

Forest Notes

NEW HAMPSHIRE'S CONSERVATION MAGAZINE



National Treasure

White Mountains Art & Inspiration

Our Gallery of Winning Photos

**Conservation Successes
in Alton and Deering**

AUTUMN 2016

SOCIETY FOR THE
PROTECTION OF
NEW HAMPSHIRE
FORESTS



forestsociety.org

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WINDOWS
to the **WILD**

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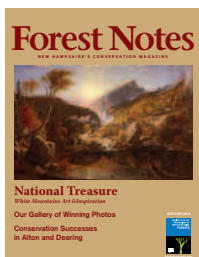
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Artists who visited the White Mountains in the 1800s made New Hampshire's landscapes famous and showed the nation that we had something worth conserving. Their work is on display in the current exhibition at the Currier Museum of Art in Manchester.

14 Winning Shots

A gallery of winning photos from the Forest Society's annual photo contest.



On our cover:

Jasper Francis Cropsey (American, 1823-1900), *An Indian Summer Morning in the White Mountains*, 1857, Oil on canvas, 39 1/4 x 61 1/4 in., Currier Museum of Art, Manchester, New Hampshire. Museum purchase: Currier Funds, 1962.17.

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FORESTS**

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Investing in the Future, One Walk at a Time

Not everyone is an intrepid adventurer, but that doesn't mean they don't appreciate the outdoors. The Forest Society has many forest reservations with a diversity of easy trails, great views, interesting wetlands and opportunities to observe wildlife. We want to share these special places with novice explorers as well as seasoned hikers. We also want to reach out to people in the more urban areas of the state, which is one reason we hosted *Five Easy Hikes in Five Weeks* last summer.

Our goal for this series of guided walks was to entice people from southern New Hampshire—especially those unfamiliar with our work and properties—to join us on walks that were relatively easy, close to home and fun. After an introductory hike, we hoped participants might return and explore further or feel comfortable exploring other reservations.

The Forest Society has dedicated, trained land stewards (some 175 strong) in addition to staff to care for our reservations. But that's a growing responsibility—not just because we keep adding reservations (and easements), but because stewardship becomes more complicated as the state's

population increases and as threats to our forests (like climate change and insects like Asian long horned beetle and emerald ash borer, among others) make stewardship more complicated.

We're enticing visitors to enjoy our reservations and the natural world in New Hampshire as an investment in the future. Our experience indicates that those who enjoy the outdoors will help assure that the lands we've invested in protecting will continue to be valued by the community. Those who walk with us will be more likely to volunteer, support local conservation projects and/or join us as members. We hope you'll join us in inviting others out for a walk in the woods.

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 \$40 and includes a subscription to *Forest Notes*.

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Forest Society Awards Martha Chandler as Conservationist of the Year

Each year, the Forest Society honors someone whose outstanding dedication to conservation in New Hampshire is deserving of the organization's highest recognition. This year we recognized Martha Chandler, of Laconia, as that person at our annual meeting on September 24 in Durham. President/Forester Jane Difley announced the award with these remarks:

The Conservationist of the Year Award honors people whose work to promote and achieve conservation is exemplary, people whose actions have made a difference not just in their own backyards but also have advanced the protection and stewardship of land statewide. Often those deserving of the award have chosen to give up something in order to accomplish a conservation outcome for the greater good. I think everyone in this room has made one kind of sacrifice or another in the name of conservation. In our Conservationist of the Year we look for those who stand out through the magnitude of the action they undertook.

Martha Chandler has done it all: maintained membership for more than 40 years, given gift memberships to others, served

on the board, conserved land, supported numerous projects, and helped raise money for them. She serves on committees, volunteers and participates in field trips. As a board and committee member she thinks for herself, speaks her mind, and votes her conscience. She has boundless enthusiasm and energy for our work and always encourages others to engage. Another member once told us, "I would never say 'no' to her. If she is working on something, I know it must be important."

Martha was the inspiration for our new education outreach initiative, the Mount Major Outdoor Classroom Project. Martha worked hard to help us acquire the land we now own on Mt. Major. One day when she was at the trailhead passing out fliers, a school bus arrived disgorging students who seemed to Martha to be in need of more direction and guidance for appreciating the resource.

Why couldn't we engage the schools already coming to Mt. Major, Martha asked us, and help them teach kids about good stewardship? We are now doing just that, partnering with a growing number of schools to provide them with guidance and resources



Photo by Diane Forbes.

President/Forester Jane Difley (left) poses with Conservationist of the Year Martha Chandler at the Forest Society's annual meeting Sept. 24 at the Three Chimneys Inn in Durham.

to enhance their Mt. Major experience.

Often it takes one person sharing one idea to make great things happen for many people. It is our great pleasure to honor Martha Chandler as that kind of person with the Conservationist of the Year Award.

New Board Members Elected

The Forest Society welcomes three new members of the Board of Trustees, approved by members at our annual meeting Sept. 24.

Members elected Karen Moran of Webster, Drew Kellner of Brookline and Bill Tucker of Goffstown (Tucker is a returning trustee).

They also recognized retiring trustees Jack Middleton and Bill McCarten.

The board elected Deanna Howard as chair, Rebecca Oreskes as vice chair and Bill Tucker as treasurer. Members named Andy Lietz as secretary.

Thank You!

Dear Anonymous Mt. Major Clean-Up Crew,

We've heard that you are picking up litter at Mt. Major on a regular basis and wish to do so quietly without fanfare. Thank you for your excellent stewardship! We really appreciate your generous care that is enhancing the hiking experience for all.

Sincerely,

The Forest Society

Annual Report Available Online

The Forest Society's 115th Annual Report is available online at www.forestsociety.org. Just scroll down on our home page to click on the link. You'll find our financial information for Fiscal Year 2016, President/Forester Jane Difley's letter to members and completed land protection projects.



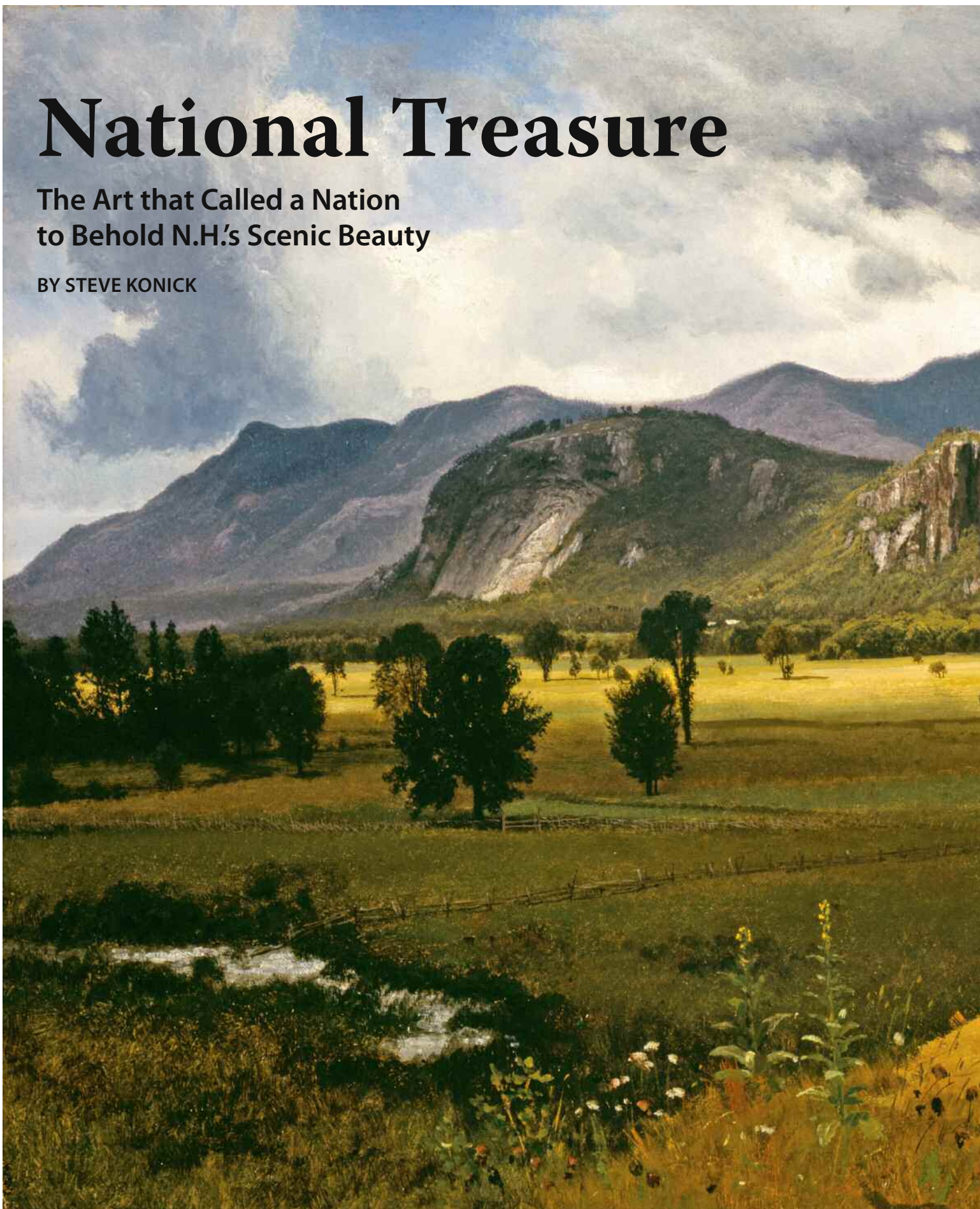
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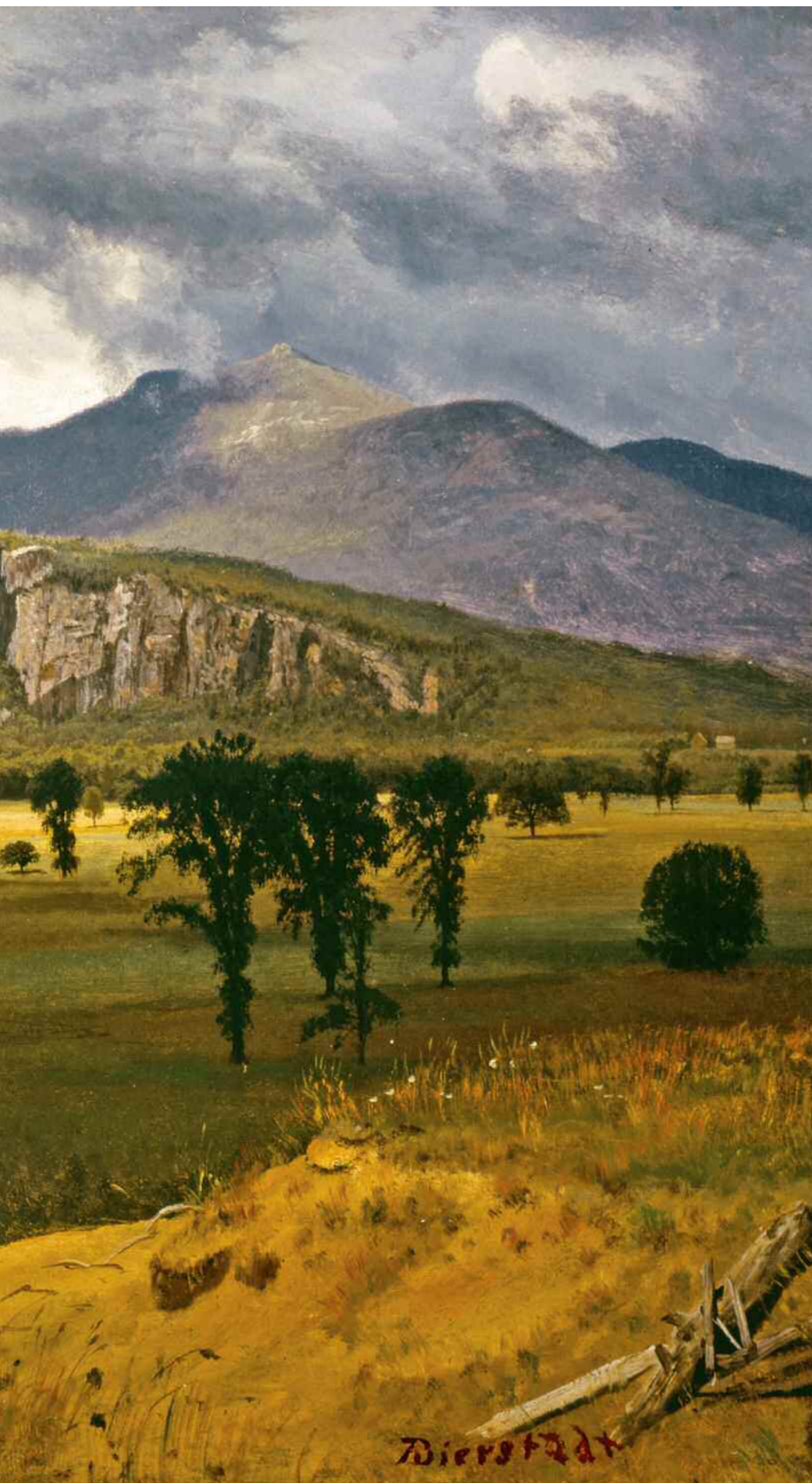
Go to www.facebook.com/ForestSociety and like our page to see the latest Forest Society photos, news and events! ♪

