

Forest Notes

NEW HAMPSHIRE'S CONSERVATION MAGAZINE

Balsams Landscape Conserved!

**Mapping the Future
of Conservation**

SPRING 2012

SOCIETY FOR THE
PROTECTION OF
NEW HAMPSHIRE
FORESTS

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By Joyce El Kouarti

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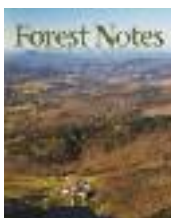
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An aerial view of the Balsams landscape.
Photo by Lori Johnson.



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Celebrating the Balsams

The Balsams Grand Resort, nestled in the crags of Dixville Notch, is an iconic New Hampshire hotel. But the real attraction of the Balsams (in this forester's eye) is the majestic, rocky, forested landscape that cradles the hotel. Here is a luxury hotel, surrounded by an even grander wilderness. And to say that I'm proud that the Forest Society now holds conservation restrictions on this landscape would be an understatement of grand proportions.

Abutting Coleman State Park to the north and almost abutting Nash Stream State Forest to the south, the Balsams land provides an important, unbroken forested link for wildlife as well as people. It's also adjacent to Dixville Notch State Park, protecting the steep cliffs of the notch itself.

We are now permanent partners with the hotel owners in the stewardship of 5,785 of the resort's 7,800 acres. This was made possible by the generosity of over 1,600 donors (see the list in the center insert) who—with the Forest Society—rose to the occasion, quickly and decisively, to protect this special place.

Local residents and visitors will continue to have access to the trails and wild places of the Balsams. And, this conservation effort honors the legacy of Neil and Louise Tillotson, who owned the Balsams for many years and knew its landscape intimately. Neil

wanted to provide North Country jobs, and the hotel and forest did that under his stewardship and will continue to do so.

Dixville Notch now joins Crawford Notch, Franconia Notch, Kinsman Notch, and Sandwich Notch as another "notch" in the Forest Society's belt of successful land protection efforts.

Some land protection projects take years to mature. This one was over a decade in the making. It was synchronicity that catalyzed the completion of this important conservation project: the sale of the hotel, and the threat of giant towers carrying electricity from Quebec to southern New England across this wild landscape.

But with a landscape as grand as this one, the results more than justify the wait.



Jane Difley is the president/forester of the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests.

Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests

A non-profit membership organization founded in 1901 to protect the state's most important landscapes and promote wise use of its renewable natural resources. Basic annual membership fee is \$35 and includes a subscription to *Forest Notes*.

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34 Portsmouth Street, Concord, NH 03301 | Phone: (603) 224-9945 | Fax: (603) 228-0423

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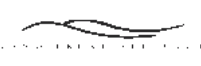
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Member

By Jack Savage

50 years ago in Forest Notes

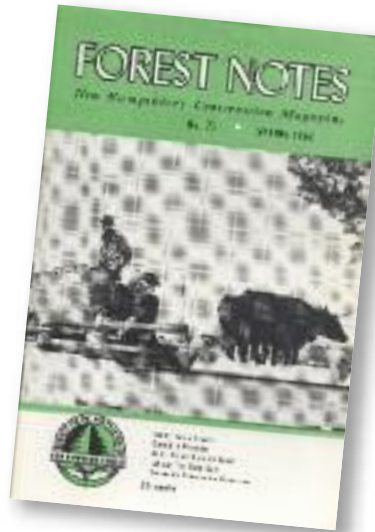
The cover of the Spring 1962 issue of *Forest Notes* featured a couple of unnamed sugarmakers from Bristol collecting sap the old fashioned way. Inside was a poem called “Sugaring” by Fairfax Downey of West Springfield, NH, including this excerpt:

The evergreens have served before
As Christmas verses’ staple.
Let them shed needles on the floor,
I’ll sing the sugar maple.

Here in our woods stand maples shorn
Of autumn’s crimson glory.
Come spring with tingling frosty morn
They’ll tell a sweeter story.

Tap sturdy trees. In buckets drips
Bountiful sap we levy.
Shoulder the yoke and pails for trips,
Carrying gallons heavy.

Then feed with wood the fiery arch.
The saps pans foam and bubble.
Now sugar off ere it can parch.
It’s worth the toil and trouble.



More than a Woodlot

Northern Woodlands has published a book that may be of interest to any current or prospective landowner: *More than a Woodlot: Getting the Most from Your Family Forest* by Stephen Long.



The book is a handy primer on managing a New England woodlot geared toward the landowner. It includes helpful advice on working with a forester, putting together a forest management plan and the basics of implementing a plan, including harvesting, improving wildlife habitat, and thinking long-term.

Long is the co-founder of *Northern Woodlands* magazine. The book includes contributions from other familiar writers such as Virginia Barlow, Irwin Post, Michael Snyder, Charles Thompson, and Chuck Wooster.

Forest Society Conveys Big Island to Umbagog NWR

The Forest Society is transferring its ownership of 156-acre Big Island in Lake Umbagog in Errol to the surrounding Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge, which is part of the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

“We acquired the island in the 1980s before the existence of the Refuge,” said Paul Doscher, vice president of Land Conservation for the Forest Society. “Today we believe the long-term stewardship of the island will be best served by having the Refuge’s on-site staff manage this land along with the other Refuge lands around it.”

The Forest Society agreed to accept \$1 million in compensation for the transfer, which represents 87 percent of the appraised value of \$1,150,000 established by an independent appraisal. The Forest Society has committed preliminarily to using a significant portion of its net sale proceeds for further land conservation work in the North Country.

FOREST STATS


Total number of trees in New Hampshire: 3,750 million
Total number of trees in Massachusetts: 1,510 million

Number of trees per person in NH: 2,857
Number of trees per person in MA: 233

Mean age of private forestland owners in NH: 62
Mean age of private forestland owners in MA: 58

Percent of NH trees that are 61-80 years old: 36%
Percent of MA trees that are 61-80 years old: 47%

Source: Northern Forest Futures Project (www.nrs.fs.fed.us/futures/)



*The sheer number of people who joined the
effort in this would swell even the hardest
heart. Shades of Franconia Notch!!*

— John Harrigan

My husband and I spent our 25th anniversary at The Balsams. Thank you for conserving this land for our children and grandchildren.
— Steve and Gail Guertin

BALSAMS LANDSCAPE CONSERVED!

By Joyce El Kouarti

THE REMOTE NEW HAMPSHIRE COMMUNITY OF DIXVILLE NOTCH

is nationally renowned for being the site of the Balsams Grand Resort Hotel, where the very first ballots in the country are cast during New Hampshire's first-in-the-nation presidential primary.

What may be less well known is that this time-honored tradition takes place in the heart of a vast working forest surrounding the hotel. The rough-hewn natural beauty of these mountain peaks and valleys is integral to the Balsams experience.

On January 15, the Forest Society became the steward of these natural riches after an intense five-week campaign to permanently protect the working forest, wildlife habitat, scenic views, and 30 miles of recreational trails that the public and Balsams' guests have enjoyed for decades.



Thank you for stepping up to the plate! You know how important this is, not just to us who live up here & rely on tourism, but to all of us for many, many reasons.

— Marc and Francine Bigney

Above: The Panorama shelter is located along the Sanguinary Ridge Trail, a segment of the fabled long-distance Cohos Trail that runs from Crawford Notch in the White Mountain National Forest to the Canadian border. Photo by Tom Howe.

Opposite page: The summit of Abeniki Mountain offers a window south past the hotel through steep-walled Dixville Notch. Photo by Chris Borg.

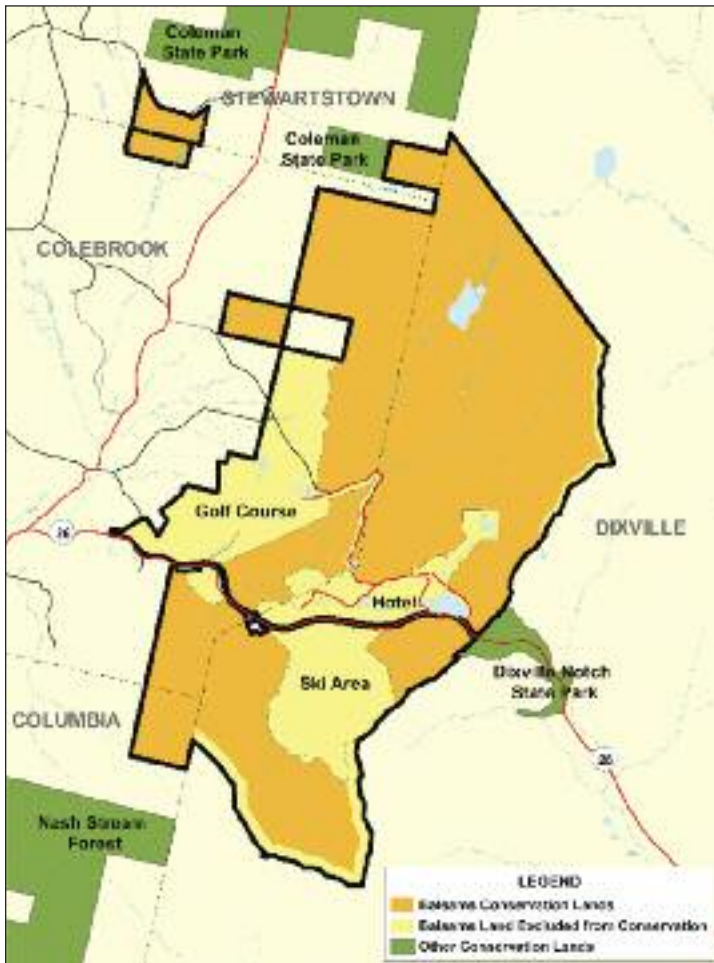
Best of luck in this important project. We have lived in New Hampshire for almost 30 years.... so we have a special interest in protecting this beautiful state. We will encourage friends and family to donate also.

