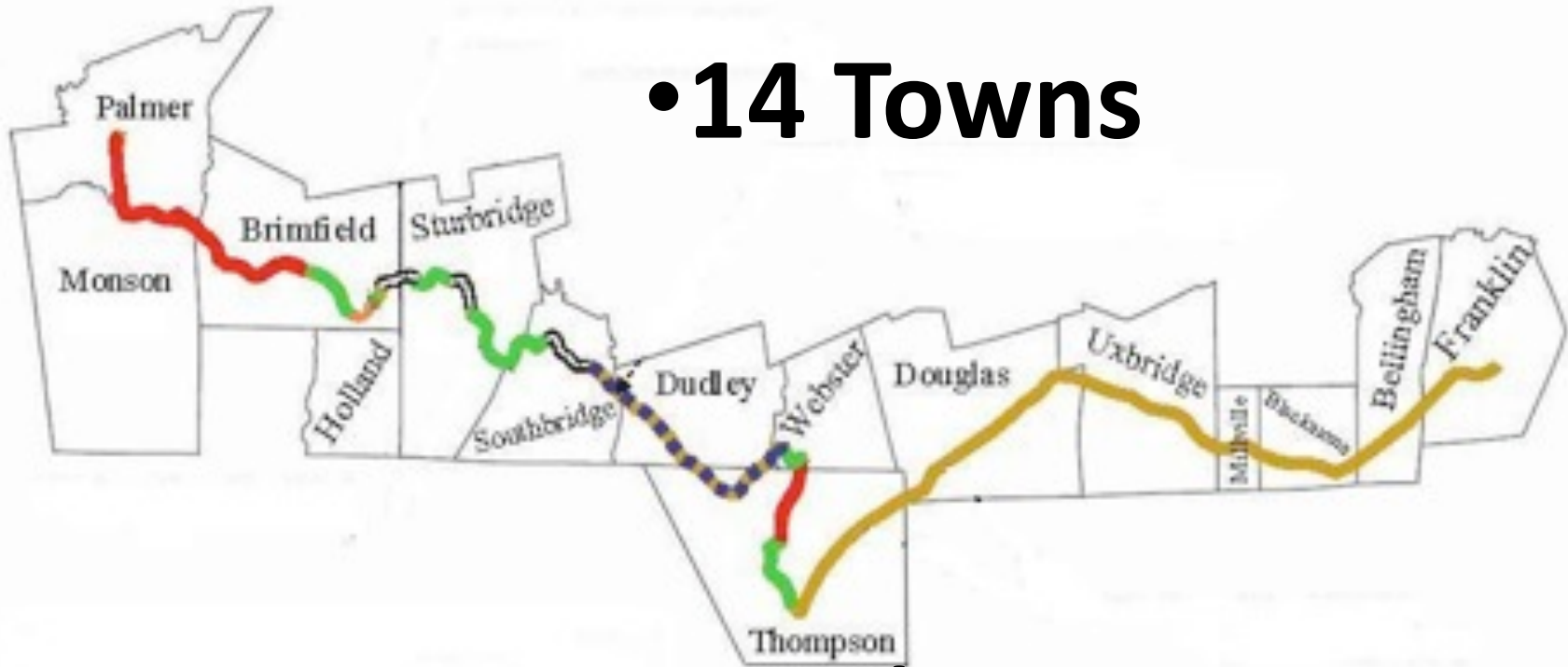


# ***The Meatballs:***

- 
- **4 State Agencies;**
    - Department of Conservation and Recreation, MA
    - Massachusetts Department of Transportation
    - Department of Conservation, CT
    - Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Agency
  - **3 Federal Partners;**
    - U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
    - National Park Service
    - Federal Highway Administration

# *The Sauce:*

• **14 Towns**



- **5 Community Service/Friends of Trail;**
  - Opacum Land Trust                      --French River Connection
  - Dudley Conservation Land Trust
  - Odd Fellows Lodge 71                -- Bay State Trail Riders

# *The Chef:*



- **The Grand Trunk Trailblazers:**

- The Grand Trunk Trail Blazers is a non-profit 501(c) (3) chartered in 1992. Our goal is to collaborate with local trail groups to establish a non-motorized 60-80 mile East-West trail linking the Blackstone with the Pioneer Valley named 'The Titanic Rail Trail'.



# *Putting It All Together:*

- 14 Towns
- 2 States: CT & MA
- 3 Federal Partners
- 4 State Agencies
- 5 Community Groups



