

## Outdoor Enthusiasts Enjoy National *Get Outdoors* Day at East Brimfield Lake

Sturbridge: US Army Corps of Engineer Park Rangers at the East Brimfield Lake project, along with their partners, the Town of Holland Trail Committee and The Last Green Valley (TLGV) offered visitors the opportunity to enjoy *National Get Outdoors* events: a 10 mile bike ride and a 5 mile river paddle.

The bike ride, held at 10 AM, drew a few participants, primarily due the threatening rain skies. However, the 8 riders enjoyed a leisurely bike ride, stopping several times to rest, enjoy the scenery or learn about the local history. The ride was hosted by Richard Haller, Chair of the Holland Trail Committee, who spoke after the ride saying “The ride was great; folks enjoyed the pace and learning about our area’s history. Several said they would be back to ride again.”

**Bike riders ready to leave on their 10 mile ride**



**Happy riders on the trail!**



*Photos by Tom Chamberland*

Later, at 1 PM in the afternoon with blue skies and warm temperatures, visitors again assembled at the launch ramp for a 5 mile Quinebaug River Water Trail paddle. This river paddle was organized by ranger Tom Chamberland and TLGV ranger Bill Reid, with Corps summer rangers Pat Cunningham and Justin Marcinkus, along with TLGV ranger Bill Reid joining in on the water trail. With the better weather, 26 paddlers joined in on this National GO Day event. Prior to launching, Corps park ranger Tom Chamberland gave a brief history presentation on how this section of the Quinebaug River was the first US Army Corps of Engineers’ nationally designated recreation water trail by the National Park Service. As a result of the partnership with TLGV, this designation has been extended all along the Quinebaug River. Tom also gave a brief water safety talk, indicating how no one, just like all of those assembled for this event, start off on the water saying “I’m going to drown today” yet unfortunately, every week through the summer an average of 5 people drown . “Wearing a properly fitted PFD is a great way to stay safe on the water,” concluded Tom. After the presentation, Tom, Bill, Pat and Justin conducted a PFD check of the participants and helped all of them set off into the river. Along the route, Pat and

Justin offered observations of wildlife, some history of the Trolley and Grand Trunk Rail beds, and a brief stop in the heart of the 2011 tornado route that crossed right over the river.