National Treasure

The Art that Called a Nation
to Behold N.H.'s Scenic Beauty

BY STEVE KONICK





Albert Bierstadt (American, 1830-1902),
Moat Mountain, Intervale, New Hampshire,
c. 1862, Oil on paper mounted on canvas,
19 1/8 x 26 1/8 in., Currier Museum of Art,
Manchester, New Hampshire. Museum
Purchase: Currier Funds, 1947.3.

A fierce wind often blows across the barren, rocky peak that is Mount Washington, and yet the 6,288-foot summit has long attracted scientists, artists, adventurers and tourists. For more than two centuries, the Northeast's highest mountain has captured the American imagination. Its combination of rugged beauty surrounded by steep notches and broad valleys made it a favorite subject for many of the country's most accomplished 19th-century artists, including Thomas Cole (1801-1848), John Frederick Kensett (1816-1872), Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902) and Winslow Homer (1836-1910).

Mount Washington: The Crown of New England, an exhibition at the Currier Museum of Art in Manchester, brings together for the first time many of the most important images of the Mount Washington region from 1826 to 1880. It also returns Albert Bierstadt's monumental 10-foot-wide, 1870 painting, *The Emerald Pool*, to New England for the first time since it was painted. The exhibition opened Oct. 1 and includes 40 paintings and a rich selection of historic prints, vintage photographs, scientific reports and literary publications that all had a part in popularizing Mount Washington and making it an international symbol of the American wilderness.



Albert Bierstadt (American, 1830–1902), *The Emerald Pool*, 1870, Oil on canvas, 76 1/2 x 119 in., Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, VA, Bequest of Walter P. Chrysler, Jr. 89.59.





Thomas Cole (American, born England, 1801-1848), *View in the White Mountains*, 1827, Oil on canvas, 25-3/8 x 35-3/16 in., Bequest of Daniel Wadsworth, 1848.17, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, Connecticut Allen Phillips/Wadsworth Atheneum.

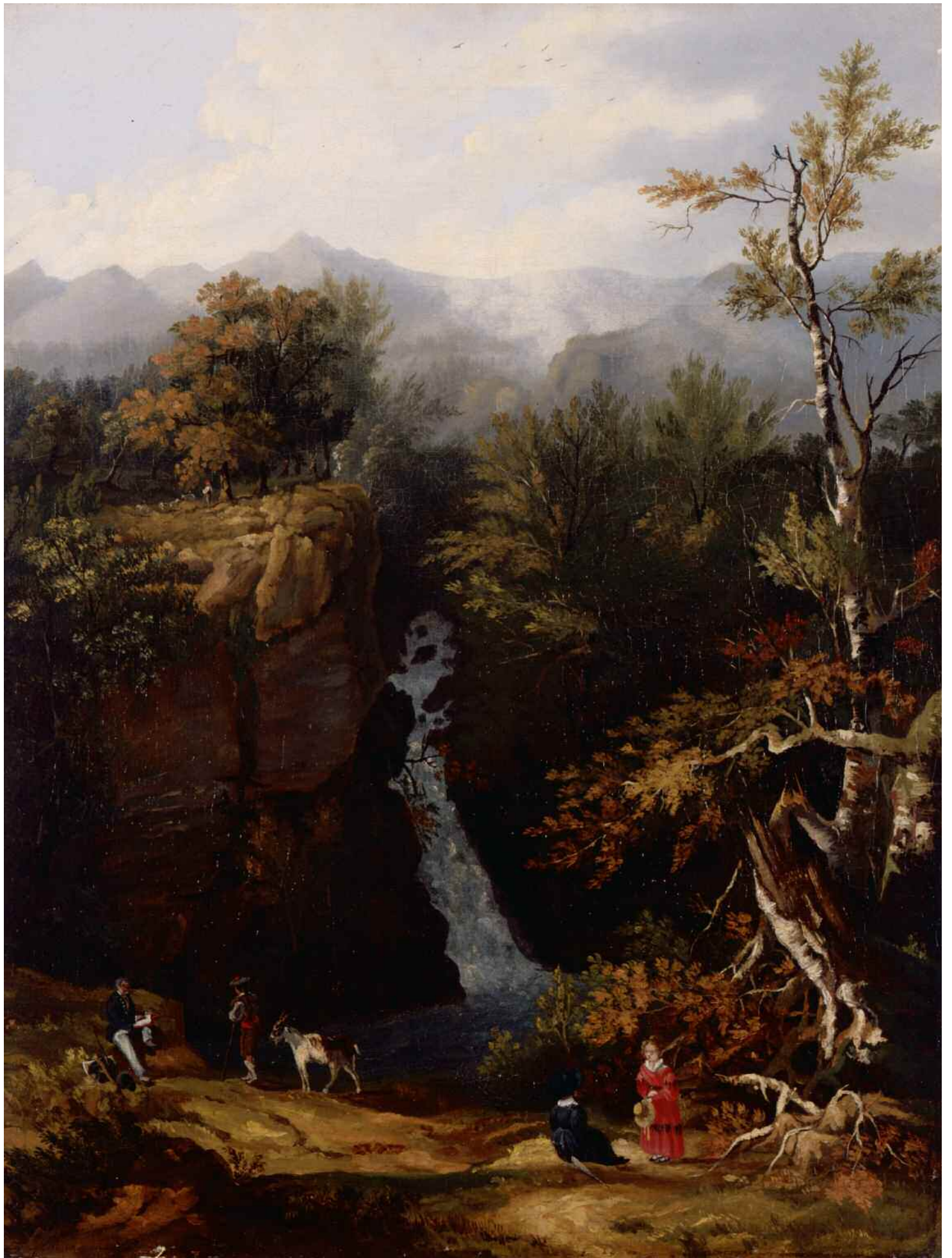
Opposite page:

Henry Cheever Pratt (American, 1803-1880), *Thomas Cole Sketching in the White Mountains*, c. 1828, Oil on canvas, 41-3/4 x 33-3/4, The Dorothy Clark Archibald and Thomas L. Archibald Fund, in memory of Thomas L. Archibald, 1997.19.1, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, Connecticut Allen Phillips/Wadsworth Atheneum.

An Irresistible Draw

The proximity of the White Mountains to large East Coast cities made them an irresistible and accessible destination. While a few regional artists explored the White Mountains in the 1820s, it was Thomas Cole's paintings and prints that first attracted the attention of the artistic community. His *View in the White Mountains* (1827) celebrated a snowcapped Mount Washington rising above a verdant valley, the peak silhouetted against dark clouds. The image was infused with a sense of national pride: The rough, craggy pinnacle, named for the country's first national hero, represented a strong, confident America that could weather any storm.

The artists who were drawn to the area were adventurers, too. You had to be in order to endure the difficult pathways and trails to get to the summit. Cole had traveled to the region in 1827 and returned in the next year with New Hampshire artist Henry Cheever Pratt. Their journey was the subject of Pratt's painting *Thomas Cole Sketching in the White Mountains*. The peaceful scene by a waterfall betrays the difficulties the duo faced on their journey. Pratt wrote in his diary, "As the road is impassable excepting to foot travelers, we had to strap our luggage on our backs. The wind blew violently down the pass as we approached...." While the valley appears peaceful, building clouds loom above the mountains in the background.





John Frederick Kensett (American, 1816 – 1872), *Mount Washington from the Valley of Conway*, 1851, Oil on canvas, 40 3/8 x 60 3/8 in., Davis Museum at Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. James B. Munn (Ruth C. Hanford, Class of 1909) in the name of the Class of 1909, 1977.37.

The area's tremendous scenic potential was fully realized in the early 1850s when artists Benjamin Champney and his friend John Frederick Kensett sketched in the area around North Conway. Their summer studies were later worked up as fully-realized oils for exhibition and the presentation of Kensett's *Mount Washington from the Valley of Conway* (1851), brought national attention to the area.

Art and Science

Mount Washington has long been the scene of important scientific research. The peak receives worldwide fame for its phenomenal and unpredictable weather, including one former world record-holding 231 mph wind in April 1934. As scientists and artists converged on the area in the 19th century, they benefitted from each other's knowledge and skills while creating more descriptive and accurate accounts of its sub-Arctic environment, rare plant life and exposed rock formations. Because many of the artists had also studied earth sciences, they better understood the specific processes that shaped the White Mountain landscape, adding scientific accuracy to the scenes they committed to paper or canvas.

Isaac Sprague—who had accompanied John James Audubon on his 1843 journey to the Great Plains to sketch the unusual mammals living there—created the most important early visual record of the region when he provided images for well-known botanist William Oakes' *Scenery of the White Mountains* (1848). His meticulous

First Appreciation, then Conservation

How artists started New Hampshire's greatest conservation success story

By Dave Anderson

Before 1840, southern New Hampshire had been mostly cleared of its original primeval forests. Pastoral landscapes of hill farms, stone walls and rail fences dominated a state where the number of sheep in many communities was 10 times greater than the number of people.

The White Mountains rose up in stark, wild contrast. Early pioneers of the palette celebrated this wildness. Their images conjure a mood, an awe for a howling wilderness both “sublime and terrible” as well as for the majesty of untrammelled nature. Their images also showed that this wildness was accessible.

By the 1850s, tourists could imagine themselves entering the realm of the explorers. The gilded age of scenic tourism—railroads, grand resort hotels and bridle paths—in the White Mountains was promoted by the images created by the White Mountain painters.

The stage was set. The threat of despoliation of the wilderness by “lumbermen” and “timber barons” was popularized by The Rev. G.E. Johnson’s depiction of the White Mountain Land Company as “The Boa Constrictor of the White Mountains” intent on depopulating hamlets and clear-cutting the mountainsides. The popular notion of majestic and scenic mountains accessible to more and more visitors galvanized public support for the historic conservation movement led by the Forest Society’s founders.

Political efforts beginning in 1901 by New Hampshire Gov. Frank West Rollins and Massachusetts Congressman John Wingate Weeks worked in tandem with the tireless public relations and advocacy campaign by *The Boston Transcript* and the Appalachian Mountain Club’s Allan Chamberlain and the Forest Society’s Philip Ayers. Their unwavering passion to protect the White Mountains as depicted by the artists of the mid-to-late 1800s led directly to the 1911 passage of The Weeks Act that created federal authority to purchase land and keep it as part of the national treasure: The national forest system was begun.

