

MONADNOCK CONSERVANCY

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How to hug a tree

Easement landowners manage their woodlot by taking the long view

By Jordan McCarron



Jordan McCarron

David and Jeanne Moody camped on their property the first spring they owned it; they now live here full time.



Peter Throop

Beaver ponds are a great resource to maintain for wildlife as they can meet a variety of needs.

David and Jeanne Moody, owners of Beaver Wood Tree Farm on Route 12A in Alstead, placed 220 of their 242 acres under conservation easement with the Monadnock Conservancy in 2011. In addition, their tree farm has been certified by the American Tree Farm System since the early 1980s. This coming winter, for the first time since the easement was put in place, there will be a timber harvest.

“If you have a piece of land with any natural resource value, you have a responsibility to manage it and protect it,” proclaimed David Moody, as he sat on his back deck overlooking Beaver Wood Pond.

For the Moodys such stewardship includes not only voluntarily agreeing to an easement but also hiring a licensed forester, creating a long-term forest management plan and adhering to sustainable silvicultural practices.

For the upcoming timber harvest, the Moodys contracted forester David Kent. Kent recently met with the Conservancy’s stewardship director, Emily Hague. They discussed how to structure a harvest plan to be sure it meets the goals of the easement — in particular, protecting the water, keeping the soil healthy and maintaining the scenic value. The easement language requires forestry to be done in such a way that human benefits are balanced with natural resource benefits.

The Beaver Wood easement was the culmination of more than three decades of interest in permanently protecting the property. The Moodys were first approached by the Alstead Conservation Commission in 1980 to put an easement on their land. The costs associated with the process were prohibitive at that

time, so they put the idea on the back burner. David, who joined the commission himself in 2003, credits the Conservancy’s Monadnock Community Conservation Partnership and the Quabbin-to-Cardigan Partnership grant program for helping them finally achieve their goal.

Jeanne cites two formative experiences with setting the tone for their ownership and stewardship of Beaver Wood. During the 1970s, they visited friends who raised Christmas trees in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia. The notion of a tree farm caught their fancy. The second was the words of a teacher with whom David studied in graduate school: “Every true New Englander owns a woodlot.”

But finding that woodlot was a process in itself. The Moodys knew they would need at least 100 acres to make any profit from timber management. At the time, they were living in the Washington, D.C., area, yet felt drawn to the forests of New England. Both David and Jeanne were born and raised in Boston suburbs and have ties to southern New Hampshire. After an extensive search for the right place the Moodys bought the nearly 300-acre Alstead property in 1979.

“You sense in your inner parts the quality of a nice woodland,” said David, when asked if he knew how ecologically important the land was when they bought it. “Scientifically, I now know that my intuition was correct.” The woods are almost entirely on Group 1 forest soils, the most suitable for producing forest products. The property also contains numerous wetlands and vernal pools; plus

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Brittany Ballantyne



We can all win

Putting aside differences is key, so people can focus on the common goal — the land

By Rick Brackett

I believe that conservation is the collaboration of many individuals, with different ethics and ideals, to protect a landscape from activities that impact the land's ability to support life.

We are each individuals with different pasts and experiences shaping who we are, why we do the things we do and why we feel the way we feel. Whether you want to protect the landscape's wildlife habitat, the farms and food of the region, local jobs and economy, outdoor recreation, ecosystem services or aesthetics, we all can be allies. The differences in our priorities do not matter most. What does matter is that the land and its natural resources exist for future landowners and generations to allow them to continue making thoughtful decisions year after year that support many of those various reasons.

As an individual, I feel pretty unique in the way I came to be a conservationist. As the son of a man who hunts and fishes, I grew up enjoying, and continue to enjoy, the same activities. As the son of a woman who bred dogs, I developed a close relationship with dogs and a certain sense of animal consciousness. As the grandson (and employee) of a man who operated a small tree service company, I learned about land conversion from forest to residences, the continuous changes in forests and the sensible use of resources. Having lived in Massachusetts with my mother and then New

Hampshire with my father, I learned about the two states' land ethics and how they differ. Combining these life experiences with my education from Keene State College and Antioch University New England has allowed me to develop a strong ethic about natural resources.

And because I see value in many different reasons for conservation, that makes it easier for me to work with different groups. Many people who consider themselves hunters or conservationists find it difficult to understand how I can be both. My answer is always the same: don't look at the differences, look at the shared goals then move forward from that to a state of mutual understanding and respect.

