HISTORICALLY SENSITIVE FORESTRY

Forest Notes

NEW HAMPSHIRE'S CONSERVATION MAGAZINE

Community Conservation in the Seacoast Region

Conservation Hero John Kauffmann

SUMMER 2016

SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF NEW HAMPSHIRE FORESTS

SINCE 1901

forestsociety.org

FOREST SOCIETY 2016 PHOTO CONTEST

CALL FOR ENTRIES

Lost River Gorge and Boulder Caves, North Woodstock.

Enter your best shots taken on a Forest Society reservation **by August 5** for a chance to have your photo published in the fall issue of *Forest Notes*, and win free passes to Lost River Gorge and Boulder Caves or a Forest Society hat or t-shirt.

The top three winners will be chosen in these categories:

Lovely Landscapes — your best shot highlighting the forest, fields, waters and mountains you find on any of our reservations.

Having Fun Outdoors — people enjoying one of our reservations.

Dog Heaven — dogs having their day on one of our reservations.

Flora & Fauna — wildlife, plants or other beautiful natural resources you encounter on our reservations.

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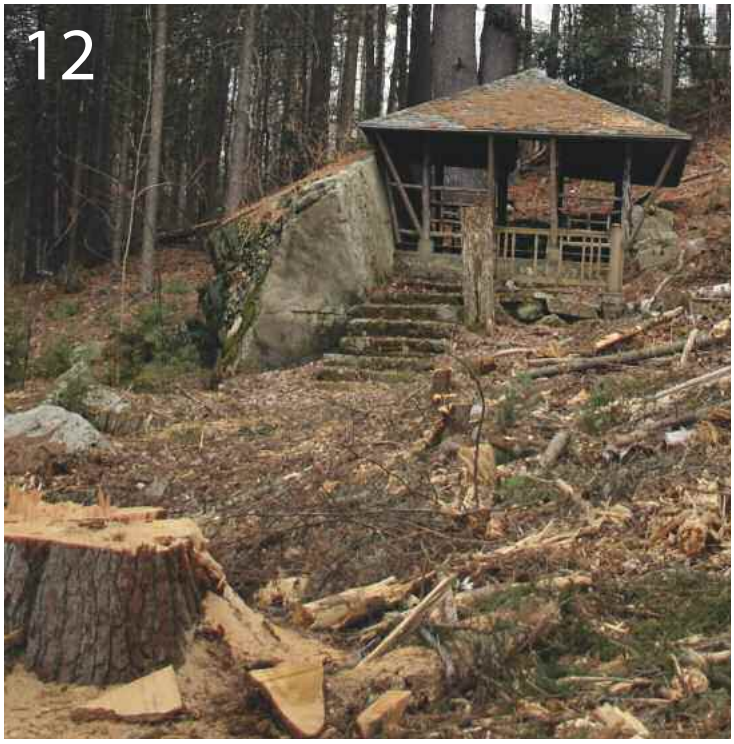
Top photo by Jerry and Marcy Monkman, EcoPhotography. Left photo by Eliza Cowie. Middle photo by Kirsten Durzy. Right photo by Bart Hunter.

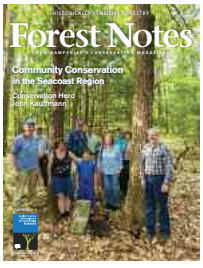
NEW Deadline for submissions is August 5.

Go to forestsociety.org/photocontest for rules and how to enter



FEATURES

DEPARTMENTS



On our cover:

Members of the conservation communities of Madbury, Durham and Lee gather at the old granite marker—inscribed with the town initials M, D and L—that marks the spot where the three towns intersect. It's located on the Madbury town property that abuts the Powder Major's Farm and Forest, all part of a 300-acre conservation project featured in this issue of *Forest Notes*, starting on Page 4.

Pictured left to right, back row: Chuck Cox, Lee; Chuck Goss, Madbury; Bill Humm, Lee; Tom Crosby, Madbury; Dave Meeker, Lee; Elizabeth Goss, Madbury.

Front row, Otho Wells, Durham; Elizabeth Meeker and son Cooper Malaison, Lee; Kathy Frid, Madbury; Eric Fiegenbaum, Madbury.

Architects of Unbuilt Places

Fallingwater, the house designed by Frank Lloyd Wright for the Edgar Kaufmann family in Mill Run, Pa., is extraordinary. With its cantilevered terraces over the waterfalls of a mountain stream called Bear Run, the house emerges organically from the hillside with native rock serving as hearth and kitchen shelf—literally bringing the outside in. That's why, when the Kaufmanns donated the house to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, they included the surrounding 1,000 acres. They felt the house was designed for that particular landscape.

Today, an expanded 5,000 protected acres surround the house, owned and stewarded as the Bear Run Nature Reserve. The run courses through the property as do 20 miles of trails. The forest includes towering tulip trees, red maples, chestnut oaks, American beech, sugar maple and black cherry and all the wildlife and flora one might hope to see in such a reserve. It is spectacular in its own right.

These provided the setting for a recent meeting of the Land Trust Alliance's Leadership Council, a group of executives from the country's largest land trusts, gathered in part to meet the Alliance's new president, Andrew Bowman. We celebrated the success of enhanced federal tax incentives for conservation easement donations, worked on improvements to the "Standards and Practices" that guide land trusts and form the backbone for accreditation, brainstormed about public relations, considered the role of land protection in mitigating climate change, and pondered legislative initiatives to keep land trusts strong. It was a productive time in conducive surroundings.

We weren't, perhaps, the architects of anything of acclaim, but collectively we were diligent in addressing the most pressing needs of land trusts and the communities we serve to ensure that the lands we protect today will—like Fallingwater—be permanently and appropriately protected for the future.

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 Earns Top Rating

The Forest Society has achieved the highest, four-star rating from Charity Navigator for its sound fiscal management and commitment to accountability and transparency.

Charity Navigator highlights the work of efficient, ethical and open charities. It's the gold standard in providing donors with essential information needed to give them greater confidence in the charitable choices they make.

The Best Classroom Ever

Elementary schools in Gilford, Exeter and Atkinson joined the Mt. Major Outdoor Classroom project this spring by hosting a Forest Society in-school presentation about ecology and good stewardship in advance of their hikes up Mt. Major (Gilford and Atkinson students made the climb, but rain kept Exeter's trip on hold until next year.) It's a truly "feet-on" learning experience, and it's free to schools thanks to support from the Dorr Foundation, the Samuel P. Pardoe Foundation and Forest Society members. To see how your local school could get involved, e-mail Education Director Dave Anderson at danderson@forestsociety.org).

Students from Gilford Elementary School scramble up Mt. Major.

We'll Put Your Outdated iPhone to Good Use

Do you have an old iPhone or iPad you're no longer using? Our volunteer land stewards can use them to help navigate around and monitor our reservations. If you have one to donate, please see our "how to" instructions under the "Get Involved" tab at www.forestsociety.org or contact Jenn Seredejko at jseredejko@forestsociety.org

The Class of 2016 land stewards with Forest Society staff in Alton.

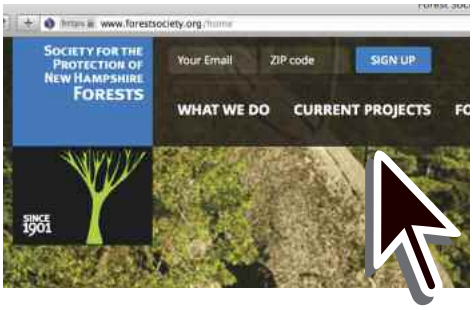
Welcome Class of 2016 Land Stewards

Twenty-four new land stewards attended a comprehensive training program in late April to learn everything they needed to know to adopt one of the Forest Society's reservations. The new stewards come from all over the state, and they will monitor and help care for 21 different forest reservations.

Volunteers from Hypertherm in Hanover with Forest Society staff at Grafton Pond in Grafton.

Thanks Hypertherm

An enthusiastic crew of volunteers from Hypertherm helped us get the Grafton Pond Reservation ready for the busy summer season. Volunteers picked up trash along the road frontage and hiking trails, as well as from the islands and shoreline. This summer our lake hosts will once again be greeting and educating visitors to Grafton Pond about invasive weeds, respect for nesting loons and other wildlife, and other stewardship opportunities.



Sign Up for Our New Forest Advocacy E-News Update

Would you like to know what's going on at the N.H. Statehouse when it comes to natural resource conservation? Go to www.forestsociety.org and click the "sign up" button at the top of the page to start receiving *The Forest Advocate*, our e-update from the Forest Society's policy staff informing you on issues affecting our quality of life in the Granite State.

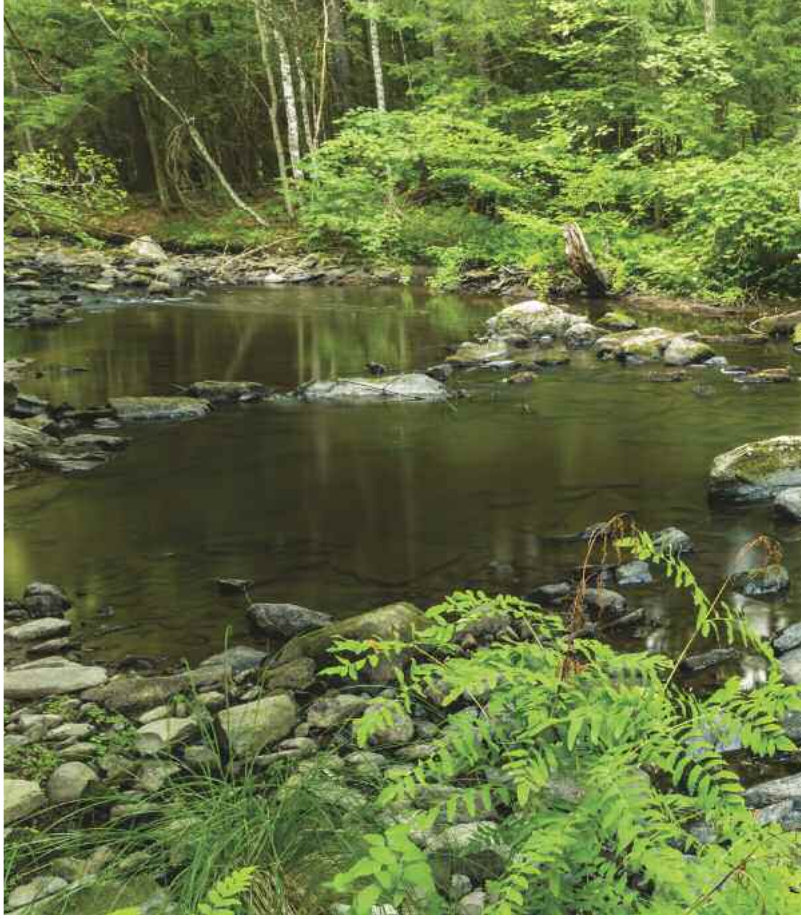
Follow us on Facebook!

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

Will this Land Be Forever Unpaved?

In the fastest growing part of New Hampshire, a tri-town community is rallying to try to save land that protects their drinking water, a place to play outdoors, and their link to the birth of our nation.

By Brenda Charpentier



Above: *The extensive trail system on the Powder Major's Farm and Forest land offers ready-made recreation opportunities. The trails take you along the Oyster River and past the site of the former Dishwater Mill. These and title page photo by Jerry Monkman/EcoPhotography.*

If you walk the meandering trails of the nearly 300 acres of land that are part of the Powder Major's Farm and Forest conservation project, your feet will land on dirt, pine needles, mud, leaves, grass and wildflowers (mind the buttercups!) and maybe even the Oyster River's rocky bottom—if you're prone to wading on a hot summer day.

Just like the Powder Major's, your feet will not strike pavement. Close to 250 years have passed since Major John Demeritt walked his farm's fields and woodlands near the convergence of Madbury, Lee and Durham, and that much at least has not changed. But how pensively he must have walked, hoping no Loyalist spies had told the British about all that gunpowder stored at his farm. Did the gurgle of the Oyster River mingle with uneasy thoughts—*What if the Redcoats come to my house today?* What a relief it must have been when the day finally came to load those barrels of powder—stolen by Demeritt and fellow local patriots in a moonlight raid on the British fort in Portsmouth Harbor—onto an oxcart and slowly rumble it off southward to help his compatriots fight the Battle of Bunker Hill in the summer of 1775.

That road would have been dirt, of course. Today the Seacoast region is the fastest growing in the state; we think of dirt roads as either quaint, scenic novelties or car eaters, and pavement is pervasively covering former farms, forests and wetlands.