— The Giaquinta Family



Above: The rough-hewn natural beauty of these mountain peaks and valleys has been treasured by North Country natives and visitors to the area for generations. Photo by Tom Howe.

Below: The land that is now protected surrounds the site of the hotel. The land immediately adjacent to the hotel, the golf course, and the Wilderness ski area is outside the conserved area.



The conserved land surrounds the site of the hotel. The land immediately adjacent to the hotel, the golf course, and the Wilderness ski area, are all outside the conserved area.

“This is arguably one of the most significant conservation projects in the Forest Society’s history,” said Forest Society President/Forester Jane Difley. “We have sought to protect this special place in New Hampshire for more than a decade.”

STARTS AND STALLS

The Balsams had been owned by the Tillotson Corporation since 1954. In September of 2000, Forest Society Vice President of Development Susanne Kibler-Hacker stood on a patio at the Balsams watching the sun set with the corporation’s patriarch, Neil Tillotson. They discussed the conservation of the dramatic landscape before them.

“He began telling stories drawn from the land itself, starting at Mount Hereford, where he was born, and following the terrain’s rocky ridges and boggy depressions, where he spent summers on foot and winters on snowshoes,” said Kibler-Hacker. “He made the case that the Balsams’ landscape offers encounters with wildness and a chance to develop self-reliance that can’t be found in many places anymore.”

However, when he died the next year at age 102, there was no clear path to achieving the conservation of this property. It was in memory of Neil Tillotson and for the people of New Hampshire that the Tillotson Corporation and the Forest Society began again last spring to take steps to ensure a conservation outcome for the land surrounding the grand resort.



The Tillotson Corporation saw the conservation of the land as being strongly tied to the sale of the hotel and its economic benefits to the North Country. The Balsams met with several interested buyers through the better part of 2011. However, the on-again, off-again hotel sale stalled conservation planning efforts. With no idea when or to whom the hotel might sell, it was impossible to negotiate a conservation outcome that future hotel owners would be sure to support.

To further complicate matters, the hotel's owners were being aggressively pursued by another suitor, Northern Pass. This prospective buyer sought to purchase a right-of-way through the Balsams for its 80- to 135-foot electrical transmission towers. Foreseeing limited benefit to North Country residents under this scenario, the Tillotson Corporation board was reluctant to sell its land or access to it for this purpose.

Ultimately, the Balsams' owners agreed to sell the hotel to Balsams View LLC, a partnership of two native North Country businessmen, for \$2.3 million, and the conservation restrictions to 5,800 acres to the Forest Society for the deep bargain sale price of \$850,000.

"We are so pleased that the board of the Tillotson Corporation gave us the opportunity to conserve this land," said Difley.

But there was a caveat: First, the Forest Society had to raise the \$850,000.

\$850,000 IN FIVE WEEKS

The Forest Society had just five weeks to find the funding needed to purchase the conservation restrictions from the Tillotson Corporation. A purchase-and-sale agreement signed in December gave the Forest Society until January 15 to raise the needed funds.

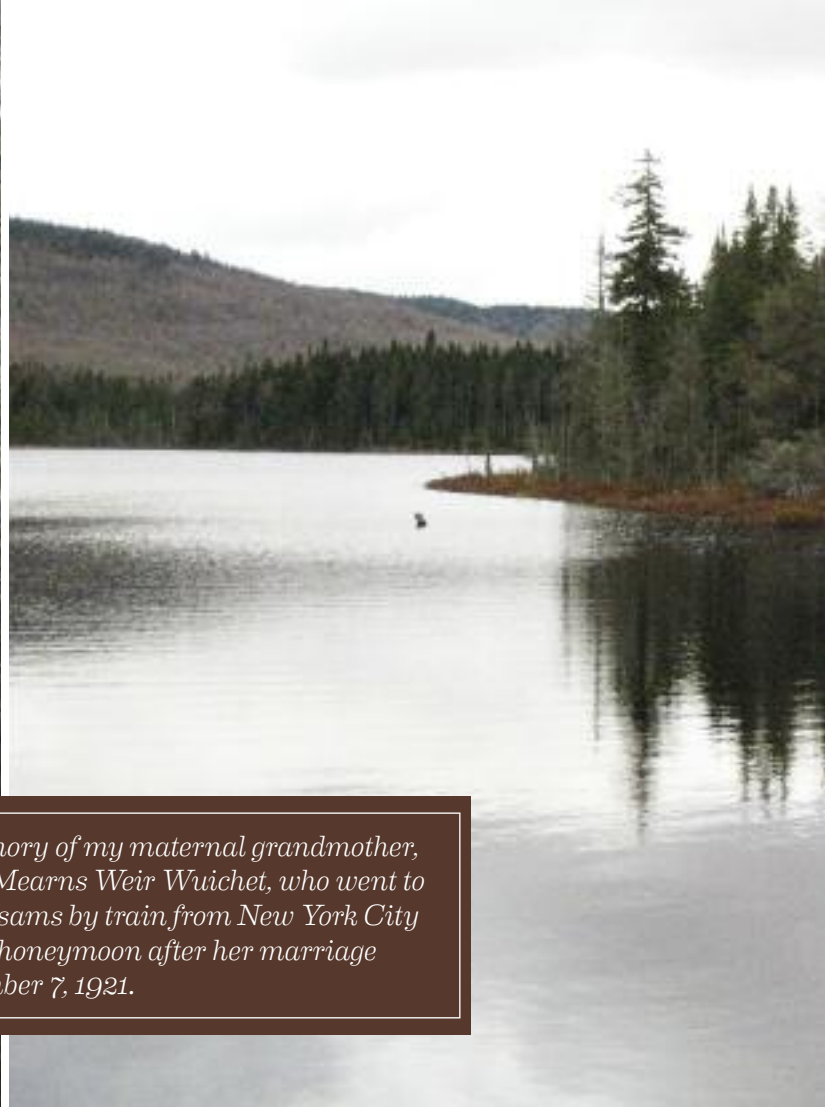
There were raised eyebrows early on by skeptics who didn't think the Forest Society would be able to secure the money in that time. However, within minutes of announcing its fundraising effort, the organization began receiving donations through its website.

"People are really jazzed about this conservation project," said Kibler-Hacker. "Many from across New England know the Balsams' landscape and appreciate its unique beauty because they've driven through Dixville Notch or had the privilege of staying at the resort."

The money poured in.... More than 1,600 donations ranging from \$1 to \$150,000—more than twice the number of gifts received for any other conservation project in modern Forest Society history. Contributions came from all over New Hampshire, but also from 22 states including Hawaii, Arizona, California, and other far-flung locales—including Quebec, Canada.

"We are so grateful to the many individuals and foundations who stepped forward to make this happen," said Difley. "Given what a special place Dixville Notch is, we felt from the start that people

In memory of my grandfather, Ed Risley, who stood on Table Rock in 1898 during a life-changing trip to Diamond Pond that awakened the conservationist in him. He passed his love of the North Woods to his children and grandchildren.



In memory of my maternal grandmother, Jessie Mearns Weir Wuichet, who went to the Balsams by train, from New York City for her honeymoon after her marriage September 7, 1921.

Left: This working forest is laced with nearly 30 miles of trails and footpaths, like this one leading to Sanguinary Ridge. Photo by Tom Howe.

Middle: Northern boreal spruce and balsam fir forests surrounding Mud Pond, home to moose, deer, brook trout, and itinerant waterfowl. Photo by Chris Borg.

would respond to our call to conserve it. But we had no inkling that the public interest in protecting these 5,800 acres would be so strong.”

NORTHERN PASS OBJECTIONS

As part of the transaction, the Forest Society acquired a deeded transmission line right-of-way coveted by Northern Pass, LLC for its controversial powerline proposal. By acquiring both the conservation restrictions and the powerline right-of-way, the Forest Society effectively removed the threat that Northern Pass would be able to cross the 5,800 conserved acres without eminent domain. (See Will Abbott’s story about eminent domain on page 32.)

Interest in the Balsams conservation project ballooned when Northern Pass, LLC attempted to interfere with the Tillotson Corporation’s sale of conservation restrictions to the Forest Society. Northern Pass’s attorneys complained to the NH Charitable Trusts Division that Tillotson should have taken their offer instead, arguing that siting their proposed private, commercial HVDC overhead transmission lines across the landscape would be a better

use of the property.

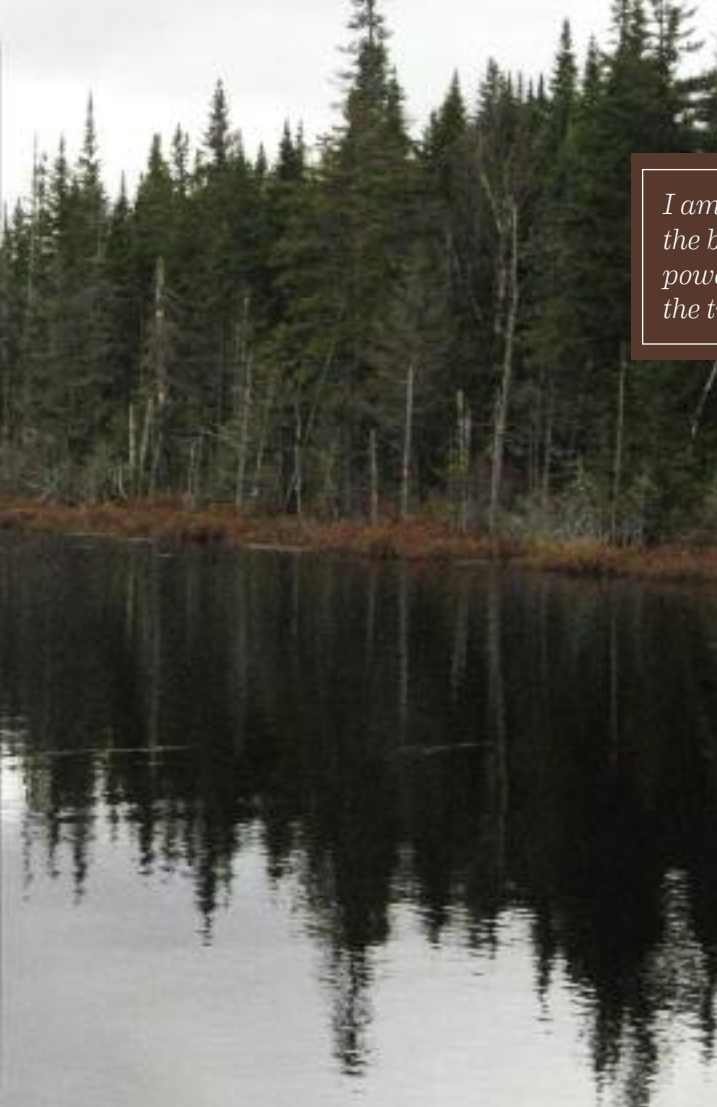
“The busiest day yet for the campaign was sparked by the news reports that Northern Pass is objecting to this conservation project,” said Kibler-Hacker. “Many donors expressed their disappointment, anger, and disgust that Northern Pass would interfere with the conservation of this cherished landscape.”

