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Forest Notes

NEW HAMPSHIRE'S CONSERVATION MAG

The POWER of PLACE

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Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests

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Forest Resource Consultants, LLC (FORECO)

Tom Hahn (left) and Bob Berti of FORECO.

FORECO was founded in 1980 by Robert Berti of Rumney. Today, the company has a staff of three licensed foresters including Berti, Ron Klemarczyk of Contoocook, and Tom Hahn of Ashland, and a forest technician, Jordan King of Wentworth.

Since 1981 FORECO has marked, sold, and supervised 3 million board feet of timber; produced numerous forest management plans; constructed or improved more than 30 miles of logging roads; and worked on other aspects of forestry including boundary surveying, timber stand improvement, current use assistance, and forest education and research.

Most notably, the company published a comprehensive biomass harvesting study for the State of New Hampshire and also conducted feasibility studies for potential wood-fired power plants. Recently the company worked closely with the State of New Hampshire and the Society for the Protection of N.H. Forests to conserve several properties in central and northern New Hampshire.

The company's client list includes several New Hampshire communities, including the towns of Boscawen, Bow, Epsom, Gilmanton, Henniker, Hopkinton, Kingston, Loudon, Pembroke, and Salem as well as the cities of Franklin and Concord. Most recently, the company completed trailwork, signage, and view cuts for the newly conserved Winant Park in Concord.

FORECO staff members are actively involved in the Tree Farm program, NH Timberland Owners Association, Society of American Foresters, Association of NH Conservation Commissions, NH Land Surveyors Association, Forest Society and town conservation commissions. This engagement within the state's forestry community has helped FORECO to be part of a long history of cooperation that has made New Hampshire a leader for sustainable forestry, said founder Bob Berti.

"People sitting down talking and discussing and promoting good forestry, understanding where everyone is coming from, and making adjustments where they need to be made is working very well in New Hampshire, and it really should be a model for the rest of the country," he said.

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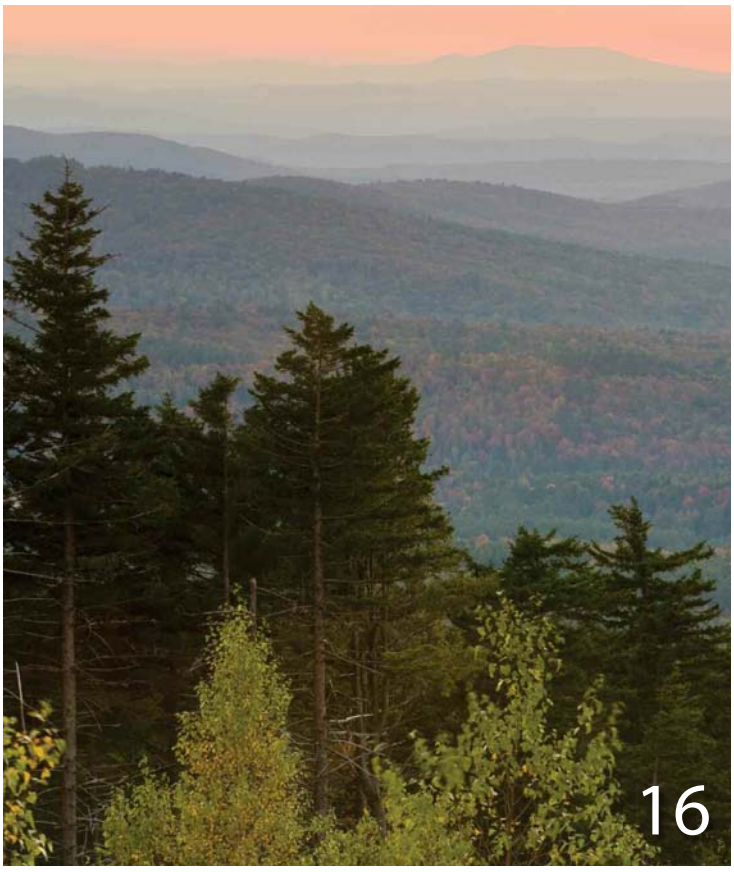

FEATURES

On our cover:
With deep roots in northern New Hampshire, Lynne Placey, John Harrigan and Rod McAllaster stand tall against Northern Pass.
Photo by Jarrod McCabe.

DEPARTMENTS

All together now

Gap Mountain is one of my favorite places—we all have them. Gap provides 360-degree views for very little effort. From the summit, Mount Monadnock dominates to the northeast with expanses of forest spread below in all directions, dotted with the slender spires of village churches.

Other viewpoints in western New Hampshire on Forest Society reservations—from Silver Mountain in Lempster, Sunset Hill in Newbury, Black Mountain on the flanks of Kearsarge, Bald Knob in Groton and others (south to north)—give a bird's eye look at the scenic and heavily wooded landscape we call the "Quabbin-to-Cardigan" region (Q2C). Forests in every direction!

It started a decade ago: an effort to protect the intact forests of this western spine of the Granite State and the area to its immediate south in Massachusetts. We gathered conservation partners—26 in all—including land trusts, trail groups and agencies—to work collaboratively to maintain the character of the region, to keep these unfragmented forests as forests while it was still possible and (somewhat) affordable.

There was mapping to be done to identify the areas with the highest concentration of conservation attributes: wetlands, quality wildlife habitat, fertile forest soils, undisturbed woods. There were conversations with landowners who wished to be part of a larger conservation effort, meetings with conservation commissions and town boards, and proposals to foundations to support the work.

Ten years later, the evidence on the ground demonstrates that it works! Tens of thousands of acres are protected, and national attention has been focused on the collaborative success. In this issue, we report on why the Q2C initiative is working and why the Q2C region warrants such effort.

New Hampshire is blessed with special places, some grand, some intimate. Collectively these special places make New Hampshire what it is—a state where tourism thrives, where the landscape is a treasured part of our daily lives, where citizens work and play. Let's keep striving together to keep it that way.

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

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

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By Jack Savage

50 Years Ago in Forest Notes

In the spring 1963 issue, 17-year-old Charles W. Scribner, a 4-Her out of Strafford, reported on his family's sugarmaking operation:

The economics of our small operation are not too impressive, but the fun, knowledge and experience gained by all of us outweighs any amount of money. Each year from our 200 taps we make about fifty gallons of syrup. Figuring a gallon at six dollars, we make roughly $300 annually. From this figure my father deducts all expenses such as cans for the syrup, slab wood for fuel in boiling the syrup, and also a little for depreciation of equipment. This leaves about $200 to be divided among those who work. When I reflect on our syrup operation, I think of the good times we have had working together and how lucky I was to be brought up on a farm, not on how much I earned!

Scribner was the 4-H forestry winner for New Hampshire in 1962, which earned him a trip to Chicago for the 4-H Congress.

Allure of the White Mountains

The new Museum of the White Mountains opened to great fanfare in Plymouth in February. The museum will offer presentations, exhibitions and programs for researchers, students and the public. Collections will be available online so visitors can enjoy the Museum's offerings remotely.

Museum director Catherine Amidon said there will be GPS coordinates displayed next to the paintings and prints exhibited in the museum, so people can visit the actual sites where the art was created.

"By having people see the White Mountain art here and then want to go out and see the sites they were painted for themselves is exciting in terms of our role as a gateway to the White Mountains," Amidon said.

Housed in a renovated church in Plymouth on the campus of Plymouth State University, the first exhibit is *Passing Through: The Allure of the White Mountains.*

For more information, including access to the collections online, visit www.plymouth.edu/museum-of-the-white-mountains.

The opening exhibit of the Museum of the White Mountains explores how the experience of visiting the Whites changed over time. The allure of the mountains increased after the Civil War as many people sought escape from the rapidly changing technology in crowded cities, but still demanded urban amenities in the mountains, *writes Marcia Schmidt Blaine.* Tourism in the White Mountains was democratized during this time as the middle class was able to seek pleasure away from their daily urban lives. They slipped the bands of their time-governed lives to re-create themselves among the mountains. At the White Mountains, *printed by Frederick Gleason, c. 1875, Chromolithograph, Courtesy of the New Hampshire Historical Society.*

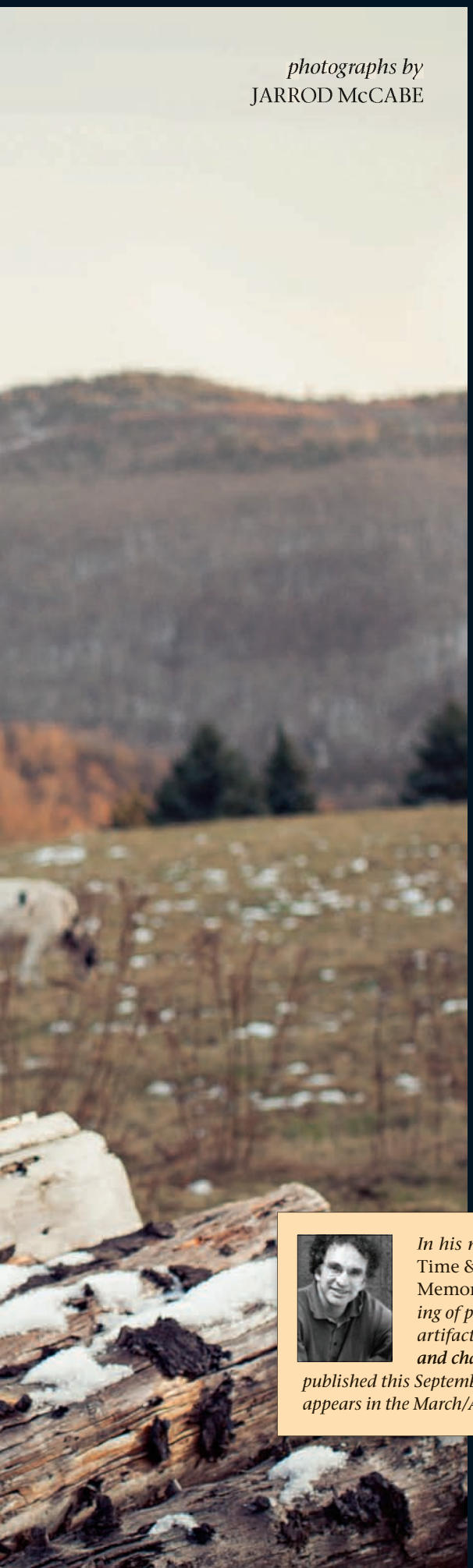
President/Forester Jane Difley and VP for Development Susanne Kibler-Hacker help Littleton Coin staffers distribute free coin maps to elementary school students in Plymouth. The Forest Society is partnering with Littleton Coin to celebrate the release of the White Mountain National Forest quarter, which features Mt. Chocorua. The quarter was officially launched in February by the U.S. Mint.

Major Donation Fortifies Easement Stewardship

The Forest Society's mission, programs and land protection efforts rely primarily on the donations we receive from thousands of people each year. However, we sometimes benefit from an extraordinary gift. This winter a Forest Society life-member who has generously supported the organization's land protection efforts contributed $500,000 to the Easement Stewardship Endowment. Proceeds from this endowment are used to support the monitoring of the more than 750 conservation easements held in perpetuity by the Forest Society. Collectively those easements protect more than 120,000 acres, including working forests, critical wildlife habitat, drinking water resources and farmland.

"Over the coming decades, pressure both from private and public sources on conserved land will be intense," said the donor. "It is absolutely critical to its mission that the Forest Society have the resources to monitor and protect the easements that it has procured on thousands of acres over the past half century."

Dairy farmer Rod McAllaster on his land in Stewartstown.



photographs by
JARROD McCABE

'MY ROOTS ARE DEEPER THAN YOUR POCKETS'

Essayist Howard Mansfield finds that love of place can run so deep that it's like faith. You can't explain it—it's just there.

In his many notable books, including Turn & Jump: How Time & Place Fell Apart; The Same Ax, Twice*; and* In the Memory House, ***Howard Mansfield*** *has explored the meaning of place and how roots, tradition, memory, and everyday artifacts provide meaning in a world geared to rootlessness and change. His new book,* Dwelling in Possibility, *will be published this September (Bauhan Publishing). A version of this article also appears in the March/April 2013 issue of* Yankee Magazine.

From a high point along Route 145, the vista takes in a magnificent expanse of the Granite State's northwestern mountains, cradling the farms and forests of Stewartstown. ***Opposite:*** *In the midst of the controversial Northern Pass project, Lynne Placey, a piano teacher in Stewartstown, has stood fast, refusing the utility group's repeated requests to purchase a right-of-way across her land.*

LYNNE PLACEY IS A 66-YEAR-OLD widow who loves teaching piano in her small house in Stewartstown, N.H. She gives lessons on her mother's instrument, which was made the year her mother was born, 1920. "I've enjoyed every minute of what I've done for 30 years," Lynne says. "People say, 'How do you listen to all those sour notes?' [I reply,] 'Because I know what's coming. I can see down the road.'" She feels "very blessed" to teach piano.

Lynne used to have about 45 students a week. She was able to just get by on that, but lately the number of students has dwindled to about 18 a week. Kids are too busy playing soccer, and not every home has a piano anymore. She doesn't have any other income, except for Social Security. Her late husband, Donald, was ill for more than 10 years, confined to a hospital bed in their living room. Lynne would look after him between lessons. Then she broke her back, and two months later, on October 8, 2009, her husband died. Like many people, she didn't have health insurance, and the long illness had wiped out their small savings.