But not here. Most of the Powder Major's former farm and forestland today is owned and well managed by the Goss family and a big chunk that juts into their property is owned by the town of Madbury. It's all part of the Powder Major conservation project, and it all remains unpaved. That simple fact has everything to do with how this land today functions as a community resource and—if successfully conserved—could increasingly serve as such in the future.

How 'bout a drink?

It is precisely its unpaved state that makes the Powder Major property an unassuming deliverer of clean drinking water for UNH and Durham, according to Tom Lee, PhD, an associate professor of forest ecology at UNH.

Lee is also the chair of the water testing committee of the Oyster River Watershed Association (ORWA). He leads a committed band of volunteers who for the past 15 years—every month from April to October—have dipped their buckets into the Oyster and tested the water on its way to faucets downstream. Their faithful research has produced conclusive data: This is some great water.

"Overall the Oyster River is in excellent shape," Lee said in a recent interview.

Wait a minute! This is not the gloom and doom news you're used to hearing about in conservation circles. No river on fire or stained red here. Refreshing, isn't it? Instead, here we have a pearl that's ours to keep untarnished as development pressures mount. The key, Lee said, is keeping still-intact land along the Oyster River, especially big blocks of land like the Powder Major's Farm property, forever unpaved.

Continued on page 8.

Above: *Oyster River Watershed Association members Dick Weyrick and Tom Lee stand in front of the pumphouse on the UNH campus in Durham, where a pipe draws water from the Oyster River and sends it to a nearby treatment plant. From there, it travels to faucets on the UNH campus and the rest of Durham.*

Right: *Volunteer water testers drop a bucket into the Oyster River to gather a sample for testing. The Oyster River Watershed Association has carried out water quality testing at sites along the Oyster and its tributaries for the past 15 years.*

Photo courtesy Oyster River Watershed Assoc.

Photo courtesy Town of Madbury.

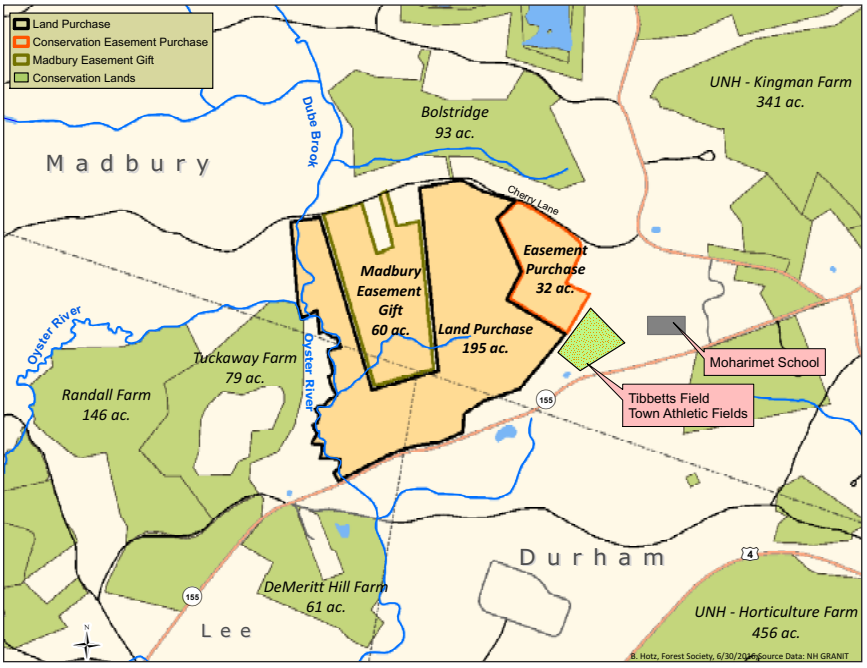
In 1996, members of the First N.H. Militia from Newmarket helped Madbury dedicate a silver maple to the heroics of Maj. John Demeritt.

Who was the Powder Major?

Maj. John Demeritt owned this farm and woodlands in the late 1700s. He was known locally as "The Powder Major" after taking part in a daring raid of the British Fort William and Mary (now Fort Constitution) at New Castle in 1774. Demeritt stored some of the gunpowder barrels stolen in the raid in a cellar tunnel under his Madbury farmhouse. Six months later, the story goes, he brought the gunpowder in the nick of time to American troops nearly out of ammunition in the Battle of Bunker Hill.

Here is a partial account of the raid as written in the 1996 Madbury Town Report:

> "In 1774 the British Parliament passed an act prohibiting the further importation of gunpowder and military stores into the colonies. We have the following first-hand account of Eleazar Bennett of Durham as to the events that followed:
>
> 'I was working for Major Sullivan, he says, when Micah Davis came up and told me Major Sullivan wanted me to go to Portsmouth, and to get all the men I could to go with him. The men who went, as far as I can remember, were Major John Sullivan, Captain Winborn Adams, Ebenezer Thompson, John Demeritt, Alpheus and Jonathan Chesley, John Spencer, Micah Davis, Isaac and Benjamin Small of Durham; Ebenezer Sullivan, Captain Langdon and Thomas Pickering of Portsmouth; John Griffin, James Underwood and Alexander Scammel. We took a gondola belonging to Benjamin Mathes, who was too old to go, and went down the river to Portsmouth.
>
> It was a clear, cold moonlight night. We sailed down to the Fort at the mouth of Piscataqua Harbor. The water was so shallow that we could not bring the boat to within a rod of shore. We waded through the water in perfect silence, mounted the Fort, surprised the Garrison, and bound the captain. In the Fort we found one hundred casks of powder and one hundred small arms, which we brought down to the boat. In wading through the water it froze upon us.'
>
> The powder thus obtained from the raid was stored in Durham and at the Demeritt Farm in Madbury."



Project Basics

The Forest Society is working with the towns of Madbury, Lee and Durham to:

- Purchase 195 acres in Madbury, Lee and Durham to create a new, Forest Society reservation open to the public for low-impact recreation.
- Purchase a conservation easement on an abutting 32 acres of agricultural land (hayfields) also owned by the Goss family, which is facilitating the project by selling their land for a price below market value.
- Accept a donated conservation easement on 60 acres of abutting land owned by the Town of Madbury.

Combined, the above actions will result in the conservation of nearly 300 acres of land in the fastest growing region in the state.

"The story from our perspective is that the portion of river that flows into and out of the Powder Major property is in good shape, and the only way to keep it that way is to keep it well buffered. You have to have natural vegetation along the banks for a couple of hundred feet back and a minimal amount of impervious surfaces—roads, parking lots, buildings, any kind of material that prevents water from percolating into the ground," Lee said.

So you can imagine what would happen if the Powder Major's forests and fields—so relatively flat and buildable, so close to schools and N.H. Rt. 155, so desirably close to the seacoast—became a housing subdivision of 60-70 homes, paved driveways and roads and green fertilized lawns. Rainwater would run off the impervious surfaces collecting pollutants along the way and dump quickly into the Oyster River. This deluge-then-drought scenario would replace the present one of clean rainwater sinking into the soft earth slowly and replenishing the ground water.

"Once about 10 percent of a watershed is covered with impervious surfaces, water quality goes down. The Oyster River Watershed is at about 7 percent impervious surfaces, so land protection is so important right now. Now is the time to do it," Lee said.

If protecting water quality was the only reason to conserve the Powder Major property, most of us would agree that that would be enough. But the reality is that conservation dollars are limited, and buildable land near the seacoast is more expensive than most other areas of New Hampshire. The Forest Society and the conservation communities in all three towns are coming together to try to raise $2.25 million to buy the land and an easement from the Goss family, members of which are committed to a conservation outcome for the land and are selling it for below its market value, precisely because the project isn't just about water quality. It's an excellent example of "strategic conservation"—or choosing a property to focus fundraising energy on that will yield the highest possible reward in terms of both ecological benefits and community benefits.

That the Powder Major's Farm project hits that mark comes through clearly when you ask members of the local conservation community the question: How do you think the Powder Major property will be a community resource if it's successfully conserved? You will get different answers from different people, with much overlap and much enthusiasm.

Recreation Destination: Let's Connect

The Goss family has expanded and maintained miles of trails on the property and have generously opened them to the community. Conserving the land would make access to those trails permanent, but what people really love about them is that they connect to an adventure-inviting, large network of trails on other properties, some conserved, some open but not yet conserved.

"This is a key piece in terms of tying those important properties together," said John Nachilly, a member of the Durham Conservation Commission who previously served on Madbury's commission for 25 years.

The recreation vision is to eventually create a greenbelt through Durham, Lee and Madbury of conserved properties serving as a long trail corridor.

Supporting and being a catalyst for a greenbelt is one of the reasons the Goss family approached the Forest Society with their conservation goals, Chuck Goss said.

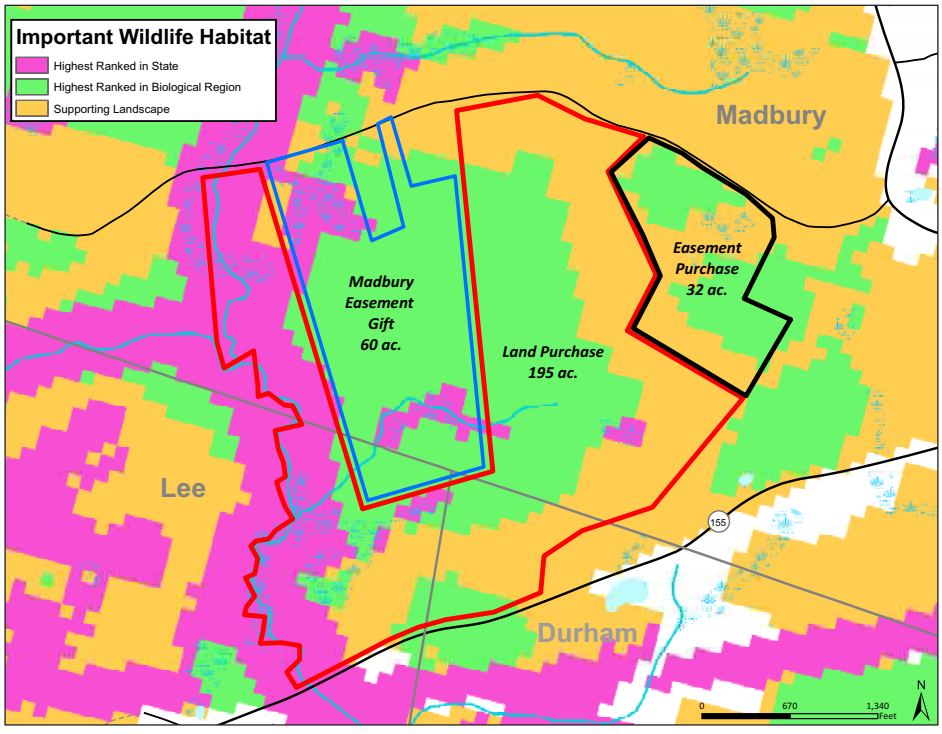
"We hope this project will have a domino effect in the area with many more conservation decisions being made," he said. "We have been involved in town committees like conservation, historical and ORWA and have been stewards of this property for generations. We have desired to protect it for future generations as green space."

With the Powder Major's size and biodiversity, it holds great promise as not only a recreation destination but also a research site for UNH's diverse life sciences programs, said John Carroll of Durham, a UNH professor of environmental conservation.

Continued on page 10.

The Powder Major project includes the conservation of about 32 acres of agricultural land that is being used for hayfields.

Photo by Jerry Monkman/EcoPhotography.



Above, clockwise from top left: *Wild edibles expert Russ Cohen leads a foraging walk through the property; the snowmobile bridge across the Oyster River; Delsin and Indiana Wormstead sample some sheep sorrel during a wild edibles hike on the Powder Major property; in May, a group of birders heard or saw 40 bird species during a three-hour excursion; a map of wildlife habitat shows that the land in the Powder Major project is classified by N.H. Fish and Game's Wildlife Action Plan as highest quality in the state or bioregion.*

"As time goes on, we need more and more properties that are geographically close to the university. Students can get to this property easily by bicycle," he said.

Research into water quality, wildlife habitat, botany, forestry—the list is extensive when it comes to potential for UNH students, he added.

On the other end of the educational spectrum, Moharimet Elementary School is within walking distance of the Powder Major property. It draws students from Durham, Madbury and Lee in the Oyster River School District, which has an active environmental sustainability program. For years, the Goss family has welcomed Moharimet students to their maple groves to collect maple sap for boiling in the school's own maple sugar house. No busing would be needed for more field trips to the Powder Major land for both fun and environmental learning.

