

Towns join forces to build trail

By **DAN BUSTARD**
Staff Writer

Sometimes things work out perfectly.

That is how the Chester Conservation Committee is describing the help it is receiving from **Chester** Charlestown-based Student Conservation Association to develop its planned nature trail in Chester's 550-acre town forest.

"It all just came together," said Chester resident Gary King, SCA's eastern partnership development director. "With my work piece, it was a natural fit."

Starting Tuesday, a group of future SCA crew leaders will get their hands dirty through four days of training before heading off around the country to lead similar efforts.

"They are some of the best in the country in terms of trail work," committee Chairman Michael Caduto said. "It is really generous of SCA to do this."

King said he has been following the committee's efforts since it formed, and when he received an e-mail from

Caduto about the town forest trail project, it was too good of an opportunity to pass up.

Twenty-four crew leaders in training, each 21 and older, will take part next week learning, working and reflecting on the type of environmental stewardship and education SCA has become known for. This summer they will

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spread across the country to take the lead on various projects, leaving behind one in Chester.

The conservation committee has been working on a town forest trail for a year and a half, Caduto said. Once completed, the trail through the eastern part of the forest will be about two miles. Town officials voiced support for developing the trail earlier

this month, and the committee has been working with town forester Tim Morton.

SCA crew leaders will tackle about half of the planned trail, mainly in the stream valley around the old town reservoir. Caduto said this is the section that needs the most work, with committee volunteers preparing the rest.

The trail could be ready by mid- to late fall. After the clearing is completed, the committee will mark the trail and post signs. A brochure will also be developed to highlight the plants and natural formations to be found along the trail.

The committee will lead a trail clearing of its own from 9 a.m. to noon on July 4. It is open to the public. For more information call (802) 885-8958.

SCA is celebrating its 50th anniversary as a national conservation group teaching college and high school volunteers while protecting and restoring America's parks, forests and other public lands.

For more information, go to the Web site www.thesca.org.

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