A year later, her nephew Landon Placey came by to tell her how she could make a half-million dollars, just as he had done; her money worries would be over. He asked her not to tell anyone else about his

"You know material things are going to eventually rust out, break. I think it's more important to leave my children and my grandchildren the inheritance of land. And they can enjoy working on the land just the same as we have."

visit; this was just between them. Landon had sold his property, 114 acres, to a utilities group, Northern Pass Transmission LLC, that wanted to build big high-voltage transmission towers across his land. He was one of the first to sell, and the contract he'd signed required him to secretly offer her the same opportunity, he said.

Lynne's husband had left her 78 acres on Holden Hill, about nine miles from her home. Her land was right next to her nephew's, and it was in the path of the proposed power lines. Landon stayed quite a while trying to convince her to sell. Lynne told him what she'd told a real-estate agent who had called a month earlier: "I'll listen to what you have to say, but I'm not selling."

The Northern Pass project is a $1.1 billion joint venture of Hydro-Québec, NSTAR, and Northeast Utilities (parent company of Public Service of New Hampshire), aiming to build a 180-mile transmission line through the Granite State. To do that, they want to cut 40 new miles of right-of-way to accommodate towers as tall as 80 to 140 feet. Since it was announced in October 2010, the project has angered and divided residents of the North Country.

—

ON ONE OF THEIR FIRST DATES, DONALD TOOK LYNNE TO SEE his land on Holden Hill. "I think he was trying to impress me," she says. Donald was one of eight children who had inherited land

**Rod McAllaster could have sold his dairy farm for four million dollars.
But where would he be? He would have sold himself off the earth.**

Opposite: *Dairy farmer Rod McAllaster's barns sit nestled beneath a ridge in Stewartstown.*
Above: *McAllaster with his herd.*

from his father, Guy Placey Sr., once the largest landowner in Stewartstown. Donald was proud of that land; he hunted and fished there. Later, they took their three small girls there for cookouts, and he'd take each daughter off by herself and teach her to fish.

"It was a beautiful piece of land," Lynne says. "I grew to have a love for it like my husband's." There are good views in three directions: southeast to The Balsams' ski area, southwest to Vermont's Monadnock Mountain, and north to Pittsburg. And there's a 35-acre field that was hayed up until 25 years ago. Lynne would like to bring that field back.

Shortly after her nephew's visit, Lynne wrote a letter to local newspapers telling about her "secret" conversation: "Can you imagine what half a million dollars would do for me? I won't tell you I didn't give some thought to all that money. The gold-plated carrot was dangled in my face. Would I bite?" she wrote.

No: "On principle, the idea of a foreign corporation coming in to our pristine North Country to ruin it for their personal gain went against everything I believe in." She was not for sale. Against all that money, she put up "my conscience, my ethics, my devotion to New Hampshire's beauty, the memory of my husband, the love for my children and grandchildren, my concern for the health of those living near the towers, and more ..." She asked that everyone stand together: *Don't believe them when they tell you Northern Pass is a done deal, that your land will be worthless if you don't sell. Don't let them isolate you; don't let them scare you. Don't sell out your neighbors.*

"I know in my heart," she concluded, "I am doing what is best for my beloved North Country." She signed it "Yours truly, a devoted native."

The response was overwhelming. The letter made Lynne Placey a North Country hero. "I got cards from all over the state thanking me for taking my stand," she says. "And I got so many phone calls I recorded them on a cassette player because I wanted to be able to listen to them again."

One of those calls was from the staff of Atta Girl Records in Thornton, N.H. They invited her to Plymouth, where outside on the sidewalk, posing for a photo, they presented her with an oversized check for $2,000 that they had raised and another $650 from the Alliance Against Northern Pass and other groups. One man stopped to ask what was going on and wrote her a check on the spot.

It was a timely gift. Because of her nephew's sale, Lynne had to have her land surveyed: "I really didn't know how I was going to make ends meet, because I'd used any spare cash that I had to pay this. Still, I knew I had to do it to protect myself on Holden Hill." The money covered the survey and some of her lawyer's fees.

"The thing is: You know material things are going to eventually rust out, break," she says. "They're going to end up in the garbage or in the dump, whatever. Or the recycling plant. I think it's more important to leave my children and my grandchildren the inheritance of land. Because land is something that you can pass from one generation to the other. And they can enjoy working on the land just the same as we have, and Donald's family before him." Her grandchildren are talking about farming again, and she's agreed to sell a conservation easement to the Forest Society.

—

A STRANGER HAS COME TO TOWN. HE HAS SUITCASES FULL of money. He wants your land. Will you sell? Does everyone have a price? Is everything for sale—every last piece of land, every rock, mineral, pond, and mountain?

Around kitchen tables, families are divided: Sell or don't sell? And then your neighbor sells. He may be your nephew or the cousin you grew up with—and now he's estranged. There's a new stranger in town.

Strangers' money has drawn a line across the land, sowing discord. It has divided the Placey family. They no longer talk to those who sold out. "We pleaded with them; we asked them not to sell," Lynne says. But they wouldn't listen; they wanted the money. Her sister-in-law is distraught. She was close to her nieces; she can't believe that they would do this.

This division is repeated all over town, straining the North Country ethic of looking out for your neighbor. I talked with people who were sorting it out painfully: *He's my neighbor—I've known him my whole life—but selling to Northern Pass is a grievous wound.*

"My mother's and father's ashes are in that hayfield." He chokes up. "As are my younger brother's. I'm from the land, I'm on the land, I love the land, and eventually I'll go back to the land."

I won't shun him on the street, but I'll avoid his business if I can. They mention David Hicks, who owns Hicks Hardware on Main Street in Colebrook. He had a sign against Northern Pass in the window, but then he sold his land. Talk of boycotting his business was quickly put down; that wasn't the North Country way. One of his friends went to him, in private, and said, "How could you do that?" It was despair beyond anger, the bitter taste of disappointment that parents sometimes feel. *You know better than that, don't you?*

There's nothing left to say; it's a difference of belief. Land is an asset; land is allegiance. Two different units of measure: money and devotion. What is land worth? What is love worth? Families debated, talking past one another as if they were speaking different languages. *Love and money, and love of money:* Try having a calm family discussion about that. How do you answer when your brother says, "This place is who I am—how can we sell it?"

ROD McALLASTER COULD HAVE SOLD HIS DAIRY FARM FOR $4 million. But where would he be? He would have sold himself off the earth. This is his place; he was born here. At age 60, he's a man who knows what he's about. He loves this land. When a real-estate agent showed up unannounced at his farm, Rod told him, "I'm not interested at all. I don't even have to think about it." There was no amount of money the man could offer. "My roots are deeper than your pockets," Rod told him.

His Stewartstown farm is right in the middle of where Northern Pass wants to run its power lines. He describes each route that the surveyors tried to take near his farm or through it. It's a Gettysburg of real-estate maneuvers: They move here and are countered and move again. He lays out the routes: *This mountain, that cousin, this stream, that other cousin*. Power lines and bloodlines, land and family and money all mixed together. The Northern Pass project

Opposite: *New Hampshire journalist John Harrigan at Howard's Restaurant in Colebrook. He has been speaking out against Northern Pass's advance since the beginning of the project in 2010.*

has bought land or rights-of-way on property adjoining his on several sides.

Rod has seen his cousins around him sell. He grew up with them. "Has that led to arguments?" I ask. "Well, it don't really help anything," he says diplomatically. "Even though I don't agree with them selling, they've got the right to sell. You know, it's America. But at the same time, I've got a right not to sell." Like his aunt Lynne Placey, he has agreed to sell a conservation easement to the Forest Society.

I ask whether there's any place he would show someone to try to get that person to see the land as he does. He smiles and asks whether I have time to see the farm. Because the small dirt road uphill is blocked by some drainage work, we get on a four-wheeler to ride through the fields. Even though he takes care as we cross the gullies and cow wallows, the vehicle pitches and yaws like a small boat at sea. We pass cows, some of his 150-head dairy herd.

As we bounce along, he tells me the history. His 967 acres were once five smaller farms. He shows me the house where his grandfather was raised, the site of the house where his father and uncle were born, and where many old barns once stood. He shows me fields that have grown up, and woods they've cut that have come back. Each story is a map with a history. He's in no hurry: "This land here—trapping porcupines when I was a kid, hunting, whatever—I know every inch of it. It never gets old, not for me. I don't care if I'm up here in a blizzard—what I'm up here in. I like being here."

We stop at a field by the house where his grandfather was raised. There are magnificent views to Bunnell (a.k.a. Blue) Mountain, Mount Washington, and Vermont's Monadnock Mountain. It's a big landscape: lots of sky and green hills. It's panoramic. From farther up the hill you can see Canada.

How would he describe this view? "Spectacular. Breathtaking," he replies. "I've seen it every day for 60 years and I'm not sick of it. That's the way I feel about it. I'd rather be here looking at this view than I would somewhere else doing something that actually made money. I don't make any money here, but we've been able to stay here. That's all I ask for: just to get by and hold onto this property that's been in the family. It's important, and there's a lot of history here. You start wrecking it and the history goes with the wreckage."

He tells me about his older brother, who had no interest in farming and left to become a career Army man. Rod looks around, taking in the view as if it were all new to him. "He's seen the world," he says. "I've seen this."

—

"THERE ARE VERY FEW PLACES LEFT LIKE THIS," SAYS JOHN Harrigan. "Wild country that you could travel as far as the eye could see and maybe not see anybody. A landscape that's largely untouched by any great scars." He's been called "the voice of the North Country." He's owned three newspapers in northern New Hampshire, and today writes a twice-weekly column that runs in 13 papers. For 38 years he has written an outdoors column for the *New Hampshire Sunday News.* He knows what some from "down below" say: *We've got big power lines all around the place down here. We don't mind them. What's your problem?*

"Is there any place you could show that person to change his mind?" I ask.

"That guy represents to me the far edge of any hope, of making anybody understand the deep-rooted attachment to the land that's being so in evidence here," he replies. "It's almost like a religion. Really, you have a hard time beginning to describe to somebody why you have a religion. It's just there."

"So you're saying it's like faith?" I ask. "Yes," he answers.

Faith has been described as "the evidence of things not seen." But for people with strong ties to the land, their faith is the evidence of the things they *can* see—and that they wish big companies could see as well. John explains it this way: "I've got some meat in my refrigerator that came from a deer that a guy shot up on my first meadow, my first hayfield. I've watched that deer grow up. My mother's and father's ashes are in that hayfield ..." He chokes up. "... As are my younger brother's. I'm eating ashes and microbes that grew into grass that the deer ate. I'm from the land, I'm on the land, I love the land, and eventually I'll go back to the land."

In one of his first columns about Northern Pass, in December 2010, he wrote, "We here in the North Country are at rope's end. Having lost about all of our industry and not having [help from the state], we have only the landscape left, which is our definition, our heritage, our livelihood, and our meager future."

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LAND IS ALL WE HAVE. I WAS HAUNTED BY THE ECHO I heard in what John Harrigan said. It's been said by others who have found themselves in the way of Hydro-Québec. About 600 miles north of Rod McAllaster and Lynne Placey, the Innu—the native people of northeastern Quebec and parts of Labrador—have been protesting Hydro-Québec's installation of power lines through their ancestral lands without their permission. Once, they blocked the road to a hydroelectric complex for five days. "Our land is the last thing we have left," one person observed. "It's our identity."

In the early 1970s, few in the United States had heard of Hydro-Québec—now North America's largest power producer—until another native people, the Cree, began to protest that they were about to be flooded out of their homeland near Hudson Bay. And since Hydro-Québec wanted to sell some of that power to Americans, they were about to lose their ancient way of life so that we in the States could plug in our televisions.

The Cree have seen thousands of square miles of old hunting grounds, sacred burial grounds, and villages drowned; rivers dammed; forests clear-cut and sliced through with roads. They have negotiated long, complex agreements with the province of Quebec. It has won them some compensation: jobs, investment,

autonomy in local governments and schools. And it has lost them much of their old way of life and brought high mercury levels in fish and in people, alcoholism, drugs, and suicide. It's a complicated ledger sheet of loss and gain. They have bravely attempted to meet modern times on their own terms.

"It's very hard to explain to white people what we mean by 'Land is part of our life,'" Chief Robbie Dick of the Great Whale community said in 1990 when Hydro-Québec was looking to dam still more wild rivers and flood another several hundred square miles ("actions conservationists say would cut out the ecological heart of a rocky region the size of Massachusetts, Vermont and New Hampshire," reported the *New York Times*). "It's always the case that we are asked to give up a way of life," Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come said later. "We are asked to compromise."

You could substitute what the native peoples have said over the last 40 years for what the opponents of Northern Pass say today. The Cree, the Innu, and now a North Country piano teacher and a farmer are united by the losses they face.

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THE FACE-OFF IN THE NORTH COUNTRY BRINGS US FULL circle. Our history on this continent began with taking land. We're re-enacting the first encounters here between Europeans and natives. The first things the Pilgrims did when they went ashore on Cape Cod was to shoot at the Indians, steal a store of corn, dig up graves to take the beads, and carry off the most beautiful decorations from empty wigwams. Abenaki scholar and storyteller Marge Bruchac asks, "What kind of people would do that?" Us. We would.

In fact, we're still at it. Only now we play both parts in this drama: We are the raiders *and* the raided. We are a people who began with a huge land hunger, and there was a lot to grab. But the era of wide-open spaces is gone, and now we're "cannibalizing each other's land," in the view of one conservative scholar.

We're witnessing a new land rush. In the 19th century the settlers would race to the frontier, occupying land in advance of completed surveys or laws—squatting. They would claim more land than they could farm, fell the forests, deplete the soil, and move on. Land hunger was there at the country's founding. It's one of the grievances listed in the Declaration of Independence; the British were hemming the colonies in, preventing them from expanding beyond the Appalachians. "Land Rush," historian Daniel Boorstin writes, is "only another name for much of American history."