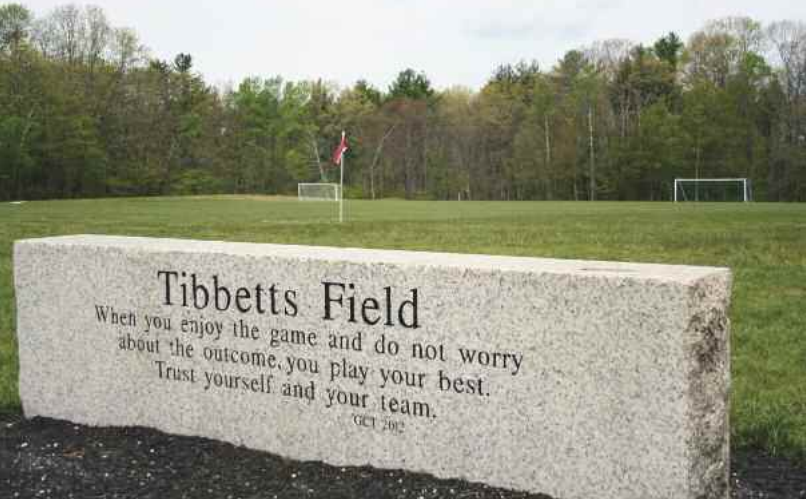
Animal Attraction

There are 15 distinct wetland natural communities on the Powder Major's Farm property, which bespeaks its value as a diverse wildlife habitat. Both rare and common species of plants and animals take full advantage of the nearly mile-long river frontage, beaver flowages, marshes, swamps and a mix of upland forest types.

Its very shape—a big, deep block of land not fragmented by roads—adds to its value for wildlife, said Anne Tappan, a member of the Lee Conservation Commission whose professional background is in wildlife biology.

"Size matters. Bigger is better for wildlife," she said. "In the Seacoast Region large parcels are increasingly uncommon."

The N.H. Fish and Game's Wildlife Action Plan map of this area (above) tells the story well, she said.



The Powder Major trails can be accessed from Tibbetts Field, used by all three communities.

"The entire Powder Major property... is all habitat either ranked highest in New Hampshire or highest in the biological region and supporting habitat, and that tells you that there's a lot going on here," she said.

But it's not just the wildlife on the Powder Major property that may benefit. The Oyster River is one of seven rivers that flow into the Great Bay, a tidal nursery for fish and other Seacoast wildlife. Keeping the Oyster River clean by protecting the land around it will help to protect that tidal nursery.

"Great Bay is greatly troubled as far as water quality, and as the rivers go, Great Bay is going to go in that direction, too," said Dick Weyrick, a member of the Oyster River Watershed Association and a retired UNH forestry professor.

Keeper of Stories and Quality of Life

These three Seacoast towns working together for the good of the region—it's been done before, in the Revolutionary War, pointed out Eric Fiegenbaum, the chair of the Madbury Conservation Commission and the town's administrative assistant.

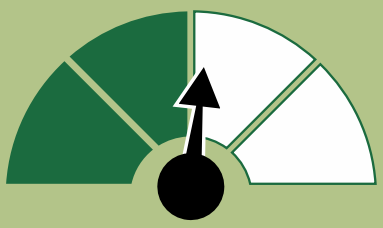
"In Madbury, there is no better historical connection than the ("Powder Major") Demeritt one for us to protect," Fiegenbaum said.

If the Powder Major's Farm is not conserved and ultimately gets developed, the tangible link to Revolution heroics would weaken. "It's land that connects Madbury to those activities that were going on during the Revolutionary War," Feigenbaum said.

Fiegenbaum gets the prize for the most succinct and pointed summary of the crux of this conservation project: "It's either this or Powder Major Drive."

There is another "community resource" connection that predates even the Revolution. Before European settlement, this property was used communally for farming by the Abenaki people. The name Moharimet—possibly an alternate spelling of Mahomet, a 17th-century Abenaki chief—is associated with the spot, and the nearby Moharimet Elementary School is an acknowledgement of that link to land that once sustained an earlier, vibrant culture.

A future as a conserved Forest Society reservation would bring this place full circle. If the conservation project is successful, the Powder Major's Farm and Forest will continue its long tradition as a treasured community resource, forever unpaved.



Fundraising Campaign Update

The Forest Society is seeking to raise $2.25 million by Oct. 31 to cover the land and easement purchases and the stewardship and transaction costs for the Powder Major's Farm and Forest project. As of mid-July when *Forest Notes* was being printed, the fundraising campaign had passed the half-way milestone at $1.3 million.

Thank you to these generous organizations, towns and agencies for supporting this project:

- N.H. Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) — $380,000
- Natural Resources Conservation Service's Agricultural Land Easement program — $175,000
- Town of Madbury — $75,000 (plus conservation easement value of $175,000)
- Town of Lee — $155,000
- N.H. DES Aquatic Resource Mitigation Program — $148,000
- Bafflin Foundation — $50,000
- Conservation License Plate (Moose Plate) through the N.H. State Conservation Committee Grant Program — $20,000
- Davis Conservation Foundation — $20,000
- Piscataqua Region Estuaries Program — $2,330
- Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership — $6,500
- Individual donations from private contributors — $165,000

Note: The Town of Durham has pledged $120,000, pending final approval of a town-held conservation easement on land within Durham.

How You Can Help

Individual donations will be needed to bridge the gap between the amounts raised through grants and town conservation funds and the total needed to complete the project.

If you would like to contribute, please send a gift—any amount will greatly help—by using the envelope enclosed in this issue of *Forest Notes* or go online to give at **www.forestsociety.org/powder_major.**

TIME FOR THE BIG REVEAL

Above and opposite: The Glessners' Big Rock House is one of several open-air structures still standing on The Rocks grounds. In the historic photo above, note the size of the young trees. The recent timber harvest cleared some of the trees that had been hiding and shading the structure.
Photo at left by Meghan McCarthy McPhaul.

Timber Cut Uncovers Vintage Rocks Estate While Inviting Wildlife to Dine

By Meghan McCarthy McPhaul

Beneath a tangle of vines and roots on a wooded hillside, a long-forgotten stone staircase leads to what was once the porch of a grand house. To the left is the faded curve of a driveway, turning around a giant boulder that sits alone on a level area. A blanket of periwinkle flowers and the occasional daffodil indicate there was once a garden tended here, where wildflowers now reign—white trillium, trout lily, lady slippers and myriad others.

The stone steps, the tall trees in what was a cleared field a century ago, and the newly-cut stumps are all part of the ever-changing landscape here, in a place not unlike so many others in northern New England. What woods wanderer has not stumbled upon an old foundation or wondered at the stone walls left crumbling in the middle of a forest or the apple tree growing far from any orchard?

This place is hidden at The Rocks Estate, the Forest Society's 1,400-acre North Country Conservation and Education Center. Last winter, a timber harvest was conducted at The Rocks as part of the property's long-range management plan, which includes enhancing wildlife habitat and protecting the many cultural landmarks on the property. The harvest, to be completed this winter, will also yield 120 cords of firewood that will heat The Rocks's buildings over the next three years, and bring revenue to support the Forest Society's conservation efforts.

"We tried to find the balance between protecting the cultural resources while also enhancing wildlife habitat here," said Nigel Manley, who has managed this property for 30 years.

The harvest area comprises the height of land at The Rocks, the site where the Big House stood from its construction in 1882 until it was torn down in the 1940s. This 19-room mansion was the summer home of John Jacob Glessner and his family, who came to the White Mountains to escape the noise and pollution of Chicago, where Glessner had co-founded International Harvester. The Glessners' son George struggled with hay fever, and Bethlehem was known for its low-pollen, high-elevation air. So the Glessners had an estate built on this hillside, complete with elaborate perennial gardens, a bee house, a greenhouse, and their own water system and electric plant.

When the Glessners were here—indeed, long before their arrival—this land, like much of the surrounding area, was cleared

The Glessner Mansion sat atop the cleared hilltop, offering views of the surrounding peaks.

of trees. From the porch of the Big House, where those hidden stone stairs now lead, the Glessners would have looked upon the peaks of the Presidential Mountains to the east and the Franconia and Kinsman ranges to the south. Now, the mountains are barely visible during the winter and early spring. By summer, when the trees have leafed out, the view is completely obscured. One of the goals of the timer harvest is to restore a view of the Presidentials for the many visitors to the Rocks—to let them see what the Glessners saw.

"Over the years I've been here, I've noticed all the old foundations and springs and stone walls becoming gradually lost to the woods," said Manley. "We were getting to the point where we'd lose everything. We needed to save where the old buildings were and save the structures that are still there."

To conduct the harvest, which covers some 150 acres, the Forest Society contracted with forester Tom Hahn of FORECO and logger Matt Cadreact of Cadreact Logging. Hahn has worked with the Forest Society on several jobs, spanning a few decades. Cadreact was selected for his finesse in the woods at both maneuvering large equipment like the feller buncher and using chainsaw work where needed.

"One challenge was all the historic buildings and foundations and wells and just finding ways for the equipment to get in and harvest around those and do the least impact on the trails system," Hahn said.

Skid roads were cut perpendicular to the trails to lessen the impact. The log landing had to be located at the south end of the harvest area, away from the parking lot and hub of daily activity at The Rocks, since logging trucks would not have been able to negotiate tight turns around stone walls.

Much of the harvest was conducted around the Mile Path, a restricted area at The Rocks, where guided tours are occasionally offered. The area includes the site of the Big House and another house called The Ledges, along with the Big Rock Summer House, a small open structure still preserved much as it was during the Glessners' time here.

"Around the Mile Path, no harvesting had happened for many, many decades," Hahn said. "What was left was a high percentage of mature trees and low quality and defective trees. There was a high percentage of mature or over-mature Balsam fir. A lot of it had already died and was on the ground."

Normally, an over-mature stand like that might be clear-cut, but that treatment didn't fit with the Forest Society's management plan. Instead, the harvest included several smaller patch cuts, which allowed for salvaging large white pines for use as saw logs and provided enhanced wildlife habitat.

"These patch cuts make good habitat for woodcock and other migratory birds that had stopped coming in," said Manley. "Deer, bear, wild turkeys, and moose all need new growth in order to eat. The forest needs to have several habitat types in order for wildlife to live successfully."

Areas with mixed hardwoods and firs were thinned of mature fir trees, which will allow the younger trees to get more sunlight. Mast

A Note to Landowners

Are you a landowner considering a timber harvest? Remember that you play a big role in determining how any harvest gets done.

"Many landowners I've met are surprised at how involved they can and should be," said Nigel Manley, Rocks director. "Some have let the forester and the logger make all of the decisions and then they've been unpleasantly surprised at what the results looked like."

Here are a few tips to make sure there are no surprises.

1. Hire a forester to work with you on a forest management plan. Consult first with your UNH Cooperative Extension county forester to get his/her free advice.
2. Understand that the forester is there to listen to your goals and objectives and come up with a prescription for meeting them. Be sure to tell the forester what you would like to see on your land. If you have a long driveway, for example, what do you want to see as you travel along it? What will the harvest area look like from your kitchen window?
3. Get a perspective on the broader landscape. Are there already a lot of fields or is it mostly mature forests? What wildlife habitat may be scarce or missing?
4. Are there certain trees you want to stay, regardless of their market value? Inform your forester to leave them.
5. Have the forester show you where and how wide the skid trails will be, and have them modified if they cut too close to buildings or driveways.
6. Include in your research a visit to a forest that has been recently logged, preferably one that was also planned by your forester.

"It's got to be a real back and forth between you and your forester, so you know what to expect," Manley said. "Your land is a big part of you, so take the time to do the research."

Photo by Nigel Manley.

Logger Ryan Matuszewski works on felling one of the larger white pines in the recent harvest.

trees like oak and beech were left as food sources for various animals. Some taller pines, where turkeys often roost, were also left.

Regardless of the good intentions and careful planning of the harvest, Manley started fielding calls from concerned area residents nearly as soon as the first tree was felled. Because the harvest area is adjacent to Route 18 and I-93, the work being done was obvious to passersby. Among those voicing consternation were several students from Profile School, the local middle and high school adjacent to the harvest area.

Manley invited the school's Outdoor Education class to tour the harvest area with him and explained what was being done and why, providing a lesson in the ways a timber harvest may foster a healthier forest. He also conducted a tour in January, along with Hahn and Cadreact, for those curious about the harvest.

"Because it was so public, it's opened up a dialogue for us with people we don't normally talk with," Manley said. "The Profile School group will come back next year to see how the landscape has changed in a year's time."

It's likely the students—and others—will marvel at how quickly a forest can transform, how wildflowers bloom in a newly opened space, how signs of past human habitation emerge from a forest when tall trees are felled, how views change over time. Manley is also planning to create tours along the Mile Path so visitors may imagine how this place looked long ago.

Nigel Manley (center) accepted the award from Jamie Seidel (left) and John O'Brien (right) of the Grafton County Conservation District at Polly's Pancake Parlor in Sugar Hill.