These paintings assembled in the current exhibition at the Currier Museum of Art, *Mount Washington: The Crown of New England*, depict landscapes that were permanently protected during the ensuing century.

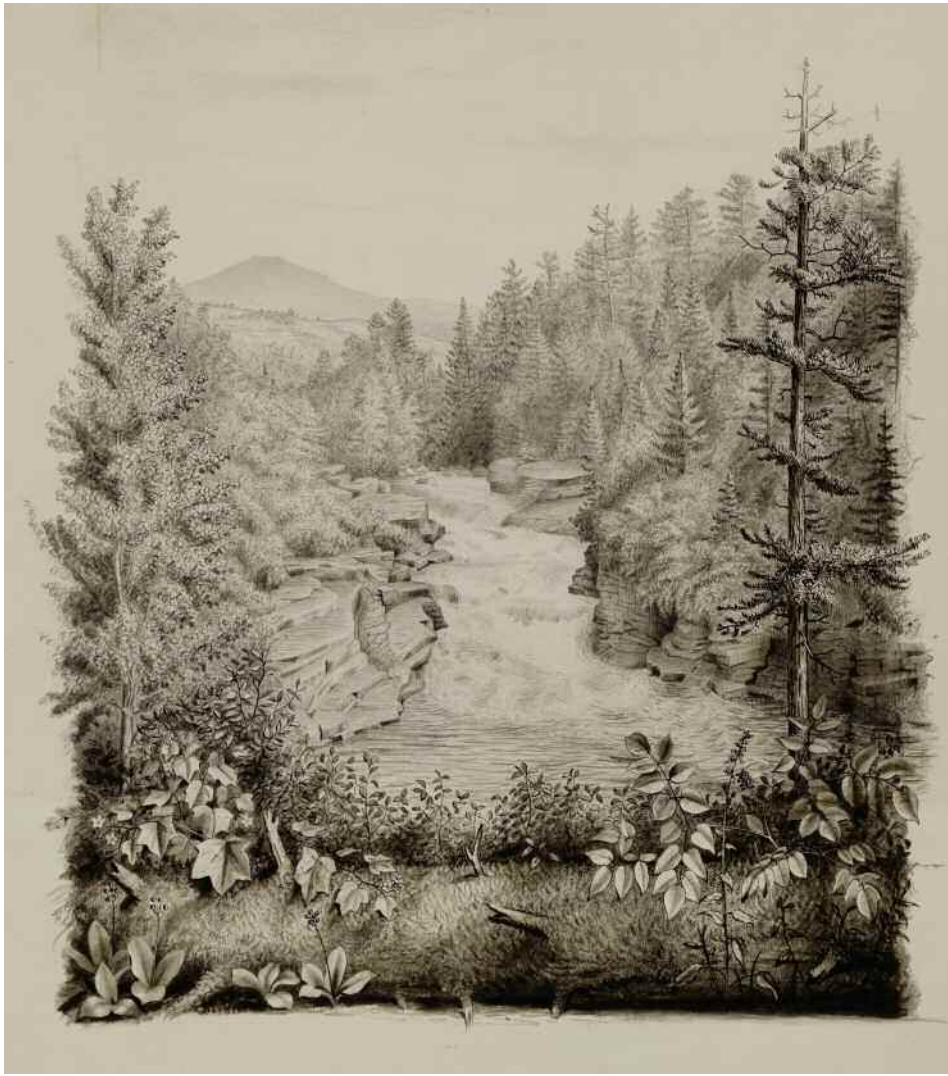
These images depict what are now protected landscapes, part of N.H.’s system of state parks and reservations or the vast 790,000-acre White Mountain National Forest, visited by more than five million people each year.

Scenes including:

- The “Emerald Pool” in Pinkham’s Grant along contemporary N.H. Rt. 16.
- The slabs of Whitehorse ledge and the crags of Cathedral ledge overlooking Echo Lake State Park below the skyline dominated by “Moat Mountain.”
- The profile of Cherry Mountain in the distance above “The (lower) Falls of the Ammonoosuck”
- The “View in the White Mountains” depicting a vista looking east from the Head of Crawford Notch with The Presidential Range looming above.

All of these depict what are now protected landscapes, part of New Hampshire’s system of state parks and reservations or the vast 790,000-acre White Mountain National Forest, visited by more than five million people each year.

The early conservationists of the 20th century who envisioned the White Mountains as a national forest reservation stood upon the shoulders of the 19th-century landscape painters who were the first to draw public attention to the rugged region, depicting it as a last, great untrammelled wilderness, a majestic, scenic landscape accessible to ordinary people—the very ordinary people who a generation later would help to save it in perpetuity.



Isaac Sprague, (American, 1811-1895),
*The Falls of the Amonoosuck, near the
 Mt. Washington House*, c. 1847 Ink on paper,
 9 x 8 1/2 in, Currier Museum of Art,
 Manchester, New Hampshire. Museum
 Purchase: The Henry Melville Fuller Acquisition
 Fund, 2006.6.4.

attention to detail can be seen in his sketches of plant life, views of the Presidential Range and his careful geological study, *The Cliffs at the Falls of the Amonoosuck* (c. 1847). His rendering features cascading rapids framed by rock strata surrounded by a verdant forest and Mount Washington in the background. It is a hiker's dream scene.

During the 1840s and early 1850s, the region was the subject of some of the first American landscape photography. The exhibition includes photographs in newly invented mediums such as daguerreotype, salt prints and other printing techniques. Stereographs—two images viewed side-by-side to create a 3-D effect—emerged as popular promotional souvenirs of visits to the White Mountains. Noted photographers the Bierstadt Brothers, Edward and Charles, were in the region at the same time that their brother Albert painted, occasionally sharing subject matter.

By the 1850s, Mount Washington had become one of the country's most popular tourist destinations. Hotels were built on the summit and in the valleys as visitors traveled to New Hampshire to view "the most magnificent scenery in the United States." Many ascended the mountain by hiking trail or bridle path. By 1861, they could also use the Summit Road and in 1869 the technological marvel, the Cog Railway, opened. By this time, so many artists had

flocked to the region that Winslow Homer made them the subject of his painting, *Artists Sketching in the White Mountains* (1868). In Homer's 1870 drawing, *The Coolest Spot in New England*, two men and four women in dressy clothes relax at the summit. They undoubtedly reached the summit via carriage or the Cog and are enjoying the stunning view, despite billowing clouds and a shower in the background. The Tip-Top House, one of the summit's two hotels, and the only structure to survive a 1908 fire, stands to the left, its roof secured by chains to prevent it from blowing away.

Today, while extreme weather often makes access to Mount Washington challenging, the peak still fascinates us. More than 300,000 people visit the summit each year. Some hike, while others opt to drive up the Auto Road or ride the Cog Railway. Throughout the year, a team of meteorologists occupies the Mount Washington Observatory. The Observatory staff has collaborated with the Currier on the exhibition's interpretive programs. Details about family programs and upcoming events planned to go with the exhibit, which will remain on display until Jan. 17, are available at CURRIER.org. ♯

Steve Konick is the director of public relations and marketing for the Currier Museum of Art.

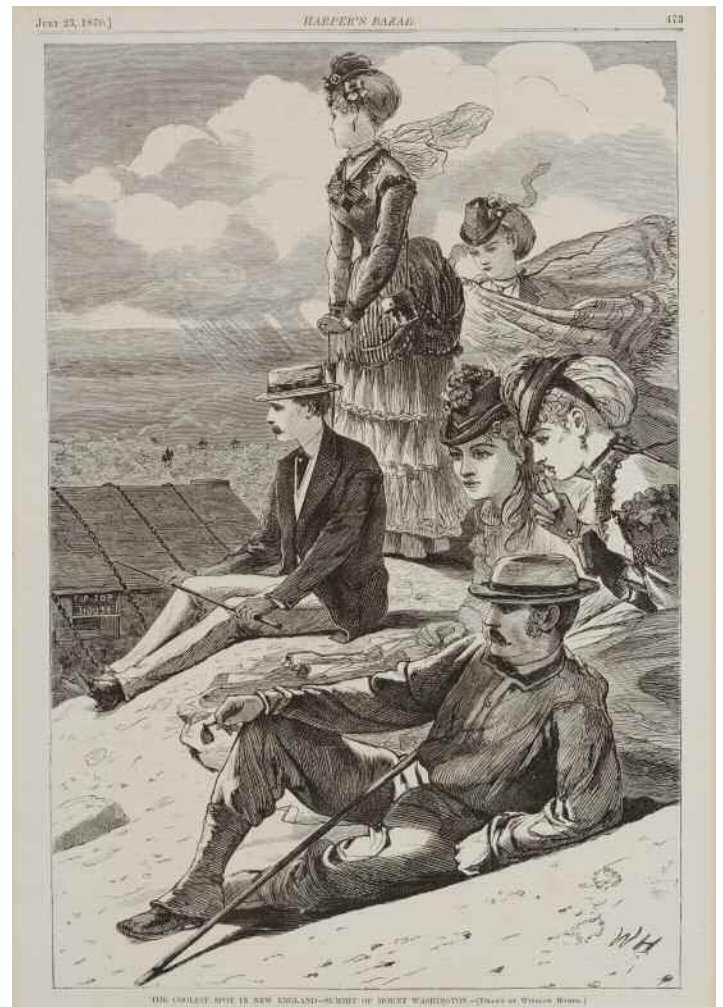


Above:

Winslow Homer, (American, 1836-1910), *Artists Sketching In the White Mountains*, 1868, Oil on panel, 9 7/16 x 15 13/16 in., Portland Museum of Art, Maine. Bequest of Charles Shipman Payson, 1988.55.4, Image courtesy meyersphoto.com.

Right:

After Winslow Homer (American, 1836-1910) *The Coolest Spot in New England—Summit of Mount Washington*, 1870. Engraving 13 3/4 x 9 1/8 in., Currier Museum of Art, Manchester, New Hampshire. Museum Purchase: The Henry Melville Fuller Acquisition Fund, 2014.9.



I N S P I R A T I O N

Winning Photos from the Forest Society's 2016 Photo Contest

In the work of conserving land and practicing sustainable forestry, it's easy to get enmeshed in pragmatic concerns. We talk about grant applications, easement deeds, forest management plans, boundary monitoring, wetlands inventories and real estate market values.

But what sustains us all in the conservation community—every member of the Forest Society included—is the beauty and the wonder we find in the natural world and knowing we are all playing a part in conserving our special places while we still can.

Our annual photo contest is a celebration of that sustaining, inspiring beauty.

Thank you to all who submitted photos taken during visits to land conserved either as a Forest Society reservation or through a conservation easement. It was difficult choosing a collection to print, but now that the hard work is done, we hope you enjoy the result and will be inspired to visit a Forest Society destination soon. The Reservations Guide at www.forestsociety.org is a good place to start planning your next adventure. Remember to take pictures! Send your favorites anytime between now and Aug. 5, 2017, to photos@forestsociety.org to enter next year's photo contest.



— FIRST PLACE —

New Year's Day on Mt. Major, by Ken MacGray of Clinton, Mass.

"Our group had summited Major in windy and very cold conditions. We didn't stick around too long before we pressed on toward Straightback Mountain."