Against this new land rush we have only a piano teacher and a dairy farmer—and, fortunately, thousands of others who can see across boundaries and generations. One afternoon I went to see one of those people, Sara Timmons, in Greenfield, N.H., in the southwestern part of the state. Sara and her late husband, Jeff, had donated an easement to the Monadnock Conservancy: 416 acres of pastures and woods, with a bewitching view of Mount Monadnock. Their easement led to their neighbors' conserving another 534 acres. They had all discussed donating easements.

"We had met enough times," Sara says. "The paper was there. Somebody had to sign it." She told her husband, "We're going to have to go first. A lot of people will say they're interested. Taking the first step is very difficult." In 2002 the Timmonses did, and it made all the difference. They weren't facing a big power project; they saw land around them being sold off in lots.

Sara Timmons's home in Greenfield takes in views of the surrounding high country. Eleven years ago, she donated an easement to the Monadnock Conservancy.

"When I was growing up, conservation didn't exist much," Sara explains. She was raised outside Philadelphia—"pretty, pretty country"—that had boomed. Farms were being sold for housing tracts and shopping centers. She was sad to see her grandfather's farm sold. Jeff had grown up in the country riding his horse anywhere he wanted. He loved to hunt and to garden. "He loved to be outside," Sara says. "It was in both of us ... I'm very land-oriented.

I paint landscapes. I walk, I hike, I garden. I'm an earth person, if there is such a thing. I'm the kind of person who shouldn't be driving because I'm always looking at the scenery."

She knows the practical case that can be made, but that's not why she acted. "It was to save the land. Period," she explains. "My whole gut: It's something that means a great deal to me. And it means a lot to other people. The mail gal was just here. She goes, 'Oh, I have to deliver this to you here. Every time I come up here, it's the best place anywhere.' There's nobody who comes up here who doesn't go, 'What a spot.' There's something that touches people."

"What do you think it is?" I ask.

"There's a feeling in your soul about this place that I can't really express," she answers. She says what John Harrigan said: *You can't explain it. It's just there. You feel it in your soul*. Forget for a moment about looking out for miles at mountains; forget all the practical talk of forest management. The most important view is hidden at first: It's how the land lives inside that person. In New Hampshire's North Country and all around the state, I meet many people like this. They know what they're about, and where they live is a big part of that. That's why Lynne Placey can say no to $500,000 and why Rod McAllaster will not sell his farm at any price. They have something of the reach of the land within themselves.

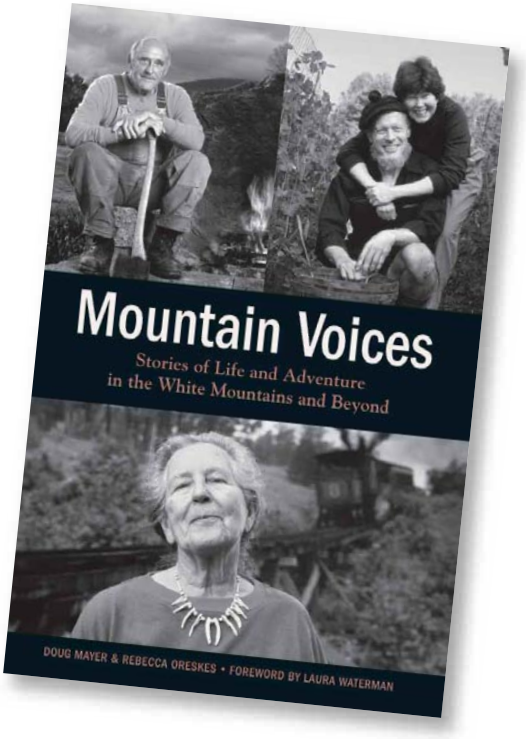
Photo courtesy Gail Scott.

Talking about 'Mountain Voices'

For anyone who knows or would like to know the White Mountains, writers Rebecca Oreskes and Doug Mayer have written *Mountain Voices: Stories of Life and Adventure in the White Mountains and Beyond*. Published by AMC Books, the book presents interviews of 15 trailblazing pioneers—climbers, rescuers, mapmakers, business people and others—who have worked, lived and played in the White Mountains.

Both Oreskes and Mayer tapped into their own White Mountain experiences to compile their stories. Oreskes, a Forest Society trustee, is retired from the US Forest Service, and lives in Milan. Mayer produces *Car Talk* on National Public Radio and lives in Randolph. Both have written extensively for the journal *Appalachia*.

We talked to Oreskes and Mayer recently about their book. Our edited conversation follows.



Forest Notes: How did you decide who to include in *Mountain Voices*?

Mayer: We came to project with a background in the White Mountains, Rebecca in the AMC huts and the Forest Service, I had worked for the Mount Washington Observatory and the Randolph Mountain Club. When you're in the mountains a lot, you keep hearing a collection of names.

Some of those folks you meet, some you just keep hearing about. It's that generation before you, people who had a profound impact. Someone you respect mentions them, then someone else you respect mentions them in some other context. Also, at the end of each interview, we asked who do *you* think we should be talking to?

FN: Explorer Barbara Washburn points out in her interview how much she enjoyed the camaraderie she and her husband Brad experienced with other outdoorsmen and women within the White Mountain community. In the book, she recounts that she was once asked for her reaction to the news that the first woman had soloed Mt. McKinley. She said, "Oh, the poor thing! She missed all the fun!" Did this theme of community come up with a lot of your subjects?

Oreskes: I think absolutely. There was no question that part of the fun and enjoyment of talking to all these people was the shared commitment and common bond—that shared history, the friends they made, the sense that they were all tied together. I think community in its different forms was a big part of almost every interview.

Mayer: One of the things that drew me to the White Mountains and has kept me here since, is the sense of a community of people who care about the mountains—all the nonprofit groups, the work and the play of a wide group of friends. It's the single biggest thing that's kept me there, besides the resource itself.

It's the land and the mountains that connect us. It's quite a powerful thing. When meeting with a lot of the folks we interviewed, I didn't want to leave. You're having such a great conversation with this person you have so much in common with. I felt after 5 hours we just scratched the surface.

FN: Climber Rick Wilcox said he's met lots of people wealthier but not happier than mountain people. He said, "I think mountain people that I deal with, people that have dedicated their lives to what they really love, who live in the mountains, they don't make the money you could make in the city but they're happier people." You've met lots of White Mountain people. Would you agree or disagree with Wilcox's observation?

Oreskes: Of course, that's a generalization. There's a little bit of a false dichotomy between mountain people and city people. But when people are following what they love, they're happier. I think for everyone in this book, that's the case. When you devote your life to a life in the mountains, you're kind of guaranteeing you're not going to make a lot of money. It's a conscious choice and it's a kind of conscious living. They've all lived very conscious lives, and I think that makes people happier.

FN: Who was the most fun to visit and what made the visit really stand out?

Oreskes: They were all fun and inspiring in their own ways. Ellen Teague was very powerful for me to talk to. She was a woman who ran a major business (The Cog Railway) when that wasn't common. I walked away thinking, "Wow." Maybe we laughed more with some of the people, but for me they were all very important.

Mayer: I wholeheartedly second all that. They're all heroes to me in different ways. I was captivated by all of them. As far as who most surprised you or caught your attention—I think (wilderness advocate and teacher) George Zink surprised me the most and not for his outdoors stuff or mountain stuff but how he characterized his own life, that teaching and sharing was what he was most proud of. That sticks in my mind.

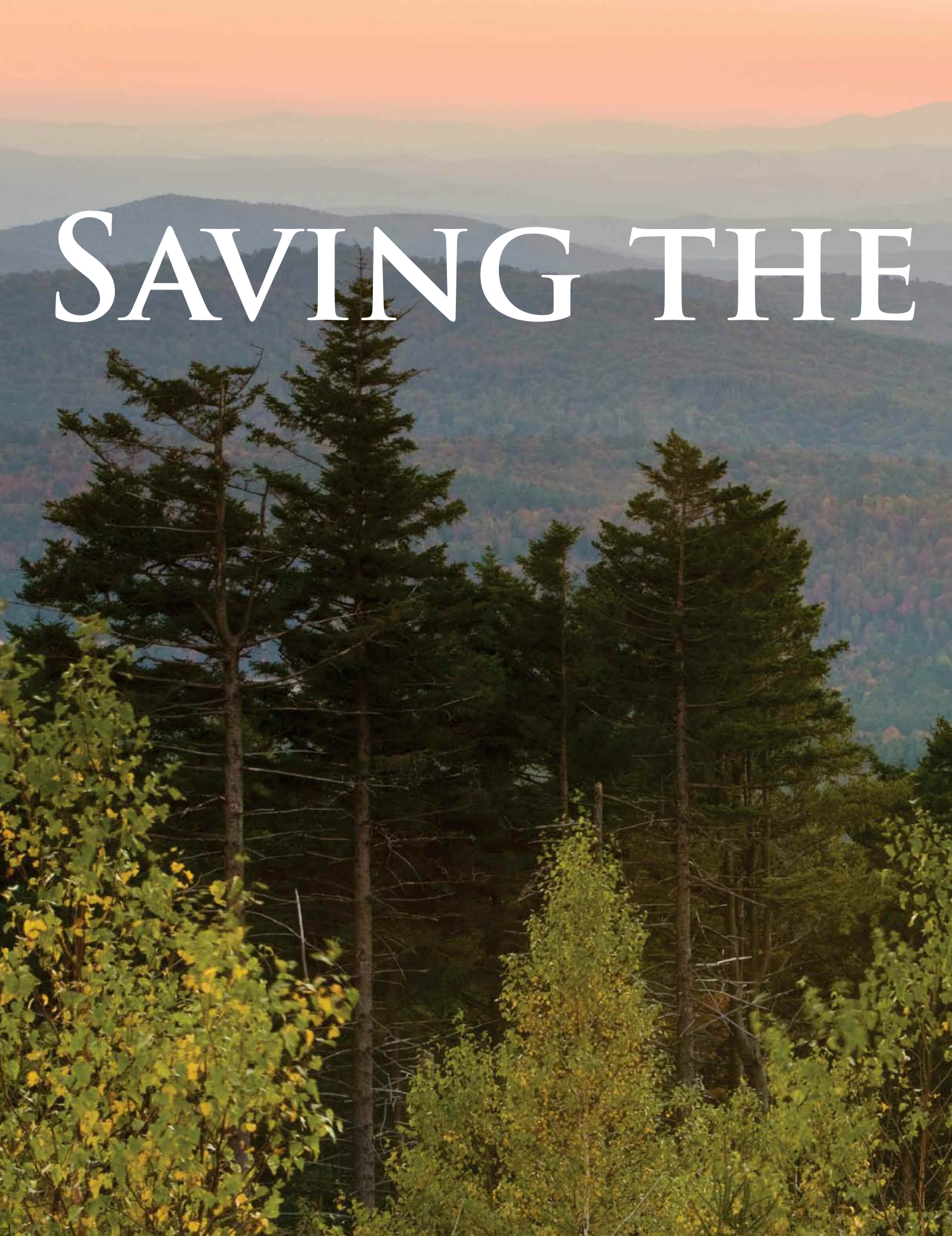
FN: *Mountain Voices* covers so many aspects of the White Mountains, from rock climbing dangers to wilderness ethics to caretaking to working in the tourist trade. What big ideas do you hope readers will take away from this book?

Mayer: One of the things I learned, some of these folks go back 70, 80 years back, you see the impact a lot of small decisions have had in terms of what kind of forest we end up with. If you integrate that into your thinking, you start to see that we need to be sensitive to the decisions we make today—even the seemingly small ones. These folks had a big hand in shaping where we are today and now that truly is in our hands.

Oreskes: I think part of that is to recognize that we are all part of history and that history didn't start the day we arrived in the White Mountains. We all have a link to the past and our history continues. Being part of the history means we're all responsible.

FN: Doug, are there any similarities whatsoever to your interviewing and compiling Mountain Voices and your regular job, producer of NPR's *Car Talk*? How do Tom and Ray Magliozzi compare with your Mountain Voices subjects?

Mayer: Something I learned at *Car Talk* which may have helped me with Mountain Voices is that authenticity matters. Tom and Ray stay true to themselves. That comes across. That's guided Tom and Ray in their decision making, and I think that's a quality they share with all of the people in the book. These are people who followed their compass and were not influenced by what the fad of the day is or what their peers are doing. They are pursuing the right path for them. When you hit on that, when you have that realization . . . I think it can be a very powerful thing.



Saving the

Best of the Highest

Why the Quabbin-to-Cardigan Initiative is Getting Conservation Done

By Brenda Charpentier

Viewed from the summit of Silver Mountain in Lempster, the sun sets over some of the best remaining intact forests along the western spine of New Hampshire and south into Massachusetts. They are the last frontier in the suburbanization of central New England. Photo by Jerry and Marcy Monkman, EcoPhotography.

With focused goals, collaboration and a grants program, the Quabbin-to-Cardigan initiative works with landowners who want to create a land legacy by conserving intact forests like these, viewed from Wilson Hill in Deering. Wilson Hill is part of the Forest Society's High Five Preserve, protected in 2004. Photo by Jerry and Marcy Monkman, EcoPhotography.

From the day he saw 'for sale' signs go up, Don Davis worried. He worried that the open land of Black Mountain, with its tree-covered slopes forming a peaceful backdrop for his town of Sutton, would be sold, developed and lost—"gobbled up by somebody."

"It was ripe to happen. The high school is right there at the base, there's a paved road, it's close to I-89, has incredible views, beautiful forests and streams. It had everything anybody could want," said Davis, now retired from the N.H. Div. of Parks and Recreation.