Award Celebrates Good Stewardship at The Rocks

The Grafton County Conservation District recognized The Rocks Estate, its director Nigel Manley and consulting forester Tom Hahn of Forest Resources Consultants (FORECO) with its annual Forest Steward of the Year award in April. The award is given for exemplary forest stewardship, which in this case included the Christmas tree farm, the forested areas of the Rocks and its agri-tourism activities such as the popular N.H. Maple Experience tours.

He'll also be able to point out the "nests" in beech trees where bears build up their energy stores before winter, the places where porcupines den, the saplings nibbled by moose, and countless other ways the many types of wildlife living at and passing through The Rocks Estate will make use of a changing landscape.

Left: *In 2010, there was enough land between the mulberry tree and the river bank to support a clump of shrubs.*

Right: *The author's students enjoy the ripe mulberries during a field trip.*

Vigil for the Mulberry Tree

Each year, the river bank erodes and the life-giving tree gets closer, closer to the edge

Photos and essay by Ellen Kenny

AT THE FOREST SOCIETY'S FLOODPLAIN RESERVATION in Concord, also known as the Merrimack River Outdoor Education and Conservation Area, the path leads through a pine stand to the river bank. If you look to your right, you'll see a mulberry tree. The mulberry tree stands apart from other trees along that stretch of river. With the flat plain in front and the river behind, its shape is emphasized by the expanse of sky behind it.

I first started taking pictures of the mulberry in 2008, taken by the tree's grace and size. Since then, the landscape has changed, the river relentlessly pushing east, carving deeper into the bank with each year and bringing the mulberry closer and closer to the edge of the land. I started fearing for the well being of the tree back in 2010—a summer of such profligate mulberry production that I worried it was somehow a portent of the tree's imminent demise.

That summer I began taking notice of the berry eaters, (myself among them), that were beneficiaries of the tree's amazing productivity. I met Sergio and his wife, a Greek couple who knew the value of the tree's fruit from their former homeland. Walking his dog, Sergio would have a telltale purple stain at the edge of his shirt pocket, and his wife developed a bad case of poison ivy that summer from the moat of it that encircles the tree's base. A friend of mine picked enough mulberries one July afternoon for a pie and didn't make a dent in the brisk business being done by a variety of birds, chipmunks and squirrels.

I introduced a class of local 9- and 10-year-old English language learners to the tree that year on a summer school floodplain field trip. Many of my students are refugees from Nepal, and they flocked to the tree with grins of recognition on their faces and fell on the lower branches like a flock of cedar waxwings.

"Kimbu!" they shouted, "We eat these in Nepal!" They filled their mouths and their pockets, and throughout the rest of the walk asked if we would have time to go back to the mulberry tree. Of course we did—how could we not?—and as we were leaving, several of them turned, held their palms together and bowing their heads, said, "Namaste, Mulberry Tree"—an expression of peace, honor and respect. They got back on the bus with purple stains on their fingers and pant legs.

Above: *Today, the mulberry is precariously close to the edge, as the river continues to shift eastward.*

Inset, above: *Scores of birds, chipmunks and squirrels devour the berries as soon as they start to turn red.*

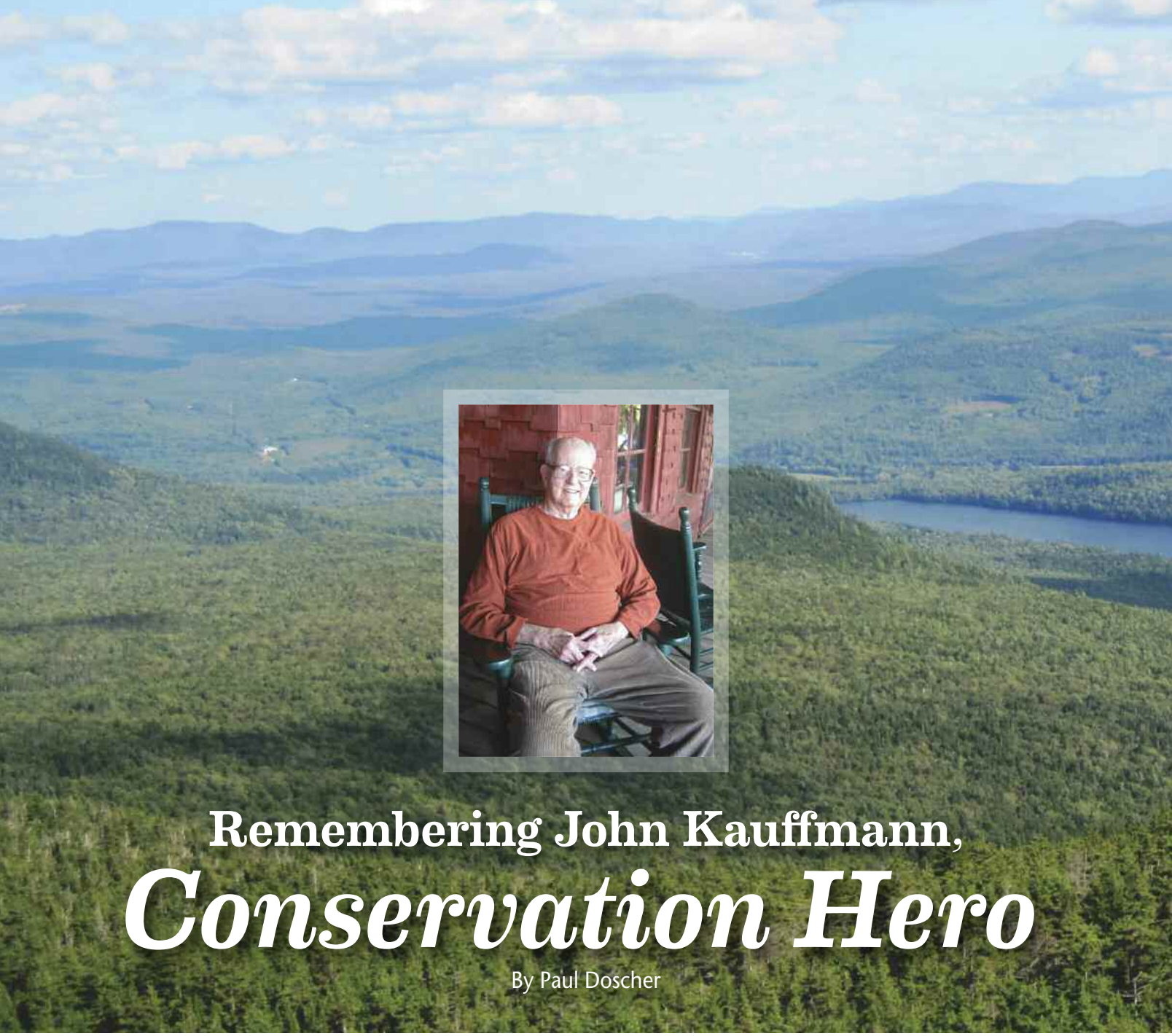
The summer of 2010 wasn't the mulberry's last stand, as I had feared. It survived that winter, and the next, and the next, and the next—each spring, with more exposure of its roots, and less of a buffer of bank between its trunk and the river. Ice storms and high winds have been hard on the mulberry, shearing off limbs.

Last summer, I watched the goings on in its branches every morning I could, camera in hand, with a sense of appreciation made sharper by the awareness of inevitable change and loss.

The first birds to partake were the cedar waxwings, followed closely by robins. As more berries turned their rich purple color, catbirds and thrashers came. By early July, robins seemed to be the dominant birds, taking enough time from their eating to harass some of the other diners. Kingbirds had a preference for the highest branches at the crown, where they could survey the river in two directions and gather in the earliest rays of the morning sun. Some lucky mornings I was able to glimpse the male scarlet tanager, who would zip into the upper branches, grab a berry and peel out, usually before I had time to focus my camera. The female tanagers stayed longer, preening and catching the sun. The female rose-breasted grosbeaks were particularly good subjects to photograph, as they would take a berry and then hang onto it for minutes while their beaks stained purple.

By the second week in July, the mulberry hosted a free-for-all of birds: song sparrows, robins, waxwings, catbirds, woodpeckers. One morning after the berries were beginning to be sparse, the tree was full of chickadees—the first time I'd seen them in the mulberry. Chipmunks and squirrels enjoyed the bounty, too, until the end of July when the berries became sparse.

I'm immensely grateful to have had the time to watch how this single tree, wounded as it was by harsh winters and hanging so precariously to a fragile bit of riverbank, has fed the neighborhood all these years. Namaste, mulberry tree.



Remembering John Kauffmann, *Conservation Hero*

By Paul Doscher

John Kauffmann explored and helped to create the 8 million-acre Gates of the Arctic National Park in northern Alaska before turning his attention to the watershed that includes Christine Lake in northern New Hampshire. Inset photo courtesy of George Hamilton.

One hundred and seventy five acres of clean, clear water. Surrounded by tens of thousands of acres of conservation land. Christine Lake in Stark is one of the lesser known jewels of the Granite State. Unlike many of our popular lakes and ponds, this one is essentially undeveloped. The shoreline is dotted with just a small collection of historic rustic lodges. And this will never change. The entire watershed of Christine Lake is protected, conservation land.

Credit for much of this extraordinary achievement goes to one exceptional man: John Kauffmann.

I first met John in 1988 when then Forest Society President/Forester Paul Bofinger sent me north to discuss John's plan to protect the land he and the Percy Summer Club owned surrounding Christine Lake. I didn't know much about Christine Lake at the time, but the idea of protecting the entire shoreline of a north country lake that shared a watershed with the recently protected Nash Stream Forest was intriguing to say the least.

I also didn't know much about John Kauffmann. I was, at the time, what Bofinger called a 'green bean' land protection specialist. Only two years into the job, Bofinger decided I was the right guy to help his friend. In the conservation business, I was to John Kauffmann like a 12 year-old little league pitcher is to Pedro Martinez. Thankfully, I didn't know what I was getting into, or I would have suggested someone more experienced for the job.

Photo (taken from the summit of North Percy Peak) by Brenda Charpentier.

His long-time friend, the author John McPhee, summarized John's background best:

This was his path: First, after college, he was a diplomatic courier, flying the world from country to country with a briefcase chained to his wrist. He was a reporter for the Washington Star and a writer for National Geographic, and a secondary-school teacher for a couple of years before he joined the National Park Service, where he long served in its Park Planning and Special Studies division. He was instrumental in the planning of various components of the park system down here in the contiguous 48 states, most notably Cape Cod National Seashore and the C&0 Canal National Historical Park. Then came 1971 and the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, which led to the apportionment of Alaskan terrain and opened possibilities for national parklands on an unprecedented scale.

No one saw the possibilities in that Act of Congress more acutely than John. He put in for a transfer, got one, went to Alaska without looking back, and built himself a house. It was not a cabin. As a planner, he was given the central Brooks Range, the north of the far north. Scouting there, exploring the terrain in season after season, he backpacked hundreds of miles over sedge tussocks, where just keeping your balance is extremely difficult, let alone attempting to move forward. The specific result of John Kauffmann's studies—of his project planning and his recommendations, his years of work in Alaska—is Gates of the Arctic National Park, more than 8 million acres in the central Brooks. And his funda-

Christine Lake's shoreline remains mostly undeveloped and pristine, surrounded by conserved land in Stark. Photo by Steve Junkin.

mental plan for Gates of the Arctic can be summarized in the words "Do nothing. Leave it as the wilderness it is."

I quickly learned that John's roots were also firmly planted in New Hampshire. From the time he was a child he spent summers at Christine Lake with his family at the Percy Summer Club, in rustic lodges built along the western shore. Those early summers clearly had an impact on John because later in life, when he saw the opportunity to secure the protection of the lake and its watershed, he took on the challenge with a passion. First he engaged the state and helped persuade policy makers to manage the surrounding Nash Stream watershed with an eye first toward protecting the lake and its viewshed. As his contribution to the cause, he would donate land he owned immediately around the lake to the Forest Society. He persuaded the other members of the Percy Summer Club to donate a conservation easement to protect their land that encompassed all but a tiny portion of the shoreline of the lake.

I had the enormous honor of being his partner in much of this pursuit. As a land protection specialist, I spent many hours walking the land with John, hearing its history and planning for its protection.

He was a delightful hiking companion, alternately sharing his encyclopedic recollections of the long history of the summer club, and marveling at the ability of the forest to reclaim land once pastured by cows. Once, while walking along a long abandoned access road to the lake (it had been replaced by a better road in a different location), John was suddenly attacked from above! A goshawk had built a nest in a large tree over the old road and apparently was unhappy to be disturbed by this chatting duo of humans. John, being the taller of the two of us, took a hit to head and was bleeding from the wound. He muttered something to the effect of "no worries, it's only a flesh wound," and we continued on our walk. He had more important things on his mind!