The Division of Charitable Trusts quickly approved the sale of the conservation restrictions and powerline right-of-way to the Forest Society.

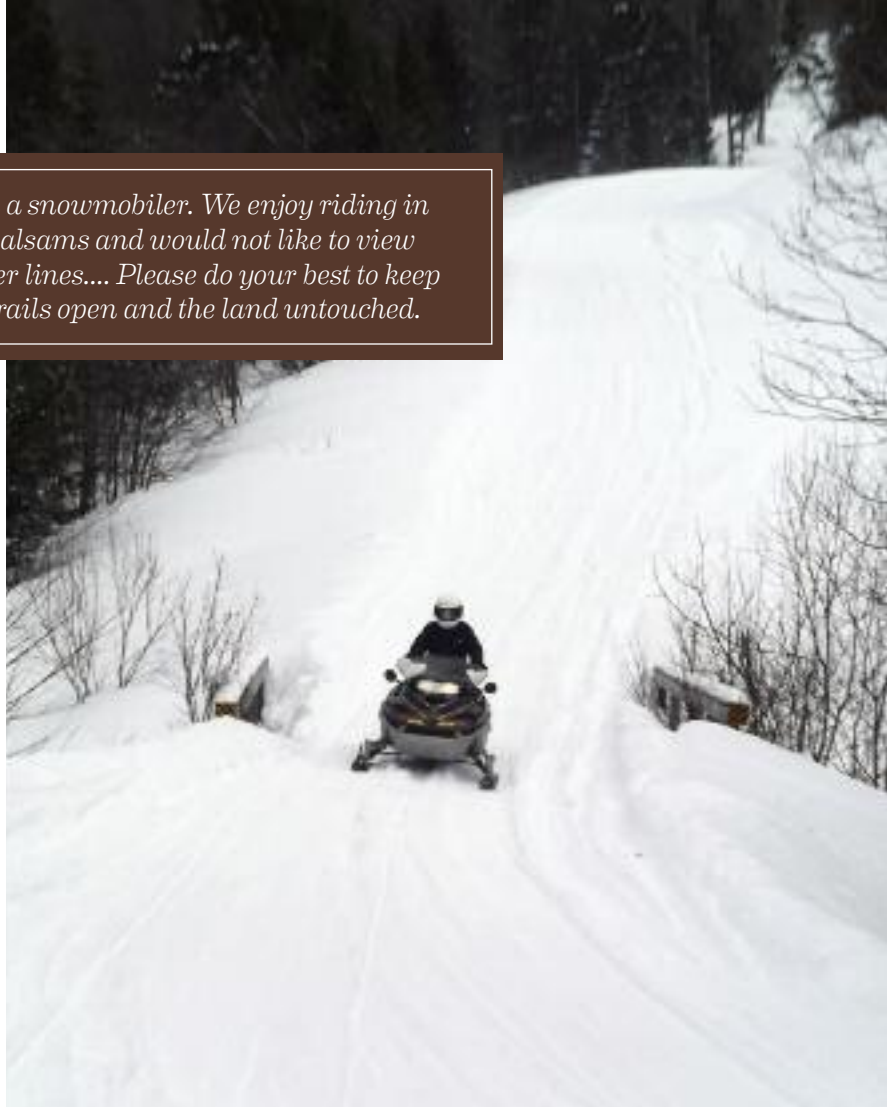
“Rarely do we have a powerful entity using its resources to stop us from conserving land,” Difley said. “While we began this project because of the extraordinary natural attributes of the Balsams, in the end this campaign also became a referendum on Northern Pass.”

A DRAMATIC, RUGGED LANDSCAPE

The Balsams’ incredibly steep and varied topography—from its remote ponds and wetlands to the cliffs and wind-swept summits linked by winding ridges—are known to and respected by hikers



I am a snowmobiler. We enjoy riding in the balsams and would not like to view power lines.... Please do your best to keep the trails open and the land untouched.



Right: Some of the North Country's 600 miles of snowmobile trails cross through the Balsams. Photo by Jack Savage.

and hunters alike. Generations of North Country residents and vacationers have shared a love of this landscape.

This working forest is laced with snowmobile trails and footpaths. Nearly 30 miles of hiking and Nordic ski trails lead explorers to storied destinations like Table Rock, Sanguinary Ridge, Abenaki Mountain, and Mud Pond. Table Rock Trail leads to its namesake pinnacle of exposed ledge high above the valley floor, with views that stretch to northern Maine, Vermont, and Canada. The summit of Abenaki Mountain offers a window south through steep-walled Dixville Notch. The Sanguinary Ridge Trail is a segment of the fabled long-distance Cohos Trail running from Crawford Notch in the White Mountain National Forest to the Canadian border.

The rugged Balsams landscape contains an impressive diversity of wildlife habitats and unique natural communities. Northern boreal spruce and balsam fir forests are prowled by rare pine martens, gray jays, and Bicknell's Thrush. Stands of sugar maple, beech, and yellow birch include likely old growth, tucked away in

secluded areas. At the valley floor, where the headwaters of the Mohawk River find their source, alder and willow swamps give way to the cottongrass fen and peatland bogs that surround Mud Pond, home to moose, deer, an excellent brook trout fishery, and migrating waterfowl.

The Forest Society's conservation deed restrictions will provide permanent protection for the Balsams' vast interconnected ecosystems and the wildlife that depends upon them for survival.

"Our success in conserving the Balsams is one more strong statement by those who understand the true value of New Hampshire's forested landscape," said Difley. "I can't thank everyone enough, including the Tillotson Corporation, for making this achievement possible.

"We believe, as they do, that this outcome is in the best interests of the North Country and, indeed, all of New Hampshire." ♪

Joyce El Kouarti is the communications director at the Forest Society and the managing editor of Forest Notes magazine.



Mapping the Future

Using regional planning and partnerships to protect New Hampshire's forested landscape

By Chris Wells

To advance the statewide conservation vision outlined in *New Hampshire Everlasting*, the Forest Society has been engaged in a systematic effort to tailor its land-protection efforts to each region of New Hampshire.

We believe that we can best achieve our statewide conservation goals—and best help our partners achieve theirs—by understanding the unique natural resource values, community dynamics, and partner and funder networks in each region. Our approach entails working with public and private partners—other land trusts, state and federal conservation agencies, regional planning commissions, etc.—to develop rigorous science-based conservation plans in each region, then working in concert to implement the plan via voluntary, willing seller/donor land conservation over a sustained period of time.

The most established example of this regional approach is the Quabbin-to-Cardigan (Q2C) initiative in western New Hampshire, which has attracted millions of dollars from public agencies and private foundations to targeted land protection efforts. Launched in 2003, this two-state, multi-partner undertaking is working to conserve the region's largest remaining areas of intact, interconnected ecologically significant forest. (To learn more about the Q2C project, please visit: <http://q2cpartnership.org>.)

In 2012 the Forest Society is expanding the regional partnership

model to two new areas of the state—the Lakes Region and the Merrimack Valley—while maintaining the momentum we and our partners have built in the Q2C region.

Lakes Region

The Lakes Region of New Hampshire—the area surrounding Winnepesaukee, Squam, and the other “big lakes” of east-central New Hampshire—is another region where large unfragmented forests still exist in close proximity to the state's main population centers. The area's forests form the watershed for almost 93,000 acres of lakes and ponds, which comprise 50% of *all the surface water in the state*.

The region is also in the bull's eye of central New England's ongoing population growth and suburbanization. Given this confluence of forests, water, and people, the Forest Society has focused much of its recent strategic planning and partnership-building efforts on the Lakes Region. In 2010 we convened regional and state conservation partners¹ for a planning process that blended the varied missions of the partners into a consensus conservation plan that focuses on the protection of water quality through the conservation of large forest blocks, riparian areas, and waterfront/riparian areas in proximity to key water bodies. Finalized in early 2011, the new plan is intended as a regional blueprint that communities,



land conservation organizations, state agencies, and funders can use to prioritize individual or shared conservation goals.

With a good running start from the land conservation that has already happened in the Lakes Region (just over 176,000 acres in the area are already in permanent conservation), the Forest Society and its partners are poised to make significant progress on implementing the new plan. With this in mind, the Forest Society is launching a focused organizational effort to implement the Lakes Region Conservation Plan in the coming year, which will kick-off with a series of public information events around the Lakes Region this summer.

Merrimack Valley

While the Quabbin-to-Cardigan and Lakes Regions form the forested “frontier” of an increasingly metropolitan New Hampshire, the Merrimack Valley is at the very heart of urban growth. From its start in Franklin, the Merrimack River flows through eight of New Hampshire’s ten largest cities, including Manchester, Nashua, and Concord. The river continues into Massachusetts, running through cities like Lowell and Lawrence to its mouth at Newburyport.

