

SOCIETY FOR THE  
PROTECTION OF  
NEW HAMPSHIRE  
FORESTS



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# Monitor

## CONSERVATION EASEMENT STEWARDSHIP NEWSLETTER ~ SPRING 2016

Greetings Landowners,

You are receiving this annual Monitor Conservation Easement Stewardship Newsletter because you own property protected by a Forest Society easement or deed restriction. If you recently acquired your property, welcome! What an unusual winter (or lack thereof) we had this year, which directly impacts our monitoring schedule.

In addition to our site visits, we monitor all of our conservation properties by plane each year after the snow melts and before trees unfurl their leaves. That was a short window last spring due to the high snowfall. In contrast, by March this year we had already captured most of the images we need. In total, the Easement Stewardship Department aerially monitors over 700 easements and deed restrictions covering nearly 130,000 acres.

In this issue, we have some new staff to introduce. In addition, you'll find information about opportunities to work with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), mobile technology for the field, and more. Also, we are planning a get together for conservation property owners this summer, so watch for more information on that to come. We enjoy hearing from you, so please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Yours in good stewardship,

Reagan Bissonnette  
Director of Easement Stewardship

### Contact Your Conservation Easement Steward

We consider a conservation easement or deed restriction to be a partnership and an opportunity to work together with you to protect the special conservation features of your property. The Easement Stewardship Department helps you to determine which activities are allowed on your land based on the specific deed for your property. Although we annually monitor all of our conservation properties, you may not hear from us directly each year. Please stay in touch and contact us if you are considering the following:

**Transfer or sale of your property**

**Major changes to property management**

**Exercising any reserved rights permitted in the easement**

**New forestry and agriculture activities**

*See the next page for the contact information for each Conservation Easement Steward.*

*The Monitor is a publication of the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests' Easement Stewardship Department and is written for owners of land under a conservation easement or deed restriction with the Forest Society.*

*For more information, visit the Forest Society website:*

[www.forestsociety.org](http://www.forestsociety.org)

## New Conservation Easement Stewardship Staff



Connie Colton, Ext. 353  
ccolton@forestsociety.org



April Costa, Ext. 317  
acosta@forestsociety.org



Paul Gagnon, Ext. 338  
pgagnon@forestsociety.org



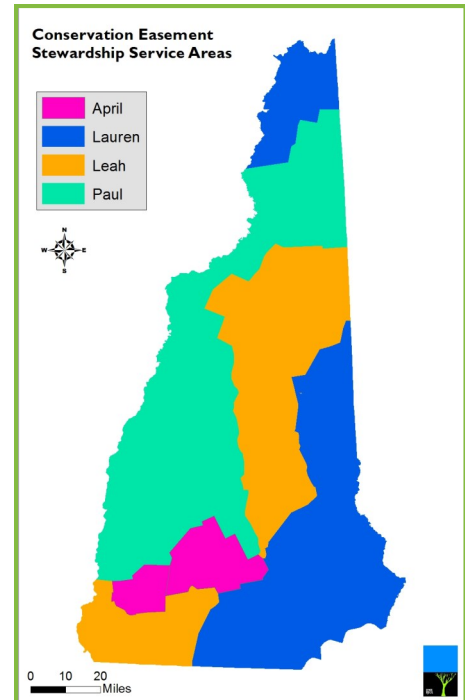
Leah Hart, Ext. 364  
lhart@forestsociety.org



Lauren Kras, Ext. 374  
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**Connie Colton** joined the Easement Stewardship Staff of the Forest Society as a part-time Administrative Assistant in July 2015. She has lived in New Hampshire for more than 30 years, first in Mt. Washington Valley and now in Concord. Connie and her husband have raised their four children here and they all enjoy the mountains and forests of the state, often on cross country skis.

**April Costa** began working with the Forest Society as a Conservation Easement Steward in the summer of 2015. She lived in the Mt. Washington Valley for several years before relocating to Concord and before that worked on bird research projects as a field technician, traveling as far as Peru and Ecuador and as close to home as Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest in North Woodstock, N.H. She has also worked as a naturalist with The Wild Center in the Adirondack Mountains of New York and the Appalachian Mountain Club right here in New Hampshire. Most recently, April worked with Upper Saco Valley Land Trust in North Conway, N.H.



Visit [www.forestsociety.org](http://www.forestsociety.org)  
to find the Conservation Easement Steward for your property.