John eventually donated all the land he and his family had once owned and then took on the task of purchasing a list of additional lands that he knew were essential for the protection of the larger landscape. That landscape included not only the watershed of the lake but also the Devil's Slide, a geologically unusual peak that towers over the village of Stark. Today, the Kauffmann Forest, 2,000 acres, is one of the Forest Society's largest reservations, containing carefully managed forest, important wildlife habitat, exceptional views, and special "forever wild" places that few people ever see. One of my favorite hikes in New Hampshire is the trail that John secured from the North Side Road in Stark to the top of the Devil's Slide.

John never married, but he left behind a huge family of friends and admirers whom he mentored, taught and entertained. He was a talented musician and writer, and his serenades of old-time songs

If you'd like to visit the Kauffmann Forest, you'll find directions, maps and trail information on the Reservations Guide at **forestsociety.org**.

at Percy Summer Club gatherings were loved by both young and old. He was amazingly modest for a man of such talent, and in all the years I knew him I rarely heard a story in which he was the center of attention. In fact, I didn't learn of the significance of his work in Alaska until I read his book, *Alaska's Brooks Range*, many years into our friendship. Most importantly, my most durable memory of John will always be the enthusiastic smile that always appeared on his face whenever he greeted me.

John's gift to New Hampshire was the protection of a unique and special place that he carefully tended for decades before transferring that responsibility to the Forest Society. That legacy of stewardship will be long remembered. Further, his bequests to the Forest Society, as well as the Maine Coast Heritage Trust (he lived in Maine for many years and was a donor and board member of MCHT) and Alaska's Twin Flower Fund, will help protect more land, ensure its wise stewardship and guarantee that John's legacy will never be forgotten.

Paul Doscher retired from the Forest Society in 2014. He remains active in conservation as a board member of the Piscataquog Land Conservancy, a trustee of Trout Unlimited and as a conservation consultant. He can be reached at padoscher@comcast.net.

Bequests Continue John Kauffmann's Work

John Kauffmann used his passion, skills and resources to build an enormous legacy in the North Country. Though he died in 2014, his work continues because he devised bequests to organizations that share his conservation philosophy, including the Forest Society.

If you would like to consider the Forest Society in your estate planning, please contact Susanne Kibler-Hacker at (603) 224-9945 or skhacker@forestsociety.org.

IN THE FIELD

Family Educational Series Mixes Wildlife, Magic and Art

The annual Bretzfelder Park Family Educational Series is a free series of entertaining programs held at Bretzfelder Park in Bethlehem each August and February. Owned by the Forest Society and managed in cooperation with the town of Bethlehem, the park was bequeathed to the Forest Society in 1984 by Helen Bretzfelder in memory of her father, Charles, and includes a classroom, educational trails, a pond and several picnic sites. For more information about any of the programs listed below, visit www.therocks.org, email us at info@therocks.org, or call (603) 444-6228.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 3, 7–8 p.m.

Magic and Nature: A Natural Connection

Sally Sherrard of Littleton uses the magic skills passed down from her father, as well as her degree in Early Childhood Education, to create entertaining and educational programs enjoyed by all ages. With a magic touch, we will discuss animals with bad reputations and how they help our environment. We'll learn the New Hampshire state bird, tree, rock, flower, mammal, amphibian, reptile, insect and fish, through magic.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 10, 7–8 p.m.

Animals with Bad Reputations

The public image of some animals is often inaccurate and responsible for many negative attitudes. Join a naturalist from the Squam Lakes Natural Science Center along with three live animals native to New Hampshire to consider the beneficial role these creatures play in our natural world.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17, 7–8 p.m.

Guided Walk on the Wildlife Habitat Trail

Local naturalist Priscilla Didio will lead visitors through the 1.5-mile interpretive trail, which traverses several wildlife habitats, including wetland, beaver marsh, spruce-fir forest, and deciduous forest.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 24, 7–8 p.m.

Sand Painting for all Ages

Local artist Kristen Pabatschnig will share the connection between sand painting and the history of Native American art during this hands-on program. Participants will be invited to create a sand painting from a template or their own original design and will end the evening with a finished piece to bring home. The program is open to participants of all ages; adult supervision may be required for young children.

See more events at www.forestsociety.org.

A Seven-Year Growth Experience

Students become tree farmers from start to finish

By Meghan McCarthy McPhaul

On a sunny day in May, 19 kindergarteners bound up a hill at The Rocks Estate in Bethlehem. Near the top they reach half a dozen rows of Christmas trees in various stages of growth. One row is marked with a sign that reads, "Planted 2016/Harvest for Class of 2022, and it is here these excited children will, on this fine spring afternoon, plant fir saplings that will grow into the Christmas trees they'll return to harvest as sixth graders..

These young students will come back each year until then to this spot, and on each visit they'll learn about a different aspect of Christmas trees and help tend their growing crop. Students from Bethlehem Elementary School, not far down the road from The Rocks, have been planting, tending and harvesting trees here for more than 20 years as part of the Forevergreen Program.

Photos this page and opposite by Meghan McCarthy McPhaul.

After planting their young trees on a May field trip to The Rocks, kindergarteners from Bethlehem Elementary School gather at the sign marking their stand.

"When we started the program, there were kids who weren't going outside much, or they were doing things like hiking but had never grown anything," said Nigel Manley, manager at The Rocks, which beyond being a tree farm is the Forest Society's North Country Conservation & Education Center. "We wanted the kids to be able to get out and look at some form of farming."

The students don't simply observe, however. In first grade, students return to the trees they planted the previous spring and learn about what nutrients fir trees need to grow well. Then they set to work fertilizing their trees.

The second and third grade classes discuss the differences between the monoculture of a tree farm and the natural community of a forest. They study the variations and speculate about which animals might prefer the forest over an orderly row of fir trees. And they learn about what happens at the farm to both support the animals living there (late mowing so ground-nesting birds are not disturbed, for example) and to discourage potentially harmful ones from damaging trees (weeding around the base of trees so mice are unlikely to burrow there in winter and eat the bark).

Older students discover different methods for removing and controlling weeds in the Christmas tree fields, then they do some weeding. They also learn about the importance of shearing the trees to encourage that perfect Christmas tree shape. Sixth graders—before harvesting their trees—get a lesson on how to grade Christmas trees and the intricacies of selling to wholesale, retail and mail order markets.

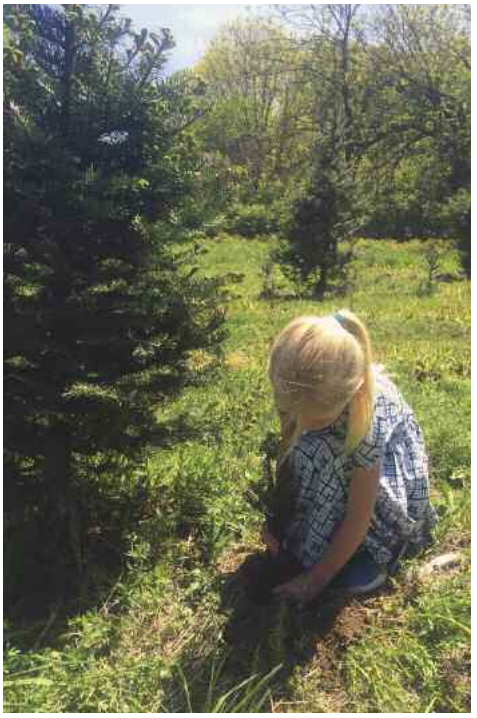
Along the way, these students learn more than what it takes to plant and tend a crop. They learn, too, about marketing and the economic impact this Christmas tree farm on the hill has on their hometown—through providing jobs, maintaining open space, and promoting tourism that brings people from other areas here to shop, stay in local inns, and eat at local restaurants.

"The teachers are committed to the program, and it fits nicely with our science program," says Priscilla Didio, who helped design the curriculum and retired this spring from teaching sixth grade at BES. "But it's also a really good economics lesson. The students get to really see one use for land that keeps it in open space while creating a product to sell. They see that this is a huge boon for our little town, gain a sense of stewardship, and see that open space can still be productive."

The kindergarteners, however, are not thinking about the economy as they search their marked row at The Rocks, saplings in hand, for the cylindrical holes already dug into the dirt. They've learned today that the roots of their small trees—which are about the same age as the children planting them—have to be placed straight into the ground so they will spread and collect nutrients to allow the trees to grow. They

Above: *Second graders work with Forest Society staff member Carleen Quinn (behind tree) on their growing crop of fir trees.*

Right: *A kindergartener tucks in her seedling fir.*



know how high to pile the dirt once the tree is in the ground, and to pack it firmly around the still-narrow trunk. They've learned that, just like people, each tree grows a little bit differently.

This initial introduction to the Forevergreen Program is one students retain through their elementary school years and beyond.

"The first and last years of the program I'm going to remember the most, because they were big milestones in my life," says Sierra Knapp, a recently graduated BES sixth grader. "I remember being excited in kindergarten, because I'd never planted a tree before. And I remember decorating the trees each year."

Last year, in the bustling days of December before school let out for the winter holidays, Knapp and her fellow sixth graders arrived at The Rocks for their final visit for the Forevergreen Program. After years of waiting, the school's oldest students harvested their own crop of Christmas trees—one for every classroom in the school.

It is a tradition the children in this town have maintained for decades and one that seems likely to continue for many years to come.

Meghan McCarthy McPhaul is a freelance writer who lives in Bethlehem and volunteers at The Rocks.

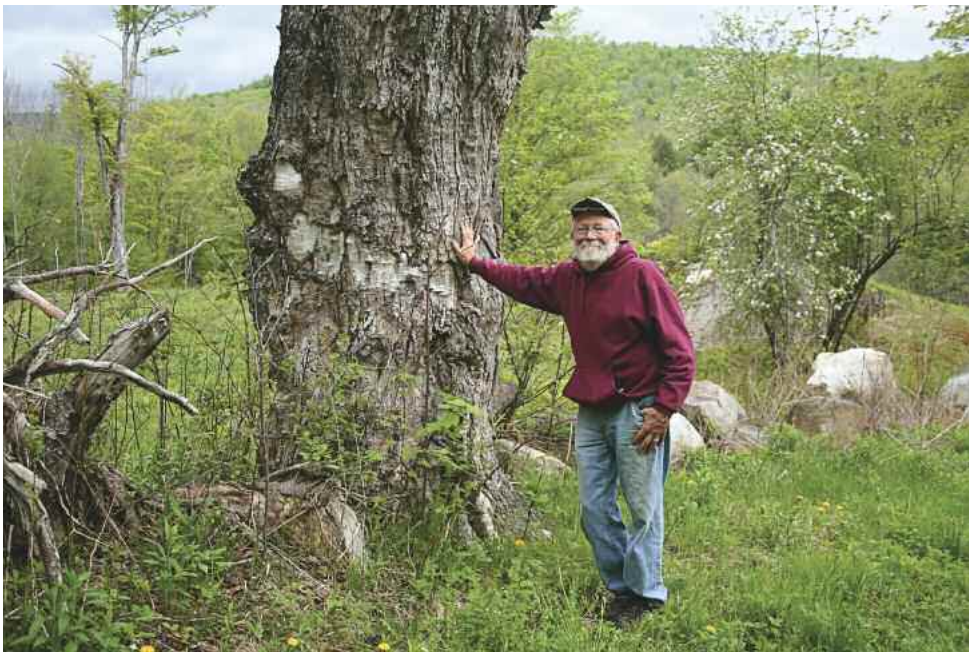
The Center of a Family, the Center of a Wildlife Haven

Landowner Conserves Habitat-Enhanced Land in Groton

By Brenda Charpentier

After a bumpy drive up a dirt road toward the headwaters of the Cockermouth River in Groton, Jim Cross parked his truck near a beaver dam and started walking toward one of four pastures—all that remains of the abandoned farm purchased by his family in the early 1950s. Five-inch hoof prints in the mud revealed that a moose had taken the same route not long before.

"We're very likely to see a moose step out here anytime," Cross said, stepping over moose scat near saplings and shrubs with nipped- off ends higher than a deer would reach. Bear droppings were even more abundant, but the animals themselves stayed out of sight except for the birds, whose chirps and melodies filled the air.



Photos this page and opposite by Brenda Charpentier.

Jim Cross stands near the maple tree that once held a swing greatly enjoyed by Cross and his siblings when they were kids.

Cross has been working with foresters and the Natural Resources Conservation Service over the past 35 years to manage his 72-acre property primarily for wildlife habitat. The results of that collaboration complement the already rich biodiversity of the headwaters area.

The old pastures, mowed regularly, are each bounded by stone walls or free flowing streams, buffered by brushy, uncut borders. Apple trees grow in three of the pastures, offering fruit that Cross refers to as nothing less than life changing.