It's most beneficial to develop partnerships, and it is from this place that we will succeed in creating and maintaining vested interest in the landscape and natural resources. So, for me, the ideal picture of the Monadnock region 100 years from now would be a place that continues to be seen from above as small areas of dense development surrounded by unfragmented blocks of farms and forests; that retains the biodiversity of today; that supports a local economy through timber and agriculture; that allows landowners to make individual choices; that supports different outdoor lifestyles and recreation interests whether hunting, hiking, farming, off-roading, so on and so forth; and that also has enough land open to these activities to limit conflict between them.

When the land is there and healthy, we can all win. 🌲

Rick Brackett works for the Conservancy managing the lands owned by the organization and overseeing projects that bring together diverse groups of people.

What does land conservation mean to you? We want to know!

Post your comments on our Facebook page, or if you'd like the opportunity to be a guest columnist and respond to the question at length, email Katrina Farmer, communications manager: Katrina@MonadnockConservancy.org.


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Ryan Owens, executive director, *Walpole*; **Anne McBride**, land protection director, *Nelson*; **Stacy Gambrel**, conservation project manager, *Keene*; **Emily Hague**, stewardship director, *Keene*; **Rick Brackett**, land manager/GIS specialist, *Fitzwilliam*; **Patricia Payne**, development and membership manager, *Hancock*; **Katrina Farmer**, communications manager, *Dublin*

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Conservation awards highlight volunteers' dedication



Three awards, presented at the 25th Annual Celebration in August, honor two couples and an individual for their ongoing dedication to local land conservation. Each awardee was given a stunning landscape photo, from a local place in our region, set in a handcrafted wood frame.

Executive Director Ryan Owens, left, presented Betsey Church with a photo of a woods road for her husband, Rick Church. Rick received the Founders' Award, which recognizes an individual who has contributed substantially to the success, stability and capabilities of the Conservancy over a sustained period of time; he was unable to personally receive the award because he was traveling abroad. "This award is about putting hard work, critical work, into the organization, and that's what Rick did," Owens said. Rick has had a long association with the Conservancy, serving three terms as a board member, including president from 2003 to 2006, and as interim executive director in 2008.



Kate Van Wely and Will Wear accepted a framed photo of Dublin Lake and Mount Monadnock on behalf of their parents, Tom and the late Story Wright. The Wrights were honored with the Philip Faulkner Award for their dedication to thoughtful community development. "When it came to land-related community service, Tom and Story made a formidable pair," said Owens. Story helped found the Beech Hill-Dublin Lake Watershed Association, served on the Dublin Open Space Committee and was a trustee for the Conservancy; Tom served on the Dublin Planning Board, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Dublin Lake Preservation Committee, Dark Pond Associates and Monadnock Advisory Commission.



Stewardship Director Emily Hague, right, presented the Volunteer of the Year Award, a photo looking east from the summit of Mount Monadnock at sunrise, to Dave and Ann Repak of Temple. The Repaks were volunteer land stewards from 2002 to 2014. "We chose [the Repaks] because of their longstanding involvement, spanning nearly half the life of this organization," said Hague. "Dave and Ann embody the spirit of volunteerism and community-based conservation, and we are enormously grateful for their service." 🌲



photos: Marilyn Weir

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72 acres have been identified by the New Hampshire Wildlife Action Plan as priority wildlife habitat.

The richness of the landscape fits the Moodys' dream to have a place they can manage for timber resources and wildlife diversity; the first to help support them in retirement and the second to leave their mark as environmental stewards. This winter's harvest will achieve both.

Stewardship Director Hague signed off on the harvest plan, finding that it addresses the easement values. Now it's up to forester David Kent to protect those resources by employing best management practices, such as stabilizing the road, operating on frozen or dry ground and installing water bars to reduce erosion. Hague will be walking the land at

different stages of the harvest, checking that best management practices are in place and that everything goes according to plan.

"If I get out there and see problem spots, I'll ask the forester to have them fixed and then revisit the property," Hague said. "Sometimes I might call in the county forester or another forester for a second opinion."

No matter what though, the Moodys can rest assured that the land they've stewarded and grown to love will be protected forever. "When our granddaughter was young," said David, "I would tell her that if she ever got lost in the woods, to hug a tree and stay put." In a manner of speaking, the Moodys are doing just that. 🌲



Local land conservation: then, now and *forever*

Celebrating 25 years of conservation

Twenty-five years ago, the founders of this organization had dreams of providing people with a permanent option of conserving their land and protecting the region's rural character. Today, 18,000 acres later, thanks to your support and others like you, the Monadnock Conservancy is fulfilling those dreams and the dreams of countless landowners.