PEOPLE ENJOYING OUR RESERVATIONS



— SECOND PLACE —

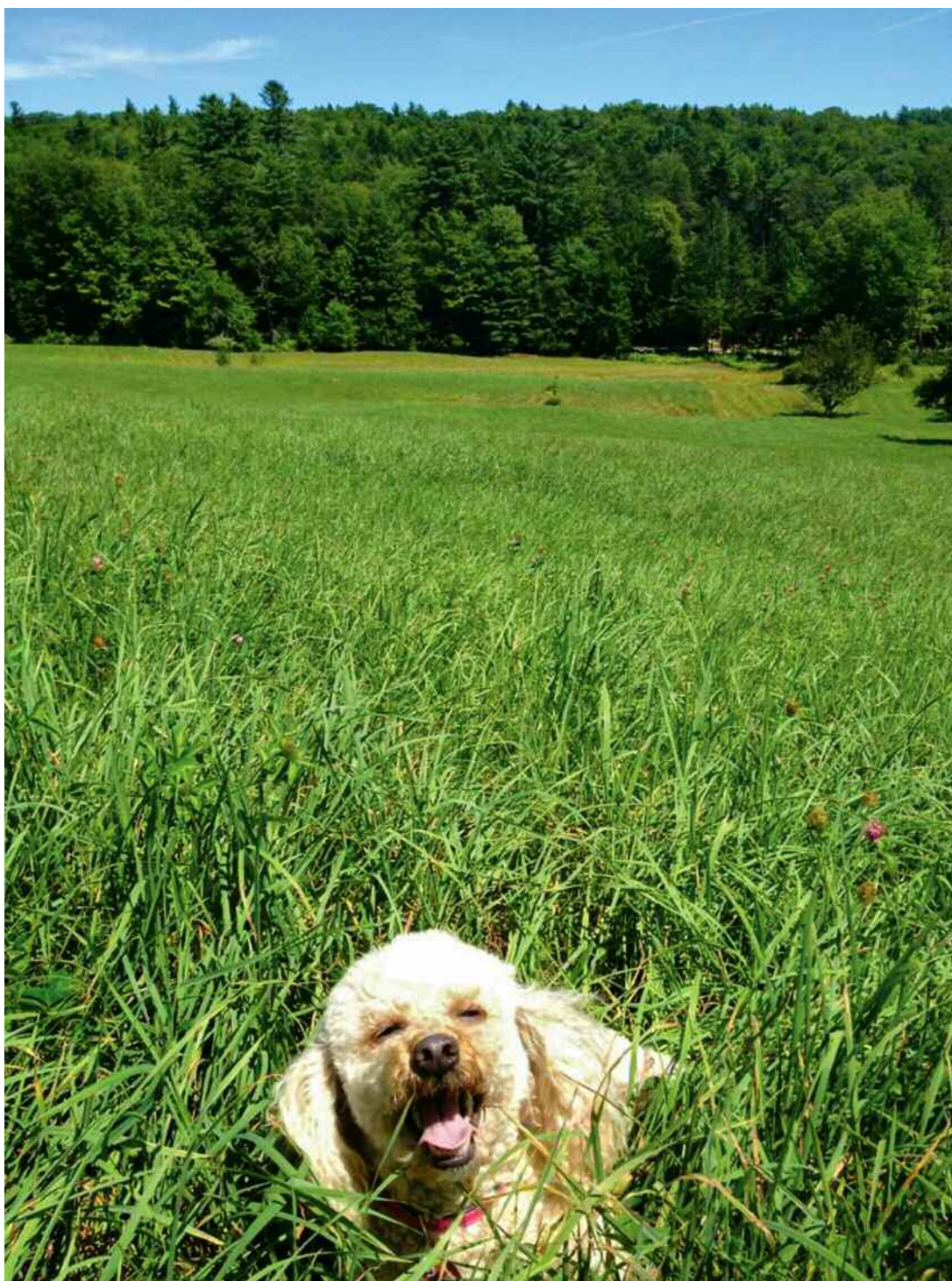
Zoey at the Morse Preserve, by Suzanne Marvin of Alton Bay, N.H.

"Our granddaughter Zoey has lived a good percentage of her life in Cambridge, Mass., where her dad is continuing his education. Getting up to Alton Bay and to the top of Pine Mountain on the Morse Preserve is a wonderful opportunity. Her view of amazing architecture over the Charles River is wonderful, but being able to look for miles and see trees, mountains and lakes is so peaceful. Snacking on ripe blueberries with the breeze blowing, and butterflies flitting around her is a true representation of her name, Zoey/Life."



Mt. Monadnock's written history etched by past trampers, by Ken MacGray of Clinton, Mass.

— THIRD PLACE —



— FIRST PLACE —

Daisy at Sunny Acres Farm in Bristol, by John Sundborg.

Sunny Acres Farm's conservation began when John's grandfather arranged a conservation easement with the Forest Society in 1991. John and his wife Rachael were married on the property last summer.



— SECOND PLACE —

Frodo at the Morse Preserve on Pine Mountain, by Kate Wilcox of Barrington, N.H.
"This is one of my favorite hikes to take newbies. This day, I took my dog."



— THIRD PLACE —

Gryphon getting a drink while stopping for breakfast on an island at Grafton Pond, by Sheila Goss of Stowe, Vt. "He loves paddling in his canoe and is one of our two Vermont paddle pups."

LANDSCAPES



— FIRST PLACE —

Evelyn H. & Albert D. Morse, Sr. Preserve,
by Kara LaSalle of Gilford, N.H.

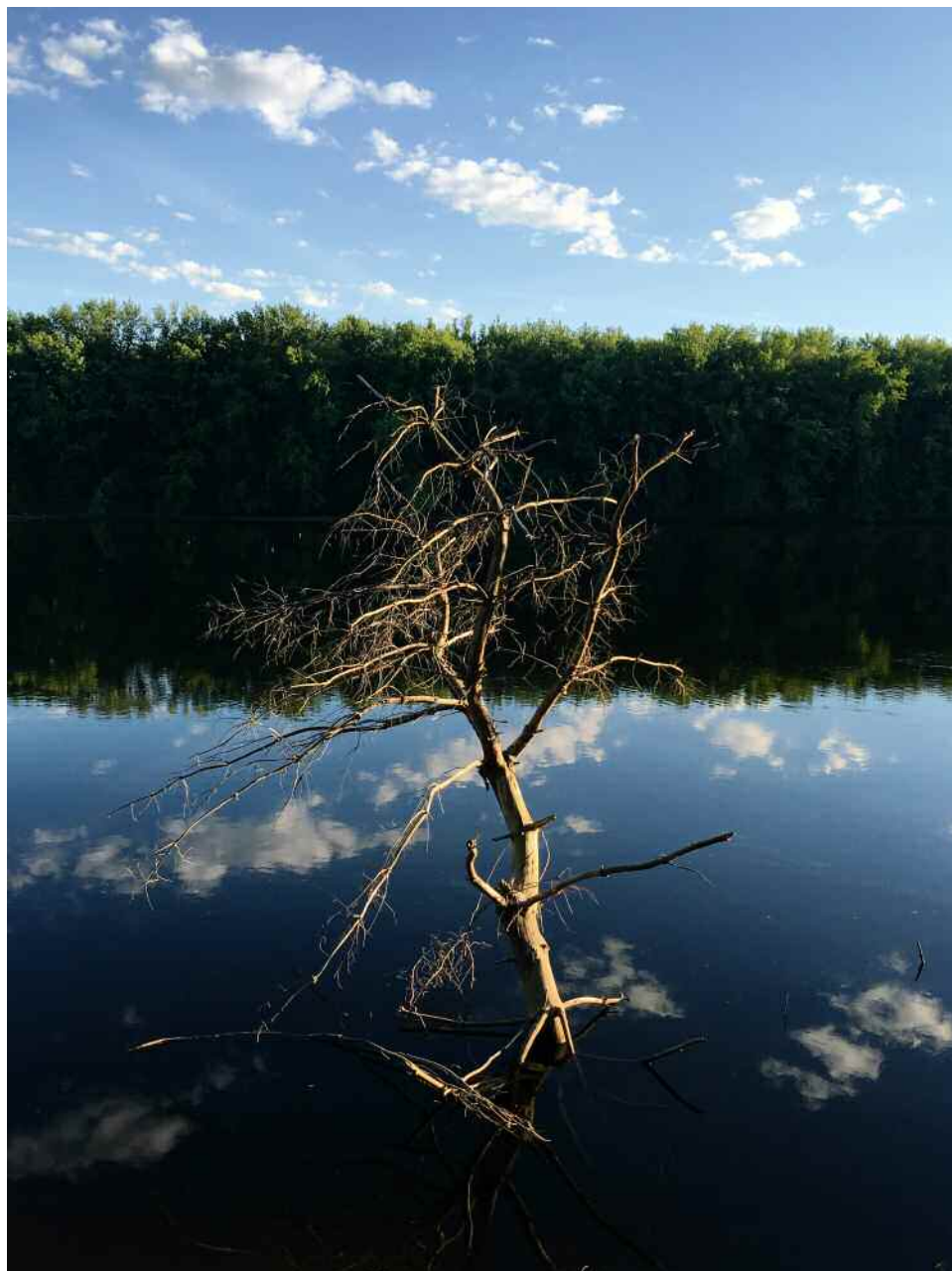
"This photo was taken in May at sunset overlooking Lake Winnepesaukee. My dogs and I enjoy going to the Morse Preserve after work and often bring dinner to have at the top of Pine Hill. You can't beat dinner with a view!"

"Old Man in the Sky," by Angela Fiandaca, Candia, N.H.

"My photo was taken at Echo Lake State Park. I heard a little boy say, 'Hey, look up! Those clouds look just like an old man!' This cloud formation appeared just before a rain storm." (Editor's note: In 1943 the Forest Society joined with the state to raise funds to buy Echo Lake, protecting it from commercial development. Today Cathedral Ledge, White Horse Ledge, and Echo Lake are all part of Echo Lake State Park.)

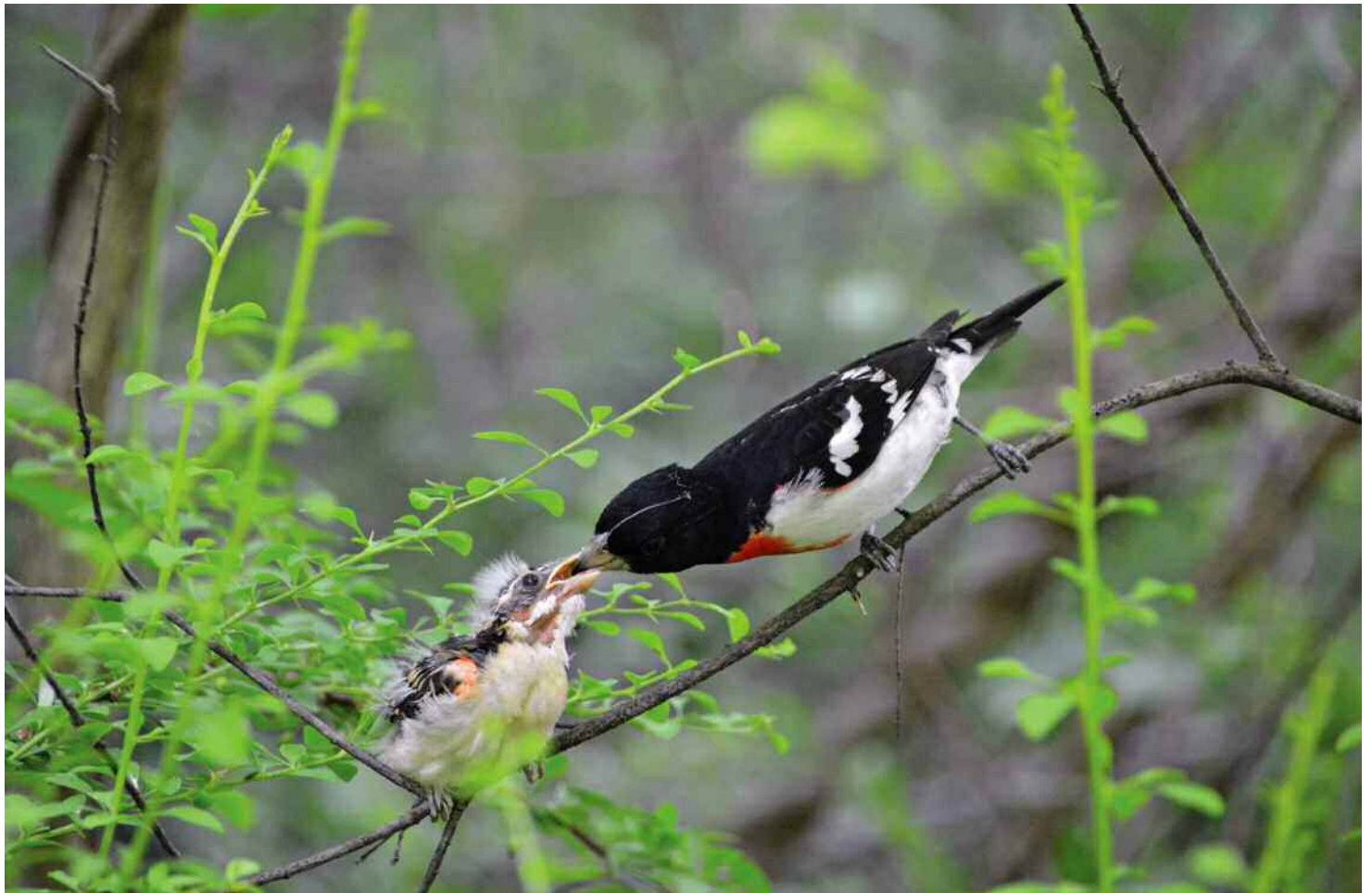


— THIRD PLACE —



— SECOND PLACE —

"Floating Tree," Merrimack River Outdoor Education and Conservation Area,
by Lisa N. Thompson of Concord, N.H.