So he alerted the town conservation commission, on which he serves. The prospects didn't look good.

"It was beyond our means. There was no way we were going to come up with the kind of money they were asking," Davis said in a recent interview.

What he didn't see at the time was that the commission wasn't on its own. He would soon come to know the strength of the Quabbin-to-Cardigan Initiative.

The Quabbin-to-Cardigan Initiative, or Q2C, is a partnership of private conservation groups and public agencies with a single mission: conserve the last, best forests that remain in a two-state region stretching about 100 miles from the Quabbin Reservoir in central Massachusetts to Mount Cardigan in west central New Hampshire.

The region is as big as it sounds—about the size of the White Mountain National Forest. Growing on its 2 million acres are some of the largest remaining interconnected, ecologically significant forests in New England. These forests cover a spine of land that rises to a watershed divide. The western side drains to the Connecticut River; the eastern side drains to the Merrimack.

Davis's precious Black Mountain is on the northern end, and as such was prized by not just folks with a view of its slopes but also by the entire Q2C partnership. The ensuing Forest Society-led fundraising campaign to acquire the land resulted in the conservation of Black Mountain's 1,025 acres in 2011.

"I was just ecstatic beyond belief," said Davis, who rallied the Sutton community to the cause. "Q2C is just incredible."

The Black Mountain project is one of a slate of Q2C successes celebrated since the initiative began in 2003 under the leadership of the Forest Society. In the first 10 years, Q2C partners have conserved 90,240 acres of land in the region (62,240 in New Hampshire and 28,000 in Massachusetts). That's 22 percent more land protected in one decade than in all the years leading up to the Q2C.

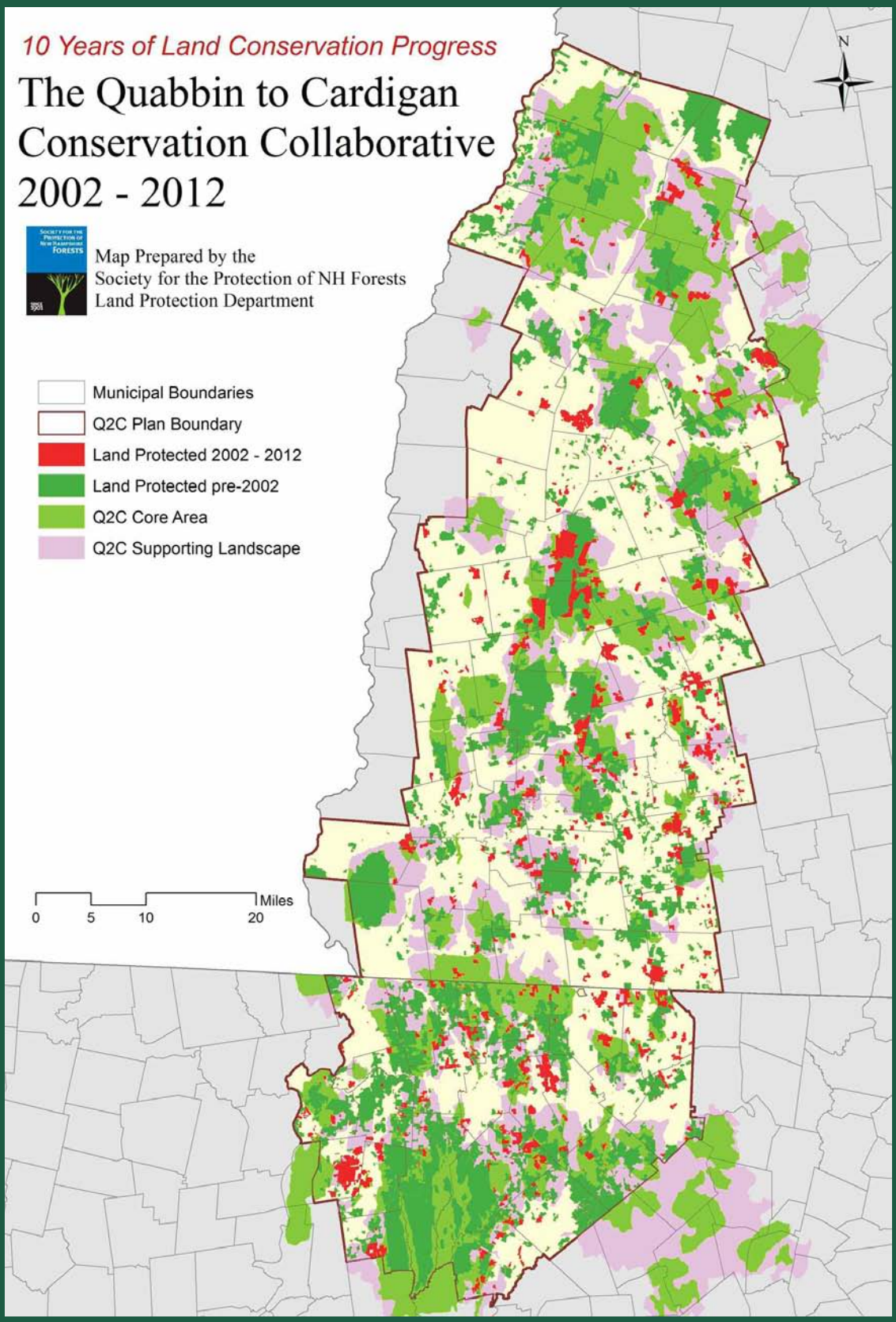
"Clearly, the level of activity has ramped up," said Chris Wells, the Forest Society's senior director for strategic projects and Q2C partnership coordinator. "The partnership is working."

Why is it working?

The reason the Q2C works is its unique mix of goal-setting, funding and collaboration.

"The Q2C is a landscape-scale partnership—one of the first such partnerships in the country. We're looking at bigger, geographical units—not town, county or state boundaries—then asking 'Who are the right people to bring to the table?" Wells said.

Continued on page 20



The two-state region spans 100 miles from the Quabbin Reservoir in Massachusetts northward to Mount Cardigan and the White Mountain National Forest. In the first 10 years of the Q2C Initiative, 22 percent more land has been protected than in all of the years leading up to the effort.

Quabbin-to-Cardigan Region
Why here? Why now?

Jeremy Turner, forester
Meadowsend Timberlands

Big is Beautiful for Sustainable Forestry

Furniture, cabinetry, door panels.
Baseball bats, pellets, shovel handles.
Railroad ties, gunstocks, hardwood flooring.

These are some of the end products of the Quabbin-to-Cardigan region's strong and stable wood products industry. The region is known for its productive forests, from northern hardwoods to white pine and spruce.

These resources support mills, wood energy plants, manufacturing facilities, loggers, foresters and trucking companies. All of them rely on responsibly managed forests to keep contributing to the statewide forest products industry's $1.15 billion annual boost to the state's economy.

The Q2C initiative aims to help its partners to work with landowners to conserve large parcels of land that are still intact in order to keep them that way as demand for land grows. The large swaths of forests still unfragmented in the Q2C are big enough to make sustainable forestry economically feasible for landowners.

"When that starts to get teased apart and broken down, the function of a working forest becomes compromised," said Jeremy Turner, a forester with Meadowsend Timberlands, which manages working forests in 26 towns within the Q2C region.

As a culture, we have a lot to lose if working forests are fragmented and the forest products industry falls apart, Turner said.

"It's about knowing what a logger is, knowing what a forester is, knowing what a sawmill is—all those cultural things that are critical to have people connected to land and wood."

It's like milk, he said. People who don't live near farms assume milk comes from the grocery store. "It's the same with wood products. Wood doesn't come from Walmart. It comes from a piece of the earth that produces a tree that hopefully has been raised wisely in a sustainable way."

Charlie Bridges, wildlife biologist
N.H. Fish and Game Dept.

For Wildlife, a Refuge of Connectivity

Moose grow such thick insulating coats that they actually look for places to cool off in winter. If they live in the Quabbin-to-Cardigan region, they're in luck, because they've got somewhere to go: up.

"In fall and winter they're moving up, looking for higher elevation fir stands and protection from overheating," said Charlie Bridges, the habitat and wildlife diversity programs administrator with the N.H. Fish and Game Dept. "They'll often seek out hardwood cuts where they can feed on woody browse in the evening and then retreat into softwood cover during the day to stay cool."

The region's higher elevation habitat of northern hardwoods, spruce and fir is found neither to the east nor west and is one of many reasons this region is so vital to wildlife—and a high priority for both the Massachusetts and New Hampshire state Wildlife Action Plans. Species typically found in northern New Hampshire live here, as do many species of concern such as wood turtles, Blandings turtles, black racers and birds like bitterns, Canada warblers, cerulean warblers, nighthawks, northern goshawks and peregrine falcons.

This region also still offers large privately owned expanses of undeveloped land that are interspersed with public lands like state parks, state forests and wildlife management areas. As blocks of the private lands are conserved, species like bear, moose and bobcats keep their room to roam.

"When you have that kind of scenario, that's setting the stage for establishing connectivity between habitats that allows wildlife to securely cross the landscape. That's what makes this area so important," Bridges said.

Portrait photos on pages 18 and 19 by Chelsea Pathiakis Photography; Photo of moose (above) Danno333/Dreamstime.com; Photo of dwarf wedge mussel (page 19) by NHFG/Victor Young.

Phil Bryce, Director
N.H. Division of Parks and Recreation

Wildly Attractive to Tourists

Tourism and marketing research clearly shows that New Hampshire's attraction can be measured in trees and rocks, mountains, lakes, rivers and wildlife. A 2010 consumer perception study leaves no doubt:

"All the activities associated with New Hampshire were outdoors activities. For people outside of the state, New Hampshire is defined by the outdoors," summed up Phil Bryce, director of the N.H. Division of Parks and Recreation.

The Q2C initiative's goal of helping its partners conserve more of the large, intact forests in this region supports the state's $1.12 billion in annual forest-based recreation and tourism. More conserved forests means more unspoiled scenery, open lands and recreational opportunities beckoning to visitors.

There are many opportunities in the Q2C region to complete land protection projects that will abut and extend public lands like Sunapee and Pillsbury state parks, or conserved private lands, like Mount Monadnock. Just in the past year, large tracts on the shoulders of Monadnock were conserved, protecting its views, hiking experience and future as a tourist magnet.

Conserving more lands in this region is good for our tourist based economy as well as making the area a great place for those fortunate enough to live close by.

"There is an increasing research showing the importance of the outdoors to people's health, and we have the benefit in New Hampshire of having a lot of open space close to major population areas, which means it can benefit more people," Bryce said. "That's what's nice about the Q2C region. As the community around it grows, they're going to have the benefit of those protected lands to make living there a better experience."

Doug Bechtel, Director of Freshwater Science & Conservation
NH Chapter, The Nature Conservancy

Wonderful Water

Dwarf wedge mussels are unassuming little creatures. Silent, dark and quarter-sized, they devote themselves to filtering river water and straining out bits of plants and plankton to eat. Unfortunately for them, if that water isn't exceptionally free of pollutants and disturbance, they die.

It's hardly surprising that the dwarf wedge mussel is federally endangered.

And yet, the species does still live in the Ashuelot River in the Quabbin-to-Cardigan region.

"This particular species only lives in rivers that have good water quality, and that just speaks to the long-term and ongoing river quality in the Q2C geography," said Doug Bechtel, director of Freshwater Science & Conservation with the NH Chapter of The Nature Conservancy.

And the reason for that high-quality river water? Large, intact, upland forests. Forests that are the headwaters of the Connecticut and Merrimack rivers and the source of drinking water for some 200 towns and cities downstream. Forests that gather the waters of the Warner, Baker, Smith and Contoocook rivers on their way to the Merrimack, and the Ashuelot, Mascoma, Sugar and Cold rivers on their way to the Connecticut.

"Because the Q2C region features a ridgeline and a watershed divide right down the center of the geography, the river waters flow over and through forests. And in order for the water quality to be good, those forests have to be intact," Bechtel said. "Working forests fulfill this role as well as wilderness forests, and there are both in the Q2C."

Trails to Tranquility

Forests for as far as the eye can see is the reward for hikers in the Q2C, triumphant views from atop Monadnock, Kearsarge, Ragged, Cardigan or other vantage points along the 100-mile expanse.

When landowners who love their land here conserve it for future generations, hikers, snowmobilers, wildlife watchers and other outdoor recreationists get a gift beyond compare: vistas that remain soul-quieting, rugged playgrounds that remain heart-lifting. Often, conservation easements and land acquisitions result in new opportunities to extend trails or build connectors between public and private lands or protect existing trails.

New and improved trails will be a part of the Q2C effort, thanks to an anonymous donor's $500,000 gift (see story), half of which will provide grants to trails groups.

More trails can lead to more support for land protection efforts, said Gerry Gold, the volunteer trailmaster for the Sunapee Ragged Kearsarge Greenway Coalition, whose volunteers have spent hundreds of hours building a 75-mile trail system surrounding Lake Sunapee and crossing Sunapee, Ragged and Kearsarge mountains.

It's a simple formula, he said. "If you hike you will love the trails and land; if you love the trails and land, you'll want to preserve them for the future; and if you want to preserve trails and land for the future, you will want to help by supporting land conservation organizations."

Gerry Gold, Trailmaster
Sunapee Ragged Kearsarge Greenway Coalition

Continued from page 20

Q2C partners discuss trails systems at a public input session at Colby Sawyer College in New London. A group consensus-driven process is key to the initiative's success, and partners meet quarterly. "There is a genuine culture of collaboration in the Q2C project," says coordinator Chris Wells of the Forest Society, at right in the photo. Photo by Laura Alexander.