It was in this spirit that nearly 150 people gathered on Saturday, August 23, at the Peterborough Town House for the Conservancy's 25th Annual Celebration. State Sen. Molly Kelly (pictured above right) shared the news that the Senate recently passed a resolution extending its congratulations to the Conservancy and its supporters for 25 years of dedicated service conserving the natural resources and scenic beauty of the region.

"[The Conservancy] exhibits all of the hallmarks that [the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation] likes to see in independent charitable organizations ... the continuity and the passion and the skill of the board," said





Dick Ober, president of the Foundation and former Conservancy executive director from 2001 to 2007. Ober (above right), along with Ben Mahnke (left), executive director from 1998 to 2001, and Ryan Owens, current executive director (center), spoke about the organization's superb governance, clear mission, professional staff and deep connections in the local communities.

"Today," Owens said, "25 years is more than an incredible milestone. This is a pivotal time of transition for the Conservancy and for the land trust movement as a whole."

To meet the challenges of the future, keynote speaker Peter Forbes (below far left) inspired everyone to think critically about what we care enough about, as individuals and as a community, to take a stand for in the next quarter century.

"Diversity of life is what I stand for," Forbes said. "To care is not reserved for conservationists, to care is simply human. And that caring is what I stand for." 🌲



 More photos, videos online
ow.ly/BSDP
youtube.com/MonadnockConservancy

THANK YOU!

Special thanks to the following businesses, organizations and people who generously donated their time or products to make our 25th Annual Celebration a success: Anytime Apparel, C&S Wholesale Grocers, Michael Dillon, Dublin Historical Society, Hannaford, Hobbs Jewelers, Inn at East Hill Farm, Joseph's Coat, Keene State College, Archie & Nina McIntyre, Monadnock Conservancy trustees, Monadnock Food Co-op, The Mountain Corporation, Margaret Soddors, Norman Spicher, Jane Taylor and Waterhouse Restaurant.



Inspiring the community to protect the land

Meet Laura Andrews of Westmoreland, Monadnock Forever Society member

By Jackie Raiford



From an overlook at Robin Hood Park in Keene, looking west, there stretches a view of unbroken forestland from south to north. Laura Andrews recalled looking out over this expanse of green and thinking, “It takes a community to preserve a landscape.”

To Laura, community is the reason land protection is both necessary and possible. “Call it Monadnock pride,” she said, “but people here, no matter how different they are from one another, treasure this landscape.”

A love of the land inspired Laura to become a member of the Monadnock Conservancy about a decade ago. Since then, she has learned a lot about the Conservancy through newsletters, newspaper articles and from Antioch students.

Laura has been the director of admissions at Antioch University New England in Keene for the past 15 years. Students know her for her bright enthusiasm and thoughtful attention to detail — like personally calling each accepted student to welcome them to the program. “It’s my chance to show prospective students the kind of community we have here,” she said.

In turn, enrolled students spend time with her discussing their experiences in their respective programs and internships, many of which have been with the Conservancy.

Beyond her life at Antioch, Laura often goes for walks in the woods to reflect upon life and escape its usual demands. She has several creative hobbies, to which she takes a historical approach. She sews quilts using vintage fabrics that once belonged to her grandmother. She also woodworks with antique tools discovered in her home, a historic 1791 restored Colonial.

It was in thinking about the past and the

future that Laura became interested in further supporting the work of land conservation, and the Conservancy “fit [my] own style of personal communication,” she said.

So Laura named the Conservancy as a beneficiary in her estate plan. As a member of the Monadnock Forever Society, she is helping to ensure the future well-being of the land she loves.

“The land is just the beginning,” she said. “From the land we get everything. What we harvest — the produce, meat and timber — supports businesses and education throughout the region.”

Laura’s support will help the Conservancy continue working toward such a shared vision, embracing the connections between the landscape and the economic and social vitality of the region. So that in 50 or 100 years, the Monadnock region will still be a place for people to hike or to hunt, to farm or to forage, as Laura imagines. 🌲



Our legacy society honors the individuals and families who have remembered the Monadnock Conservancy with a planned gift through their estate. Deferred gifts to the Conservancy are acts of generosity that celebrate our region by helping to conserve open space and care for the land in the years to come.