— FIRST PLACE —

Male rose-breasted grosbeak feeding one of his young,
Merrimack River Outdoor Education and Conservation Area,
by Linda King of Concord, N.H.



— SECOND PLACE —

Great Blue Heron Rookery at Monson Center,
by Ken Paulsen of Greenfield, N.H.

"When I got to the rookery a little before 9 a.m., I found the sun's angle was not favorable for the shot I wanted. I took a few less-than-memorable images and packed up my gear. As I headed back, I noticed a trail off to the left and decided to give it a try. In a matter of yards I was at an opening that provided the view I was after. I took a few test shots and then waited for one of the adults to return to a nest."

Snapping turtle at Grafton Pond,
by Jim Moul of Goshen, N.H.

"This beast remained on the rock the entire time we were observing him, approximately half an hour. I wish we had seen it climb up to get to his spot."



— THIRD PLACE —



— FIRST PLACE —

Seedhead in the Camp Trail orchard on the Heald Tract, by Bart Hunter of Wilton, N.H.
 "Most of us take pictures of flowers. However, after the flower has faded, the seedhead with its combination of robust interior structure and its delicate seeds attached to their sails can be as beautiful as the flower."



St Johnswort flower at its peak, Moose Mountains Reservation on Opening Day for the new Phoebe's Nable loop trail. By Kate Wilcox, Barrington, N.H.

— SECOND PLACE —



— FIRST PLACE —

Grafton Pond, by Victoria Bergstrom, age 17, of Portsmouth, R.I.

WANT TO SEE YOUR PHOTO HERE?

To enter next year's photo contest, email your best shots taken on a Forest Society reservation or on land protected through a Forest Society conservation easement anytime between now and Aug. 5, 2017, to photos@forestsociety.org.

Not sure which reservation to visit first? The Reservations Guide at www.forestsociety.org is a good place to start planning your next adventure!

Christmas Trees, Shopping and Outings at The Rocks Estate

See www.forestsociety.org for more upcoming events

The Rocks Estate and Christmas Tree Farm, the Forest Society's North Country Conservation and Education center in Bethlehem, N.H., is gearing up for the holiday season.

The Marketplace and Gift Shop will be open daily (except Thanksgiving Day) from Nov. 7 until Christmas Eve. The Marketplace features an array of American-made and locally-crafted items, from home goods to holiday decorations.

Want to ship a New Hampshire Christmas tree or wreath to far-flung loved ones? Just go online at www.therocks.org or call.

Starting on Nov. 19, cut-your-own and pre-cut Christmas trees are available daily (except Thanksgiving Day) until Christmas Eve. Many families make The Rocks part of their holiday tradition by combining the search for just the right tree with a horse-drawn carriage ride around the scenic estate. The carriage rides run on Nov. 19, 25 and 27; and on Dec. 3, 4, 10, 11 and 17. The carriage rides are very popular, so please call ahead for reservations.

The Rocks also offers a network of walking trails, open daily, year-round, from dawn until dusk. Please visit www.therocks.org or call 444-6228 for more information.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30 | 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Hike the Pierce Reservation in Stoddard

Follow in the footsteps of John Kulish to Bacon Ledges. A strenuous, eight-mile hike (600 feet elevation gain) to Bacon Ledges in Stoddard. The hike will leave from Barrett Pond Road in Stoddard. We'll bushwhack to Bacon Ledges, where we will follow a trail past Round Mountain to Trout Pond. The trip will continue past Nancy Mountain to Stoddard Rocks before ending at Highland Lake.

Bring lunch. Meet at the Stoddard fire station on Route 123. Contact Stan Smith for more information at 978-827-5185 or srsantq@yahoo.com. Co-sponsored by the Harris Center and the Forest Society.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12 | 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Hike the Heald Tract in Wilton

A moderately easy, three-mile hike at the Heald Tract in Wilton. We will explore the northern part of this Forest Society property, which includes several cellar holes and other evidence of past agricultural activity. We will have lunch at one of the scenic ponds.

Bring lunch and meet at the trailhead kiosk, on Russell Hill Road in Wilton, 1.3 miles from Rt. 101. Russell Hill Road is a right turn off Rt. 101, 6.1 miles east of Miller State Park, or a left turn off Rt. 101, 0.7 miles west of Rt. 31 South. For more information, contact Dave (davidbutler@comcast.net or 603-472-5608). Co-sponsored by the Harris Center and the Forest Society.

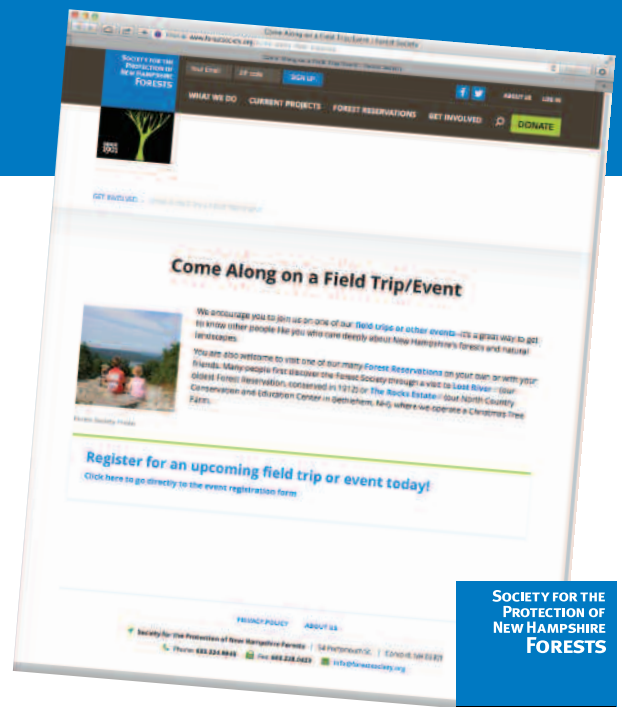
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**SOCIETY FOR THE
PROTECTION OF
NEW HAMPSHIRE
FORESTS**



Volunteer of the Year Ben Haubrich Shares Decades of Stewardship Know-How

By Carrie Deegan

The recipient of the Forest Society's 2016 Trish Churchill Volunteer of the Year award is no newcomer to conservation or land stewardship. Ben Haubrich became familiar with the Forest Society in the early 1970s when, fresh out of college, he became the manager of Monadnock State Park. At that time, the Forest Society's more than 3,000 acres on Monadnock weren't leased to the State as part of the park, but Ben remembers coordinating with Forest Society staff.

"It was a very challenging job," he said about his years at Monadnock, "but also a very special place to be working."

After more than 20 years at Monadnock State Park, Ben went on to serve as a regional supervisor for N.H. State Parks, and then administered the Land and Water Conservation Fund before retiring in 2004. With an entire career focused on conservation land, you might think that Ben would want to do anything but that in retirement. Instead, he quickly found himself helping out at the Franconia Land Trust in his hometown of Franconia, N.H., and that led to more volunteer work with conservation organizations like the Forest Society.

When the Forest Society protected the High Five Reservation in Deering in 2004, Ben attended a guided hike from Deering Reservoir to the stunning, 360-degree views on the top of Wilson Hill at High Five. He was smitten. And so were some serious litterbugs, unfortunately.

"I started going to High Five regularly and bringing others, friends and family," Ben said. "But there was a lot of trash, and I was always out there cleaning it up."

Eventually, he decided he might as well make it official and become a land steward for the property. In 2012, Ben added the newly protected Hedgehog Mountain Forest in Deering to his land steward duties. He soon realized it might be possible to

connect his two steward properties, Hedgehog Mountain and High Five, with a long-distance hiking trail along the dramatic Hedgehog Ridge. The five-mile Hedgehog Ridge Trail would need to pass through the

"I like to get up there as often as I can . . . of all my volunteer efforts, this kind of trail work is by far my favorite."

— Ben Haubrich

Forest Society's Deering Preserve as well, in addition to land owned by the New England Forestry Foundation (NEFF), Meadowsend Timberlands (MTL) and others, but Ben was determined to make it work, and the Forest Society agreed it was an extremely worthy project.

Over the next two years, Ben planned and fine-tuned a hiking route along the Hedgehog Ridge. He met with town officials and abutting landowners and helped secure permissions and support for the trail. Then came the work of building the trail, clearing and marking it, and installing infrastructure like signage and a footbridge. With help from his wife Robin and fellow land steward Bob Macentee, Ben was at the forefront of all of this, quietly getting the work done without fuss or fanfare.

"I like to get up there as often as I can," he said. "Of all my volunteer efforts, this kind of trail work is by far my favorite."

Now that the route is complete and open to the public, Ben can relax and enjoy the scenery more. And the scenery is spectacular—sweeping views of the Contoocook Valley with Mount Monadnock standing prominently to the southwest.



Photo by Dave Anderson.

Ben Haubrich took his vision of a trail along the Hedgehog Ridge all the way from idea to reality.

"I especially love the variety on this trail. The ridge views with gaps between, rock falls, and different vegetative communities make it interesting," he said.

Recently, Ben was sorting through some old paperwork and found a worn letter. It was written by former Forest Society Director of Education Les Clark and signed by former President/Forester Paul Bofinger, and it named Ben as "an agent of the Forest Society," since he had offered to help address problems on Forest Society lands while working at Monadnock State Park.

"I thought that was neat," said Ben. "I guess I've been a volunteer for the Forest Society for a really long time." ☺

Carrie Deegan is community engagement and volunteers manager at the Forest Society. You can reach her at cdeegan@forestsociety.org.



Above: The view of Lake Winnepesaukee and the Belknap Range is a favorite of all who are familiar with the Evelyn H. and Albert D. Morse, Sr. Preserve in Alton.

Below: Mary Jane Morse Greenwood donated land in 2008 and again recently to honor the memory of her parents, Evelyn and Albert Morse, Sr., (pictured left on opposite page), and of her sister, Arlene Frances Morse, (pictured right on opposite page picking blueberries with her father Albert).



Close to Heaven

Member completes the Morse Preserve in honor of her parents and sister

By Brenda Charpentier



Mary Jane Morse Greenwood grew up on a bustling farm in Alton, where pastures extended up Pine Mountain and included vast wild blueberry barrens overlooking Lake Winnepesaukee.

At a spry 87, this petite and energetic woman with a quick laugh and abundant funny stories remembers bringing boxes of blueberries with her father to bakeries, restaurants and stores, where they sold for 25 cents a quart.

Reminiscing in her Belmont home recently, she used her hands to show the rounded shape of the mounds of blueberries her father, Albert Morse, Sr., put into each box.

"We always used to give them a good heaping quart," she said.