Currently 26 partner groups and agencies have come to the table, sharing vision, talents and resources. Their guide is a science-based conservation plan, created in 2007, that targets the region's most ecologically significant areas—566,000 acres of "focus areas", as well as 438,000 acres of "supporting landscapes."

Individual member groups use the plan to develop land protection projects in keeping with each group's own mission. The plan provides impetus for reaching out to landowners within high priority areas and offering resources and options should they ever want to look into creating a land legacy.

"You start to develop a relationship with landowners that sometimes lasts years," said Brian Hotz, the Forest Society land agent who covers the Q2C region. "Then when they are ready to make decisions about their land, you hope they think of you as a resource and call. Getting to know landowners is a really key component of this style of focused land conservation," he said.

Conservation outcomes can take many forms within the Q2C framework: donations or purchases of conservation easements, or donations and purchases of the land itself. How each project gets done is up to landowners and member groups, but the partnership provides the priorities and—very importantly—access to funding.

Grants "make all the difference"

The Q2C initiative acts as a land protection accelerator in large part because it includes a targeted grants program. The grants provide partnering land trusts, towns and other groups with money to cover transaction costs—appraisals, surveys, title searches, etc.—that are necessary parts of every project.

The targeted grants fill a niche otherwise overlooked or not seen as dramatic or attractive from a fundraising standpoint, said Ryan Owens, executive director of the Monadnock Conservancy.

"People are excited to buy land or put on a conservation easement, but these kinds of due diligence items, which are so very important, aren't quite as exciting," he said.

The Monadnock Conservancy has used the grants to complete 10 projects so far. Owens said the Q2C grant process is refreshingly efficient. "It's a great contrast to some federal and state funding sources that are so bureaucratic and exhausting to wade through. We don't always have the luxury of spending that kind of time seeking grants," he said.

Debbie Stanley, the executive director of the Ausbon Sargent Land Protection Trust, a Q2C partner, said the grants have made "all the difference" in several recent projects her group has completed in Andover and Bradford.

It's often transaction costs that hold up a project, Stanley said. People may want to donate their land or an easement on it to a trust but aren't prepared to pay for surveying or title searches.

"These people are willing to make a tremendous gift to us. It's always hard when they find out, 'Oh, I'm going to give a gift and it's going to cost me money to give this? That's what they really struggle with, and that's the beauty of the Q2C."

Over the last three years, federal funds provided $500,000 for grants that were awarded to partners for 36 projects in New Hampshire that have conserved 12,360 acres of land. The earmarks ended in 2010, but this past December, an anonymous donor provided $500,000 through the N.H. Charitable Foundation, giving what Wells calls a "huge vote of confidence" in the Q2C initiative.

"The impact of this new grant cannot be overstated," he said. "Without it, the grants program would have shut down. Now we'll be able to continue making grants for at least the next two years and help protect thousands of additional acres."

In addition to the land protection grants, the donation will fund a second grants program to support hiking trails-related work in the Q2C region.

As the Q2C begins its second decade, there is much to celebrate and much work to do. The Q2C forests are on the front lines of long-term population growth and development in New England. Will the remaining forests become fragmented by vacation home lots or bedroom communities? Or will they continue to provide wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, clean water for people and wildlife, reasons for tourists to visit, and resources for sustainable forest products?

If the next 10 years of the Q2C initiative bring as many successes as the first, there's ample reason to look to the future with hope.

Building Resilient Forests for the Future

By George F. Frame, CF, Senior Director of Forestry

The Society of American Foresters held their annual convention in Spokane, Wash., last October. Always an interesting and educational event, this year's conference was entitled "Resilient Forests."

One of the presentations, by researchers from Michigan Tech, involved a new strategy for foresters who write silvicultural prescriptions. Silviculture is the art and science of growing trees. You might think that's pretty easy in New Hampshire; after all, trees are cut down and in some amount of time new ones grow back! How hard can that be?

If we are successful, we will begin growing forests that will have a much better chance of surviving whatever the world climate throws at them.

Foresters Gabe Roxby and Steven Junkin talk over the day's inventorying in the field with George Frame, senior director of forestry (at right). Photo by Wendy Weisiger.

Foresters, as silviculturalists, work to analyze resource attributes—current tree species occupying a site, the soils underlying that site, the topography, characteristics of the understory vegetation, general tree health, growth rates, etc.—and then they prescribe a set of treatments to be applied over a period of time that will result in a desired set of outcomes.

Foresters, as planners, look well out into the future. But one of our basic assumptions, even when we all know the world is forever changing, is that the climate will be the same in 25, 50 or 100 years. Will it be the same? If we accept that it won't, shouldn't we be making some educated guesses about how changes might affect our outcomes? The researchers at Michigan think we should.

But there are big questions to answer along the way. What will the climate be like and how will that climate affect trees? Forests will need to be resilient and adaptable. How can we plan that resilience into our forests?

Natural systems like forests have three options for responding to climate change: adapt (or evolve), migrate or die. Now we know we don't want the forest to die, and migration for tree species is likely to take a very long time, so that leaves us to explore the adapt or evolve option. Michigan Tech researchers are working to create something called adaptive silvicultural planning, and I think it is exciting and as cutting edge as forestry can be.

The specifics of adaptive planning are only now trickling out to practitioners. Preliminary review shows some to be easy to incorporate; for instance, the forests of New Hampshire contain species that overlap the southern oak-hickory type and the mixed northern hardwood type. If we believe future conditions here will be drier than today, then whatever we do to favor the southern species in our long-term planning will help create forests better adapted to the site.

Earlier this year the Forest Society hired two foresters to help us with inventory and planning. They are cruising our forestlands collecting information to be used in management plans. This activity positions the Forest Society to begin using these new adaptive principles as they develop. If we are successful, we will begin growing forests that will have a much better chance of surviving whatever the world climate throws at them.

We hope building in resilience will allow us to positively affect forest adaptation into this uncertain future so forests carry forward the capacity to absorb insect and disease attacks, produce healthy regeneration, and continue to provide humans with the broad range of goods and services on which we depend.

George Frame is the Senior Director of Forestry at the Forest Society. He can be reached at gframe@forestsociety.org.

Welcome Spring at the 33rd Wildflower Festival

Mark your calendars for these upcoming events

Go online. Get outside. Visit our website at www.forestsociety.org/thingstodo for a complete and up-to-date list of field trips and special events.

Pre-registration is requested for all programs. To register, call (603) 224-9945 ext 313, or email signup@forestsociety.org. Most programs are free unless otherwise noted.

JUNE 1 | 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

33rd Annual Wildflower Festival

The Rocks Estate, Route 302, Bethlehem

The Forest Society invites wildflower enthusiasts to the start of the 33rd Annual Wildflower Festival, with a full slate of fun activities planned at The Rocks Estate. Workshops include planting, edible flowers and floral identification. Tours include birdwatching and guided walks through the historic property, where the original estate owners collected and planted an array of perennials. Wine sampling will feature the wines of Hermit Woods Winery in Sanbornton.

The $15 fee includes lunch and all programs. Tours are limited to 15 people at a time, so reservations are strongly advised. For reservations or more information e-mail info@therocks.org or call (603) 444-6228.

APRIL 6 | 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

New Hampshire Maple Experience

The Rocks Estate, Route 302, Bethlehem

The New Hampshire Maple Experience showcases the tradition of sugar making with hands-on learning and tasty treats. The tour includes an interactive demonstration of crafting maple syrup, complete with a visit to the onsite sugar house. Tour the maple museum and take a horse-drawn wagon ride through the historic 1,400-acre estate. Watch cooking demonstrations by local chefs, sample the results and take some recipes home.

Reservations are highly recommended. Call (603) 444-6228, but walk-ins are welcome on a space available basis.

APRIL 17 | 7-8:30 p.m.

Vernal Pool Workshop

The Rocks Estate, Route 302, Bethlehem

Join Dave Anderson, Forest Society director of education and volunteers, for a free workshop exploring the wonderful world of vernal pools. Workshop participants will learn how to identify vernal pool species like wood frogs and mole salamanders by sight, sound, and habitat. They'll also learn about the unique role amphibians play in forested ecosystems and how to locate and protect woodland vernal pools. This popular annual workshop will include an opportunity to see live amphibians and their eggs.

For more information, visit www.therocks.org, e-mail info@therocks.org, or call (603) 444-6228.

APRIL 26 AND 27
(BOTH DAYS REQUIRED)

Annual Volunteer Land Steward Training

Camp Calumet, Ossippee

Are you interested in making a significant contribution to conservation by helping to steward a piece of conservation land? Want to learn some new outdoor skills and be part of a great community of energized, conservation-minded people? The Forest Society's Land Steward Program may be for you! The annual core training for land stewards will include field and classroom instruction in forest management, trail maintenance, boundary monitoring, map and compass navigation, and recreation management. New stewards then adopt a property near their home (we have 172 all across the state) to assist with stewardship and monitoring.

The weekend training is free, but we ask for a minimum 2-year commitment to stewardship of a SPNHF reservation. Lodging and meals provided.

For more information, contact Carrie Deegan, Land Steward Program Specialist at cdeegan@forestsociety.org.

MAY 8 | 7 p.m.

Bears Among Us

The Rocks Estate, Route 302, Bethlehem

Join Nancy Comeau, a black bear technician with the USDA Wildlife Services, for a free program to learn more about bears and how to avoid human-bear conflicts. While many people enjoy seeing bears at their backyard feeders, bears are wild animals and can quickly become a nuisance. Corneau works with the New Hampshire Bear Program, a partnership between Wildlife Services and the N.H. Fish and Game Department.

For more information, visit www.therocks.org, e-mail info@therocks.org, or call (603) 444-6228.

Follow us on Facebook!
Go to www.facebook.com/ForestSociety and like our page to find out more about things to do and places to go!

MAY 11 | 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Sawmill Tour and Hike

Wilkins Timberland Easements, Milford and Mont Vernon

The Wilkins family has been active in the state's timber industry for generations. Tom and Sally Wilkins of Wilkins Lumber Company are working with the Forest Society to conserve more than 520 acres of land in Mont Vernon and Amherst. The Wilkins Lumber Company is a small family-owned lumber mill and retail lumber outfit located in Mont Vernon and Milford. The company was founded in 1808 and has been operated by the Wilkins family for eight generations. Join us for a special sawmill tour and hike on one of the tracts to be conserved with conservation easements held by the Forest Society.

Call (603) 224-9945 to register or visit forestsociety.org.

Spring brings colorful migrants like this northern parula to New Hampshire. Photo by Lauren Kras.

JUNE 1 | 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Birding Tour: The Breeding Birds of Mount Monadnock

Monadnock Reservation, Jaffrey

Join conservation biologist and naturalist Chris Borg of the Forest Society for a guided introductory bird watching tour of Mount Monadnock. June is prime time for viewing neo-tropical migratory songbirds in New Hampshire. Monadnock, with its altitudinal array of microhabitats, hosts a multitude of colorful species. Expect to encounter flycatchers, grosbeaks, thrushes, warblers, vireos and many more while learning basic birding skills and natural history.

This walk will move slowly, but expect moderately strenuous trail conditions. A subset of the group may push on to the summit in the afternoon. Be prepared for changing weather conditions. Bring binoculars, sturdy footwear, sun protection, insect repellent and plenty of water and snacks. A field guide is recommended. All skill levels are welcome. Preregistration required. Limit 15 participants. Call (603) 224-9945.

ART EXHIBIT

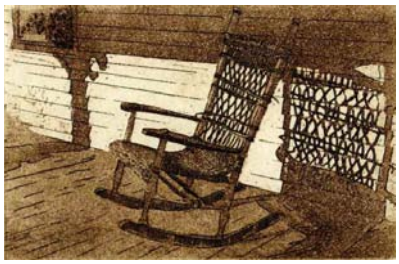
This exhibit can be viewed Monday–Friday from 9 am to 5 pm at the Conservation Center Conference Room, located at 54 Portsmouth St. in Concord, N.H. As the Conference Room is used for meetings, please call (603) 224-9945 before visiting to confirm that the room is open.

MAY – JUNE

Rooted in New England—Small Treasures Etchings, drawings and photography by Susann Foster Brown

Conservation Center, Concord

This collection comprises works Susann Foster Brown has created over several decades and includes limited edition etchings, pen & ink and color pencil drawings, as well as photographs. The New Hampshire landscape, trees, porches and critters are among Brown's subjects.



"Off Her Rocker," by Susann Foster Brown.

JUNE 8 | 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Special Event— In the Company of Light: Readings from the works of naturalist John Hay & hike to picnic on Sunset Hill

Fells Historic Estate and Gardens, Newbury

Join Forest Society Education Director Dave Anderson for a hike to spectacular views from the summit of Sunset Hill, a favorite picnic spot for the John Hay family. Dave will read aloud passages of naturalist John Hay's writings specifically inspired by his boyhood explorations at what is now The Fells and the Forest Society Hay Forest Reservation. John's daughter Kitty Hay will accompany the group to share her father's philosophy and personal experiences with both her father and grandmother, Alice Appleton Hay.

Sunset Hill in Newbury will be the picnic spot for the John Hay hike on June 8.

We'll adopt a comfortable, leisurely pace for this moderate, 2.4-mile round-trip hike that gains 550 feet to the summit. BYO picnic lunch. Meet at the Gatehouse kiosk at the Fells Historic Estate and Gardens on Lake Sunapee, 456 Route 103A, Newbury.

Advance registration of $10 per person required by May 31. To register or for more information, call (603) 763-4789 x3 or visit www.thefells.org.

Sponsored in partnership by the Forest Society and The Fells. Supported by grants from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation's Wellborn Ecology Fund, and the Creekmore and Adele Fath Charitable Foundation.

