



*Friends of Schell Bridge seeks to save the century-old, architecturally-rare, and historically-significant Schell Memorial Bridge across the beautiful Connecticut River in the storied town of Northfield, Massachusetts, and to restore the bridge as a critical trail link in the evolving biking, hiking, and recreational activity scene in the Massachusetts/Vermont/New Hampshire tri-state area.*

**Newsletter - Fall 2006**

**National exposure**

*historic bridges website features the Schell ...*

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**Strategic plan**

*open meeting scheduled to work on the draft*

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**Trail vision**

*and Northfield greenway*

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**Senator Kennedy**

*writes letter of support for 11 most endangered*

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**Bridge cleanup**

*both ends of the bridge - reserve April 28*

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**Nominating committee**

*formed to recommend new board members*

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**Bridge of the Month**

**HISTORIC BRIDGES WEBSITE FEATURES THE SCHELL**

*Schell Bridge has been added to [www.historicbridges.org](http://www.historicbridges.org) as the feature of the month for February 2007. Here's what it says, in part, about the Schell:*

“Visually, this is a striking bridge. Cantilever style bridges usually appear over larger bodies of water. This is a pleasing change from the usual to find such a bridge on a river the size of the Connecticut River in this area. Perhaps the most noteworthy visual asset is the stunning gothic portal bracing design, which is unlike any designs found on other truss bridges. The beauty of the bridge is also enhanced by extensive lattice and v-lacing on the various members, chords, and bracing on the bridge. Tall stone piers and abutments complete the image, creating a scene of beauty that should be a crime to destroy.

“Despite this beauty and historic significance, the bridge has been on demolition lists for some time. Like Ohio’s now-demolished [Blue Rock Road Bridge](http://www.historicbridges.org/blue-rock-road-bridge), this is a bridge that is not in the way of a replacement structure. The government just wants to demolish it for the sake of demolishing it. This is a horrific idea both in terms of the senseless loss of history and beauty, but also in the waste of taxpayer dollars. It makes sense instead to put this demolition money towards a restoration. There is a shred of hope for this bridge, because a concerned group of citizens has formed to try to save the bridge ... so that future generations can marvel at its beauty and engineering, a relic from the days when bridges were built to be beautiful, in addition to functional.”

[www.historicbridges.org/mass/schell](http://www.historicbridges.org/mass/schell)

## Spring is planning time for Friends of Schell Bridge

Board members have worked all winter on a draft Strategic Plan and are anxious for your input at a meeting of members on

**Sunday, March 25, 2007, 7:00 pm,  
Trinitarian Church, Main St, Northfield**

Is the Strategic Plan (outlined below) doable? Do you like it? What would you add? If you want to be part of this exciting vision to revitalize Northfield, come to this meeting and share your ideas for the bridge. An "Action Plan" should be drafted by the end of the evening, refreshments will be served, and a fun time should be had by all.

### VISION

This plan is inspired by the vision of:

*A beautifully-restored historic bridge across the Connecticut River that serves both as a premier recreational link for a network of hiking and biking trails in the tri-state region and as a centerpiece for a series of linked riverfront parks for Northfield and area residents.*

A rehabilitated bridge will open the bridge, riverbank, the water, and the views to Northfield residents and people from the tri-state region and beyond. Its unique construction and significance in Northfield's history will inspire a renewed interest in Northfield's unusual past when Dwight L. Moody's evangelistic conferences attracted thousands of people ... . Walkers, bicyclists, and historians will enjoy the network of trails and parks that connect to the nearby Mill Brook and Schell Pond nature trails and open up paths to West Northfield's Satan's Kingdom Wildlife Management and to the highlands in East Northfield. Bicyclists from the surrounding area will be able to connect to the current and expanding bike path network in the tri-state region.

### MISSION (replaces current mission stmt)

In order to achieve this vision, Friends of the Schell Bridge has adopted a mission that is both essential and practical:

*To ensure the rehabilitation of Schell Memorial Bridge through adequate funding, proper maintenance, public support, and active promotion of its place in Northfield's history, and to encourage citizen enjoyment of the footpaths, bikeways, and parks that connect to the bridge. These objectives will be realized through partnerships with local, state, federal government and local organizations, and through the development of an organization dedicated to the stewardship of the bridge and parks.*

### INTRODUCTION (historical setting)

### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

#### **1. REHABILITATION**

Repair and rehabilitate the Schell Bridge as a walking and biking bridge

#### **2. COMMUNITY BENEFITS**

Provide a range of historical, environmental, recreational and service projects and activities to highlight the value of preserving the Schell Bridge and developing a Northfield Conservancy

#### **3. ADVOCACY**

Be an active voice for the preservation of the Schell Bridge and in the development of a Northfield Conservancy

#### **4. STEWARDSHIP**

Act as a catalyst for the development of a non-profit entity called the Northfield Conservancy that will serve as a steward for the Schell Bridge, parks, and trails