It's the baker's dozen philosophy—"one more for good measure." And it's the spirit

of Mary Jane's donation of 25 more acres of land and a conservation easement on another 15 acres to the Forest Society to add to the 431 acres she donated in 2008.

Mary Jane's recent donation means that her entire family farm—save the farmhouse and two acres—is now conserved, and the Evelyn H. and Albert D. Morse, Sr. Preserve, named after her parents and given in honor of them and Mary Jane's sister Arlene Frances, is complete.

The Morse farm was begun by Mary Jane's grandparents. Her father was born on the farm. When he was old enough to join his father in the farming business, they bought additional parcels that included pastures full of wild blueberries. The farm produced everything from vegetables to meats, maple syrup, dairy and wood products. But with the native blueberries so abundant, the father-son team also started one of the first commercial blue-

berry operations in the region, sending blueberries by truck and railroad from the Alton station to Boston's Faneuil Hall Marketplace.

They maintained the two blueberry fields by burning them in rotation, so as one produced a crop the other was burned, which prompted the bushes to grow back from the roots and produce more berries.

Mary Jane's father hired up to 20 pickers at the peak of the season. The trick at harvest time was making sure the berries didn't get crushed. Pickers couldn't put them into big pails or boxes where the weight of the top berries would squish the bottom berries. So they used blueberry rakes to scoop up the berries and put them into quart-sized boxes they carried with them in a special harness that balanced on their shoulders like an ox's yoke. A tray on either side held eight boxes each.



As a child, Mary Jane was a fast picker and her father's secret productivity booster. When he noticed that the pickers, mostly neighbors, were slowing down and maybe enjoying the scenery a little too much, he would call Mary Jane and say, "I think it's time for you to go up."

Little Mary Jane would head up to the field and start picking. Soon her dad would call out to ask how she was doing, and she would shout—loudly, so everyone would hear—that she just had a bit more to do before all of her boxes were full.

"That got them going again!" Mary Jane said with a laugh. "You didn't have to tell them—they weren't about to let a girl beat them."

Mary Jane helped on the farm along with her brothers and sister. She and her sister Arlene helped her mother Evelyn with all of the chores that come with a highly productive farm, like butter churning and canning—500 to 600 jars each season.

"We were pretty old before my sister and I realized we were working and not 'having fun,' Mary Jane said.

Mary Jane vividly remembers her parents' generosity and spirit of hospitality that made the Morse farm a hub of the community. Her father was asked to be a selectman, and he obliged. Every Friday was pay day, and during the blueberry season all the farm workers were invited to a cookout at the end of the day to get a meal along with their paycheck. On holidays,



Mary Jane or Arlene was sent to neighbors' and farm workers' homes with meals and extra farm goods her mother carefully packaged up. The table was often set with an extra spot for guests. Her father built camps for wood cutters from Canada to live in, and her mother made a habit of inviting the workers for dinner.

"She'd say, 'If you're here around meal time, you just come right in.' Well, they were around a lot at meal time! One more never mattered," Mary Jane said.

Evelyn was trained as a registered nurse, and perhaps that's where she honed the listening skills and pragmatism as a mother that Mary Jane remembers. "She would listen to your story, but then she'd say, 'Now tell me the truth!'" Mary Jane said.

Admitting to being somewhat impetuous as a child, Mary Jane recalled the time she got fed up with a classmate's ceaseless teasing. So one day after school, she whacked him over the head with her lunch

pail. Upon arriving home, her mother asked her what happened to her dented lunch pail and she said, "I don't know."

Well, the next day the bus driver filled in all the details for her mother, but he also told her the boy had it coming. On the one hand, Mary Jane's mom was proud of her for sticking up for herself, so they went down to the store and bought a brand new lunch pail. On the other hand, the lie couldn't be condoned. Her mother put the new pail up on a shelf.

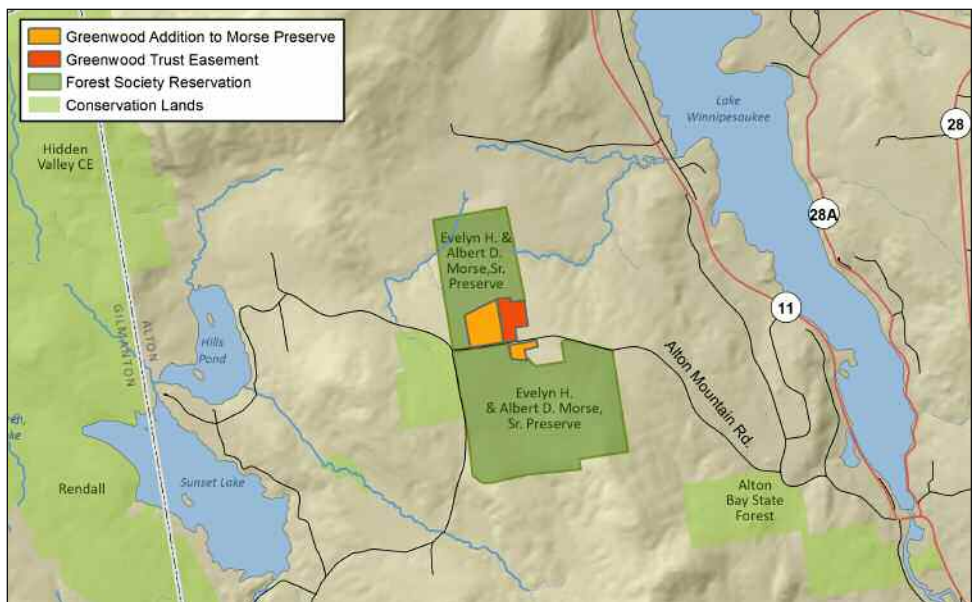
"It was taken away for a whole week because I lied," Mary Jane said.

Mary Jane lived on the farm until going to Maine for college and getting a job as a dietitian in New York. She returned after her mother died.

"I knew Dad needed me, so I quit and moved back to the farm," she said.

She stayed until marrying later in life and moving to Belmont, N.H., with her new husband Bob Greenwood. When her father died in 1964, he entrusted the land to Arlene and her. When Arlene died, the responsibility for the land became all hers, and that responsibility weighed heavily because of her desire to keep the farm intact in honor of her parents, the wonderful childhood they gave her and the beauty of

Continued on page 29





The 21-acre Dudley Pond, home to large- and small-mouth bass, is mostly undeveloped. The new Dudley Pond Forest Reservation cradles its southern end. The pond is accessible by an unmarked dirt road (best to drive a high-clearance vehicle) off of Dudley Pond Road in Deering.

New Reservation in Deering Protects Undeveloped Shoreline, Brook Frontage

By Brenda Charpentier



If you go fishing or paddling on Dudley Pond in Deering, chances are the loudest noise you'll hear (besides your own conversation and paddle splash) is the twang of a frog or the buzz of a dragonfly. You'll keep scanning the forested shoreline to see if a deer steps out toward the water. When you get to the south side of the pond, where a shallow brook flows out of it, you'll be tempted to get out and follow the brook on foot, to see if you can find finger-sized fish darting among the rocks.

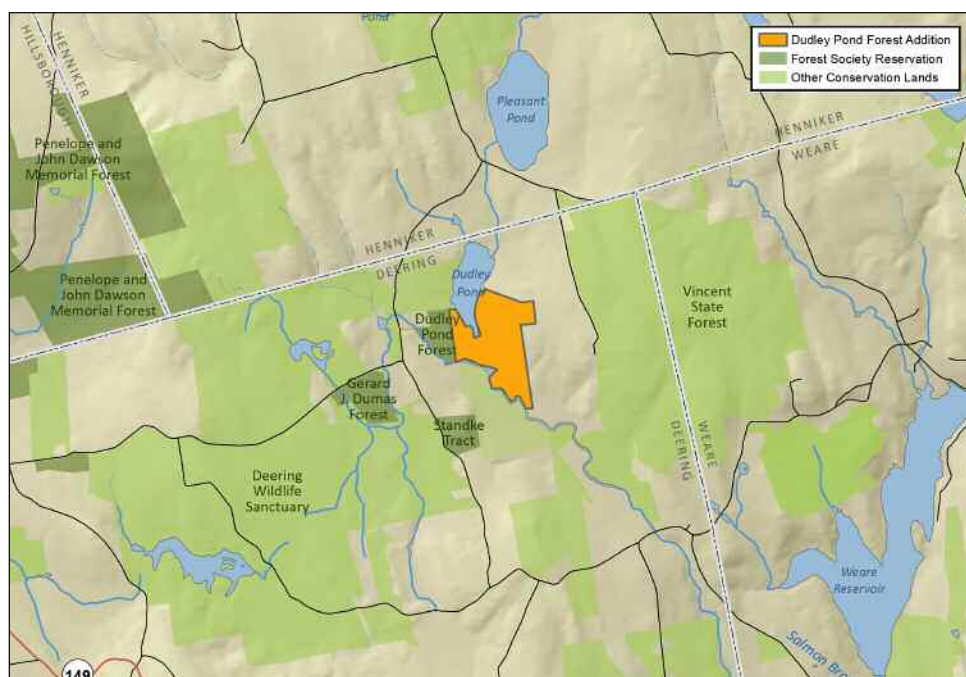
You'll be standing on land that's now conserved, part of a new, 91-acre Forest Society reservation acquired in a long-standing partnership with the Deering Conservation Commission and an anonymous donor who bought the land from a private owner and donated it to the Forest Society.

Twelve acres of the reservation are marsh wetlands and the rest is forest with good quality timber and 2,000 feet of frontage on Dudley Pond, basically its southern end.

Ed Cobbett, the chair of the Deering Conservation Commission, said that as the Dudley Brook headwaters, the property is a key part of efforts to connect nearby conservation lands and protect the land along the brook and thereby its water quality.

He can follow the brook in his mind and name off the properties conserved along its meandering course on its way to Horace Lake in Weare.

"The water quality of Dudley Pond is very good...the majority of it is spring fed,"



The regional goal is to connect conservation lands in northern Deering through southeast Hillsborough and southwest Henniker with the Vincent State Forest in Weare.

he said. "The brook has some pretty nice native trout in it, and it flows through some good moose and deer habitat."

The shoreline of Dudley Pond is mostly undeveloped, with a couple of small, seasonal camps on the eastern side. The town owns a right-of-way along an unmarked, rugged dirt road that leads to a N.H. Fish and Game boat launch area used by fishermen looking for a quiet bass-fishing spot.

"A good number of people go in there fishing primarily because of the seclusion," Cobbett said. "It's not a place to put a 22-foot bass boat, but you can go out on a summer night when it's calm and put out a plug or two and have a pretty good time for yourself."

The Dudley Pond Forest Reservation is the latest of many conservation projects in Deering, aided by the anonymous donor's commitment to the area, an active conservation commission working

in collaboration with landowners and organizations like the Forest Society.

What started years ago with the town's first conservation easement on under 10 acres is today a network of 1,000 acres of conserved land, Cobbett said. Protecting the Dudley Pond Forest property has been a goal for nearly a decade, but long-range conservation is fairly typical for the town, Cobbett said.

"In Deering, land has often been in a family for generations but the landowners don't have a lot of money. Land is a family heirloom and people deal with it differently. They want to know how (a conservation option) is going to work and what they have to do to protect it," Cobbett said. "So you explain the ins and outs to them and then you let it go from there, and when they're ready to do it, they'll let you know."

Patience and persistence...good for conservation and fishing alike. ♪

Morse Preserve continued from page 27

the place.

"We felt we were as close to Heaven as we could be without being in Heaven," Mary Jane said. "My mother and father did so much for so many and they worked so hard."

Sharing was such a big part of her parents' lifestyle that Mary Jane wanted to do something with the land that would keep it open for others to enjoy.

"I just didn't want a developer to come in or a wealthy person to come in and buy it for their own estate. The spot was so beautiful we had to have something done to take care of it," she said.