"They're so sour that one bite will change your whole life forever," he said.

Since the early 1980s, a series of small patch cuts have been carried out in the forested part of the property. These canopy openings encourage diversity in the plant community, providing the saplings and shrubby thickets of a regenerating forest required by species like ruffed grouse and woodcock.

A large beaver dam across the main stem of the Cockermouth River has created a forest of standing dead trees providing nesting sites for birds. Blue herons have recently moved in, perhaps attracted by the growing population of native brook trout behind the dam. Below the dam, two unnamed streams join the Cockermouth on the property as it flows down toward the Sculptured Rocks Natural Area and into Newfound Lake.

The obvious value this land has for wildlife is one of the reasons Cross decided to protect the land by donating a conservation easement on it to the Forest Society. Support for that decision, according to Cross, also came from a Family Mission Statement that he and his wife Sharon have posted just above the handle of the refrigerator in their kitchen.

"We put it there because it's a place we both visit many time a day. Seeing it so often keeps our core values fresh in our minds. One of those values is treating the environment with reverence," Cross said.

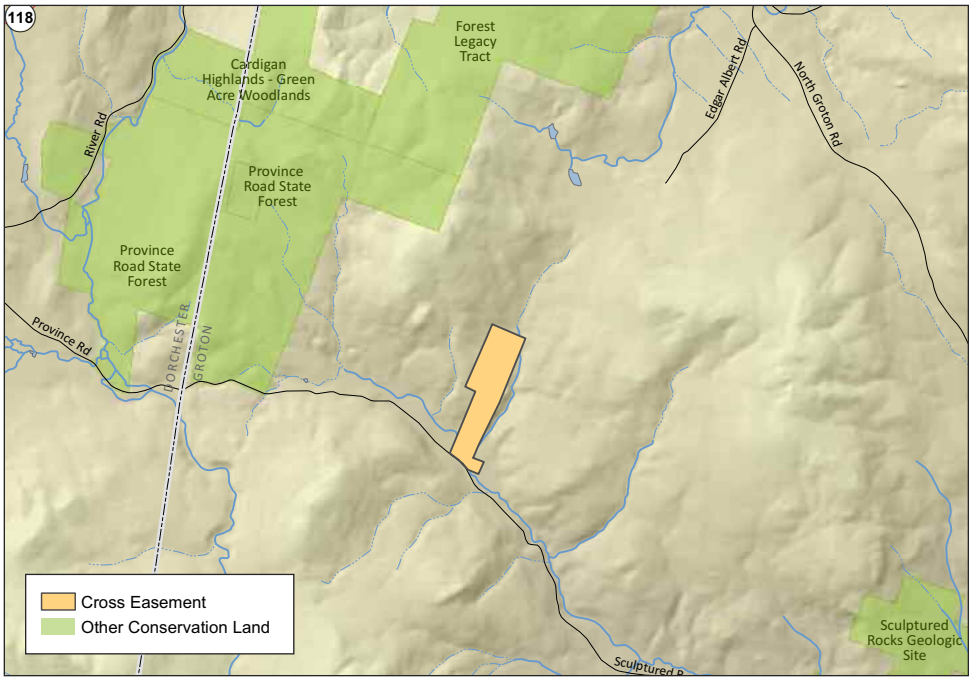
Cross's parents, James and Dorothy Cross, bought the Groton property in when they lived in Melrose, Mass., and James Sr. worked at MIT. To them, it was the perfect wild place to give their kids (Jim is the oldest of six) a place to play in the great outdoors. They propped up the old farmhouse then on the property and spent weekends and summer vacations there. This continued after the family moved to Pennsylvania, though the trips were necessarily less frequent. They fished in the river, hurled

A beaver dam on Jim Cross's easement property holds enough water back on the Cockermouth River to create a shallow pond.

themselves down the hills on makeshift toboggans and sailed across the sky on a swing in the huge maple tree that still stands sentinel over the highest pasture.

Cross returned to New Hampshire from Pennsylvania as soon as he was old enough to drive, "springing back like a rubber band", he said. He lived in Groton for a time, serving as a selectman and helping to write the town's first master plan. His work in business consulting for Fortune 500 companies took him to far-flung parts of both North and South America. Now "mostly retired," he and Sharon live in Moultonborough, but the Groton land holds a special place in the family's heart.

"My siblings are all completely on board with the conservation easement," Cross said. "Even though they're spread out from Germany to California, this place is special to all of them."



The old farmhouse is gone now, but the family still uses the land for annual get-togethers and camp-outs.

During a recent visit to see the wildlife habitat enhancements, Cross stopped at a rounded bedrock outcropping near the site of the old farmhouse. The view from the top of the outcropping included the four cleared pastures, the streams, and part of the wetlands behind the beaver dam.

"We call this the Big Rock" Cross said. "We all spent a good part of our childhoods playing up here. Ask any one of my sisters and brother, and they will tell you that this is the geographic center of our family."

That center is protected into perpetuity, thanks to Cross's generous donation of a conservation easement.

A Donation Inspired by Mountain Laurel Memories

By Brenda Charpentier

When Peter Ouellette was a young boy growing up in southern New Hampshire, he had an important job to do. He and his siblings would go out to the mountain laurel patches to collect branches with his mother, a young widow whose talented hands turned the branches into Christmas decorations to sell for extra income.

"Growing up, my mother had it really rough. There were three of us and she would have us come out with her to pick laurel, and in the evening after we went to bed, she would make wreaths and roping to sell, and that would be our Christmas," Peter said. "She would say, 'if you want a good Christmas, you've got to come out and help me with the laurel'."

Ouellette, now 77, keeps many fond memories of those earliest years, including being one of only three first graders in Mason's two-room schoolhouse that only had students enough to use one of them. "We had all eight grades in that one room and the teacher was just fresh out of Keene Normal School," Ouellette said. "I didn't miss a trick and I got a lot of information by listening to the other grades."

Little wonder, then, that decades later, after becoming a successful accountant and moving around a lot, Ouellette picked a 10-acre piece of land in Mason to buy in 1977. He was living in Massachusetts but planned to retire to Mason. "I always had a special feeling toward Mason as it was there, just down the road, I spent the first six years of my life," he said. "I would often go back there and walk through the woodland," he said.

He enjoyed the property especially in June, when the mountain laurel was blooming, and near Thanksgiving, when he collected laurel branches to make a Christmas wreath.

Top: *Peter Ouellette stands in the garden of his South Dartmouth, Mass., home.*

Bottom: *Mountain laurel in June.*

Ultimately, though, Ouellette settled into South Dartmouth, Mass., in a home overlooking Buzzard's Bay. He started to think about what could be done with the Mason property.

As a longtime Forest Society member and a supporter of conservation efforts around his home in South Dartmouth, he decided to donate the Mason property to the Forest Society's Assets to Acres program. Assets to Acres is a way for property owners to donate real estate that doesn't lend itself to becoming a forest reservation because of its size or location, but that can be sold to generate conservation funds. The funds from the sale support the stewardship of already existing reservations and help purchase more conservation easements and land.

Assets to Acres was a win-win for him, Ouellette said, because he could receive a tax benefit and support the Forest Society at the same time.

"I'm thrilled to know that I've been instrumental in helping to save some special spot in New Hampshire," he said.

The donation of a house, condo, cottage, small woodlot or country estate can be a conservation asset while providing a potential tax benefit. If you, or someone you know would like more information on how to turn a real estate 'asset' into conservation 'acres', please contact Susanne Kibler-Hacker at 224-9945. You can also learn more about Assets to Acres on our website, www.forestsociety.org (click the Land Conservation tab).

The Forest Society thanks the following businesses for their generous support.

Summit Circle *($5,000 and up)*
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Amica Companies Foundation
Autodesk, Inc.
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CA, Inc Matching Gifts Program
ExxonMobil Foundation
f5 Networks
Fairpoint Communications
FM Global Foundation
Gartner
GE Foundation
Global Impact
Green Mountain Coffee
Hewlett Packard Company Foundation
The Home Depot Foundation
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And many thanks to those businesses who give less than $250.

The Forest Society...Where Conservation and Business Meet

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

Milan Completes Phase One of First Town Forest

By J.T. Horn

The town of Milan this past spring bought land to create its first community forest, for which the Forest Society holds a conservation easement that will permanently protect the land and ensure that the forestry done on the property will be done to the highest standards. The 265-acre forest will provide the town with income through sustainable timber harvesting and provide a place for people to hike, hunt, fish and enjoy the outdoors. The project also protects important wildlife habitat in New Hampshire's North Country.

The purchase was the first phase of a conservation project that will eventually exceed 1,300 acres.

"This has been a long time coming and we couldn't be more excited," said George Pozzuto, chair of the Milan Community Forest Committee. "The Milan Community Forest Committee has been working for four years to acquire land. Owning our own productive timberland and important recreation land will bring so many benefits to Milan. We want to thank The Trust for Public Land, the Northern Forest Center, and all the funders who made this acquisition happen. I also want to thank the citizens of Milan for their strong support for the creation of a community forest for our town."

Photo courtesy Trust for Public Land.

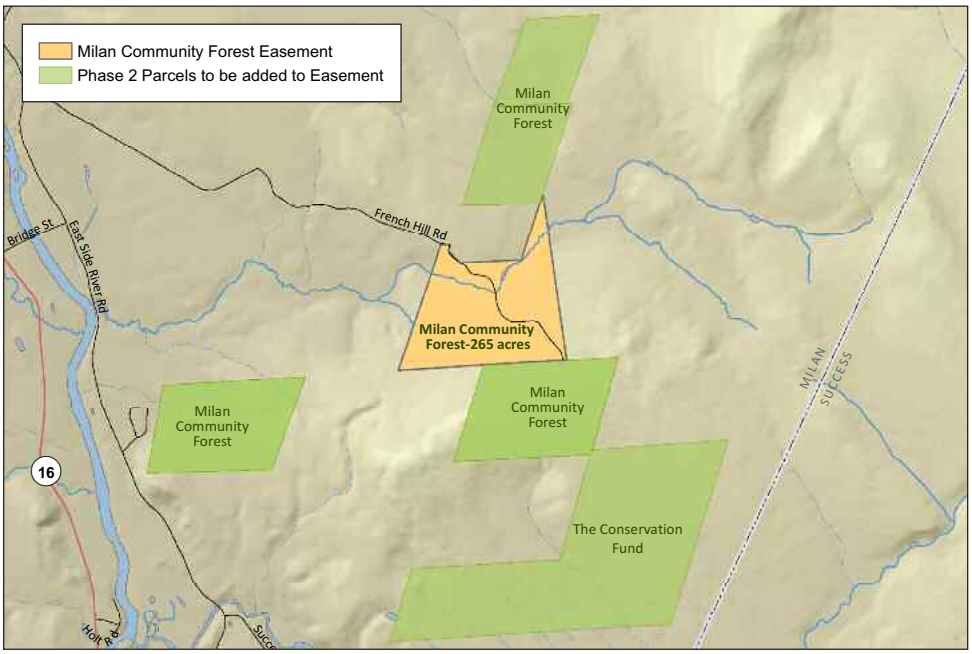
George Pozzuto, chair of the Milan Community Forest Committee, explores the 265-acre property that will offer hunting, fishing, hiking and timber harvesting opportunities in Milan.

The Milan Community Forest, on Oak Hill and French Hill near the Berlin Airport, is managed by a volunteer committee appointed by the board of selectmen. The Trust for Public Land bought the land and led fundraising, while the Northern Forest Center helped Milan organize the Community Forest Committee, create a governance structure, and develop a forest stewardship plan.

The $320,000 cost to purchase the parcels came from several sources, including private money, and state and federal funds including the U.S. Forest Service Community Forest Program, The Open Space Institute's Community Forest Fund, the N.H. Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) and the Town of Milan.

The Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation awarded a grant to fund expert technical assistance from the Northern Forest Center and The Trust for Public Land to launch and complete the project. The Law Firm of Samaha, Russell and Hogdon of Littleton, N.H., also provided pro-bono legal services to The Trust for Public Land and the Town of Milan.

The property includes productive timber stands and some wetlands feeding Leavitt Stream, which flows into the Androscoggin River. The property also has a small field that may eventually be developed into a trailhead parking area.