## Staying Informed & Getting Involved in N.H. Conservation

Protecting New Hampshire's landscapes has been the driving force behind the Forest Society since it began in 1901. Our land conservation ethic is deeply rooted in protecting the state's most important landscapes and promoting the wise use of its renewable natural resources. Maintaining this balance while partnering with private landowners, public agencies, and communities to protect more than one million acres of our beautiful state has made the Forest Society one of the most effective land conservation organizations in the country.

In addition to land conservation, our mission includes education, modeling sustainable forestry, and advocating for state and local policies that protect our natural resources. We share news about events, conservation projects, places to hike, accomplishments, and public policy quarterly in *Forest Notes* and through the following helpful resources:

**Website blogs:** Go to [www.forestsociety.org](http://www.forestsociety.org) to find blog posts about current projects, policy issues, and events. Just click "What We Do," then "News and Events."

**E-newsletters:** Subscribe to our monthly *Forest Society News* for updates on all aspects of conservation. Subscribe to our monthly *Forest Advocate* for news about legislation and public policy issues concerning conservation. You can sign up for one or both at [www.forestsociety.org](http://www.forestsociety.org) under the "Get Involved" tab or by clicking "sign up" on our Facebook page.

**Facebook:** "Like" us on Facebook to see nature photos and get updates on our latest projects, events, volunteer opportunities, and much more. See more photos by following @forestsociety on **Instagram**, and tag your own photos with #forestsociety.

**Twitter:** Follow @JackatSPNHF and @MattatSPNHF to get tweets about policy issues like Northern Pass and other current issues in N.H. conservation from Vice President of Communication and Outreach Jack Savage and Public Policy Manager Matt Leahy.

**NHPR/Union Leader:** Listen for natural history features from the Forest Society and N.H. Audubon on "Something Wild," airing Friday mornings at 8:35 a.m. on N.H. Public Radio. And look for our bi-weekly conservation column, "Forest Journal," in the Life section of the *N.H. Sunday News*.



## Mobile Technology for the Field

Smartphones are everywhere now and there are apps for almost anything from checking the weather, to saving your favorite recipes, to tracking where you go in the woods. Over the past few years, the Easement Stewardship Department has been exploring ways to use mobile technology to help us during monitoring visits. You may have noticed that instead of carrying a handheld GPS unit, a phone, a camera, and a compass, many of us now only carry a smartphone.

During a monitoring visit, we use our phones to locate boundaries of the easement, track where we are walking, take pictures, and record notes. Since we have started using this technology, we have heard a lot of requests from landowners wondering how to create a track while walking their own property.

We pulled together a list of a few apps that we find particularly interesting, have proven to be useful, and have good reviews. The good and the bad news, depending on how you look at it, is that there are dozens of apps designed to assist with navigation in the field. Naturally, the prices range dramatically from free to hundreds of dollars, but we will only suggest apps that cost under \$20. Many of the apps with a cost associated offer a free trial first. The best thing you can do is try a few and see what you like best. Even each of us in the Easement Stewardship Department has a different preference!

This is not meant to be a complete list and new apps are coming out every day, so you may find something else that suits you better. Also, note that some apps only work on iPhones and others only work on Android devices.

- iPhone and Android: Gaia GPS\*, Locus Map, Map My Walk/Hike/Run
- iPhone only: GPS Kit\*, MotionX GPS, GPS Tracks
- Android only: Backcountry Navigator\*, GPS Logger for Android, GPS Essentials, GPS Track Recorder, GPX Viewer
- Also, try out iNaturalist to help with field identification of your favorite wildlife.

*\*Apps used in the field by the Easement Stewardship Department*

## Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS): Managing Your Land to its Greatest Potential

Have you ever wondered how new land management activities would help improve the quality of the natural resources on your property? Have you wanted to complete a management project on your land but held off because of the expense? If you are interested in improving your land, be it for agriculture, forestry, wildlife habitat, or otherwise, and managing it for long-term sustainability and productivity, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) can help you with those goals in the form of financial assistance, technical assistance, and informational resources. While getting started with a financial assistance program can seem overwhelming, it really is as simple as paying a visit to your county's NRCS representative to discuss your goals and options for your land.