The Merrimack region is home to 2.1 million people—1,425,000 in Massachusetts and 628,000 in New Hampshire—

representing almost 52% of New Hampshire’s total population and 22% of Massachusetts’. Despite being highly developed, the Merrimack Valley still contains critical terrestrial and aquatic habitats and contributes to the larger Gulf of Maine marine ecosystem. The region’s residents directly depend on the Merrimack watershed for drinking water, and these urban and suburban residents also look to the Valley’s remaining forests and other open spaces for close-to-home outdoor recreation.

Against this backdrop, there is much to do to conserve the region’s resources. 18.5% of the Merrimack region is permanently conserved—significantly less than the share for New Hampshire as a whole (30.6%) or Massachusetts (24.5%). Even more importantly, some of the lands most in need of conservation are grossly under-protected, particularly those directly tied to protecting public drinking water supplies. In the New Hampshire portion of the Merrimack region, only 12% of all the land classified as “drinking water protection area” is actually in permanent conservation. In the Massachusetts portion of the region, 18% of the land classified as “source water protection area” by state regulators is in permanent protection.

Another area of concern is the imbalance between population and local open space. To illustrate, 22% of all Massachusetts residents live in the Massachusetts portion of the Merrimack



Previous page: The Lakes Region of New Hampshire—the area surrounding Winnepesaukee (show here), Squam, and the other “big lakes” just south of the White Mountains—is in the bull’s eye of central New England’s ongoing population growth and suburbanization. Photo by Jerry and Marcy Monkman, EcoPhotography.

Above: In 2010 the Merrimack watershed was identified by the US Forest Service as the most threatened in the nation. The Merrimack River flows through eight of New Hampshire’s ten largest cities, including Manchester (shown here), Nashua, and Concord. The region’s residents directly depend upon the Merrimack watershed for drinking water and also look to the area’s remaining forests and waterways for close-to-home outdoor recreation. Photo by Joyce El Kouarti.

region, but the region only has 17% of the state’s conservation land. The imbalance is truly glaring in New Hampshire, where half of the state’s population lives in a region with only 10% of its conserved land.

There is little time to correct these conservation imbalances. In 2010 the Merrimack watershed was identified by the US Forest Service as the most threatened in the nation in terms of projected loss of private forest land over the next twenty years.² The Forest Service report reinforced the Forest Society’s already growing interest in seeing more conservation activity in the Merrimack Valley and spurred us to commit to the Merrimack as our next major conservation planning effort.

As with our other regional initiatives, we believe conservation in the Merrimack Valley should be planned at the whole-watershed scale, which means working with partners in Massachusetts. After initial conversations with key conservation organizations and agencies during the second half of 2011, the Forest Society convened a larger stakeholder meeting in December to determine whether there is a critical mass of interest in developing a consensus land conservation plan for the Merrimack watershed. There was broad and passionate agreement that a conservation plan for

the Merrimack watershed was needed and indeed overdue. There was also agreement that a Merrimack conservation plan would need to go beyond the natural resource-driven planning approach used in previous regional planning efforts to include urban/suburban open space and trails, and possibly aquatic systems (i.e. connectivity and health of rivers, streams, wetlands).

The Merrimack conservation planning project will be the most ambitious undertaken by the Forest Society yet. Over the coming year, we will work to complete a two-state/multi-partner consensus-based land conservation plan for the Merrimack watershed of New Hampshire and Massachusetts, then share the completed plan with key stakeholders and decision-makers in the region. We will then work with our partners to cultivate opportunities for land conservation that will hopefully lay the groundwork for an intensified conservation effort in the Merrimack Valley.

Quabbin to Cardigan

Even as we ramp up our efforts in the Lakes Region and Merrimack Valley, the Forest Society is also working to maintain the momentum of the successful Quabbin-to-Cardigan initiative. Almost nine years after its formation, the Q2C Partnership remains



Left: Launched in 2003, the Quabbin-to-Cardigan Partnership is exploring opportunities for completing a through trail that would allow hikers to walk a continuous footpath up the western spine of New Hampshire, viewed here from the summit of Mount Monadnock. Photo by Jerry and Marcy Monkman, EcoPhotography.

an engaged, functioning collaboration working to achieve a common conservation vision. This is due both to committed partners and to the Forest Society being able to devote time and resources to coordinate the effort, raise the profile of and advocate for the Q2C region, secure public and private funds, and develop new project opportunities that benefit the region. In the coming year, the Forest Society will continue to provide this organizational support to the Q2C Partnership and foster land protection projects in the region.

The Q2C Partnership is also working on two new initiatives this year that break new ground for the group, which to date has been mainly focused on land conservation. The first is a trails planning project that will explore opportunities for expanding or enhancing the hiking trail network in the Q2C region, including to the possible completion of a through trail that would allow hikers to walk a continuous footpath up the western spine of NH from the Massachusetts border to the White Mountains. The project is being pursued in partnership with the Appalachian Mountain Club with assistance from the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance program. The first step will be to take a look at the feasibility of and local interest in a long-distance trail in the region. The study is not aimed at creating any new federal or state designation of trails in the area.

Another new initiative will conduct targeted outreach to private landowners in the region to encourage good forest stewardship practices and provide information about land management and conservation options. This initiative will be a collaboration with the NH Division of Forests and Lands, UNH Cooperative Extension and USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Toward a New Hampshire Everlasting

The Forest Society's regional conservation strategies are all ultimately aimed at achieving the statewide vision set out in New Hampshire Everlasting, the Forest Society's 25-year strategic plan. Launched in 2001, it challenges the Forest Society and New Hampshire's conservation community as a whole to permanently protect another one million acres of land by 2026. The goal is to ensure that the people of New Hampshire continue to enjoy a living landscape where intact forests, healthy waters, abundant wildlife, and opportunities for outdoor recreation are woven into the fabric of community life.

For more information about the Forest Society's regional conservation strategies, contact Chris Wells at cwells@forestsociety.org or Dan Sundquist at dsundquist@forestsociety.org. Both can also be reached at (603) 224-9945. ♻️

Chris Wells is the Forest Society's senior director for strategic projects.

1 Partners on the Lakes Region conservation plan: NH Fish & Game Department (NHFG), Green Mountain Conservation Group (GMCG), Lakes Region Conservation Trust (LRCT), Lakes Region Regional Planning Commission (LRRPC) The Nature Conservancy, NH Chapter (TNC), Newfound Lake Region Association (NLRA), Squam Lake Conservation Society (SLCS), and Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (SPNHF).

2 Private Forests, Public Benefits—Increased Housing Density and other Pressures on Private Forest Contributions, USDA Forest Service, 2009.

Spring Events: May through June 2012

Go online. Get outside. Visit our website for a complete and up-to-date list of field trips and special events: www.forestsociety.org and click on the "Things To Do" tab.

You may preregister by calling (603) 224-9945 extension 311, or you may register online at signup@forestsociety.org. Most programs are free unless otherwise noted.

www.forestsociety.org/thingstodo



Hike Mount Monadnock and enjoy dramatic views from the mountain's bald summit.

Photo by Jerry and Marcy Monkman, EcoPhotography.

SUNDAY, MAY 13 | 10 am – 4 pm

Hike Mount Monadnock

Marlborough Trail, Marlborough

Hike Mount Monadnock with Ben Haubrich from the Harris Center and Paul Gagnon from the Forest Society. We'll look for early wildflowers and rhodora in bloom as we explore. Participants will experience elevation gains of 1,800 feet on this strenuous hike to the bald summit of New Hampshire's most-climbed mountain.

Cosponsored by the Harris Center for Conservation Education.

SATURDAY, MAY 26 | 10 am – 2 pm

Branch River Paddle

Branch Hill Farm, Milton Mills

Paddle the Branch and Salmon Fall Rivers and enjoy a picnic lunch at Branch Hill Farm, under conservation easement with the Forest Society. Kira Jacobs of the Salmon Falls Watershed Collaborative will describe the impact that conserved land has upon water quality. Bring your own canoe or kayak; food and boat transport provided.

Cost: \$10/person. Preregistration required; contact Moose Mountains Regional Greenways at info@mrmrg.info or (603) 817-8260.

AT THE ROCKS ESTATE

All events take place at The Rocks Estate in Bethlehem; visit www.therocks.org for details.

SATURDAY, JUNE 2 | 10 am – 4:30 pm

Wildflower Festival

The Rocks Estate, Bethlehem

Wildflower enthusiasts are invited to kick off the annual Fields of Lupine Festival at The Rocks Estate. The day will mark the 32nd Annual Wildflower Festival with a full slate of activities that includes photography, crafts, and edible flower identification. The Festival will include guided walks along the Mile Path, which meanders through the historic Rocks Estate property.

Cost: \$15 per person including lunch; reservations are strongly advised.



Poppies and lupine in the formal garden, with the tea house in the background at The Rocks Estate. Photo by Nigel Manley.

SATURDAY, JUNE 9 | 10 am – 11:30 am

Wildlife Trail Opening at Bretzfelder Park

Bretzfelder Park, Bethlehem

Join Rocks Estate volunteer and Bretzfelder Trail designer Priscilla Didio on a guided tour of a new interactive trail that educates users about various local wildlife habitats. The new wildlife trail is the result of three years of hard work to create a venue for learning that is engaging and entertaining for explorers of all ages.

For more information or to register, contact The Rocks Estate at info@therocks.org or (603) 444-6228.

ART EXHIBITS

These exhibits can be viewed Monday through Friday from 9 am to 5 pm at the Conservation Center Conference Room, located at 54 Portsmouth Street in Concord, NH. As the Conference Room is used for meetings, please call (603) 224-9945 before visiting to confirm that the room is open.

MAY 11 – JUNE 28

Fred Fry: Birds of New Hampshire

Now 102 years old, Peterborough artist Fred Fry began painting when he was 100. His preferred subject is birds, and he has a collection of about 450 paintings of birds from all over



Kingfisher by Fred Fry.

the world, including New Hampshire. Fry suffers from macular degeneration and consequently requires special full spectrum lighting for painting. He grew up in Williamsport Pennsylvania and moved to New Hampshire in 2007.