Have you already included the Conservancy in your estate plan, or are you considering doing so? For more information about our legacy society, please contact Ryan Owens, executive director, at Ryan@MonadnockConservancy.org or 603-357-0600, ext. 103.



Emily Hague

In memoriam

Elizabeth Story Wright of Dublin passed away in July. She deeply cared about the conservation of natural resources and the protection of the beauty of the Monadnock region. She was a board member of the Conservancy, Beech Hill–Dublin Lake Watershed Association, Dublin Open Space Committee and Dublin Riding and Walking Club, in addition to several other education and human services boards. Story especially enjoyed horseback riding, gardening and being with her dogs. Her friend Betsey Harris noted that “Story was really strong, in her opinions as well as physically. She could throw a hay bale to her horse, or outlast a professional helper in her lovely garden.” In her six years of service on the Conservancy board, her strength shone in her well-informed voice and a willingness to take on any task.

Accreditation status renewed

Accreditation is a mark of excellence among more than 1,700 land trusts in the United States. In 2008, the Conservancy was one of the first 39 organizations in the nation to be awarded accreditation by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance. The commission announced in late August that the Conservancy’s accredited status has been renewed for another five years. “It’s important for our stakeholders and supporters to know we are accredited,” said Conservancy Board President Ken Stewart. “It’s a hallmark of

what we do, representing professionalism and commitment to stewardship.” The Conservancy submitted some 50 documents for review and demonstrated adherence to 12 standards and 26 indicator practices, which address the ethical and technical operation of a land trust. The renewal application also included letters of support and public comment about how the Conservancy complies with national quality standards.

Follow that heron

A papier-mâché great blue heron has been a guest at the Conservancy offices off-and-on over the past four months. The Keene Middle School Art Club made the heron to be our spokesperson for the West Hill conservation project. Henrietta, as she’s known, has made appearances at 15 places in Keene, Chesterfield and Swanzev, introducing people to the West Hill parcels and their importance for protection. Totalling nearly 700 acres, three properties straddling Keene, Chesterfield and Swanzev include wetlands, streams and woods — perfect habitat especially for great blue herons, moose, bear and bobcat. To learn more about the project, visit our “West Hill” page in the “Support us” section of our website (www.MonadnockConservancy.org). View our photo album on Facebook to see more pictures of Henrietta from her adventures around the region: <http://ow.ly/BEdTK>



Stacy Gambrel

What does the Annual Fund do?

Soon you’ll be receiving our yearly Annual Fund appeal. Since we also have a membership program, the question sometimes comes up: what exactly is the Annual Fund and what does it do?

The contributions we receive in the next few months help us do *more* — protect more land, offer more help to landowners caring for already conserved properties and host more educational events. Without an Annual Fund program, we would be a smaller and less effective organization. So for those who are able to share an additional donation over and above membership ... *thank you!* And to those who prefer to make only an Annual Fund donation, in lieu of membership ... *thank you!* Either way your contributions truly make a difference, both in our work and in the larger Monadnock region community.



Peter Throop



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Can you guess the location of
 this beaver pond?

Read the story on page 1 for the answer.



Welcome to our new members!



Stacy Gambrel

Susan Abraham, Swanzey
 Dorianne Almann, Hinsdale
 Joseph & Margaret Antosiewicz,
 Swanzey
 Bank of New Hampshire, Laconia
 Bellows-Nichols Insurance,
 Peterborough
 Norman Bergeron
 Phyllis Bradd, Keene
 Timothy Butterworth, Chesterfield
 Kathleen M. Chelstowski, Keene
 Cheshire County Federal Credit
 Union, Keene
 Christina Christides, Keene
 Christine Clarke, Swanzey
 Ernest Conides, Keene
 Debra Damelio, Keene
 Marie Duggan, Keene
 Elizabeth DuVerlie, Baltimore, Md.

Nancy Eddy, West Chesterfield
 Edward & Marcia Elshout, Keene
 Russell & Kathleen Fleming,
 Keene
 Barbara & Edwin Fletcher,
 Chesterfield
 Bonnie Forcier, Keene
 Anne Francisco, Keene
 Barbara Gogolen, Keene
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 Beth Caldwell, Keene
 Tucker Gresh, Bryn Mawr, Pa.
 Gail Haas, South Acworth
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