SAVE THE DATE! UPCOMING FOREST SOCIETY EVENTS

July 13 – Celebrate NEW Forest Society Farnsworth Hill Forest with Town of Washington

July 12 -16 – Monadnock Trails Week, Jaffrey & Dublin

Sept. 28 – 112th Annual Meeting & Field Trips, Meredith

John Brighton takes in the western view toward Vermont from atop Farnsworth Hill. The former owner logged the property without the benefit of a sustainable forestry plan, but new growth will soon cover the area. Photo by Brenda Charpentier.

Saving Farnsworth Hill

How prime high ground in Washington became the newest Forest Society reservation

By Brenda Charpentier

John Brighton hiked upward along a snowmobile trail until the land leveled off to acres of flat, open ground on Farnsworth Hill in Washington. He pointed out the great views of the valley below and forested hills beyond, south to Pitcher Mountain and west all the way to Vermont.

"This piece here is the one that was going to be subdivided, cut in two. Long term—it's high elevation view sites," he said. "Need I say more?"

A year and a half ago, Brighton and many of his neighbors feared the two parcels surrounding the spot where he stood would be turned into a housing development. The owner was indiscriminately clearing the land of trees and planned to sell it once the harvest was over.

But the properties were never sold into development and never will be. Instead, they have become the Forest Society's newest reservation: The Farnsworth Hill Forest, 313 acres owned by the Forest Society and open to the public.

A Forest Society reservation wasn't even in the realm of possibilities for the small group of neighbors who first gathered in the fall of 2011 to talk over what, if anything, they could do to keep the land from development. Brighton and his sister Susan Brighton invited them to their family home that sits on 120 acres abutting Farnsworth Hill.

The way ahead seemed steeper than the class VI road leading up to the most developable land at 1,830 feet. They would need to raise more than $370,000 to buy both parcels.

"I have to say looking at it from the front end, I said, 'How in the heck are we ever going to do this?' " Brighton recalled.

Nevertheless, the group set out to try. They anted up themselves, then started talking to people with homes around Millen Lake, which sits just below Farnsworth Hill.

"Almost everybody along the lake, all the way down as far as you can see, gave money to this project," Brighton said. "Some a lot, some a little, whatever they could."

One man he saw out jogging one day stopped to talk, said Brighton. "I asked him, 'What can you do?' He said, 'I'll do $10,000' — and he did. He followed through with it."

There was plenty of discouragement, though. Some people felt the danger of development was overblown, that the land would be cleared and then just sit there.

Left: *The Farnsworth Hill Forest offers picnicking, hiking, hunting and snowmobiling opportunities.* Photo by Allan Krygeris.

Right: *Jim Crandall and other homeowners around Millen Lake felt strongly that protecting Farnsworth Hill protects the quality of life in the lake community.*

Others took the long view shared by Brighton: "I don't have a lot of time here in the grand scheme of things, but I have children, and others have grandchildren . . . you go out 10, 20, 30 years from now and there's no question what's going to happen."

Jim and Elaine Crandall, who own a home across Millen Lake from the Brightons' place, were committed to the project from the beginning. Jim Crandall's great grandfather was James Farnsworth, whose cellar hole can be seen on the Farnsworth Hill Forest, and Crandall's grandmother was born in a house nearby.

The people who live or vacation around the lake share a history and deep love for the area, Jim Crandall said, and didn't want to see the place change. They were concerned about traffic on the narrow road around the lake and worried that the character of the place would disappear.

"This place has deep meaning for people," Crandall said. "I mean deep meaning. I'll break up in tears if I keep going down that road. It was our youth. We grew up here. We . . . people wanted to protect that."

The project got a big vote of confidence when the Washington Conservation Commission gave $20,000 for the purchase. The town forest abuts one of the parcels, and the commission viewed the area as a high risk for development and important for protecting water quality in Millen Lake and nearby Ashuelot Lake, said Jed Schwartz, conservation commission chairman.

"It's in one of our highest conservation priority areas," Schwartz said.

At the invitation of the conservation commission, the Forest Society got involved, developing the idea of creating a permanent reservation and raising $30,000 toward the fundraising goal. The Forest Society saw an opportunity to add to existing conservation lands in the area, such as the nearby Ashuelot River Headwaters Forest. Conserving Farnsworth Hill also starts to fill in a gap between the protected lands surrounding Pillsbury and Sunapee state parks to the north and the 11,000 conserved acres of the Andorra Forest just a mile to the south.

The Forest Society's involvement became a key selling point. "Then we were able to go back to people and talk about perpetually protecting this land, and that a highly reputable organization will be overseeing it; this is the real deal," Brighton said.

The Millen Lake Association provided $25,000 in matching funds, and by last winter some 80 individuals and organizations had provided the rest.

The conserved Farnsworth Hill Forest was indeed "the real deal. "

"One of the most gratifying things about this project is seeing the percentage of people participate who had enough foresight to be willing to put their money where their mouth is and grasp that there are places in this world worth protecting," Brighton said. "That impresses me almost to the point of tears."

ABOUT THE FARNSWORTH HILL FOREST

The 313-acre Farnsworth Hill Forest rises above Millen Lake just outside the village center of Washington.

The land was recently logged without the benefit of a sustainable forestry plan, resulting in a landscape that will take many years to recover its former beauty. However, there is ample wildlife habitat for hunting, great views from the top for hikers, picnickers and cross-country skiers and a snowmobile trail. The land abuts the Washington Town Forest.

It can be accessed from the center of Washington by following Faxon Hill Road, then turning right onto Millen Pond Road. After 1.8 miles, turn right onto Farnsworth Hill Road, an unmaintained Class VI road. Continue for about a half mile until the road turns sharply west. There is currently no designated parking, but parking is available along both sides of the road.

Conserving a Newfound Natural Resources Star

Hazelton Farm easement also preserves a reclaimed family heritage

By Brenda Charpentier

Forester Jon Martin didn't have to look far when searching for opportunities to promote land conservation in the Newfound region. He was renting the farmhouse on the Hazelton Farm in Hebron, just north of Newfound Lake. Outside his door beckoned forested hillsides, hay fields, streams and wetlands. He routinely spotted deer, woodcock, moose and coyotes—evidence of the property's bountiful and diverse wildlife habitat. And his forester's eye saw a working forest full of high-quality timber.

"It has wonderful, wonderful soils on it for growing northern hardwoods and pine," he said in a recent interview

The Newfound Land Conservation Partnership, of which Martin is a committee member, had already helped to conserve five properties in the region. After Martin arranged a meeting between the Hazelton family, whom he had known since childhood, the Forest Society and other partnership members, the family decided to make their land the sixth.

Three years later, the Forest Society's successful fundraising campaign to raise $317,000 to purchase and maintain a conservation easement on 272 acres of the property is complete. The Forest Society acquired the easement in February, protecting the land from development while keeping ownership with the Hazelton family and providing access to the public for recreation.

A natural-resources star

"The Forest Society took on the fundraising effort because the property's natural resource values are off the charts," said Brian Hotz, senior director of strategic projects. Both the Cockermouth River and Wise Brook course through it, and its conservation will protect not only those streams but also nearby Newfound Lake. Its upper reaches include forested hillsides of Crosby and Tenney mountains, and its lowlands offer fields and farmland.

Above: *The Hazelton Farm boasts diverse habitats for wildlife, from grasslands to wetlands to hardwood forests. Its successful conservation affords public pedestrian access as well as water quality protection for nearby Newfound Lake.* Photo by Martha Twombly.

Right: *For Mary and Paul Hazelton, conserving the family land is a way to honor Paul's parents, who bought the land back into the family after a long hiatus. The family's original 18th-century deeds are shown in the forefront of the photo.*

Martin, who now lives on his own conserved land in Bridgewater, is writing a forest stewardship plan for the diverse Hazelton forests. "Besides the great soils we have to work with, we've got a heavily involved landowner who wants to do what's right by the forest," he said.

"If you've got good soils and a landowner willing to put in the time, you can really grow some high quality timber."

The property has such high conservation values that the project was awarded all six grants the Forest Society applied for in their entirety—something that rarely happens in land conservation.

"All the funders were really excited about this project," said Martha Twombly, the Forest Society's capital campaign specialist. She noted that some of that excitement stemmed from the property's inclusion in several regional conservation plans, including the Newfound Lake Region Association's watershed management plan.

Grants came from the John Gemmill Newfound Fund, the N.H. Fish and Game Dept., the Aquatic Resources Mitigation program of the N.H. Dept. of Environmental Services, the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP), the State Conservation Committee and the N.H. Charitable Foundation.

The project attracted strong support from local communities as well, with contributions from more than 300 individuals and organizations, including the Pemi-Baker Chapter of Trout Unlimited and the Hebron Conservation Commission. "We've been thrilled with the outpouring of support," Twombly said.

The great interest in the community for conserving the land came as a pleasant surprise to Paul and Mary Hazelton, who have lived for 40 years in a sheep barn they converted into a home on the property.

"We knew we loved this place and knew it was a wonderful place, but as time went on, we saw more and more that it was valuable to the community as well," Paul Hazelton said.

Paul and Mary Hazelton inherited the farm along with Paul's brother Dave and his late brother John. The easement seemed an ideal way to protect the land while keeping it in the family and honoring their parents, Philip and Louise Hazelton, who cherished it.

"The primary motivation for us was to honor the wishes of our parents, who bought the ancestral property and managed to hang on there for so many years while we were growing up, which was a great experience but it wasn't easy for them," said Dave Hazelton, who now lives in Boise, Idaho.

Reclaiming a family heritage

According to the original deeds found tucked in a farmhouse drawer, Hazeltons started farming the property before the Revolutionary War. The earliest deed, penned in a flourish of black ink, records that in 1764, "in the fourth year of his Majesty's reign," Samuel Hazelton took ownership of land in what was once called

Continued on page 33

FAMILY'S GIVING TRADITION TURNS MAGICAL

More than 300 individuals and groups contributed toward the Forest Society's campaign to conserve the Hazelton Farm in Hebron.

Chances are, only one of them saw the farm as a dragons' lair.

Molly Lu McKellar, who lives in nearby Groton, donated money raised at her 8th birthday party to the project. "I dream about dragons using this land," she wrote in a letter to the Forest Society.

Using birthdays to support important causes is a family ritual. It began when Molly Lu and her sister Laurel were toddlers who didn't need more toys, said the girls' mother, Michelle Chamberlain.

"It's an attempt to live simply and not have all the 'stuff,'" she said. "We're always looking for ways we can give."

This year, the family picked the Hazelton Farm project to support because they value land conservation and attend church with Paul and Mary Hazelton.

"It's beautiful," Chamberlain said of the property. "It's beautiful to just drive down that road past the farm."

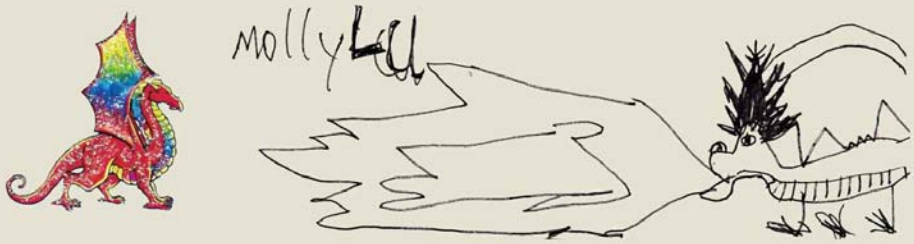
Molly Lu and Laurel McKellar and their mom, Michelle Chamberlain, stop for a photo before heading out for a walk in the woods near their Groton home. Photo by Brenda Charpentier.

Molly Lu's fascination with the fire-breathing sort started with a book at school that described "all different kinds of dragons," Molly Lu said. Now walks to the pond near her house will likely include some dragon sightings, and playing outside with her sister may well involve them too. "There's a river under the bridge, and sometimes my mom lets us go down and we pretend that we're dragons. We break the ice and throw snowballs at the trees," she said.

She's glad the Hazelton forests and fields won't ever have buildings on them because she wants to make sure the animals have a place to live.

"It would just be sad if all the animals were extinct in the whole entire world," she said. "Then deer season wouldn't have any deer around."

Well said, Molly Lu. The deer—and the dragons—thank you.



Molly Lu McKellar affixed a dragon sticker (left) and drew a dragon on a letter her mom sent to the Forest Society along with the birthday donation.

Northern Pass Update: Trees Not Towers Expands Blocking Action

By Jack Savage

In August 2012 when the Forest Society announced its campaign to block the intended route of the proposed Northern Pass transmission line, four landowners had signed agreements to conserve their lands. As word of the campaign spread, more landowners started to come forward seeking to use their lands to block the Northern Pass project.

Now the Forest Society has agreements with 15 landowners who control a total of nearly 3,000 acres that sit in strategic pinch points that serve to frustrate efforts by Northern Pass to establish a complete route. In most cases, landowners are offering to donate the value of the conservation easements that would permanently protect their land.

The *Trees Not Towers* campaign is a strategy to ensure that the sanctity of our scenic landscape is not violated by an industrialized corridor with multiple transmission lines. If built as proposed, the Northern Pass transmission line and 1,100 towers would directly and indirectly impact more than 15,000 acres of conserved land involving 153 different parcels owned by private individuals, local communities, land trusts such as the Forest Society, the State of New Hampshire, and the federal government.

To date more than 2,300 individuals have contributed to the effort, raising nearly $2 million. The support has been widespread, with donors from more than 225 of New Hampshire's 234 towns, as well as 29 states.

No land protection campaign in the Forest Society's modern history has received broader support.