NRCS is a government funded agency that works under the umbrella of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The program offers various types of funding, technical assistance, and information to landowners who are interested in improving the quality of natural resources on their land. For example, the NRCS could assist you with the cost of creating patch cuts within your woodlot to encourage the presence of wildlife, managing erosion on your agricultural fields, or even conducting forestry practices that would diversify the tree species in your woodlot. If you visit the NRCS's New Hampshire website at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/nh/home>, you will see that there are many incentives and opportunities for landowners, not to mention a wealth of knowledge and information available at no cost at all.

Some Forest Society easement landowners have already taken advantage of NRCS grants and other resources to improve their land for its long-term health. For more information, visit the NRCS website to get in touch with your county's representative or reach out to us here at the Easement Stewardship Department.

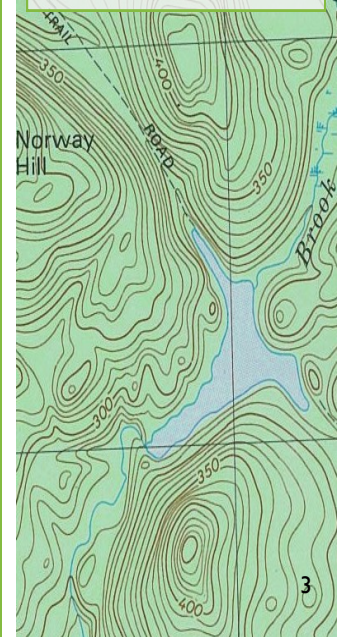
## Annual Stewardship Report

In 2015, the Easement Stewardship Department visited **413** conservation easements and deed restricted properties in **140** towns in New Hampshire and **2** towns in Maine.

We reviewed nearly **130,000** acres of aerial imagery.

The Land Protection Department added **15** new conservation easements, protecting **1,787** acres & added **86** acres to the Forest Society's fee-owned properties.

*We met with towns, cities, private landowners, and other conservation partners. Thank you for hosting us on your property, for sharing your stories, and for your hard work protecting New Hampshire's important natural resources.*

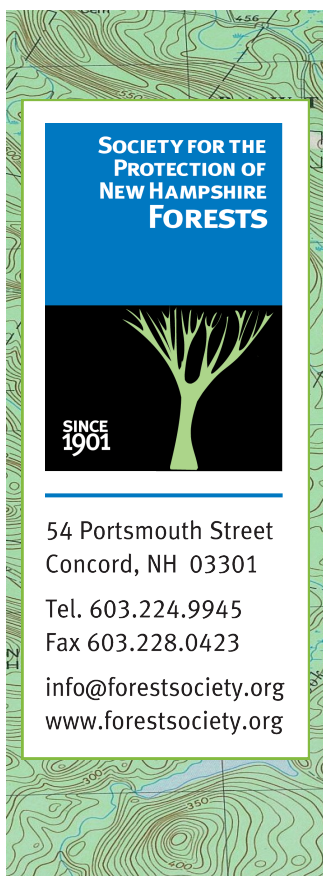




**Society for the Protection of  
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## CONSERVATION EASEMENT STEWARDSHIP NEWSLETTER FEATURES 2016

- *Director's Welcome*
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### New Hampshire Fish & Game's 2015 Wildlife Action Plan

In 2015, New Hampshire Fish & Game released a revised Wildlife Action Plan. The plan is an important tool used by all who care about the future of New Hampshire's landscape and the health of its native species.

This plan identifies 169 species as "Species of Greatest Conservation Need" and recognizes 27 distinct habitats that support these and other more common species. This new 10-year plan sets the groundwork for conservation organizations, state and local entities, and individuals to contribute to protecting wildlife and the state's most valuable natural habitats.

The revised Wildlife Action Plan outlines 100 actions that can be taken to contribute to wildlife protection efforts. Together with University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension, New Hampshire Fish & Game has provided relevant resources to encourage landowners to "Take Action for Wildlife."

Visit [www.takingactionforwildlife.org/](http://www.takingactionforwildlife.org/) for more information on how you as a landowner can be involved in protecting New Hampshire's wildlife habitats outside your own back door. There is information on planting pollinator habitat, battling invasive species, upcoming workshops and trainings, local volunteer opportunities, and developing a management plan for your property.

To see the habitat ranking and the land cover mapped on your favorite lands, check out the statewide or town-specific maps found at [www.wildlife.state.nh.us/wildlife/wap.html](http://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/wildlife/wap.html).