Water under the Bridge by Ruth Sears.

JULY 2 – AUGUST 31

New Hampshire Landscapes by Ruth Sears

Working mostly in soft pastel on velour paper, sanded paper, and pastelbord, New Hampshire artist Ruth Sears specializes in landscapes. Working from photos, she captures the beauty and mystery of New Hampshire's wetlands, mountains, lakes, and rural areas in different seasons. She makes a special effort to capture the lovely vibrant colors of autumn. A resident of Henniker, Sears has lived in New Hampshire for about 20 years.

FOREST SOCIETY VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

For details or to participate in any of these trainings or work days, contact Carrie Deegan at cdeegan@forestsociety.org or (603) 224-9945.

FRI. MAY 11 & SAT. MAY 12 | 8 am – 4 pm

Forest Society Land Steward Training

Barbara C. Harris Conference Center, Greenfield

Prospective land stewards will learn about the Forest Society's history and mission, forest management/timber harvesting, recreation management, trail maintenance, and map/compass navigation at our annual training event for new volunteers. Following the training, new stewards "adopt" a Forest Society reservation near them to assist with monitoring and maintaining trails, signs, gates, and other infrastructure.

Spaces are limited, and preregistration is required.

THURS. MAY 17 | 10 am – 3:30 pm

Lost River Workday

Lost River Reservation, North Woodstock

Join Forest Society staff and other volunteers for a day of spring cleaning at Lost River Reservation. Trail clearing, native garden pruning, landscaping, painting, and other tasks are on the agenda to help Lost River get ready for its 100th anniversary. Participants will also have an opportunity to walk through the spectacular gorge and boulder caves in the afternoon.

TUES. MAY 22 | 9:30 am – 3 pm

Yatsevitch Forest Invasive Plant Workday

Yatsevitch Forest, Cornish and Plainfield

The Yatsevitch Forest in Cornish and Plainfield has nutrient-rich soils that support a number of rare and uncommon plants. Unfortunately, several invasive plant species threaten these rare plant communities. Participants will learn to identify invasive plants, and will work together to implement appropriate control measures.

THURS. MAY 24 | 9 am – 3:30 pm

Chainsaw Safety and Maintenance Workshop

Forest Society Conservation Center and Estes Forest, Concord

This is a full day workshop using classroom and field instruction to teach participants how to work safely with a chainsaw in the

woods. Topics will include safety considerations, felling, bucking, and routine maintenance. Please bring your own saw, fuel, oil, maintenance tools, safety equipment, and bag lunch. You may also attend this workshop without a saw and learn by observing others.

Cost: \$30 for non-members, \$20 for Forest Society members, FREE for Forest Society Land Stewards.

TUES. JUNE 5 & WED. JUNE 6 | 9 am – 3 pm

Wooden Sign Making

Forest Society Conservation Center, Concord

Learn the steps involved in creating and/or refurbishing the beautiful routed wooden property signs that grace our Forest Society reservations. The Forest Society seeks some handy and energetic folks to help stencil, route, plane, sand, stain, varnish, and paint signs during this workday blitz.

There are projects for all interests and abilities; just need to bring enthusiasm and your work clothes.



Forest Society volunteers and staff move clear a culvert at Monadnock Trail Week. Photo by Wendy Weisiger.

FRI. JULY 13 – TUES. JULY 17 | 9 am – 3 pm

Monadnock Trail Week

Mount Monadnock State Park, Jaffrey

Join conservation professionals and other volunteers from the Forest Society and NH State Parks in restoring hiking trails on New Hampshire's Mount Monadnock. Come for one day or several, alone or with friends. Trail maintenance experience is very welcome but not necessary. Tasks for the week will include restoring and re-marking trails, building waterbars, improving trail tread, and constructing footbridges.

Doing the Right Thing . . .

Managing Forest Society land for future generations

By George Frame

Woods Wise will be appearing regularly in Forest Notes presenting information about forest management, the management of land owned by the Forest Society, and forestry-related issues.



Landing operations at the Forest Society's Hutchins Reservation during a winter timber sale. A slasher cuts pine logs to length while the truck loads for a trip to the mill. Photo by Wendy Weisiger.

Like other landowners the Forest Society wants to do its best by and for our land, which will be here long after we are gone. If we do our jobs well, the green spots on the map will continue to provide natural renewable resources for local and global economies while also being sanctuaries where people can find renewal and perhaps a little peace.

The Forest Society now owns more than 52,000 acres in 105 towns throughout the state, and these forestlands are actively managed. In the past 10 years alone, income from the sale of forest products has been between two and three million dollars. It has been derived from harvesting activities related to eco-restoration, wildlife habitat development and enhancement, silvicultural improvement, and storm salvage cleanup. This revenue is reinvested to support our programs, including education and outreach, land protection, and recreation management. We consider this wise use of our natural resources a significant portion of our mission.

We work with many federal, state, and

private organizations, groups, and individuals who offer expertise about the latest research on silvicultural techniques and detailed knowledge of the potential threats to our forests, including invasive species such as the hemlock woolly adelgid, the emerald ash borer, mile-a-minute vine, and Japanese knotweed.

We also work with consulting foresters who share our core values and understand our management philosophy and policies. We employ logging contractors who work very hard to leave the forest better than they found it, and we collaborate with an ever-growing cadre of volunteer land stewards who act as our ears and eyes on the ground when we can't be there.

New Hampshire residents and visitors all have an expectation of being able to buy

products of wood and paper and to enjoy local edibles like maple syrup and blueberries. We need places where we can hike, ride our snowmobiles, snowshoe, cross-country ski, mountain bike, ride our horses, hunt, fish, track wildlife, and enjoy immersing ourselves within nature. Doing right by our land means we have to manage that land for this wide range of expected social, economic, and ecological benefits. That is the Forest Society's mission. ♯

George Frame has been a forester for more than forty years and has worked for the USDA Forest Service, private landowners, and towns throughout NH. He has been with the Forest Society since March of 2005 and in his current position as Senior Director of Forestry since November 2010.

Consulting Foresters

The Forest Society encourages landowners to consult with a licensed forester before undertaking land management activities. The following are paid advertisers.

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FEATURED FORESTER:

Ben Hudson

Hudson Forestry, Lyme, NH



Photo by Ian Smith.

Ben Hudson has owned and operated Hudson Forestry since 1996, working closely with and providing land management services to individual property owners. His earliest clients hired him to do site restoration and forest engineering work, but in time, he was able to carve out a niche for himself by offering a combination of forest management and planning and “woodscape design.” By helping shape forests, forested wetlands, and meadows,

Hudson works to enhance the timber value, diversity of wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities available on a given site.

“Most of my clients are very conservation-minded with smaller acreage,” he said. “They are interested in adding value to their woodlands through an integrated forest management process that protects and enhances the soils, water quality, and wildlife habitat.”

Hudson considers his work an art form and focuses heavily upon the aesthetics of forest management and stewardship. “I try to blend aesthetics, recreational opportunity, and wildlife habitat into my designs,” he said.

He frequently creates trails and woodland meadows to make it easier for property owners to get out into the woods and see the wildlife on their land.

“I encourage landowners to participate in the creative process, to get them actively involved in managing their land,” he said. “When people learn about their land, they are more motivated to protect its conservation values.”

Hudson also volunteered for 10 years as a supervisor for the Grafton County Conservation District, stepping down in 2011 so others would have the opportunity to serve.

Hudson is certified by the USDA NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) as a Technical Service Provider (TSP) qualified to develop Forest Management Activity Plans for landowners under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). These cost-sharing forest stewardship plans provide the landowner with an inventory of conservation resource concerns that can be addressed through NRCS programs.

At its 2012 Winter Meeting held in February, the Granite State Division of the Society of American Foresters (SAF) awarded Hudson with a Certificate of Appreciation in recognition of his 30 years of service and dedication.

Thank you!


On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, let me add our thanks for the incredibly enthusiastic response to the successful fundraising appeal enabling the Forest Society to purchase the conservation restrictions on the 5,800 acres surrounding the Balsams. The outpouring of contributions was inspiring. Combined with the dozens of personally encouraging notes accompanying the gifts, the campaign, completed in a short but intense six weeks, was and is inspirational and affirming.

But this is not the first time the citizens of New Hampshire and beyond have rallied to preserve precious land for generations to come. In the late 1920s, the potential for logging in Franconia Notch was a real possibility. When a popular hotel burned in 1923, the owners decided not to rebuild and asked lumber companies to bid for the standing timber. Six thousand acres of the Notch, which spread out for seven miles along both sides of the Daniel Webster Highway, were in jeopardy.

A campaign to save the Notch was swiftly organized by Philip Ayres, the Forest Society's forester and director. In a short amount of time the NH legislature approved \$200,000 for the land purchase with an additional \$200,000 being raised from over 12,000 people and organizations like the State Federation of Women's Clubs, the Granges, Kiwanis, and Rotary Clubs, and Girl Scouts. Children at the Orphan's Home raised \$20 from their pennies. When the campaign was completed, contributions had come from towns and cities throughout the state as well as from Texas, New Jersey, France and Panama. The Notch was saved because of an outpouring of contributions and support from people who loved the land and what it stood for.

Much has changed over the last 90 years. And yet some things like the passion for an unspoiled sense of place have not been lost but have only deepened as people continue to embrace the ethic of living close to the land and hold on to places that have historic meaning, thus enriching the lives of all.

Thanks again to everyone who has made the conservation of the Balsams land a reality. Your generosity will have immeasurable impact on the futures of those who celebrate this unique place we call home.



Carolyn Benthien
Chair, Board of Trustees
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*Thank you! We couldn't
 have done it without you.*



Beverly's recently protected land includes the falls that give Hampton Falls its name—and that once powered the most industrialized part of the New Works east of New York City. Photo by Brenda Lind.