#### **5. FUNDRAISING**

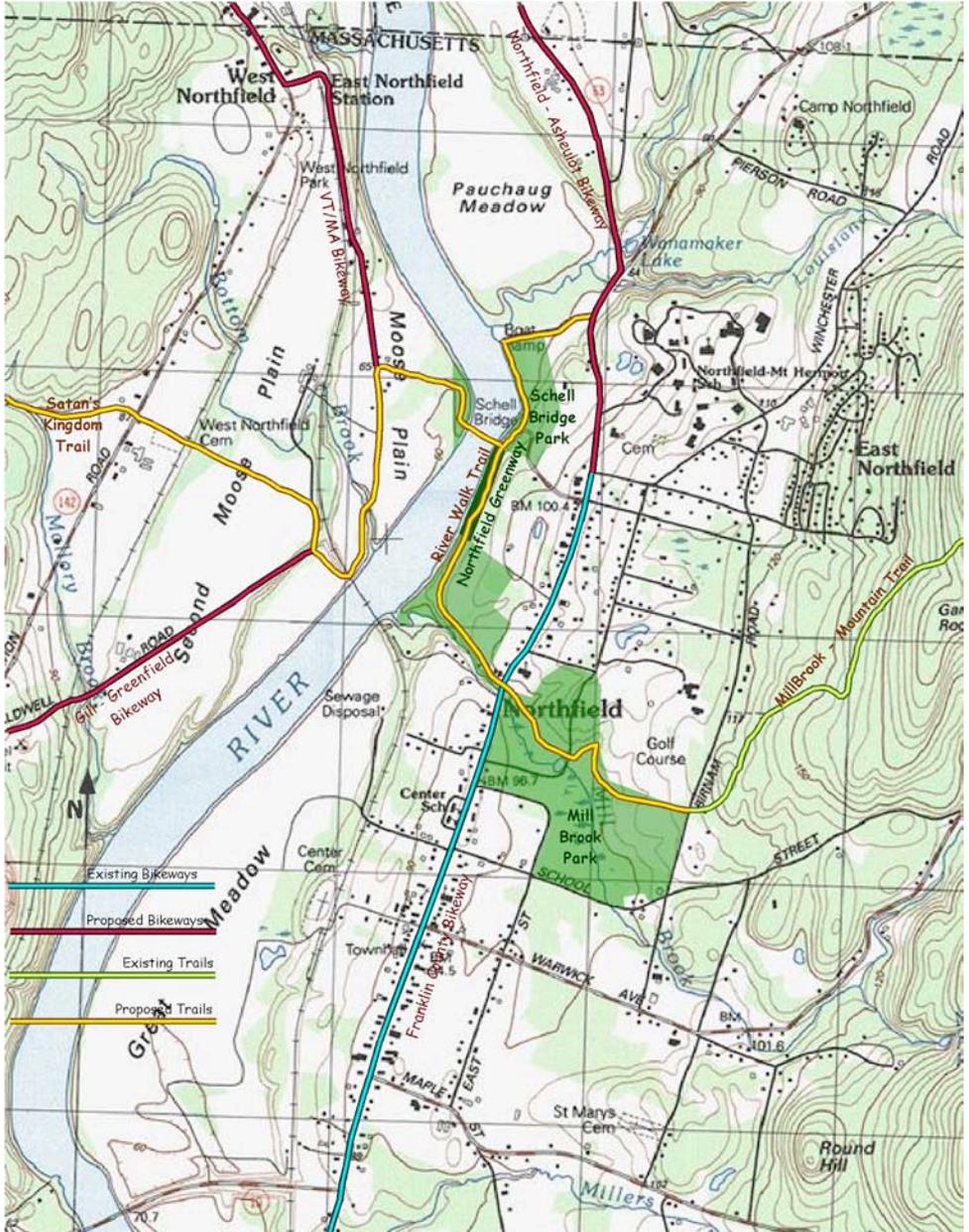
Act as a catalyst for additional public and private resources to flow to the preservation of the Schell Bridge

#### **6. ORGANIZATIONAL EFFICIENCY**

Develop the volunteer leadership and membership to support these goals

# Trail vision & Northfield greenway

Something along the lines of this diagram to be a critical part of the Strategic Plan.



## 11 most endangered historical places

Friends of Schell Bridge have submitted Schell Bridge for consideration to be included on the National Trust for Historic Preservation's annual list of *11 most endangered historical places* in the United States. Among the required application materials are several letters of support. A copy of one such letter - strong support from Senator Kennedy - is enclosed. Announcement of the 11 places chosen for the list are made in late spring.

## Bridge cleanup scheduled

Mark your calendar for Saturday, April 28, to join the crew for sprucing up the approaches to Schell Bridge. This will include the usual cleaning the areas of debris and trash, as well as removing much of the vegetation that has grown onto the bridge. Chainsaws and various brush removal tools will be available, and lots of pull-it-off-pile-it-up hands will be needed. Bring gloves, old clothes, and lots of enthusiasm.

## Nominations for the Board of Directors

A nominating committee of Katherine Harris, Jean Kozlowski, Barbara Richardson, and Sue Ross has been formed to identify candidates for the Friends of Schell Bridge board of directors; directors are elected by the membership at the annual meeting and serve for three-year terms. Major tasks for the board are obtaining an engineering design for rehabilitation of the bridge, implementing the strategic plan, and raising funds for rehabilitation. Contact Sue Ross, 413-498-2700, to suggest a nomination.



*The Friends of Schell Bridge membership is now almost 200 strong - give the form below to a friend, and help push the membership over 200.*

### Friends of Schell Bridge Membership Form

*memberships and donations are tax-deductible*

Name \_\_\_\_\_  Schell Saver ..... \$100

Address \_\_\_\_\_  Bridge Booster .... \$50

City, State \_\_\_\_\_  Family ..... \$25

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  Individual ..... \$15

Email \_\_\_\_\_  Student ..... \$5

I prefer to receive news and alerts via email.  Other ..... \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to volunteer to **help save Schell Bridge.**