

# Massachusetts Conservation Corps:

Staff Hitch 8/31-9/7, 2020



## Mahican Mohawk Project Summary:

Massachusetts Conservation Corps Staff Crew members Dave, Bryce, Austin, and Tim headed out on the Mahican Mohawk Trail to complete critical trail repair and maintenance. This project was completed in partnership and support with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG), DCR, the Franklin Land Trust, the Friends of the Mahican Mohawk Trail and Massachusetts Conservation Corps. This is one of five projects funded through a Recreation Trails Grant obtained by FRCOG to complete work on the Mahican Mohawk Trail.

This project focused on four miles of the Mahican Mohawk Trail heading east from the trail head at South County Road, over Clark Mountain, to the junction with the Indian Trail. Many sections of this trail were blocked with blown down trees. In total, the crew sawed out over 20 trees blocking the trail, which made it impassible in sections, and pulled down an additional 5 widow makers, improving hiker safety. The crew also tackled the replacement of a native timber bridge over Wheeler Brook, in a truly beautiful section of the Mohawk Trail State Forest. The bridge had failed with one stringer lying broken in the creek and the second stringer unsafe for use. The crew enjoyed the opportunity to use (and refresh) their native timber and rigging skills, while restoring safe passage over the creek.

## Outputs from Machican Mohawk Project

Rustic Timber Bridge Replaced	15 ft long
Blowdowns Cleared	20, along 4 miles of trail
Widow Makers Removed	5
Trail Brushed	2.5 miles
Staff Miles Hiked	40+ per person

Photos from the project: Blowdown removal

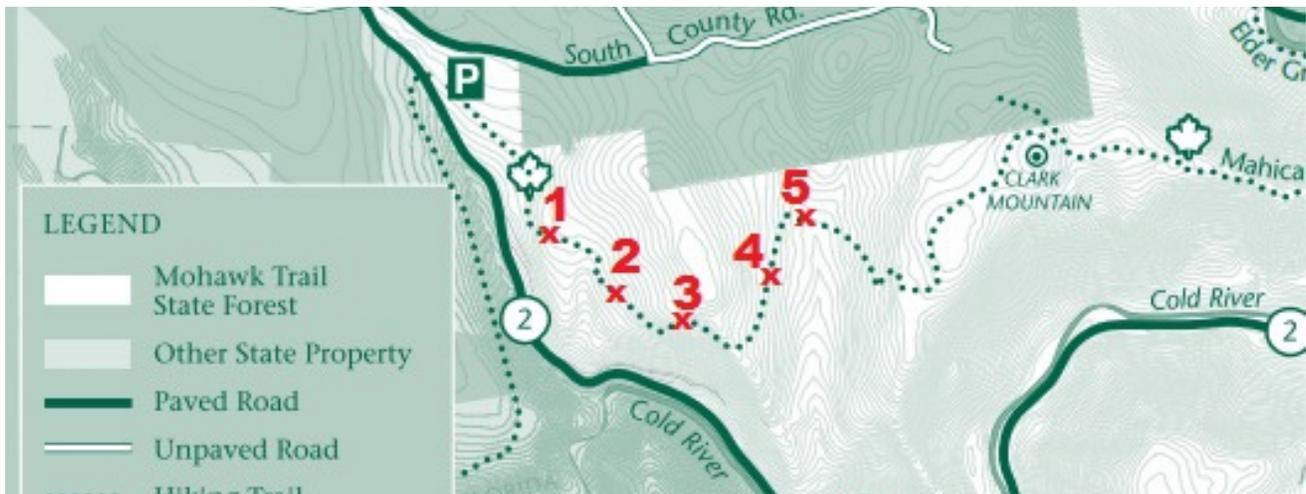


# Photos from the project: Rustic Timber Bridge



## Completed and Future Project Map

While there were significant improvements made to this section of the Mahican Mohawk Trail during this hitch, there remains more work to be done. This map shows locations of both completed work and issues that will need to be tackled in the near future.



1. **NEED:** There are 3 sets of rustic bog bridges over shallow drainages in this section that should be replaced in the next 1-2 years.
2. **NEED:** The sills of a dimensional bridge over a deep drainage are being severely undercut. Rock retaining structures could be used to reinforce the sill's or the bridge could be rebuilt with a longer span.
3. **NEED:** There is a 1/4 mile section of trail in this area with sustained steep slopes of 20-25%. While this is a rugged trail, current best practice in trail design call for 10-12% grade with short sections of 15% grade. We would recommend adding a switch back or two in this area, which will help with erosion and make the trail more user friendly
4. **COMPLETE:** This section had large clusters of trees blocking the trail. While the trail is passable now, the forest in this area has large amounts of dead pines, which will likely end up across the trail in future years.
5. **COMPLETE:** This is the location of the rustic timber bridge replacement.





#2 - Washed out sill



#4 - Before



#4 - After