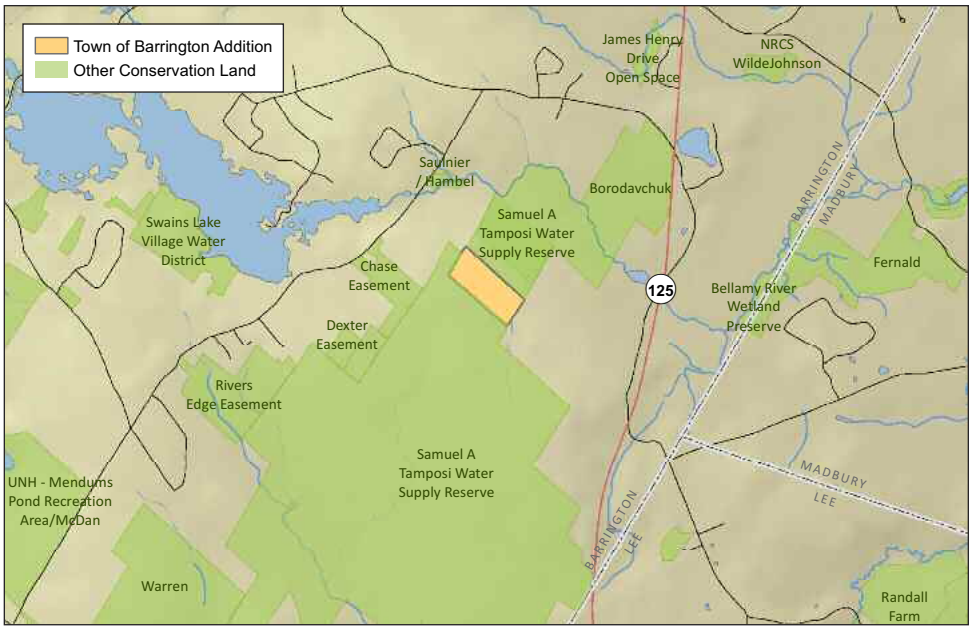
Keeping a Good Thing Going in Barrington

In a win for clean drinking water, the Town of Barrington donated a conservation easement on a key, 35-acre addition to the Samuel A. Tamposi Water Supply Reserve to the Forest Society.

The property lies between two larger tracts of Reserve land already under easement with the Forest Society. The town reached out to the private landowners to negotiate a sale to strengthen the Reserve's water quality protection and wildlife habitat.

"We think of this property as the keystone piece linking to the other larger pieces of land," said John Wallace, chair of the Barrington Conservation Commission. "It was in many ways a no-brainer to try to make it happen."

The Tamposi Reserve is a 1,400-acre area in the headwater area of the Oyster and Bellamy Rivers and the Bellamy Reservior.



The town originally purchased and protected the Reserve in 2001 as part of a N.H. DES Water Supply Protection grant.

The latest addition was made possible through Barrington's Conservation Fund and grants from the Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership, the Bafflin Foundation and the Fields Pond Foundation.

Register for the Forest Society's 2016 Annual Meeting Sept. 24 at the Three Chimneys Inn, Durham

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

Dudley Dudley, political activist

Dudley Dudley, of Exeter, was a freshman state legislator when she helped spearhead the successful effort to save Great Bay and the Isles of Shoals from a proposed oil refinery in the 1970s. Come hear her story of how a local, grassroots campaign stopped powerful corporate interests led by shipping magnate Aristotle Onassis from marring some of New Hampshire's greatest natural assets.

Please join us for field trips, an excellent dinner and presentation at the Three Chimneys Inn in Durham (left). Field trips start at various times at nearby locations in the Seacoast Region. All field trips will end around 3:30 p.m. Participants should plan to arrive at the Three Chimneys before 4:30 p.m.

Field trip options below — see back cover for registration details

1. Sweet Trail Sampler

Dame Forest, Durham and Newmarket
1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The Sweet Trail is a 4-mile hiking path in Durham and Newmarket that passes through conservation lands protected through the Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership (GBRPP), in which the Forest Society is an active participant. We will enjoy a 2-mile hike along the northern portions of the Sweet Trail as it passes through the Forest Society's 136-acre Dame Forest. Beautiful beaver marshes, vernal pools and abundant wildlife including herons, turtles, and osprey are just some of the treats in store on this trek. The terrain is relatively flat, with some gentle grades. Bring binoculars!

2. History of Powder Major's Farm and Forest

Madbury, Durham and Lee
Noon to 3:30 p.m.

The Forest Society is working to protect the forests and fields of the Powder Major's Farm in Madbury, Durham and Lee. This tour will highlight the history of the Powder Major's Farm and Forest. Speaker Liz Charlebois of the N.H. Commission on Native American Affairs will share Native American history and culture of the Seacoast region. Landowner Chuck Goss will describe the important role of the "Powder Major" John Demeritt during the Revolutionary War. Historian Randy Stevens, local co-author of *The Early Mills and Industry of Lee, New Hampshire*, will detail the history of colonial-era water-powered mills, including the "Dishwater Mill" on the Oyster River at the Powder Major's Forest.

>>> **Please reserve your spot early; we expect registrations to fill up fast. See back cover for registration options.**

3. Three-part field trip: Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge New England cottontail rabbit habitat restoration, Hills Forest, Emery Farm and Hills conservation easement

Noon to 3:30 p.m.

Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge in Newington and the Forest Society Hills Forest Reservation and conservation easement in Durham. Emery Farm farm stand.

Visit the Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Learn about New England cottontail rabbit restoration efforts and establishment of the US Fish and Wildlife Service's "Great Thicket" National Wildlife Refuge. See how the Forest Society manages brushy young forest at the Hills Forest in Durham as cottontail habitat. Take a break at the Emery Farm's farm stand on Rte. 4 for refreshments. Walk to the adjacent David Hills conservation easement to learn about protecting the scenic fields and forest on Great Bay.

4. Explore the Creek Farm Reservation in Portsmouth

Creek Farm, Sagamore Creek in Portsmouth
1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Tour the forest and wildlife habitat along Sagamore Creek in Portsmouth. This naturalist-led tour includes scenic views from the Little Harbor Loop Trail waterfront at Creek Farm and views to Little Harbor from the Wentworth Coolidge State Historic Site and adjacent City of Portsmouth land. The site of Creek Farm was first occupied by early settler Nicholas Rowe in 1640 and was one of the earliest places in New Hampshire to be cultivated by Europeans. It was later part of the 18th-century farm of the royal governor, Benning Wentworth. A 40-acre portion of the original Benning Wentworth farm was developed beginning in 1888 by Arthur Astor Carey as a summer home. Creek Farm hosted Russian and Japanese delegates to the Portsmouth Peace Treaty in 1905.

How would this view change if the Northern Pass is permitted as proposed? From the Forest Society's Rocks Estate in Bethlehem, you can see Eversource's utility right-of-way near the center of this photo. The visible poles are made of wood and are 40 feet high. If the SEC allows Northern Pass's proposal, the new hydro-electric towers would rise to more than double the height of the existing poles. Because of that height, many more poles would be visible following the right-of-way north. Farther north in Coos County, Northern Pass towers would rise up along a new right-of-way blazed through about 30 miles of forests where no utility line exists today.

Northern Pass Update:

Forest Society Takes Northern Pass Property Rights Lawsuit to N.H. Supreme Court

SEC Pushes Northern Pass Decision Back Nine Months

By Jack Savage and Will Abbott

As part of our ongoing fight to defend conserved lands from private commercial use, on June 17 the Forest Society filed a Notice of Appeal with the New Hampshire Supreme Court in its lawsuit against Northern Pass Transmission. This appeal is in response to a decision in May by the Coos County Superior Court granting Northern Pass a Motion for Summary Judgment in the lawsuit.

"We believe strongly that the Superior Court erred by not getting to the root of the private property rights issue in its decision," said attorney Tom Masland of Ransmeier & Spellman, representing the Forest Society. The Forest Society originally filed suit against Northern Pass in November 2015.

Northern Pass, as an elective transmission project that has not been determined to be necessary, is legally prohibited from using the state's power of eminent domain.

The Superior Court decision, issued by Coos County Superior Court Justice Lawrence McLeod, called the Forest Society's concerns over the proposed use by Northern Pass of the Washburn Family Forest in Clarksville "purely speculative" because a license for such use hasn't yet been granted and declined to address whether such use

The N.H. DES letter to the SEC suggests that the Northern Pass wetlands application would be improved if Northern Pass considered burying the facility entirely in northern Coos County along a previously disturbed transportation corridor.

constitutes a "taking" by eminent domain.

"The N.H. Dept. of Transportation does not have the authority to determine the property rights of landowners affected by a project like Northern Pass," Masland said. "By failing to address that issue now—nor allowing the issue to be litigated— landowners like the Forest Society would be left with no remedy. This is a complex case, and important issues remain unresolved, including the complexities and ramifications of declaring DOT the sole authority to resolve all matters involving the use of roads."

The Forest Society's appeal asks the Supreme Court to examine the issue of the use of the highway rights of way—where abutting owners of land own beneath the road—for elective, private, for-profit, transmission projects, not intended to "keep the lights on" in this state, and whether it is appropriate for "an extension cord" between Quebec and Southern New England. The Superior Court left this unresolved as it did not address that part of the argument.

"As a land trust, we have a legal and ethical obligation to defend conserved lands like our Washburn Family Forest from private development like Northern Pass," said Jane Difley, president/forester of the Forest Society. "We also believe that the principles behind this case are of interest to every landowner in New Hampshire."

In some cases, such as I-93 and some state highways, the state of New Hampshire owns the land under the roadway. At Washburn Family Forest at the Rocks Estate, the Forest Society owns the land over which the road passes.

The Forest Society has not opposed the Northern Pass project in concept, but has called on partners Eversource and Hydro-Quebec to bury the proposed transmission line entirely along appropriate transportation corridors. The current 192-mile proposal submitted by Eversource to the N.H. Site Evaluation Committee (SEC) would bury less than one-third of the line and would create miles of new overhead transmission corridor through northern New Hampshire.

The Notice of Appeal and the Superior Court decision can both be read in full at www.forestsociety.org.

SEC Update

On May 19, the N.H. Site Evaluation Committee (SEC) voted to extend the statutory schedule for review of the Northern Pass (NP) application by nine months. Under the new schedule, the SEC has targeted Sept. 30, 2017, for a final decision on the siting permit requested by Northern Pass.

After a vigorous debate, in which both the Forest Society and the Counsel for the Public argued to extend the December 2016 statutory deadline for a final SEC decision, the committee concluded that it simply does not have the appropriate time to fully review the extensive record in the case by this December. Northern Pass subsequently asked the SEC to reconsider its decision.

During the same session, the seven-member SEC subcommittee voted against granting a waiver that would have allowed Northern Pass to avoid having an independent contractor prepare a decommissioning plan for the facility. The applicant must now hire an independent contractor to prepare such a plan before the SEC adjudicatory hearings begin (likely in spring 2017). Other waivers from rules governing how much information NP must gather and provide regarding the land impacts outside the actual rights-of way it proposes to use were granted (three fully and one partially).

The SEC also held two additional public hearings, one in Whitefield on May 19 at which nearly 20 people spoke, all but one in opposition to the project, and another on June 23 in Plymouth. The Forest Society's comments focused on property rights and the inappropriate use of NP's Forward NH Fund.

"The applicant has suggested that the Forward NH Fund (a $200 million economic development fund bootstrapped to this application) is somehow a part of the way in which the project serves the public interest," commented Will Abbott, vice-president of Policy/Reservation Stewardship. "The subcommittee should reject the notion that it include benefits of the Forward NH Fund in its consideration of whether the project serves the public interest. The statute clearly suggests, and the rules reinforce the statutory language, that the task before the subcommittee is to determine whether the intrinsic energy benefits of the project warrant its approval."

DES Calling for More Burial?

In another significant development, the N.H. Department of Environmental Services (DES) sent an update letter to the SEC regarding the Northern Pass wetlands application suggesting that Northern Pass should look at avoiding significant wetland impacts of the project on the new right of way proposed in northern Coos County.

The letter suggests that the NP wetlands application would be improved if NP considered burying the facility entirely in northern Coos County along a previously disturbed transportation corridor. DES made similar comments to the U.S. Dept. of Energy on April 4, 2016, in response to the U.S. DOE Draft Environmental Impact Statement. If NP accepts the advice from DES, the substantial wetland impacts of the currently proposed right of way in Coos County would be avoided.

The DES letter and other documents related to Northern Pass and the SEC can be found at www.forestsociety.org.

Jack Savage is vp of communications and outreach at the Forest Society. Will Abbott is vp of policy/reservation stewardship.

Tree Economics: Loss of Forests Means Loss of Money

Investing in conservation yields tangible returns

By Matt Leahy

A recent report from the Carsey School of Public Policy at the University of New Hampshire found that forest cover has declined throughout Nekwjfiw England and New York over the last decade. Unfortunately, New Hampshire led the Northeast region in the percentage loss of forested land. In better news, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) reported how trees within the city limits of Austin, Texas contribute nearly $34 million in ecosystem services to that community each year. Such services include air pollution removal, reduced emissions and storm water runoff, reduced energy use for buildings, and carbon sequestration.