Mary Jane and her husband had been talking about what to do with the land for years when one day she made a decision. "I woke up one morning and said, 'Bob, why don't we donate that land?' He said, 'You want to donate that land?' I said, 'Yes, how about it?' He said, 'Call up (the lawyer) and do it now!'"

Their lawyer knew the Forest Society and its work and soon the Evelyn H. and Albert D. Morse, Sr. Preserve was created. That was 2008, and the Forest Society has been caring for the land and mowing to keep the blueberries producing ever since.

"The Forest Society was there when I needed a solution and has been so good to me," Mary Jane said.

Now many visitors spend time on the Morse Preserve, feeling the fresh Pine Mountain breeze and taking in the breathtaking vista of the big lake and the Belknap Mountains ... Major, Straightback, Belknap, Gunstock. Families go there to pick berries together, talking about the pies they'll bake and taking pictures, making great memories like Mary Jane did before them. And now her memories are settled with the knowledge that she has faithfully protected all of the land in a way she feels her parents would have wanted.

When she hears of visitors deeply appreciating that a place as beautiful as the Morse Preserve is open to them because of her family's generosity, she struggles to find the words that could describe how she feels. So during our recent visit she just pointed to her tear-filled eyes and said, "Proud... tears..." and then shook off the tears to smile.

"I am so thankful," she said. "If I had a chance to live my life over, I would say yes, I want my life over. That's a pretty good feeling." ♪



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Delays and Contrariness Color Northern Pass Proceedings

By Jack Savage

While the Northern Pass project has been in the headlines less frequently the last few months, there has been considerable activity surrounding the controversial 192-mile transmission line proposal.

The Forest Society remains committed to fighting the Northern Pass transmission project as proposed. Our position is that Northern Pass should only be built if buried along appropriate transportation corridors, such as I-93.

The Site Evaluation Committee

Northern Pass requires a permit from the N.H. State Site Evaluation Committee (SEC). Originally scheduled for a decision in December 2016, the SEC has postponed its decision deadline to Sept. 30, 2017. The SEC can decide to grant a permit, to deny a permit, or to grant a permit with conditions. The SEC decision can be appealed, and the appeal goes directly to the N.H. Supreme Court. The likely timeline for potential appeals is unknown.

The SEC process has been less than smooth, in part because of the sheer size of the application, the large number of intervenors, and technical difficulties in providing full and prompt public access to information in electronic form.

Over the summer, intervenors submitted requests for data from Northern Pass about various aspects of the proposed line. Northern Pass fulfilled some of those requests, failed to fulfill others, and claimed “confidentiality” of the information for others. Economic data is particularly non-transparent. There is an ongoing effort to compel Northern Pass to provide information they are required to provide in formats that can be accessed and analyzed by intervenors, hired experts, and the Counsel for the Public.

Confidentiality of information is becoming an issue itself, as Northern Pass has



Trees Not Towers Bury Northern Pass

endeavored to keep information about key aspects of the project from the public.

In August, the state’s Department of Environmental Services, Department of Transportation, and Division of Historical Resources were granted motions to postpone deadlines for the analysis each agency must do to inform the SEC process. The new deadlines are six months away.

Technical Sessions, at which Northern Pass experts were questioned by intervenors, took place in September and early October. This part of the discovery process is meant to inform intervenors’ pre-filed testimony due later this fall and in early 2017. The SEC application, the intervenors’ pre-filed testimony, and the state agency analyses are the evidence that the SEC will review in the adjudicative portion of the process. This is a court-like proceeding in which experts and witnesses can be cross-examined as the SEC subcommittee listens. The evidence and its review in the adjudicative hearing will provide the seven-member SEC Subcommittee with the information with which they will make a final decision.

In September, in response to multiple motions from intervenors and the Counsel for the Public, the chair of the SEC re-aligned certain schedules for discovery and dates for certain pre-filed testimony. Suffice it to say that the schedule, as revised, could be described as optimistic, but it would appear that the goal is for the adjudicative hearing to

occur in late spring/early summer 2017. Once this is complete, the SEC Subcommittee will then hold a deliberative session (in public) at which its final decision will be made.

Forest Society Lawsuit

The Forest Society has taken the legal fight against Northern Pass over property rights to the N.H. Supreme Court. The Court accepted the case and set Sept. 28 for the Forest Society’s legal brief to be filed. Northern Pass has 30 days to respond. No further schedule has been set, and estimates for a final decision/resolution range from six to 18 months.

Federal Permit Process

At the federal level, the Dept. of Energy has not yet issued a final Environmental Impact Statement, and we may not see that until 2017. The EPA sent a letter to the DOE earlier this summer saying about the northern portion of the proposed line:

“We request that Northern Pass investigate another alternative, which would involve putting the 30-40 miles proposed transmission line on new location, underground, next to existing roadways.” And further: “Based on the information in the DEIS and the NP application, EPA concludes that the preferred alternative (Alternative 7) would not pass the alternatives test....Until these issues are adequately addressed, EPA recommends that a permit not be issued for this project.”

Similarly, the N.H. Department of Environmental Services also wrote a letter to the DOE, noting:

“Additional consideration should be given to the burial of the section or sections of line from Canada within existing roadway corridors to the overhead corridor just off of Route 110 in Northumberland. In addition, if moving this section of line to existing roadway corridors is still found to be unreasonable, consideration should be given to converting the new overhead transmission corridor to a smaller underground transmission corridor. It is not clear from review of the DEIS why the transmission line is crossing into the United States at the proposed location. What is the basis for choosing the current crossing location? Are there lesser impacting alternatives for the border crossing (e.g., entering the U.S. further south through Vermont along Route 253 to Route 3 in New Hampshire)?”

Southern New England RFPs

Northern Pass has submitted a bid in the “Clean Energy RFP (Request for Proposals)”, which was meant to announce bid winners at the end of July. That decision has been postponed, and the latest rumor has it coming out in October.

Massachusetts passed legislation at the end of July to enable another RFP into which Northern Pass could bid (as could other developers, including the New England Clean Power Link in Vermont).

What’s clear from all of this is that Northern Pass electricity is for the southern New England Market primarily, and that ultimately, those consumers would be helping Hydro Quebec pay for the cost of building the line.

Power Purchase Agreement

Northern Pass announced a proposed Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for 10 percent of Northern Pass power for Ever-source NH (PSNH) ratepayers. That PPA would need to be approved by the N.H. Public Utilities Commission (PUC). The PUC Consumer Advocate was quoted as calling the PPA a “publicity stunt.”

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To date the terms of the PPA have been considered confidential and withheld by Eversource from the public, making it difficult for the public to make any thorough assessment. The Forest Society remains committed to moving the SEC Subcommittee to deny a siting permit to NP as proposed, and to carrying forward the property rights

claim now headed to the N.H. Supreme Court.

We continue to believe that if the project developers would consider complete burial of the project along appropriate transportation corridors, a project that benefits all without scarring New Hampshire landscapes is possible.

For the latest developments on Northern Pass, including links to relevant news articles, please visit forestsociety.org/burynorthernpass. ¶

Jack Savage is vp of communications and outreach at the Forest Society.

Federal Land Ownership Has Been Good for New Hampshire

By Matt Leahy

The current Republican Party platform contains language calling for the U.S. Congress to “immediately pass universal legislation providing a timely and orderly mechanism requiring the federal government to convey certain federally controlled public lands to the states.” The platform further asks “all national and state leaders and representatives to exert their utmost power and influence to urge the transfer of those lands identified.”

The underlying motivation for this provision proposal is not new; many groups have long expressed concerns about federal landownership. Way back in the 1870s, for example, opponents of the creation of Yellowstone National Park wanted to transfer management to a private company that would administer it in a less “elitist” and “imperial” manner. While Yellowstone is now the fourth most popular national park, the re-emergence of the issue in a political party’s governing platform forces us to confront a legitimate public policy question. Specifically, is federal land ownership a benefit or a detriment to the communities where these areas are located?

This subject, admittedly, is complicated. It touches on, among other topics, constitutional doctrines, states’ rights, land use trends and natural resource protection. But, at the risk of oversimplifying things, let’s distill it down to a New Hampshire-centric question: Would our state be better off if the White Mountain National Forest had never been established?

When you study the history of the White Mountains and view photographs of the region from the late 1800s and early 1900s, the answer should seem obvious.

The once wooded mountains had been clear-cut or decimated by fire, the hillsides were marked by heavy erosion, heavy floods were common and the tourists who did travel north complained about the polluted waterways and ugly, treeless landscapes. The response to this situation was the passage in 1911 of the Weeks Act, which gave the federal government the ability to buy private forestland in the interest of protecting navigable streams. The result was the creation of 52 National Forests in 26 eastern states including the now 800,000-acre White Mountain National Forest.

Today, the estimated five million yearly visitors make it one of the most popular national forests in the country. Economically, those visitors spend money as they snowmobile, hunt, ski, hike and camp within its boundaries. The profitability of many private businesses is tied to the forest’s continued popularity. Environmentally, the restoration of the forest has resulted in cleaner water and air. Culturally, the WMNF has over the last 100 years helped shape the history of New Hampshire and inspired artists, musicians and writers.

So the case for a federal role in land protection and conservation seems strong, right? Without the injection of federal resources, the White Mountains would not only look far different than they do today but would play a greatly diminished role in our state’s way of life. Collectively, the country’s national parks, wildlife refuges, monuments and other public lands received an estimated 407 million visits, which contributed \$41 billion to the economy and helped to support

355,000 jobs, according to a 2014 report by the Department of the Interior.

Ultimately, federal land acquisition is intricately tied to how our country developed into a global superpower. It is hard to believe the United States would have achieved this status if it had not acquired any of the lands west of the borders of the original 13 states. And yet, in 2015, the U.S. Senate approved a non-binding resolution which called for the sale of large chunks of public lands. This year the N.H. Legislature passed a bill, eventually vetoed by the Governor, which would have amended an old law requiring approval of federal land acquisitions by the Governor and Executive Council. Support for that bill was rooted in the belief our state could become just like Nevada, where the federal government owns 85 percent of the total acreage.

To be clear, this is not an argument for federal ownership of every important natural resource area; unquestionably, private landowners, private land trusts, local governments and state agencies all play critical roles in the long-term protection and stewardship of the special areas our society cherishes. However, resource protection challenges often require the backing of the federal government. In some cases, those challenges can best be met by federal acquisition. So, while a gubernatorial veto has not settled the argument over government land ownership, perhaps a review of New Hampshire’s history at the turn of the 20th Century and a drive today through the White Mountains will. ¶

Matt Leahy is public policy manager at the Forest Society.

Kearsarge Outdoor Classroom Project Builds Bridges and So Much More

By Brenda Charpentier

On Mount Kearsarge, students from Kearsarge Regional High School are improving the Lincoln Trail thanks to a new partnership between the school and the Forest Society.

The students turned standing hemlock trees into a footbridge and re-routed a trail segment to higher, dryer ground last spring, learning about trail work, tree felling and chainsaw/tool safety.

This fall, a new set of students is at work re-routing another section of the Lincoln Trail away from a wetland area.

The Lincoln Trail passes through the Forest Society's 1,060-acre Black Mountain Forest Reservation, located behind KRHS in Sutton. Now a segment of the 75-mile "Sunapee-Ragged-Kearsarge Greenway," the Lincoln Trail was originally constructed by KRHS students in 1980, but the school's connection with the corridor had long since diminished. This history, as well as KRHS's proximity to Black Mountain Forest, prompted Forest Society staff to reach out to the school as part of its educational mission.

During the partnership's first project last spring, the forest became the classroom for the 10 students involved. They hiked up to the site, ate lunch together and then took on the bridge construction. The kids got the "full experience" of trail work, with black flies, mosquitos and some hot, humid days to cope with. Some of the students found following the safety guidelines to be cumbersome and having to work as a team didn't always come easily. But Peter Angus, the school's guidance counselor, included those challenges with the benefits of the project for students.