# The Titanic Rail Trail



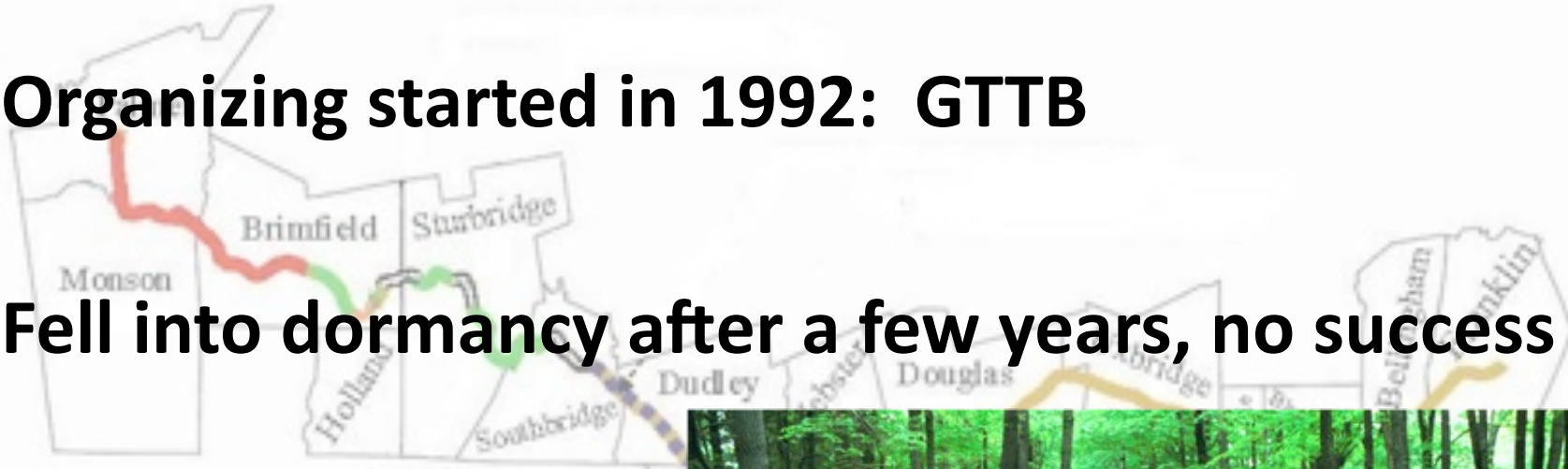
	Fully open for hiking and fat-tire Bicycles; final surface, marked, universal accessibility
	Open for hiking and fat tire bicycles, rough surface, missing bridges, not well marked
	Currently on-road
	Closed - Trail planning underway
	Proposed





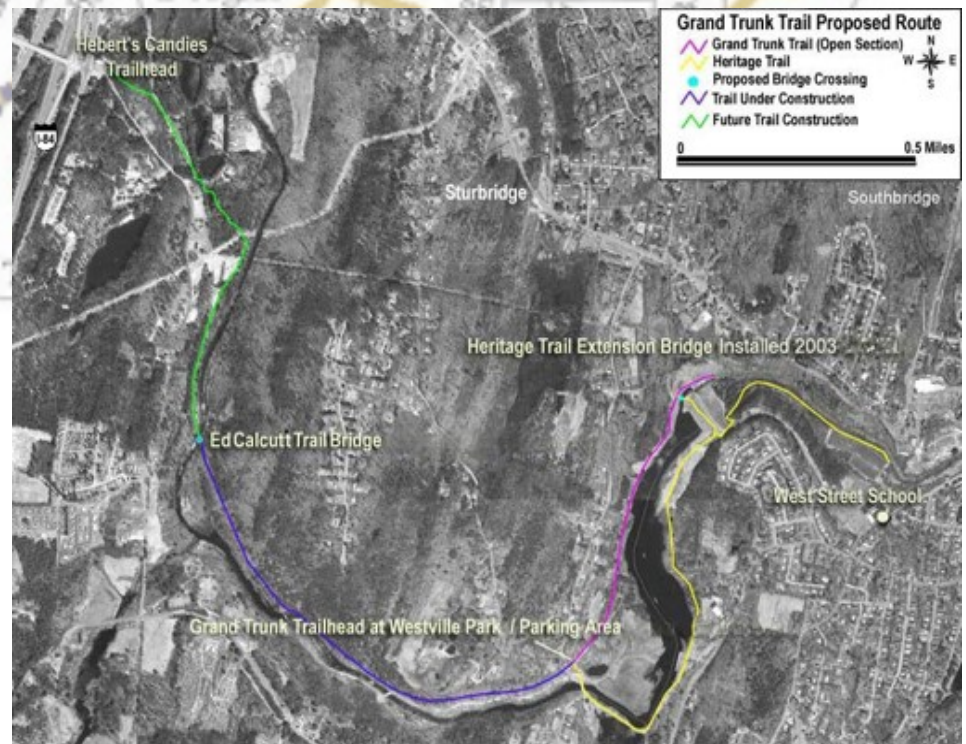
# *Letting It Simmer:*

- Organizing started in 1992: GTTB
- Fell into dormancy after a few years, no success
- Revived in 2000 with MA Interest in Economic Dev., Corps of Engineers, NPS and local land trust



# *Letting It Simmer:*

- Success came as the Corps took lead in developing partnerships with NPS in three towns encompassing 2 Corps Projects
- GTTB re energized trail advocates, using success from Corps in partnership with NPS Opacum Land Trust again to promote the trail





# *Letting It Simmer:* Town by Town Promotion

## Our Vision of a trail

- A long-distance mostly off-road trail built on the former Grand Trunk, P&W, and Airline rail beds from Franklin to the Pioneer Valley
- A safe, beautiful multi-use trail for recreation, commuting, and a platform for interpretive and environmental learning programs



