

WHAT OUR COMMUNITY IS SAYING...

Community Programs

"Such forward-thinking educational programming in our community will help us to approach innovative and lasting solutions to the issues of conservation, development and sustainability that we must face in the coming decades." - Patrick Burke, Project Scientist - Stantec

CREA Summer Camp

"This year after CREA camp I noted that my son paid much more attention to the trees, rocks, insects and nature in general than I've seen him do before. He also seems more receptive to my constant reminders about recycling, composting and generally reducing our waste. Thank you and great job!" - CREA Camper Parent



Conservation, Preservation & Restoration

"Of important note is the impact that CREA has had on the conservation ethic that now exists in Town Government and its positive effect in the regards to local policy decisions." -Rod Melanson, Natural Resource Assistant Planner -Town of Topsham



OUR HISTORY

The Cathance River Education Alliance (CREA) was founded in 2000 to foster wise use of the Cathance River Nature Preserve, to deepen ecological awareness through nature-based learning among students, educators, and the public, and to promote environmental stewardship. A living partnership between Topsham's Future, a local citizens' group, and Highland Green developer John Wasileski, CREA represents environmental, educational, and business interests working together to benefit the community.



CREA received official 501(c)(3) non-profit status in 2005, and construction of the CREA Ecology Center was completed the following year.

Through Topsham's Future, John Rensenbrink worked diligently to earn John Wasileski's enthusiastic support to co-found CREA in 2000.

On August 27, 2019, CREA and the town of Topsham dedicated the rustic road to the Ecology Center as Rensenbrink Way, honoring more than two decades of warm and respectful relationships between conservation and business interests.



*Connecting people with nature,
for the benefit of both.*



Cathance River Education Alliance

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Cathance River Preserve & Trail Map

The Cathance River Preserve forms a 1,000-foot protective buffer along the Cathance River. The 230-acre Preserve lies along the wildest portion of the river providing a deep woods experience only 1.5 miles from Topsham's bustling commercial areas.

The Preserve includes:

- forested and wetland areas
- vernal pools
- unique 30-acre heath community
- 5 miles of trails
- trail connection to Head of Tide Park



CREA's Programs

CREA in the Public Schools

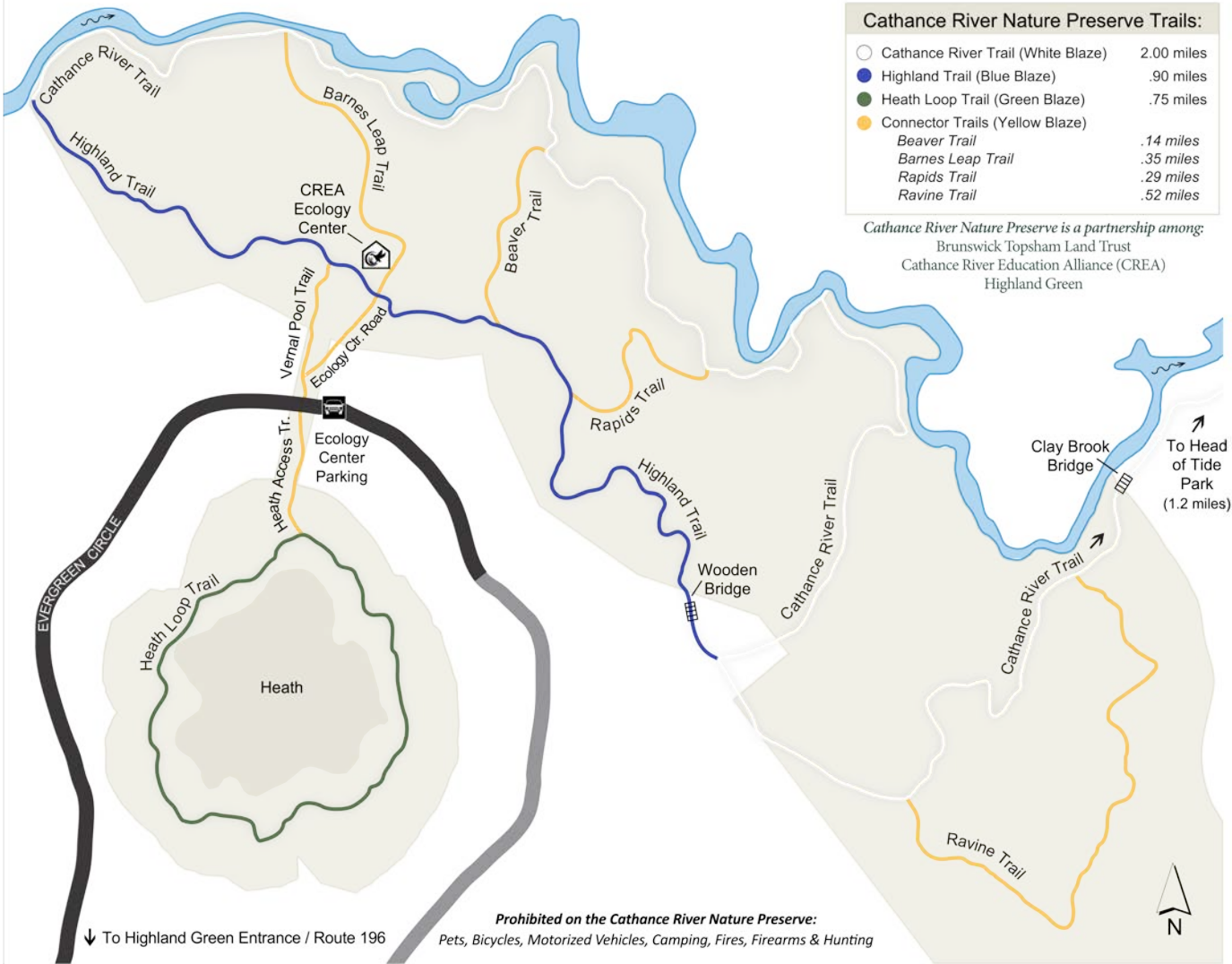
CREA's educators serve over 1,000 students annually, enriching curriculums through unique, nature-based lessons at the Ecology Center and on school campuses. They also mentor teachers who wish to extend their use of the outdoor classroom and applied learning

Community Programs

CREA hosts a broad array of guided walks, presentations, and hands-on workshops with the goal of connecting, or re-connecting, people of all ages with the natural world.

Summer Camp

CREA Summer Camp runs for 6 weeks each summer and serves youth ages 6-16. Each day campers explore the Cathance River Nature Preserve under the supervision of CREA's experienced and engaging camp staff. Week-long sessions include: hiking, frog catching, fishing, art and science activities, STEM projects, and research on the Preserve. Counselors in Training are mentored in leadership skills.



CREA Ecology Center

The Cathance River Ecology Center is the "building that teaches"

Open to the public from 12pm - 2pm
Sundays, year-round.