"We live in a pretty rural area, and these kids access trails all the time. It's good for them to have this experience of knowing what people put into these trails," he said.

The students worked hand in hand with Forest Society staff and volunteers as well as



Clockwise from top, left: Amy Bowman scrapes bark off one of the felled trees. Removing the bark helps keep the tree from rotting for a longer period of time; Lew Shelley (center) guides students in the use of a hand saw; The crew carries one of the logs to the bridge site; Some of the crew members celebrate the bridge's completion by standing on it for the first time. From left: Lew Shelley, Stanley Reyno, Richie Page, George Mellon, Carrie Deegan, Matt Pulaski and Peter Angus.

professional trails contractor Lew Shelley, who served as project foreman.

"It was great for our students to meet other adults in the community and be able to connect with them," Angus said.

Student George Mellon said he most enjoyed the chance to work on a project outdoors with his friends and was proud of what they accomplished together.

"My favorite part was getting to leave school and come out to the woods, where I feel most comfortable," he said. "I hope that hikers will recognize all the hard work that we put into this bridge."

There is great potential for many more future projects in collaboration with KRHS, said Carrie Deegan, the Forest Society's manager of community engagement and volunteers.

"Our Black Mountain Forest property is so close to the high school that we feel it's a perfect partnership opportunity," she said. "We can give kids a chance to connect with the forests in their own community while also teaching them about land conservation and sustainable forestry in a way that's personal to them." ♪



Left: The beaver-made wetlands along Mill Brook near the Merrimack River Outdoor Education and Conservation Area is a Forest Society ecological reserve.



Photos on left by Ellen Kenny; photo below by Dave Anderson.

Right: A great blue heron hunts near Mill Brook. After 10 years as an ecological reserve, more wildlife have moved into the area.

Mystery Scat at the Increasingly Wild Conservation Center

By Dave Anderson

Do you remember Mr. Peabody and Sherman from the old Rocky and Bullwinkle TV shows? Well then, set the “Way Back Machine” to the Mother’s Day 2006 flooding along the Merrimack River. At the Conservation Center, the Forest Society’s headquarters in Concord, the mighty Merrimack and its tributary, Mill Brook, merged on the floodplain below our offices. A former wooden staircase (now an observation platform) buckled when its footing piers tilted, and a hiking trail bridge washed off its abutment.

After the floodwaters receded, we removed the remains of the bridge and staircase and then closed the low-lying trail. Mill Brook and the enriched hardwood ravine communities up to the top of the bluff where the Conservation Center buildings are located were designated as a permanent ecological reserve. In the absence of people and domestic dogs, the forest of white ash,



The puzzling scat.

basswood, elm, shagbark hickory and maple and the beaver-influenced wetlands began to fill with more reclusive wildlife and colorful songbirds.

Maybe it’s more anecdotal than scientific, but ever since then we see more wildlife out our office windows. It’s typical to see red and gray squirrels, songbirds and an occasional chubby woodchuck browsing on tender perennial plants and shrubs planted along the steep bluff overlooking the floodplain. Now, colleagues more regularly spot raccoons, deer, red foxes and even a bobcat. The Conservation Center campus hosts nesting red-tailed hawks and great horned owls in tall pines surrounding the parking lot. We catch glimpses of bald eagles during migration and wintering along the Merrimack. Snapping turtles scale the steep bluff from Mill Brook in search of warm sand in which to lay eggs. Our office is perched at the rim of a wetland wilderness within earshot of I-93 and with a view of the New Hampshire Statehouse’s gold dome.

One recent summer morning, the state news headlines included a tale of

a disgruntled former employee of a Merrimack, N.H., flower shop who was arrested for leaving animal feces on the front steps of her former workplace. That very morning, Forest Society staff were greeted and enthralled —or at least not offended—by essentially the same thing along our entrance walkway. Nobody balked. Nobody swept. Nobody called the Concord Police.

In fact, by mid-morning, digital photos were snapped for, umm... poop posterity.

At coffee pot conversations and lunch table banter, a debate ensued. Was the mystery scat from the local bobcat? Could it have been a skunk? Skunks are well-known to patrol building perimeters during pre-dawn hours. Or was it from a red fox? A handsome young red fox had spent much of the previous two mornings a few yards away. Like their larger canine cousins, the coyotes, foxes intentionally deposit their scat prominently along trails and busy paths—even atop stone walls! Our mystery

scat was on the brick path to the back doorstep. Prominent? Check.

I personally voted “fox” in accordance with the principle of “Occam’s razor” which states: *Among competing hypotheses, the one with the fewest assumptions should be selected.*

Yet a vocal “bobcat” faction cited technical characteristics including scat size and shape. I am withholding staff names—you all know who you are!

Cat scat is typically cylindrical, with blunt, slightly rounded ends—like a Tootsie Roll. Bobcat scats lack a characteristic twisted, tapered shape of coyote and fox scat. The mystery scat appeared both cylindrical and blunt (before one colleague began dissecting it). Yet cat scats are often buried, not so often placed prominently to win territory. Our mystery deepened.

The scat contents offered few clues: insect carapaces, beetle shells, cricket parts interspersed with tiny seeds smaller than

raspberry seeds all within a black matrix of grass and digested vegetation. An omnivore! No hint of fur or hair suggested a strict carnivore scat.

A forester colleague confidently proclaimed: “It’s from a toad.” Really—a toad stool!?

Turns out, toads do leave relatively huge scats. See for yourself with a simple internet search while also proving once more that you may find *anything* on the internet.

Who knew? Actually, the forester did. Do we inhabit a bizarre office subculture? Actually, no. The sidewalk scat mystery is pretty typical of conversations at the Conservation Center. Forest Society staffers took no offense, the police were not summoned... and the mystery remains unsolved. ♣

Naturalist Dave Anderson is director of education for the Forest Society. He can be reached via e-mail at danderson@forestsociety.org.

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Photo by Jerry and Marcy Monkman/EcoPhotography.

Preserving this beautiful scene depends upon the support of donors to the Powder Major's Farm and Forest project in Madbury, Durham and Lee.

Help Us Meet the \$100,000 Challenge Grant for the Powder Major's Farm and Forest

The Forest Society is seeking gifts to match a \$100,000 challenge grant from the Thomas W. Haas Fund of the N.H. Charitable Foundation. So far, generous donors have provided \$67,000 toward this challenge. That leaves \$33,000 to go in order to maximize this grant—can you help?

Your gift will help to create a new, 195-acre protected forest reservation in Madbury, Lee and Durham and to acquire conservation easements on 34 acres of abutting farmland and another 60-acre parcel owned by the Town of Madbury.

This is a strategic conservation project that meets multiple objectives to protect:

PUBLIC RECREATION AND EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

The land and miles of trails will be open to the public for hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, wildlife viewing, hunting, fishing and snowmobiling. The land abuts the Tibbetts Field and is next to Moharimet Elementary School and the University of New Hampshire, offering many educational and outdoor opportunities.

RURAL HERITAGE

Conservation will prevent subdivision into as many as 76 house lots.

We face a real threat of development—The Forest Society must raise a total of \$2.25 million in order to purchase the property and easement, cover transaction costs and care for the land into the future. We must be successful in our efforts, since the property will be sold on the open market if no conservation outcome can be reached.

Right: The Oyster River.



Photo by Jerry and Marcy Monkman/EcoPhotography.

WILDLIFE HABITAT

- 84 acres of wetlands, and buffers along the Oyster River and Dube Brook, provide a diversity of wildlife habitats.

HISTORIC CONNECTIONS

- During the Revolutionary War, this land belonged to John Demeritt, known as the 'Powder Major' after he brought gunpowder to the Continental Army at the Battle of Bunker Hill

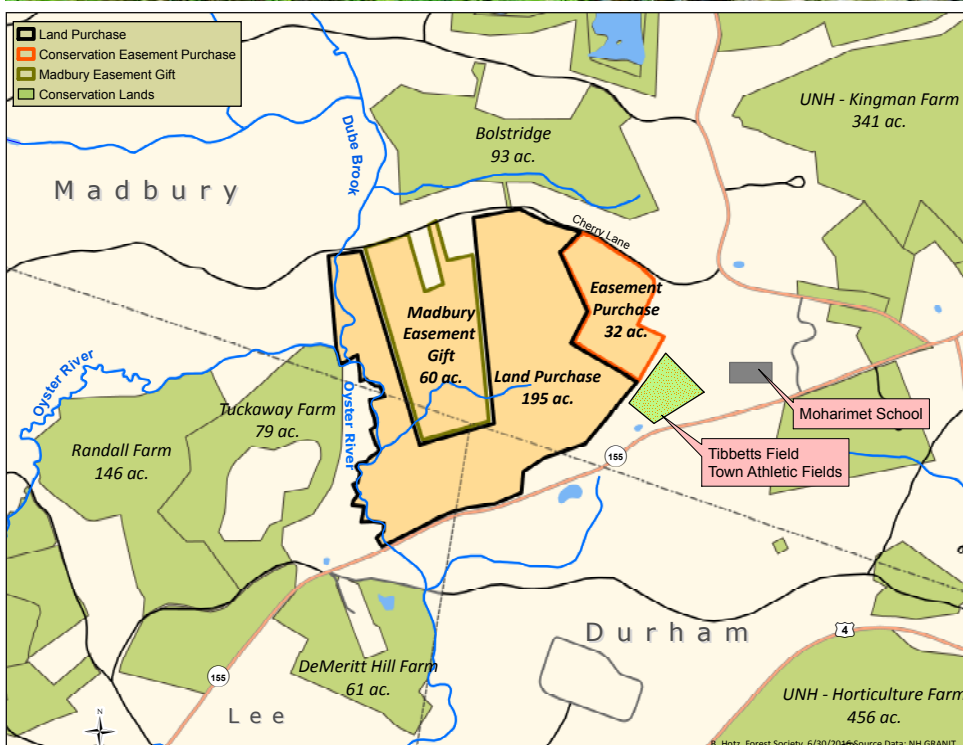
WATER QUALITY

- The Oyster River, a drinking water source for UNH and Durham, travels 3/4 mile through the property.

WORKING FORESTS AND FIELDS

- About 30 acres are working hayfields on prime agricultural soils, and the remainder consists of healthy forests of oak, pine and hemlock managed for timber.

Please join us to protect this land by making a contribution using the envelope in this issue of *Forest Notes* or online at www.forestsociety.org/powder_major. Thank you! ♪



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



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Concord, N.H.

Member since 2008

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Ellen 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.

Photo by Al Karevy.

“As a child growing up in New Jersey, I walked in the woods almost every day with my family on a long, narrow piece of land that was part of the Pascack River floodplain. It was a place whose marvels were revealed over time spent fishing for sunfish big enough to fry, picking wild strawberries in a meadow shared with box turtles, and spotting night herons from a seat on a willow tree limb.

When my husband, our children, our dogs and I moved to Concord, I discovered the Conservation Center on the Merrimack River. Over the past decade, a walk in this piece of woods has become my daily ritual.

So many of the sights, sounds and scents of this floodplain are reminiscent of that beloved childhood landscape—but with one critical difference. My childhood woods are no longer there. Unlike the Conservation Center on the Merrimack, my

small piece of the Pascack Valley floodplain was not protected. Gone now for decades, those woods are not even a memory for the residents of the suburban houses that replaced them.

The Forest Society’s vision of woodlands, farms and wild lands “woven into the fabric of community life” resonates with my experience. My enjoyment of the Conservation Center property is multiplied by being able to share it with a community of others: the dog walkers, bird watchers, children, parents and grandparents that I run into daily, walking the paths, appreciating. As a teacher, I’m especially glad to run into my students there, knowing that their experience with this particular place is a privilege that will enrich their lives, exercise their capacity for wonder, and help them to understand their role within a greater community of living things. This vision and my daily gratitude for a fine walk in the woods are why I’m a member of the Forest Society.” ♻