- Connections to schools, shops, businesses and restaurants
- A trail that respects the industrial heritage of the region
- A rallying point for the community and a source of pride

# *Letting It Simmer:* Organized by Regional Trail Sections

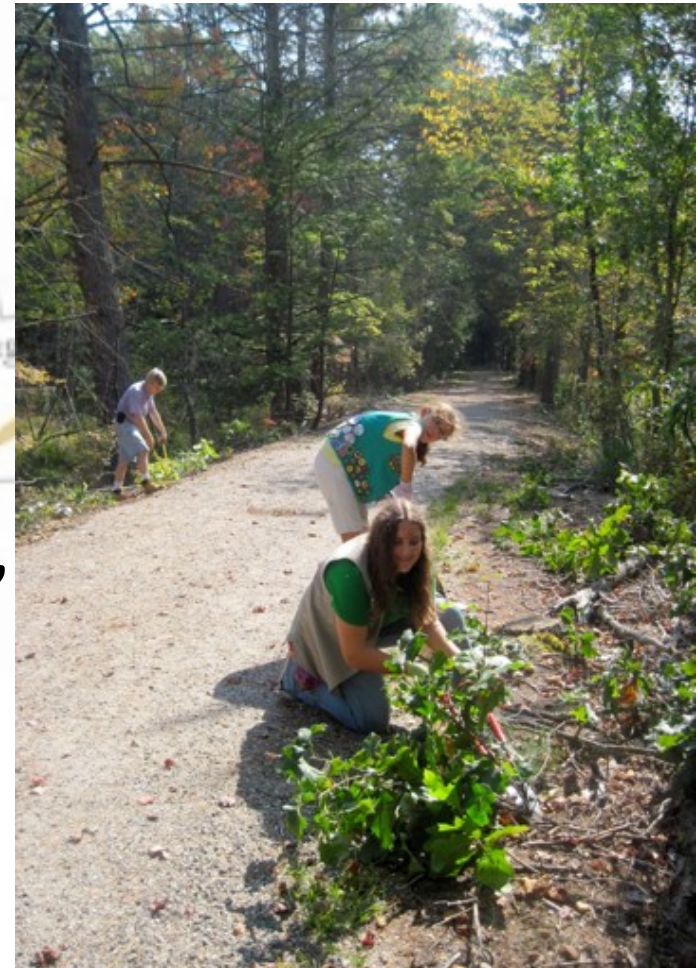
## Friends Groups

- ⊗ Palmer to Monson – tbd
- ⊗ Brimfield, Sturbridge, Southbridge – Grand Trunk Trail
  - ⊗ Brimfield Trail Committee, Sturbridge Trail Committee, Southbridge Trail Committee, USACE, Grand Trunk Trailblazers\*, Opacum Land Trust\*
- ⊗ Southbridge, Dudley, Thompson, Webster – Quinebaug Rail Trail
  - ⊗ Southbridge Trail Committee, Dudley Trail Committee, Thompson Together Trails Committee, State of Mass, State of Conn, CMRPC, USACE, Grand Trunk Trailblazers\*
- ⊗ Webster – French River Greenway
  - ⊗ French River Connection\*, Dudley Trails Committee, USACE, Dudley Conservation Land Trust\*, Grand Trunk Trailblazers\*
- ⊗ Thompson – Thompson Town Trails
  - ⊗ Thompson Together Trails Committee, CT
- ⊗ Douglas, Uxbridge, Millville, Blackstone – Southern New England Trunkline Trail
  - ⊗ Bay State Trail Riders Association\*, Mass DCR, Grand Trunk Trailblazers\*
- ⊗ Blackstone, Bellingham, Franklin - Southern New England Trunkline Trail
  - ⊗ Mass DCR, Grand Trunk Trailblazers\*, Bellingham group being formed, Odd Fellows Lodge 71 and Franklin Citizens Rail Trail Committee



# *Letting It Simmer:*

- Advocacy continues today building representation in each town with at least one group locally promoting the trail.
- The details of route planning, partnership building, grants, & construction in various stages now underway in each community.



# ***When Do We Eat!***

- **2- 3 years: Completed trail wide organization and planning, partnerships fully identified and working, continuing small grant local funding construction**
- **3-5 years: Numerous 10 Mile (+) sections fully constructed and open for use**
- **5-10 years: Major funding projects (Bridges) and final route addressed**
- **10-15 years: Trail Complete in 25 years**



# ***Reviewing the Steps:***

- **Start building small and local, find your friends!  
Identify the movers and shakers!**
- **Create/identify a 501 (3) c, Have a vision! *THINK BIG***
- **Identify Partners, How can we help each other  
contact best!**
- **Build on small successes, the big ones take time!  
Volunteer days are great, help a partner!**
- **Celebrate every chance you get! GET THE WORD  
OUT!**
- **Key word: Net work, net work, net work!  
*Keep developing those partnerships!***
- **Remember: *Rome was not built in one day!*  
Building trails takes time AND patience!**

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- **Questions???**



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