Leaving Her Mark on the Land

By Mike Speltz

“I still love you with all my heart.” Those words (well, the “heart” was actually a symbol) were carved a couple of decades ago onto a two-foot diameter beech tree overlooking the quiet waters of Upper Dodge Pond in Hampton Falls. This peaceful spot, less than a quarter mile from the eight roaring lanes of I-95 in Hampton Falls, was obviously a special place for someone.

Those words might well have been said by the 93-year old owner of this spot: Beverly Powell Woodward still loves this land with all her heart, and now she has provided for its permanent protection by donating a conservation easement on 30 acres to the Forest Society.

The “falls” that give Hampton Falls its name occur on Beverly’s land. The falls were first harnessed in 1648 to power a grist mill. By 1690 the river was controlled by three dams supporting five mills. According to local historians, this area became the most

industrialized part of the New World east of New York City about a century *before* the Revolutionary War. On a small area excluded from the easement is Mrs. Powell’s home, built in 1787 by the scion of the Dodge family. It remained in the Dodge family for 265 years until New Hampshire’s 70th governor, Wesley Powell, purchased the property in 1952. Governor Powell used the nearby mill building as his office for many years; the Hampton Falls River still runs under it. An old ice house on the bank of the river was converted in 1932 and consecrated as the “Little Gate to the City of Gladness,” and is recognized as the smallest Episcopal church in the world.

The conserved land includes both sides of Upper Dodge Pond, along with its dam, and both banks of the Hampton Falls River between Interstate 95 and NH Route 84. Across Route 84, a second tract protects the river as it empties into Whittier Pond, the

river’s last impoundment before it enters the Hampton salt marshes. This diminutive property holds one state-threatened and one state endangered plant species, and there are an additional five state-threatened and five state endangered plant species within one mile of the property, which will benefit from the buffer effect of the nearby open space. Finally, the state endangered common tern has been documented within a mile of the property.

People carve messages of love into trees firm in the belief that both their love and the tree will last. It is a case of truly “writing on the landscape.” In fact, everything we do leaves a message, for good or for ill, on the landscape. With this donation, Mrs. Powell has written a message that will outlast even that two-foot beech. The Forest Society is proud to have become a fellow steward of this historic and scenic property. ♪

Northwood Landowner Leads by Example

By Tom Howe

Carl Wallman recently donated his third conservation easement to the Forest Society, protecting an additional 40 acres of his picturesque Harmony Hill Farm in Northwood. In doing so, Carl has added to a protected block of 2,310 acres within the neighborhood of the Northwood Area Land Management Collaborative (NALMC) that he founded five years ago. Based on principles espoused by Aldo Leopold, NALMC promotes landowners working across boundary lines on community-based land conservation and stewardship projects. This gift follows two prior easements that Carl gave to the Forest Society protecting 164 abutting acres. The Northwood Conservation Commission holds an executory interest in the easement and assisted with some of the transactional expenses of the project.

The land contains an attractive mix of managed hayland and forestland with productive soils, a forested wetland containing centuries-old black gum trees, and a brushy field that Carl burns every two years to maintain early successional conditions favored by many creatures, such as ruffed grouse, American woodcock, and New England Cottontail. Sitting atop a watershed divide, this land also helps protect the water quality of the Lamprey River to the east and the Suncook River to the west.

Carl's land also includes about 2,000 feet of picturesque road frontage, in sharp contrast to a neighboring nine-lot subdivision now under construction on what had been productive cropland farmed for decades by a local family. Ironically, it



Carl allows hikers and snowmobilers to enjoy the trails that run through his land and connect with others in the NALMC neighborhood. Photo by Tom Howe.

was this development that catalyzed Carl and a neighbor to take action to conserve their land.

Carl allows hikers and snowmobilers to enjoy the trails that run through his land and connect with others in the NALMC neighborhood. He also makes it available for various community-oriented educational programs, such as a workshop run last year to build Leopold-designed benches with rough-sawn timber cut from Carl's land.

From New York City, Carl arrived at this property 43 years ago with no farming background. Singlehandedly, and with great persistence, he learned what he

needed to know and cleared the fields himself, in part driven by a desire to make peace with the reality that his Russian parents were prohibited from even owning land in their country of origin. Over the next 25 years, he developed a stocking and breeding operation for black angus cattle, winning national awards and putting surprised Westerners to shame. Upon discontinuing that business 18 years ago, Carl has since dedicated himself to restoring the ecological health of Harmony Hill Farm, increasing its habitat diversity, and fostering an ethic of land conservation and stewardship throughout the larger Northwood community. ♯

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www.forestsociety.org/news



Sisters Protect Unusual Black Gum Stand

By Tom Howe

Every so often, landowners joyfully discover natural treasures on their land as a result of their work with the Forest Society. Such was the case when sisters Rachel Boyden, Rebecca Boyden, and Jennifer Kampsnider learned of the 400+ year-old black gum trees in the most distant corner of their family's land in Sandwich and Tamworth. The stand's location at the most northerly extent of this tree's range adds to its importance. The sisters' awe, delight, and surprise contributed to their decision to donate a conservation easement to the Forest Society, protecting this and other significant features of their 158-acre Tree Farm straddling the Sandwich/Tamworth town line.

This diverse property also includes fields kept open for views and wildlife, wetlands, and more than a mile of undeveloped road frontage. Water quality is also well served by the location of this parcel. The headwaters of Mill Brook, on which the Forest Society has protected many other properties, lie just to the east. To the southwest are the headwaters of the Cold River, documented



The three sisters (from left to right Rebecca Boyden, Rachel Boyden, and Jennifer Kampsnider) have kept portions of their recently-conserved land open for views and wildlife. Photo by Tom Howe.

as having the highest water quality of all the waterways feeding into Ossipee Lake.

At a landscape scale, this land sits squarely within a priority corridor having “Whites-to-Ossipees Wildlife Connectivity” as identified by the Tamworth and Sandwich Conservation Commissions and endorsed by the Forest Society and others. This land is close to other conserved parcels, including conservation easements donated to the Forest

Society by the Nye and Daniels families.

Reaching farther back in time, the sisters' family has owned this land off and on dating back to the late 1700s, when their ancestor Silas Fry built his homestead on the site. The walled “Fry Burying Ground” on the town line marks the family's early commitment to this land. Spanning the centuries, the sisters' recent gift honors those who came before. ♪

Conserved Land Helps Newfound Camp

By Brian Hotz

Lawrence Caperton of London, England has donated a conservation easement on 145 acres in Hebron to the Forest Society. Mr. Caperton purchased the land earlier this year and plans to give it to Camp Pasquaney on Newfound Lake to honor his brother, who recently passed away. The two brothers spent many memorable summers at the camp, and Mr. Caperton wants to thank the camp for those memories. The camp will be able to use the conserved land for its youth camping activities.

This is the first project that the Forest Society has completed as part of the Newfound Land Conservation Partnership (NLCP). Made up of three partners—the Newfound Lake Region Association, The

Lakes Region Conservation Trust, and the Forest Society—the NLCP works to conserve land and water quality in the Newfound region.

The Forest Society's Lakes Region Conservation Plan (see story on page 10) has identified several important natural resources on the land. Located just east of Newfound Lake, the property abuts other conserved land owned by the New England Forestry Foundation and Audubon Society of New Hampshire. The easement will help protect the water quality of Newfound Lake by conserving sections of two streams that drain into the lake. The land also has more than 5,700 feet of scenic road frontage along Stokes Road and is visible from Newfound Lake. ♪



The conservation easement on Larry Caperton's land protects sections two streams that drain into Newfound Lake. Photo by Brian Hotz.



Featuring managed hayland with prime farming soils, this protected land is located near the Sugar Hill village center. Photo by Tom Howe.

Small Gift with Big Impact

By Tom Howe

Margo and Greg Connors added a small but highly picturesque parcel in Sugar Hill to a 115-acre conservation easement they'd previously donated to the Forest Society. This two-acre tract, consisting of managed hayland with prime agricultural soils, comes from the heart of a former farm near the center of the village. It also has key frontage on Rt. 117, designated by the State as a Scenic and Cultural Byway for its outstanding views, and affords a distant vista of the Presidential Range to the east. The terms of the easement guarantee public pedestrian access for recreation and education.

This retired building lot is also close to other conserved lands, notably the 115 acres previously protected by the Connors, and cannot be separately conveyed in ownership from that larger conserved area. Given its strategic location, superb agricultural features, and scenic attributes, this conserved land presents some conservation-friendly opportunities, such as a community garden, or a location for temporary, low-impact events for non-profit and/or community purposes. Small can indeed be beautiful. ♯

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And many thanks to those businesses who give less than \$250.

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For information on business memberships, please contact Susanne Kibler-Hacker at (603) 224-9945 or via email at skh@forestsociety.org.



The view of North and South Kinsman Mountains from the conserved land, looking across a beaver pond. Photo by Mike Speltz.

Mother-Daughter Duo Donate Easton Easement

By Mike Speltz

Most of us have heard of Bode Miller, the world famous skier. Well, Bode has some neighbors, just up the road, that should probably be equally famous, but for different reasons: the mother-daughter duo of Ruth Ward and Kristina Pastoriza. Ruth and Kris have donated a conservation easement on 361 acres of land in Easton, tucked into the northwest reaches of the White Mountain National Forest.

Why the fame? Because these two conservationists are also Anti-Northern-Pass activists. It seems fairly certain that their “fame” has spread to the offices of PSNH, where a map undoubtedly hangs showing Northern Pass bisecting their beautiful landscape. While the easement cannot stop

the use of the existing power line, it should make expanding it onto the easement property very difficult indeed.