While it is true the USFS study focused on a specific urban forest outside our state, ample evidence exists which illustrates the positive environmental and economic impact trees have on New Hampshire. So, if forests have a quantifiable monetary benefit, is our state literally losing money as we lose forest cover? The answer to this question is an obvious yes. And this leads to a new question: How do we assure the long-term stability and resilience of New Hampshire's forests?

The challenges we face as we work for the long-term protection of our forests are twofold:

1. How to increase recognition of these values by the public and by public policy makers? Those of us in the conservation community often assume most people appreciate the multiple benefits of open spaces; the truth is the majority of the public does not have a true understanding of the complex connections between forests and the air we breathe, the water we drink, the wildlife we observe and the carbon we need to store. Trees are a vital part of the rich quality of life in New Hampshire we sometimes take for granted. Improving public awareness of the complex web of services trees and forests provide is an important part of adopting public policies that successfully contribute to the sustainability of our forests.

2. How to encourage and incentivize more private landowners to place long-term conservation protections on their properties? New Hampshire has a long held commitment to protect and respect private property rights. This belief is reflected in the fact that close to 70 percent of New Hampshire's forests is owned by individuals or families with an additional 8 percent owned by business. Given these numbers, conserving the many ecosystem services these privately owned forests provide must directly engage the private property owners.

The most noteworthy aspect of USFS's Austin study for us in New Hampshire is that it demonstrates how all the good things we associate with forests actually have a real monetary benefit. This is an important point to raise when we hear the usual talking point that we "don't have the money" to undertake additional conservation efforts. Forests and private forest owners are providing tangible services to the public, but the true financial value of these services is not fully valued. In fact, most of these services are provided for free by landowners. In traditional economic markets, a company that gives away its product for free or far below market rates will not last long. We certainly do not want an outcome like that for our forests.

The UNH study offers a compelling argument that investing in the services provided by our forests will have an enormous return for all of us.

Matt Leahy is a public policy manager at the Forest Society.

Illustration by Christos Georghiou/Dreamstime.

The Once and Future Mighty Merrimack

For thousands of years before Europeans discovered New Hampshire's rivers and mountains, a snow-fed, swollen Merrimack River sculpted its banks and shaped the lives and cultures of people living, working and drinking from it.

By Dave Anderson

I try to imagine the centuries when the Merrimack, New Hampshire's central north-south river corridor, served as the transportation precursor to railroads and I-93. The Contoocook River served similarly to I-89 and N.H. Route 9, draining the foothills of the Monadnock region to the Merrimack in Penacook. The two great rivers join at the Hannah Dustin Memorial site of an infamous and brutal colonial vs. Abenaki massacre.

I'm told "Penacook" is a native Abenaki word for "crooked place:" a broad alluvial floodplain where the Merrimack carved looping bends and oxbows across the sand of the lake bed of a post-glacial "Lake Merrimack." In so doing, the river deposited rich silt onto the flat floodplain terraces, which fed the people of the crooked place. Modern-day Concord sits at a site that was a significant year-round village of Penacooks, a band of the Abenaki tribe of the Algonquin peoples of the region destined to become a *New* England.

From high bluffs at Portsmouth Street and East Side Drive, the river slides south toward Manchester and Nashua, entering the realm of rip-rap, brick canyons and asphalt plains. The Forest Society Concord Conservation Center sits perched at the cusp of an ongoing land use change from farms, forests and wetlands to sprawling urban and suburban infrastructure.

Due south, below the Conservation Center, the river is flanked by floodplain forests of red maple, green ash and sleek silver maples that bend like reeds under floodwaters while rooted in shifting sands. North to Boscawen, Canterbury and Northfield, sandy banks form steep cliffs opposite wide fertile fields of corn, feed

Photos this page and opposite page, bottom by Ellen Kenny. Opposite page, top by Jerry Monkman/EcoPhotography.

Clockwise from top: *A calm stretch of the Merrimack River where it passes through Concord; a wood duck swims among pickerel weed; a bald eagle looks out over the river.*

Left: *Paddlers near Canterbury find the Merrimack to be a still-forested waterway. Downstream through Manchester and Nashua, an increasing number of buildings rise up along its banks.*

Below: *A kingfisher scouts for fish, frogs and insects from a birch tree leaning over the river in Concord.*

hay, turf grass and ornamental nursery stock. Fertile soil remains the wealth of the riverbank communities.

Remaining riparian wildlife habitats of the Merrimack are surprisingly wild along stretches of a former industrial sewer. Now tree swallows, bank swallows and kingbirds—colorful orioles and thrushes nest each May. Kingfishers rattle over mudflats where herons prowl for pickerel and green frogs. Beavers, otters, muskrats and mink build lodges or dig bank burrows. Bobcats, foxes and coyotes hunt and deer, turkeys and an occasional moose haunt the rich riverine wetlands. Bald eagles and ospreys have returned in greater numbers. Ducks, geese and wading birds use quiet coves and backwaters as critical migratory feeding and staging areas.

Compared to steep, rocky-granite northern and western uplands of the headwaters, the lower broad reaches support far greater numbers of turtles—common painted turtles and snapping turtles as well as rare and increasingly imperiled Spotted, Blandings and Wood turtles. Biological diversity hovers as fragile and spectacular as a bejeweled summer damselfly at the very doorstep of "Asphalt America." Remaining undeveloped stretches—sandy islands and shady riverbank cove forests—harbor vestiges of the former wild Merrimack.

The river flows south through brick and cement urban canyons: Manchester, Nashua, Lawrence and Lowell. The Merrimack is flanked by vast plains of big box retail stores, forests of wooden triple-decker tenements and outlying suburbs, parks, manicured lawns, cement curbs, fire hydrants on the banks of feeder streams paved with asphalt and pocked with steel grated curb drains feeding water to storm sewer pipes.

It's an increasingly thirsty landscape along the lower Merrimack. Municipal water supplies can become strained during summer droughts. Manchester Waterworks' Lake Massabesic, and the Pennachuck Waterworks tap surface supplies fed by subsurface groundwater aquafers.

In recent months, news reports detail a spreading specter of PFOE contamination in drinking water wells in Merrimack, Litchfield and Manchester from the Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics factory. A National Cancer Institute, Dartmouth College and State health department study links increased incidence of bladder cancer to residual arsenic from pesticide contamination of older New England drinking water wells. The role of New Hampshire's central river as both drinking water source and municipal storm sewer is again brought into sharp focus.

Standing on the bluff, we can look to the thirsty south or to the verdant forests northward to its headwaters. Which way for the Merrimack in the future?

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

Photos by Carrie Deegan.

Left: *Volunteer land steward Summer Brooks checks a vernal pool for amphibian eggs at the Indian Arrowhead Preserve in Surry.*

Right: *The eggs of a Jefferson salamander, a species of special concern in New Hampshire.*

Discoveries in an Out-of-the-Way Place

By Carrie Deegan

Land steward Summer Brooks is pretty sure she won't ever get bored at the Indian Arrowhead Forest Preserve in Surry. At 284 acres, Indian Arrowhead isn't the biggest Forest Society reservation in the area, nor is it a very busy place; Summer has encountered only three other humans on the forest during dozens of steward visits. There's no kiosk to maintain, and no erosion on the trails. You might think there isn't enough there to keep Summer busy, but you'd be wrong.

Summer is fascinated with all the things that grow, flit, creep and crawl at Indian Arrowhead Forest.

"I spend a lot of time looking at the ground," she said, "just watching and not moving very fast. Putzing, basically."

Patience is key for observing wildlife, and Summer admits that she could easily spend an hour in one spot, waiting for a bird to hop out into just the right light for a photo. She also knows that can be fairly maddening for others.

"My partner Sarah doesn't even like to hike with me unless she's sure I'm not bringing my camera," she said, adding with a small grin, "but that doesn't really work either, because even if I don't have it, I still want to stop and look at everything."

An interest in tracking led her to purchase a game camera to see what kinds of animals are active when people are not around. The camera has captured everything from inquisitive bobcats to tiny mice scurrying along the stone walls, to startled deer to families of raccoons mucking through a vernal pool in search of their dinner.

"Mostly I get squirrels and raccoons," she said, "but I was really excited about a long-tailed weasel recently, just because I'd never seen one before."

With all their video and photo attachments, Summer's land steward reports are some of the most entertaining for Forest Society staff, but they are also helping us document species we didn't know existed on this property. For example, she has confirmed that many of the wet forest depressions at Indian Arrowhead do indeed contain obligate vernal pool breeders like spotted salamanders and wood frogs. When I accompanied her on one of these visits, Summer donned her rubber boots and waded right into the muck, scooping up double handfuls of greenish egg masses to examine more closely.

"These look like they could be Jefferson's salamander eggs," she said. "See how they have a looser jelly-like consistency?"

We snapped photos to e-mail to the experts, and sure enough, two days later Summer had confirmed Indian Arrowhead's first record of Jefferson's salamander, a species of special concern in New Hampshire.

Summer told me the best thing about the land steward program has been having a good excuse to get out in the woods and learn about all of these creatures.

"Without something to do with everything I'm learning, it seemed a bit silly," she said.

Now that she's got the perfect excuse, Summer has done little hiking anywhere. Part of that is convenience, as it's only two miles from her home, but, "I know where to find whatever I'm looking for here. If I want to spend the morning hanging out in a peaceful grove of conifers, I know exactly where to go."

In a little over a year, the connection she's developed to this forest is strong. And it won't ever get old.

Carrie Deegan is the manager of community engagement and volunteers at the Forest Society.

Trees Not Towers
No Northern Pass

Keep up the Fight for What's Right on New Hampshire's Landscapes

It was nearly six years ago that most of us first heard of a proposal called "Northern Pass," a proposed overhead extension cord through New Hampshire to serve the interests of Hydro-Quebec and the company known today as Eversource. Northern Pass promised us more than 1,100 towers extending well above treeline through some of our most treasured scenery. If they had had their way back then, Northern Pass would be nearly complete by now.

Today the fight against the 192-mile transmission line continues. Thanks to the thousands who have participated in the process, stood up for New Hampshire, and donated to the Trees Not Towers Defense Fund, Northern Pass is still a long way from becoming a reality. When we said it should be buried along roads, they said it couldn't be done—then flip-flopped and said they would bury 60 miles.

The Forest Society believes that if Northern Pass is to be built, it should be buried entirely along appropriate roads. The U.S. Dept. of Energy has shown how that could be done. Other similar projects are doing it. It's time for Northern Pass to get with the program.

Your donation today will help the Forest Society defend New Hampshire's scenery and conserved lands from Northern Pass, through the state permitting process and in court. As a land trust, we have a legal and ethical obligation to defend our lands from private commercial development like Northern Pass. With your help, we can do exactly that.

A van carrying members of the N.H. Site Evaluation Committee along the proposed Northern Pass route passes by the Forest Society's Rocks Estate earlier this year.

☐ **YES, I WANT TO HELP BURY NORTHERN PASS**

Name: _____

Address: _____ Town/City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

☐ Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution for $_____

☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard Number: _____ Exp. date: _____ Security code: _____

Please mail the completed form to: Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests 54 Portsmouth Street, Concord, NH 03301. Or donate online at www.forestsociety.org.

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

Thank you for your help!

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It's Time for Early-Bird Registration!

2016 ANNUAL MEETING • SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 • DURHAM



Creek Farm (left) and the Sweet Trail (center) are two destinations for Annual Meeting field trips in September. The dinner and keynote address will be held at the Three Chimneys Inn (right) in Durham.

HIGHLIGHTS:

Noon to 3:30 pm — **FIELD TRIPS AND WORKSHOPS**

- **Sweet Trail Sampler walk, Dame Forest, Durham and Newmarket**
- **History of the Powder Major's Farm and Forest, Madbury, Durham and Lee**
- **Great Bay New England Cottontail Rabbit restoration, Hills Forest, Emery Farm, Durham and Newmarket**
- **Creek Farm Reservation along tidal Sagamore Creek, Portsmouth**

4 pm to 8 pm — **ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING**

- **Annual Business Meeting**
- **Reception and Recognitions (cash bar)**
- **Business Meeting**
- **Dinner**
- **Keynote Speaker, political activist Dudley Dudley**

COST: Early Bird price is $45 per person prior to August 31.
Regular price is $50 per person. **Final registration deadline is September 16.**

EARLY BIRD DEADLINE: AUGUST 31!

TO REGISTER:
Sign up online at
www.forestsociety.org
OR
Contact Sara at (603) 224-9945
or skrzyzaniak@forestsociety.org

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Pre-registration is required. There will be no on-site registration. Please register early as space is limited. For more information and to register, please visit www.forestsociety.org or contact Sara Krzyzaniak at (603) 224-9945 or skrzyzaniak@forestsociety.org.

See page 30 for field trip options!