In February, the Forest Society closed transactions with two more of the landowners, Rod McAllaster and Lynne Placey, finalizing conservation easements on more than 1,000 acres of land in Stewartstown, N.H. The easements are perpetual, remaining with the land regardless of who may own it at any time in the future.

In December 2012 the Forest Society closed on another conservation easement on 500 acres owned by Green Acre Woodlands that is adjacent to the McAllaster Farm. In January 2012, the Forest Society successfully conserved 5,800 acres of the Balsams landscape despite an attempt by Northern Pass to interfere with the transaction.

"If Hydro-Quebec wants to export electricity to the southern New England market, they should be required to do so in a responsible manner."

— Jane Difley, president/forester of the Forest Society

The Forest Society has also blocked Northern Pass's preferred route through the Concord area by putting a conservation easement on 141 acres owned by Patricia Humphrey in Chichester. Additional conservation easements granted on land south of Groveton restricts Northern Pass's ability to widen existing distribution rights-of-way in an attempt to squeeze in their proposed private HVDC transmission line.

"Without eminent domain, Northern Pass cannot complete this route," said Jane Difley, president/forester of the Forest Society. "We salute all the landowners who are taking a stand against this unnecessary scenic blight.

Northern Pass is a joint project with Hydro-Quebec, Northeast Utilities and Public Service of New Hampshire that proposes to build an overhead 180-mile transmission line crossing the Canadian border in Pittsburg and extending south through the White Mountain National Forest to Franklin, through Concord and terminating in Deerfield. It is an elective project for which there has been no determination of need.

Northern Pass officials have continually pushed back self-imposed deadlines for announcing a completed route. The project must be granted a Presidential Permit in order to cross the international border and would need to be permitted by the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee.

"If Hydro-Quebec wants to export electricity to the southern New England market, they should be required to do so in a responsible manner," Difley said. "There are viable alternatives to draping 180 miles of New Hampshire's scenic landscape with power lines and more than 1,100 towers up to 140 feet high. We have taken this action to protect land in Coos County as a way to defend two-thirds of New Hampshire, and especially those existing conserved lands it would impact," Difley said.

Among the impacted conserved landscapes would be a stretch of 10 miles through the White Mountain National Forest, which the Forest Society was founded to help establish and protect. That portion of the route would require a Special Use Permit from the WMNF Supervisor.

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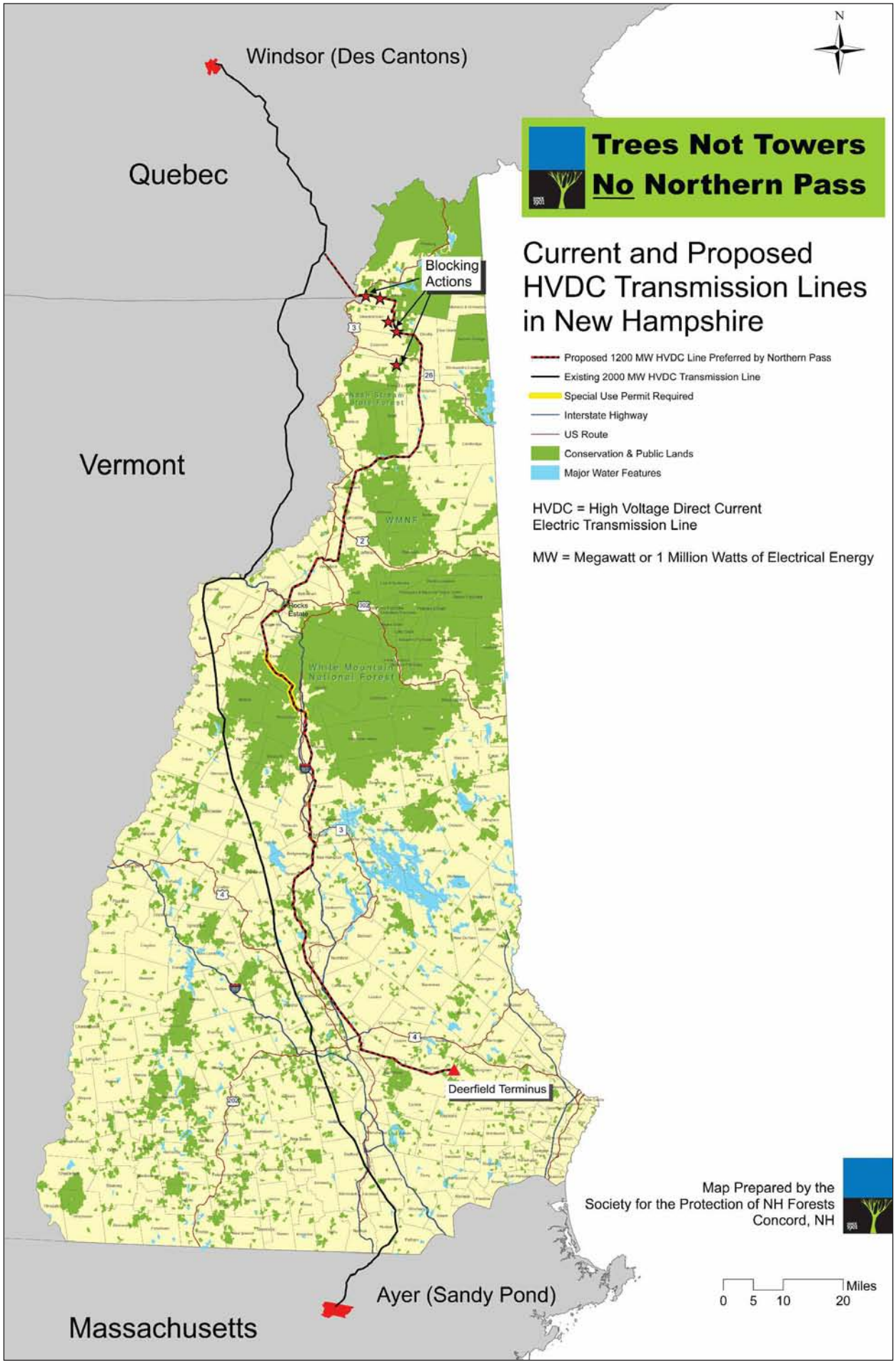
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Windsor (Des Cantons)
Quebec
Vermont
Massachusetts
Ayer (Sandy Pond)
Blocking Actions
Deerfield Terminus
Trees Not Towers
No Northern Pass
Current and Proposed HVDC Transmission Lines in New Hampshire
Proposed 1200 MW HVDC Line Preferred by Northern Pass
Existing 2000 MW HVDC Transmission Line
Special Use Permit Required
Interstate Highway
US Route
Conservation & Public Lands
Major Water Features
HVDC = High Voltage Direct Current Electric Transmission Line
MW = Megawatt or 1 Million Watts of Electrical Energy
WMNF
White Mountain National Forest
Map Prepared by the Society for the Protection of NH Forests Concord, NH
0 5 10 20 Miles

Continued from page 30

Also directly impacted would be the Forest Society's Rocks Estate in Bethlehem, which was protected specifically because of its outstanding views of the Presidential Range, as well as the Washburn Family Forest in Clarksville and the Kauffmann Forest in Stark.

Next Steps for Trees Not Towers

Given that Northern Pass has spent an estimated $30 million on land purchases in an attempt to secure a route, there is a concern that the threat of one or more transmission lines will remain even after the Northern Pass proposal fails. The Forest Society is working to ensure that New Hampshire's landscape is permanently protected from such inappropriate development by blocking any potential workarounds of an overhead transmission line.

Of particular importance is a conservation easement on 300 acres in Columbia, N.H., owned by the Lewis family, that connects the conserved Balsams landscape with the Nash Stream State Forest. That land is adjacent a parcel owned by Northern Pass, and would seal off its potential use for a through route now or in the future. The Forest Society hopes to close that transaction this spring.

The Forest Society has previously announced transactions involving other landowners in Clarksville and Stewartstown who were approached by Northern Pass, including Brad and Daryl Thompson and Don and Diane Bilodeau. Those landowners agreed to donate easements that help block Northern Pass or other such projects in the future.

"For 112 years the Forest Society has worked to protect New Hampshire from threats like Northern Pass," Difley said. "A century ago it was the drastic, wasteful overcutting of the White Mountains. Decades ago Franconia Notch was threatened by a proposed four-lane highway. We prevailed then and we intend to prevail now."

Funds from the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) helped to conserve the 335-acre Stowell property near Mount Monadnock. If the legislature restores the program to its original purpose, the impact on conservation will be great. Photo by Jeff Sluder.

Governor's Budget Proposal Partially Restores LCHIP

Governor Maggie Hassan took a significant step towards restoring the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program's dedicated funding in her FY14-15 budget proposal, which was released in February. The Governor's budget would allocate $1 million to the program in the first year, and fully restore the program's dedicated funding—approximately $4 million—in the second year.

In a joint statement with other conservation organizations, the Forest Society applauded Governor Hassan's "clear statement of principle that the diversion of Land and Community Heritage Investment Program funds for other purposes must not continue."

Since 2008, LCHIP has been funded from a $25 fee charged at the County Registries of Deeds for the recording of certain documents, but state budget writers have repeatedly included language in the state budget diverting the fee to the state's general fund. Altogether, more than $10 million of the LCHIP fee will have been diverted to the general fund by the end of the current fiscal year, or almost two thirds of all the funds collected from the fee since its inception. During the same five years, LCHIP will have received only $5.8 million from its "dedicated" funding source.

A recent statewide poll conducted by the UNH Survey Center asked registered voters whether they approve or disapprove of the Legislature's diversion of LCHIP funds for other purposes. An overwhelming and bipartisan majority—79%—said they disapprove.

"The citizens of New Hampshire—including literally hundreds of thousands of people who have paid the LCHIP fee over the past five years—want the bait and switch to stop," says the Forest Society's Chris Wells. "Building on the Governor's strong start, we look forward to working with members of the House and Senate to ensure that the final budget agreement fully restores LCHIP's dedicated fund to its intended purpose."

Continued from page 29

the Cockermouth Plantation. Hazeltons continued to farm there until 1872, when it was sold out of the family. Others farmed it for three generations, and for a time it was known as the Glendale Stock Farm.

Philip Hazelton had a great interest in genealogy. He tracked down his ancestors' farm and, though he lived out of state, started visiting and expressing interest in it in the early 1930s.

"Dad kept looking, kept visiting," said Paul Hazelton. "I remember a 1949 visit with my dad and brother Dave so well. It was pretty exciting for a 4-year-old kid. Dad told the owners that if they were ever interested in selling, let him know."

After years of hoping, Phil and Louise Hazelton bought the place back into the family in 1951.

"My father loved genealogy; my mother always wanted to live on a farm. We moved up lock, stock and barrel," Paul said. "My parents had the romantic view that with a few cows and chickens and kids you could make a go of it."

They did for many years but local jobs weren't enough to enable them to continue and they eventually moved to Concord to be closer to better paying employment. They headed north to the farm on weekends and summers for haying, gardening and thoroughly enjoying the land.

"His mother would sit down to dinner and say, 'Everything on the table is from this farm, except the salt and pepper.' She always felt so proud of that," Mary Hazelton remembered.

Paul's siblings made their homes elsewhere, but he and Mary have continued haying the fields, gardening and stewarding the land. Conserving it ensures that the land will stay open and beautiful, just as Louise and Philip would want, they said.

"We've all said just how happy they would be, just how thrilled, because it's that whole family history," Mary said. "For Paul and his brothers, that was their parent's dream. They made sacrifices to be able to live here. It's that story. We know that Phil and Louise would love it."

The Witness Tree

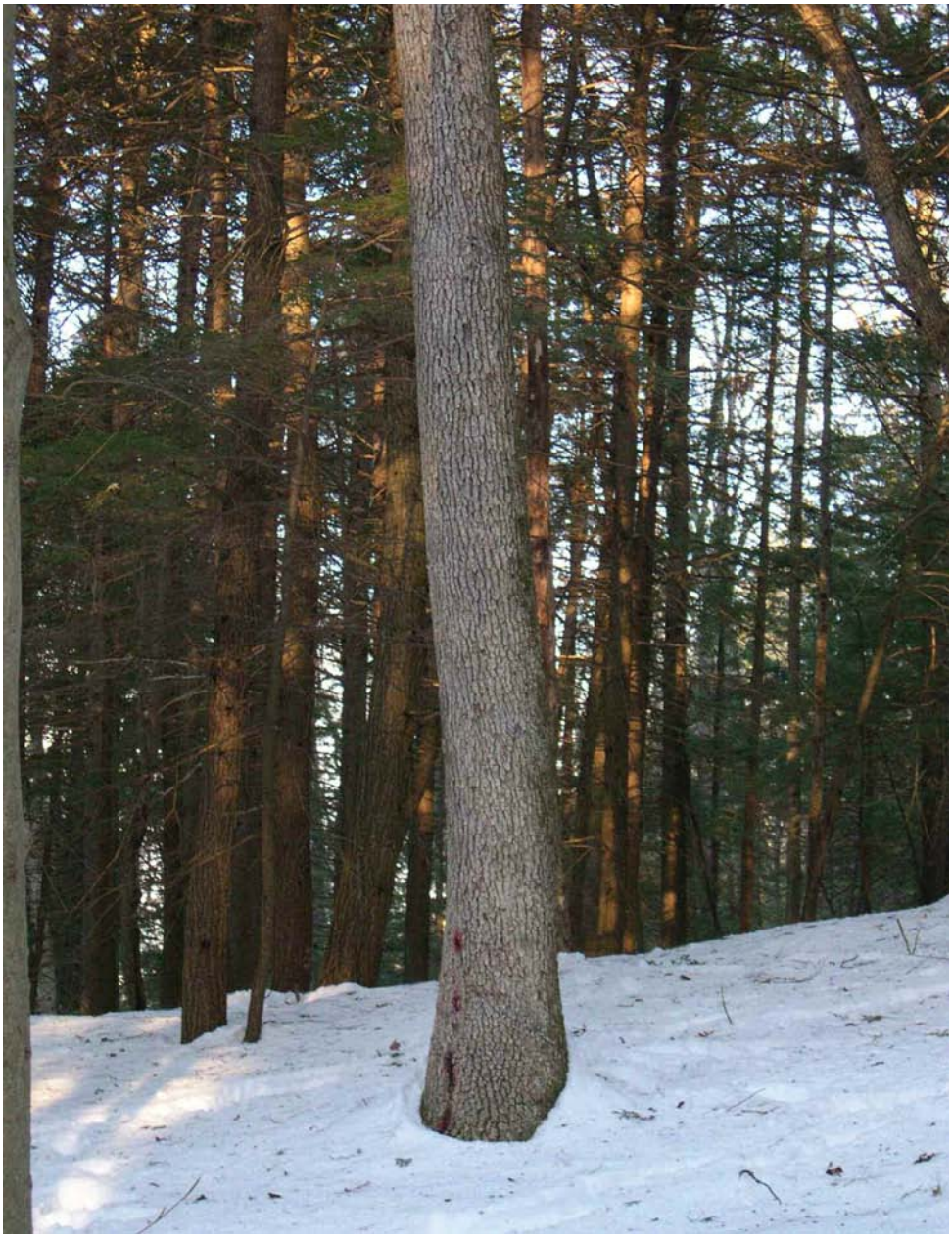
What we learn from our elders if we make time to visit

By Dave Anderson

Do you remember the celebrated New York City "Survivor Tree?" New Yorkers found the stub of an ornamental Callery Pear buried beneath the rubble of the World Trade Center towers after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack. It survived. They moved it to a nursery, nursed it back to health and replanted it back at the September 11 Memorial site in 2011.