On the east side of North and South Kinsman mountains lies the narrow valley of Franconia Notch; the west side of these mountains overlooks a broader valley, full of brooks that join and become the Ham Branch of the Gale River. West of these brooks the land rises again to the Jericho Trail on the Cooley-Cole Ridge. This newly conserved land encompasses the brooks in the valley (three miles of shoreline!), the hayfields on the valley floor, and steep, forested slopes rising to a mountain plateau. On this high meadow Kris maintains a small cabin, an extensive garden,

and a hand sown wheat field. In the valley below Ruth and Kris maintain another garden and small orchard. This land has been in agricultural production for at least 180 years, when it was the forward edge of settlement pushing up the Connecticut River valley.

Ruth is also a Forest Society land steward. Not content to care only for her assigned Forest Society land in Stoddard, she is an inveterate trail builder, who has left her mark on Mount Monadnock during the Forest Society's Trails Week. These two women demonstrate that the Forest Society is more than a land trust—it is a true “Society” of people dedicated to living well and carefully on the land. ♪



The Platt land features hayfields that the owners depend upon to support their dairy operation. Mount Hedgehog can be seen in the distance. Photo by Brian Hotz.

Conserved Fields Help Local Dairy Farmers

By Brian Hotz

The Forest Society has purchased a conservation easement on 119 acres of land in Deering owned by Doris Platt. For several generations, the Platt family has operated a dairy farm in nearby Antrim. Currently, Doris's sons Ben and Stephen Platt run the commercial dairy operation, which relies upon several tracts of land in the surrounding towns to grow corn and hay—including this 119 acres in Deering. This summer the two brothers approached the Forest Society

wishing to sell an easement on this parcel to raise needed funds for their dairy operation.

Situated between the Contoocook River and a restored rail trail that runs from Hillsborough to Bennington, this land contains more than 7,000 feet of Contoocook River frontage and overlies a stratified aquifer that could serve as a future town water supply. Its wetlands and riparian areas provide excellent wildlife habitat. Located near many

other conserved lands located on Hedgehog Mountain, this property has been a conservation priority for the Town of Deering's Conservation Commission. The property also contains 60 acres of prime agricultural soils currently in active agricultural use.

A local foundation has generously provided the \$52,700 purchase price, and the Russell Foundation covered direct transaction costs and staff time. ♪

More than a Mile of Stream Frontage Protected

By Brian Hotz

Chuck Bolton recently sold a conservation easement on 104 acres in Weare to the Forest Society for a deep bargain sale. A devoted outdoorsman, Chuck loves his land and its wildlife. The land's 30 acres of open fields contain soils of local importance for agriculture, and the property also has a well managed oak/pine forest with

productive forest soils. The land contains more than a mile of frontage on Center Brook and overlies a stratified aquifer. Additionally, the property includes a section of local snowmobile trail. This area is a very high conservation priority for the Town of Weare, the Forest Society, and the Piscataquog Watershed Association.

Although the value of the conservation easement is estimated to be at least \$150,000, Chuck sold the easement for just \$20,000. The Russell Foundation graciously provided much of the funding to purchase the easement and cover the related transactional expenses. ♪

Northern Pass Proposal Suffers Setbacks

Is a return to the drawing board inevitable?

By Will Abbott

The Forest Society continues its advocacy work to stop the Northern Pass transmission project from scarring the New Hampshire landscape. Northern Pass currently proposes to erect 1,100 new transmission towers through 180 miles of New Hampshire, from Pittsburg to Deerfield, to carry power from Canada to consumers to our south. From the Forest Society's point of view, there may be a way to successfully bring 1,200 additional megawatts of Hydro-Quebec electricity to markets in southern New England, but the proposal on the table before the US Department of Energy (DOE) is most definitely not it.

Recently, there have been a number of positive developments in the effort to send the Northern Pass proposal back to the drawing boards:

Balsams Blocks New Route

The current Northern Pass proposal assumes the construction of transmission towers up to 135 feet high through 40 miles of the state's most pristine landscape in Coos County. In order to accomplish this, Northern Pass has launched an aggressive campaign to acquire land along its preferred route. However, the project is having trouble bridging significant gaps in this controversial part of the route because many North Country landowners have refused to sell. Some have gone a step further: by selling their land, or conservation restrictions upon it, to the Forest Society instead.

In January the Forest Society acquired conservation restrictions on 5,800 acres of the Balsams Grand Resort Hotel in Dixville Notch, a project that started with conversations between the owner of the Balsams and the Forest Society a decade ago. Northern Pass unsuccessfully tried to disrupt this project by offering \$2 million for a power line right-of-way through the Balsams land-

scape. More than 1,600 donors contributed \$850,000 to the Forest Society to make the conservation outcome possible. (Read the full story on page 4.)

Northern Pass Barred from Using Eminent Domain

Governor John Lynch signed House Bill 648 into law on March 5, 2012. This legislation, with strong bi-partisan support, makes clear that eminent domain is off the table for Northern Pass. Senators Jeanie Forrester (R-Meredith), Peter Bragdon (R-Milford) and Amanda Merrill (D-Durham) sponsored the language that provided much-needed security to landowners that their constitutional property rights trumped access to eminent domain by Northern Pass.

Without eminent domain, it appears highly unlikely that Northern Pass can find a corridor through Coos County by purchasing real estate from willing sellers. The project needs 40-plus miles of new rights-of-way from the Canadian border in Pittsburg down to Groveton, where connects to existing rights-of-way for 140 miles south to Deerfield. Northern Pass itself has asked US DOE to suspend its application for a Presidential Permit unless and until it can find a corridor through Coos County.

Burial Option to Be Discussed

In addition to addressing the use of eminent domain, state senators also acknowledged that Northern Pass is just one of several electrical power transmission projects currently under development in the state. Determining the location of the most appropriate corridor for transmitting power will remain an ongoing point of discussion not just for Northern Pass, but for all potential energy suppliers.

With this in mind, Senator Forrester included a bill in the recently-signed legis-

lation addressing the need to study the feasibility of burying utility infrastructure along state-owned transportation corridors. This bill was endorsed by her colleagues in the Senate and House and also signed into law by Governor Lynch. There is more than passing interest among state elected officials in the potential revenue stream to the state that could come from allowing underground utilities to be buried along these state-owned transportation rights-of-way.

SEC Authority under Review

Senator Forrester introduced another bill, also signed into law by the governor, that would address improvements to the existing statute that establishes the charge for the NH Energy Facility Site Evaluation Committee (SEC), the regulatory body that will review and act on needed state permits for projects like Northern Pass.

Northern Pass has said they will only apply to the SEC after the federal Department of Energy has issued its draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the project. The EIS is needed to inform the DOE's decision on Northern Pass's application for a federal Presidential Permit.

But with eminent domain off the table, the scope of the SEC's authority under discussion, and the viability of Northern Pass's preferred route in jeopardy, Northern Pass might have greater success by withdrawing its current proposal altogether and starting fresh. ♣

Visit www.forestsociety.org/issues for more information about these and other policy issues.



Franconia Notch State Park, with Cannon Mountain in the foreground. Photo by Greg Keeler.

Franconia Notch State Park: Keeping It Whole

By Will Abbott

Franconia Notch State Park (FNSP) is often referred to as the crown jewel of New Hampshire's state park system. Conserving the Old Man of the Mountain and 6,000 acres of natural beauty in the Old Man's front and back yards was a hard-won campaign led by the New Hampshire Federation of Women's Clubs and the Forest Society in the 1920s. The campaign raised \$400,000 from public and private sources to support a state purchase of the land.

FNSP was dedicated as a state park, a war memorial, and a natural asset belonging to each New Hampshire citizen in September 1928. Ten years later the Cannon Mountain Tramway was built and dedicated, and Cannon became a national destination for skiing because of the mountain's sharp vertical drop. Today the ski area uses less than 10 percent of the park's total acreage but remains one of its major attractions.

The 6,000-acre park comes with steward-

ship obligations that are the responsibility of each of us. Even though the Old Man has found his final resting place, the stewardship obligation continues. The decisions we make today to care for the park—including the ski area—determine the legacy we leave for future generations. We look to the Division of Parks and Recreation, part of the NH Department of Resources and Economic Development, to lead and manage this stewardship.

Seemingly every year over the last decade, a bill to require DRED to lease the Cannon Mountain Ski Area has been introduced to the New Hampshire legislature. And every year, common sense leads the majority in the House or Senate (or both) to put such mandates aside. Senator Jeb Bradley (R-Wolfeboro) introduced such a bill during the 2012 session. To his credit, Senator Bradley agreed to reconsider after hearing testimony from the Forest Society and others

advocating for a different approach.

With support from the Forest Society, the State Park System Advisory Council suggested that FNSP would benefit from a master plan that addresses not only the leasing issue, but also the many other public use issues the park is challenged with. This master plan would be crafted by DRED and informed by a series of public hearings, where all stakeholders would have an opportunity to weigh in on the future of FNSP. Senator Bradley agreed to use the master plan as the basis for addressing the leasing issue in SB 217.

As this is written, Senator Bradley's legislation—Senate Bill 217—is headed to the House of Representatives for input. We encourage all Forest Society members to ask their elected representatives to support SB 217 as amended, which uses the FNSP master plan as a means to ensure a strong future for the park. ♯



Spring foliage is as magical as it is ephemeral. Hardwood buds burst into tiny flowers, and tender leaves unfold along Lower Pond in the Forest Society's Champlain Forest reservation in Rochester. Photo by Tom Howe.

Green Rx

Nature is good for your health

By Dave Anderson

“The less we are able to admit common feelings into our relationship with trees, the more impoverished we become: it must indicate a deforestation of the spirit. Strangely enough, their least understood qualities lie in the sensate natures they share with the rest of life . . . We have hardly started to explore our mutual chemistry.”

— John Hay, *The Immortal Wilderness*, 1987.

It's possible that one day soon, the land conservation community will quantify the importance of our work protecting forests, farms, wildlife habitats, and urban parks in terms of human health and sociological benefits as much as the more traditional natural resource values conserved. Recent studies reveal how even brief periods of immersion in natural surroundings positively impact human hormone

cycles that regulate our response to stress.

A research study at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland monitored daily circadian fluctuations in the hormone cortisol. Scottish researcher Catharine Ward Thompson reported in the publication *Landscape and Urban Planning* that research subjects living in close proximity to natural areas and parks were less anxious, and stress hormones cycled more uniformly than

those without access to green space.

In another series of human health studies, Japanese researchers explored the relationship between access to nature and fresh air during a brisk walk by taking urban dwellers into a forest. The Japanese practice of *Shinrin-yoku*, literally “forest bathing”, resulted in lowered blood pressure among participants.

Numerous studies by health practitioners across nursing disciplines report more



Left, top: April leaf-peepers will see emerging tree flowers and foliage in soft pastels, like an array of Easter candy. Maple, birch, beech, and oak will transition from lavender, pale lemon-yellow, soft pink, and light gold into various shades of green. Courtesy photo.

Left, bottom: The annual April unfurling of leafy green—and sometimes red—pennants heralds a corresponding spike in human happiness, calm, and a general sense of well-being. Photo by Dave Anderson.



split and stacked.

April leaf-peepers see emerging tree flowers and foliage in soft pastels, like an array of Easter candy. In a few short weeks, our hills are transformed by a gauzy rising tide that imparts a soft watercolor wash to the hardwood canopy. Maple, birch, beech, and oak transition from lavender, pale lemon-yellow, soft pink, and light gold into an astonishing array of colors—all of them green.

Spring foliage is as magical as it is ephemeral. Our less-celebrated foliage season arrives on the heels of mud season at the cusp of dreaded black fly season. Hardwood buds burst into tiny flowers, and tender leaves unfold like tiny banners. In wetlands, fern fiddleheads unravel into delicate neon-green fronds overnight.

The fairest days of summer all lie ahead; not a single weekend is yet squandered doing yard work or washed-out by rain. All the promise of sun-ripened summer is contained in the first rustle of emerging leaves on a warm evening breeze as shade returns to the forest.

If hope springs eternal, then perhaps spring itself hopes to provide a universal health care prescription. Spring foliage may be the most ancient natural balm for collective regional mental health—but only for those who partake. In order to gain the health benefits of forests, we must immerse ourselves in the woods. ♪

Naturalist Dave Anderson is director of education and volunteer services for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests.

rapid patient healing when hospital windows afford natural light and views to adjacent green space or daily access to natural settings. Even placing living plants in hospital settings produced positive therapeutic results and faster rates of healing.

If the human health research conclusions are accurate, the annual April unfurling of untold gazillions of leafy green pennants heralds a corresponding spike in human happiness, calm, and a general sense of well-being.

As a transplant to New England, I'm struck by the seasonal dualities of our northern

latitude. My friends and neighbors exhibit nearly universal autumn introversion. Conversely in spring, manic extroverts emerge from the collective regional den to squint in bright sunshine as pink buds and green leaves tint the landscape.

Consider the fleeting beauty of spring foliage season. The charms of this "other" foliage season exceed those of our more famous autumn display. Why do more busloads of tourists prefer October? Yellow, orange, and red autumn leaves are garish even while dying. It's depressing—particularly if you haven't gotten the cordwood

Land Donation Honors Family, Creates Working Forest Legacy

By Katrina Farmer



The Calhoun family affectionately calls this waterfall on their recently donated property, now owned by the Monadnock Conservancy, "Porky Falls." © Emily Hague / Courtesy of the Monadnock Conservancy.

To honor their deceased parents, the children of John and Rosemarie (Studer) Calhoun recently donated to the Monadnock Conservancy 308 acres of the family's property, which straddles the Gilsum and Sullivan town lines.

Jack Calhoun, Will Calhoun, Helen Mercer, Annemarie Calhoun, and Ruth McQuade

signed the deed to donate the land to the Monadnock Conservancy, which will maintain the property as a working forest and public recreation area. A conservation easement previously donated to the Forest Society prevents development of the land.

"We are all delighted that the Monadnock Conservancy will continue to steward the property in a manner consistent with the aspirations and goals of our dad and mom," said Jack Calhoun on behalf of the family.

The Calhoun family has a heritage of loving and using the woods and its trees: John and Rosemarie's fathers were a lumberman and forester, respectively, and John was a career consulting forester in the Monadnock Region. Each generation has learned from an early age to love the land.

"In turn, we wanted to see [our parents' property] be a place for others to do the same," said Jack Calhoun.

The Calhouns' Bingham

Hill Forest will now be known as the John and Rosemarie Calhoun Family Forest. The public will be welcome to walk and hike on the system of old logging roads, and in time signage and limited parking will be installed. The forest, which John began decades ago to manage carefully as a timber resource, will continue to be harvested

sustainably, providing a perpetual source of revenue for the Conservancy and opportunities for forestry demonstration and education.

The property features over 10,000 feet of river and stream frontage, including White Brook and the Ashuelot River. The protection of the forest helps prevent water contamination, avoiding future public health threats downstream and also helps moderate stream flow in times of drought and flood.

In addition, the land directly abuts 466 acres of contiguous conserved land and is a part of a larger corridor, thousands of acres in size, extending eastward into Sullivan and Stoddard that is protected by the Forest Society.

Ryan Owens, Monadnock Conservancy executive director, expressed his gratitude to the Calhoun family for their generous donation. "This donation provides not only a means for us to welcome the public to a spectacular landscape completely under our management, but also to meet our long-term funding needs through sustainable forestry," Owens said. "We're thinking of it as an endowment, but one that's much more interesting to manage than a stock portfolio."

The protection of the Calhoun family's property doubles the acreage the Monadnock Conservancy owns outright. The vast majority of the organization's land protection has been accomplished through conservation easements, through which a private landowner continues to own the land.

Founded in 1989, the Monadnock Conservancy is a land trust dedicated exclusively to the 35 towns of the Monadnock Region in southwestern New Hampshire. For more information, visit www.MonadnockConservancy.org.

Help the Forest Society Stop Northern Pass

The Forest Society believes that the current Northern Pass proposal is bad for New Hampshire, its people, its economy, and its forests. There may be an acceptable way to import hydro power from Canada, but the Northern Pass power line as proposed comes with costs that far exceed any short- or long-term benefits for the Granite State.

If you believe, as we believe, that the project must be stopped, please make a contribution to the TREES NOT TOWERS fund we have created to wage and win this fight.

Proponents of this proposal would like us to think that the construction of 1,100 giant steel towers along 180 miles of the Granite State is inevitable. It is not.

Already our efforts have led to the passage of legislation that will prohibit Northern Pass from threatening New Hampshire property owners with eminent domain. Our extensive public outreach has helped thousands of New Hampshire residents learn more about the Northern Pass proposal and inspired them to take action to stop it. And we have succeeded in blocking a key Northern Pass route through our recent protection of 5,800 acres of working forest owned by the



The towers in this photo cross through the White Mountain National Forest in Easton, NH. Northern Pass proposes to add another row of towers more than twice as high next to these.
Photo by Jack Savage.

Balsams Grand Resort in Coos County. (See page 4 for the full story.)

This will be a long and hard fight, and we need your support. We must join together and act now if we are to succeed.

We intend to fight this proposal at the federal, state, and grassroots levels. We are

seeking the best legal advice possible on key matters such as Northern Pass's presumed prerogative to exploit existing right-of-ways. We are readying ourselves to fully and frontally engage the federal and state permitting processes.

Our landscapes are at risk. People choose to live in New Hampshire because of the rural character of these communities. Landowners keep their forestland open and undeveloped because of the trees, not towers. Tourists come here to see trees, not towers. Foresters manage trees, not towers. We need to show that we stand together in opposition, and we must respond loudly and clearly.

Please make your voice heard. Help the Forest Society defend our landscape and lifestyle by making your contribution today. Your contribution will be used exclusively to fight the proposed Northern Pass.

We don't fight battles on this scale very often. But when the threat to our landscape, our economy, and our way of life is real, the Forest Society rises to defend them.

For details about the Northern Pass project, to view a map of the proposed corridor, or to receive regular updates about Northern Pass and opportunities to make your voice heard, visit www.forestsociety.org/np. ♪

☐ YES, I WANT TO HELP THE FOREST SOCIETY STOP NORTHERN PASS

Name: _____

Address: _____

Town/City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

☐ Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution for \$_____
(Please make check out to the Forest Society, with "Trees Not Towers" on the memo line.)

☐ Please charge my tax-deductible contribution to my credit card in the amount of \$_____

☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard Card number: _____ Expiration date: _____

Signature: _____

Please mail the completed form to: Trees Not Towers, Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests
54 Portsmouth Street, Concord, NH 03301. Or donate online at www.forestsociety.org/np.

For more information, contact Susanne Kibler-Hacker at 603-224-9945 or via e-mail at skh@forestsociety.org.

Thank you for your help!





**SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION
OF NEW HAMPSHIRE FORESTS**

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THE MANY FACES OF CONSERVATION



MEMBERS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE!

Beth Flagler is among the 10,000 members who helped the Forest Society protect more than one million acres in New Hampshire. To join her, use the envelope in this issue or contact Margaret Liszka at 603-224-9945.

Beth Flagler
Hollis, N.H.

Member since 2006

Photo by Al Karevy.

“Finding a copy of Forest Notes almost six years ago was one of the best things that ever happened to me. Opening the pages of the magazine was like looking through a giant window of opportunity into land conservation in New Hampshire.

As a member of the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, I am able to stay informed about current and

future land conservation projects. Knowing my membership and contribution dollars are working to promote sustainable forestry and recreational space is very important to me.

The Forest Society is one of the oldest and most respected conservation leaders in the country. It also fosters an atmosphere of collaboration by providing a home to several conservation groups,

including the one I work for—the New Hampshire Rivers Council. As a graduate of the Thompson School of Applied Science and the University of New Hampshire’s Forestry Program, I understand that water quality and land use are very much connected. Fortunately, the Forest Society is leading the way in protecting the quality and use of our state’s land resources.” ♻