Many lesser-known and unsung "survivor trees"—trees bearing scars of time and tempests—hide in our forests. Gnarly old trees can connect us to a long history of fires, ice storms, hurricanes, tornadoes and floods. Imagine the broad sweep of historical events they've lived through! Trees now 150 years old, for instance, were mere seedlings in 1863 when President Abraham Lincoln faced a divided nation's darkest days.

There's one old white oak I like to visit. I guess you could say it's become one of my favorite trees. It grows in a quiet and scenic spot on a south-facing slope overlooking a seasonal brook. Opposite faces of the old oak sport rusty stubs of imbedded barbed wire, dimples in its rough complexion of thick bark ridges. Facial scars from a surveyor's blazes chopped by hatchet are marked by red paint. Fallen strands of barbed wire lie buried alongside, beneath six inches of soil created by decades of rotted leaves. The wire connects to a red maple up the hill, and finding it brought great joy because it confirmed the missing boundary of my woodlot, otherwise outlined by stone walls.



Red paint sprayed during a father/son boundary walk adds to the story told by this old white oak.

The oak is a reliable witness to the history of that particular place. It grew on the dry, well-drained slope surrounded by older American chestnuts. The oldest hand-drawn survey map for my neighbor's woodlot to the east refers to his adjacent land as "The Chestnut Tract." Today there is not even a stump left from chestnuts that succumbed to the fungal blight in the decades after 1905.

Further upslope, amid granite ledges of an old graphite mine, is a forest of red oak and hop hornbeam. The trunks of the oldest and largest red oaks exhibit uphill-facing basal fire scars that bear witness to fires either lightning-set or due to carelessness.

The worst recorded forest fire season in recent history in New Hampshire took

Following rusted barbed wire to the red maple at left from the white oak at right confirmed an old boundary line. Photos by Dave Anderson.

The pastures of my woodlot were uniformly abandoned following the 1929 stock market crash and the ensuing Great Depression. When I cut a tree—regardless of species or diameter—and count growth rings, I find myself back in the early 1930s when I reach the core.

place in October of 1947 after months of prolonged summer drought. Since oaks are better adapted to fast moving ground fires than some other species, it makes sense that my white oak and the red oaks would have survived those fires or others to remain today, while less fire-adapted species like beech, birch and maples would have succumbed.

A visitor looking over the Lane River Valley from this same hillside prior to 1900 would have seen rolling pastures entirely cleared of trees. The young white oak carried its three strands of barbed wire while overlooking a rough expanse of boulder-strewn land and grazing sheep or cattle before the turn of the 20th century. The decades-long wool craze briefly reigned the landscape between 1810 and 1840. Naturalist Tom Wessels had dubbed this era as "sheep fever" for a near cult-like devotion to raising sheep. Our forests continue to rebound to this day.

The farmers who cleared forests south of the White Mountains to pastures prior to the Civil War created a short-lived pseudo prairie. Tree cavity-dwelling wildlife specifically adapted as mature forest *specialists*—flying squirrels, fishers and pileated woodpeckers—decreased. Grassland specialists arrived and increased in abundance: meadowlarks, bobolinks, woodcock, red foxes and woodchucks.

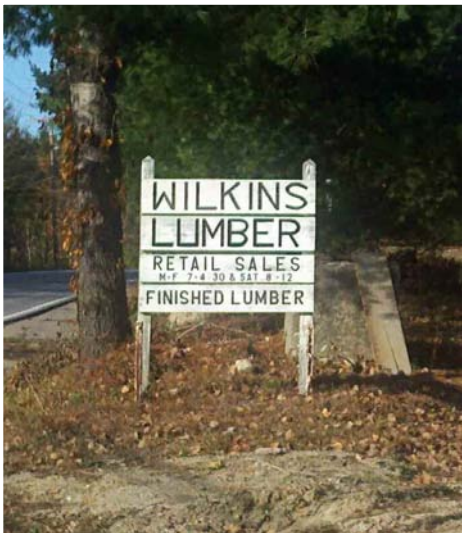
When farmers moved on, pastures quickly reverted back to forest. Pioneer trees—sun-drenched white birch, poplars and white pines—replaced dark forests of beech, sugar maple, yellow birch and hemlock adapted to shade. The pastures of my woodlot were uniformly abandoned following the 1929 stock market crash and the ensuing Great Depression. When I cut a tree—regardless of species or diameter—and count growth rings, I find myself back in the early 1930s when I reach the core.

Now surrounded by dense hemlock and red oak woods, the white oak is declining in vigor and slowly dying of age-related effects which foresters and gerontologists call "senescence." Yet even in decline, the oak bequeaths an important biological legacy. Large fallen limbs and dead wood are full of wood-boring beetles, millipedes, ants and grubs. Hollows provide nest sites for cavity nesting birds—woodpeckers or owls. Various entrances to hollow sections of trunk create long-lasting dens which may be renovated by mice, flying squirrels, raccoons, porcupines and fishers.

With current concern for which tree species and forest communities are best-adapted to compete in the changing climatic regime, survivor trees represent a century or more of natural selection and resilience. Changing suites of wildlife and natural communities shift and disappear while yielding to better-adapted or weedy species. In slow-motion it seems, forests respond to natural disturbances and landscape change. Even as individual trees succumb, forests endure.

The white oak "witness tree" is a living time-capsule that places my brief tenancy as landowner into its proper perspective. I hike down the hill after visiting the old oak with renewed perspective. If I squint my eyes just right, I might see myself descending through former landscapes my predecessors would instantly recognize . . . And I wonder what changes the next 150 years will bring to our state's forests.

Naturalist Dave Anderson is director of education for the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. He may be reached via e-mail at danderson@forestsociety.org.



Above: *Wilkins Lumber was founded in 1808. The conservation easements would keep about 500 acres of its working forests open to the public in an area that is rapidly losing open space.* Photo by Brian Hotz.

Help the Forest Society Protect the Historic Wilkins Family Forestlands in Southern N.H.

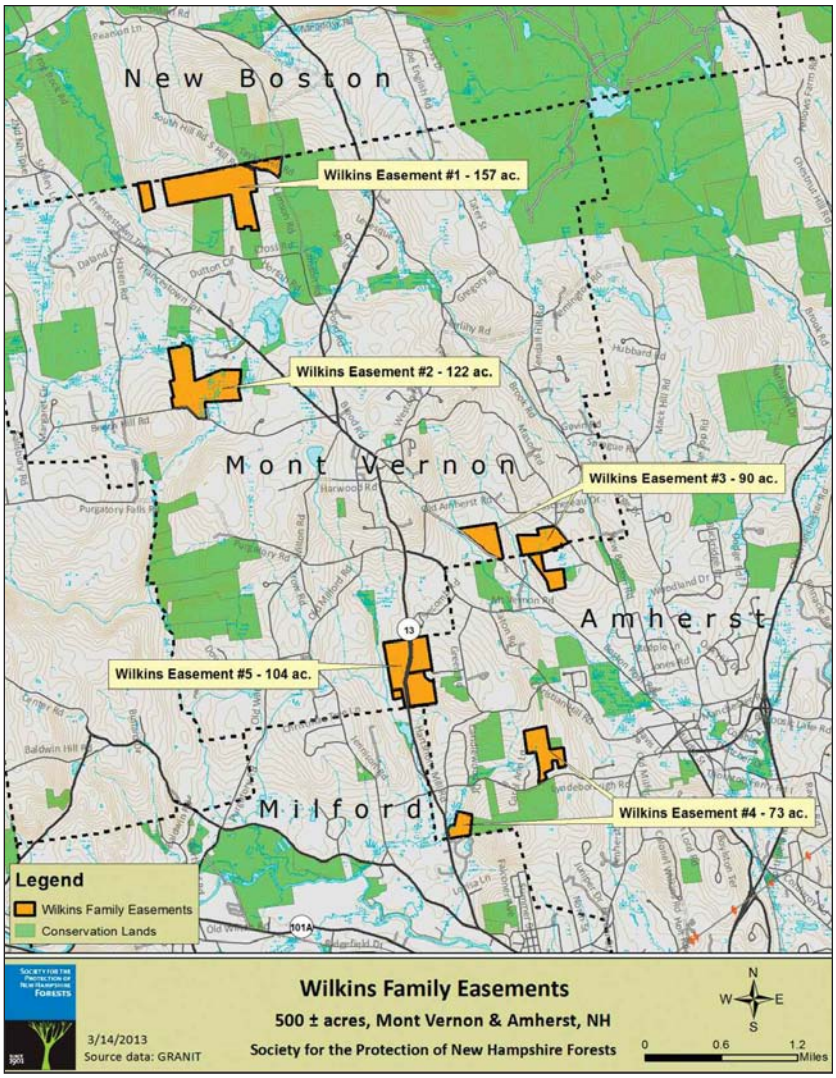
It's no small thing to have created a family legacy that goes back eight generations. It's a giant accomplishment to protect that legacy. The Forest Society is working with the owners of the Wilkins Lumber Company to do just that, but we need your help.

The Wilkins family is hoping to conserve approximately 500 acres in the increasingly developed towns of Mont Vernon and Amherst by selling conservation easements on five separate blocks of long-held working forestland at a bargain-sale rate. The Forest Society needs to raise $190,000 by Sept. 30 to cover the modest purchase price and to offset the surveying, legal and other costs of the easements.

Wilkins Lumber was founded in 1808 by E.L. Hartshorn, who built a sawmill next to the brook on his farm in Milford. In the late 1800s, Hartshorn descendants married into the Wilkins family, who continued to operate and improve the mill. Always a source of local lumber, Wilkins Lumber has survived the Great Depression, the Hurricane of '38, a fire started by a lightning strike and ongoing market challenges. Acquiring their own working timberlands and managing them well was one key to the family business's longevity.

The 500 acres are an open-space patchwork in the towns of Mont Vernon and Amherst. The five conservation easements

Easements would protect the woodland walking paths on the properties from being lost to development in the future.
Photo by Brian Hotz.



will secure permanent pedestrian public access to the lands. The easements will protect forest, wetlands and streams that feed the Souhegan and Piscatagua rivers in the Merrimack River watershed. Like any well-managed working forest, the Wilkins acreage is home to diverse wildlife such as songbirds, amphibians, deer, moose and bears.

Please help us perpetuate the Wilkins family's legacy of providing open spaces for all to enjoy!

☐ YES, I WANT TO HELP THE FOREST SOCIETY PROTECT THE HISTORIC WILKINS FORESTLANDS

Name: _____

Address: _____

Town/City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

☐ Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution for $_____
(Please make check out to the Forest Society, with "Wilkins Forestlands" on the memo line.)

☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard Number: _____ Expiration date: _____ Security code: _____

Please mail the completed form to: Martha Twombly, 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 Martha Twombly at 603-224-9945 or via e-mail at mtwombly@forestsociety.org.

Thank you for your help!

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THE MANY FACES OF CONSERVATION

Photo of Kimberly and Morgan Mastrianni by Al Karevy.

Jack, Kimberly and Morgan Mastrianni

Langdon, N.H.

Members since 2004

"Land is precious. As the saying goes, 'They aren't making any more of it,' and once it's gone, it's extraordinarily difficult to get it back. Contiguous open space dedicated to agriculture or forestry may seem abundant in this rural area, but it isn't really. New Hampshire loses farms to development for various reasons at an alarming pace.

So we started looking at what we could do to make sure this property stayed open. It was important to us that the views and woods we love so much will be there for future generations of people to enjoy. We wanted the forest and fields to remain intact to support wildlife as well as livestock. Putting it in conservation was the simplest way to achieve those goals, and the Forest Society made the process easy.

We are proud and happy to be supporting an organization that provides such a resource for landowners and does so much to keep New Hampshire forests healthy and available for our future."

MEMBERS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE!

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