



THE LEGACY

FOR ALL THOSE WHO LOVE THE LAKES REGION OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

View NE from Piper—Rick Van de Poll Photo

LONG AWAITED PIPER SUMMIT CONSERVATION BECOMES A REALITY

Winter in the Lakes Region is usually the quieter time of the year. Snow starts to cover the landscape and the pace of life slows. This past winter though, was far from quiet for the Lakes Region Conservation Trust, as LRCT and the Gilford Conservation Commission worked energetically to complete the permanent conservation of a key 273-acre parcel of land on Piper Mountain in the Belknap Mountain Range. This parcel encompasses Piper Mountain's summit (elevation 2,044 feet), the surrounding unfragmented forest and wild habitat, and parts of key hiking trails.

Anyone who has hiked on Piper Mountain or elsewhere in the Belknaps, or who enjoys the views of the Belknaps from around the region, can attest to the beauty of this landscape. Contiguous to thousands of acres of conserved land, the Piper Mountain parcel has long been a conservation priority for LRCT and the Town of Gilford.

The strong and enthusiastic support for the Piper Mountain project is a testament to the importance of the Belknap Range

as a destination for hiking and other recreational activities and as a natural landmark of the Lakes Region. LRCT greatly appreciates the extraordinarily generous support for this project from many individuals, families, businesses, and organizations. LRCT is particularly grateful for the dedication of the Gilford Land Conservation Task Force and the Gilford Conservation Commission to the project, and for the Conservation Commission's approval of a substantial contribution from the Town of Gilford Conservation Fund. The Samuel P. Pardoe Foundation offered a very generous challenge grant which helped to bring the campaign to a successful conclusion. LRCT is also thankful to the Belknap Range Conservation Coalition and the Belknap County Sportsmen's Association for their important support for and assistance with the project.

LRCT now owns the Piper Mountain parcel, and the Town of Gilford holds a conservation easement on the property. As part of the project, LRCT also granted to the Town a conservation easement on another contiguous parcel of 86 acres already owned by LRCT.

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Erin with her daughter Stella at the top of Piper during the recent land celebration

Growing up in Gilford, I was fortunate to have Piper Mountain practically in my backyard. It has been a part of my life for over 20 years. I've hiked this mountain countless times, from every angle and in every season, under the sun and under the stars. There is something special about Piper. The entire Belknap Range is beautiful, but anyone who has sat in one of the stone chairs at the summit of Piper can tell you that it stands out from the rest.

This past winter I hiked up with my family shortly after the closing documents were signed conserving the latest 273 acres. I felt a great sense of pride as we walked along the Red Trail, my favorite route. As we sat at the top and I warmed my daughter's hands, I thought ... this is it, this is what I work towards, this is part of the legacy that I will leave for her and future generations.

Erin Mastine



LAKE WICWAS – FOUR NEW CONSERVED AREAS

In July, the Lakes Region Conservation Trust completed the last transaction of an ambitious four-part land conservation project on Lake Wicwas in Meredith, protecting a total of approximately one mile of Wicwas shoreline. Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of four families, a generous grant from the NH Department of Environment Services Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund, and support from the Lake Wicwas Association and its members, these projects have conserved more than 33 acres of forest land, wetland, and shoreline on this beautiful lake.



The most recently completed of these transactions is a conservation easement on approximately 15 acres of land off Chemung Road with 550 feet of shoreline, donated by Janet H. Harris and Richard L. Harris. This property abuts the Roger W. Harris Natural Area, previously conserved with LRCT by other members of the Harris family, and the contiguous conserved area now encompasses more than 75 acres and 4,200 feet of shoreline.



In March 2015, Gillian C. Emmons and Eric S. Cohen donated to LRCT a shorefront parcel on Loon Point, across the cove from the Harris conservation easement, permanently protecting more than 2 acres of pristine woodland and wetland and 500 feet of shoreline. In August 2016, Michael and Nancy Marion donated to LRCT approximately 15 acres of land near the eastern end of Lake Wicwas, conserving woodland, wetland, and 3,600 feet of shoreline. In December 2016, LRCT received from M. Daniel Smith and Lois Emily K. Smith the gift of Turtle Island (also known through the years as Small Pine Island, Round Island, and Shaw’s Island) and its 525 feet of shoreline.

These properties lie within highest ranked habitat in the state according to the NH Fish and Game Department’s Wildlife Action Plan, encompassing such habitats as vernal pools and black gum-red maple swamp. They contain shoreline along critical marsh habitat, including the largest bordering marsh on Lake Wicwas and habitat supporting the only nesting loon pair on the lake. The properties have significant value, as well, in providing opportunities for quiet paddling and nature observation and in protecting the lake’s water quality and scenic character. The project has increased by more than 50% the conserved shoreline on Lake Wicwas and has added to the already significant conserved lands to the west, south, and southeast of the lake.

Our thanks to Scott Powell for providing these photos taken along the shores of the Lake Wicwas parcels

This land conservation project is unique in LRCT’s experience—four families deciding to conserve their properties as a group, with generous and enthusiastic support from the lake association and its members for the benefit of the entire community. We at LRCT are very grateful to all four families for their generosity and commitment to conservation and to the future of Lake Wicwas. We are also grateful to the Lake Wicwas Association and its members for their financial and volunteer support that helped to bring this project to completion, and we look forward to working together toward future conservation successes in the Wicwas Watershed.

WELCOME BACK ASHLEY!

It is our great pleasure to welcome Ashley Clark as LRCT’s Membership Coordinator. Ashley interned at LRCT during her senior year at Plymouth State University and graduated with a degree in Environmental Science and Policy, and she continued to work as LRCT’s Land and Stewardship Assistant after graduation. She subsequently took a position as part of the Alumni and Development staff at the New Hampton School, and now she has returned to LRCT. A West Coast native, Ashley has planted New Hampshire roots in both the White Mountains and the Lakes Region. When she’s not admiring the view of Red Hill and the Ossipees from LRCT Headquarters, she can be found hiking with her dog, floating on Squam, or skiing in the mountains.



Ashley and her dog Mookie on Rattlesnake Mountain in Sandwich

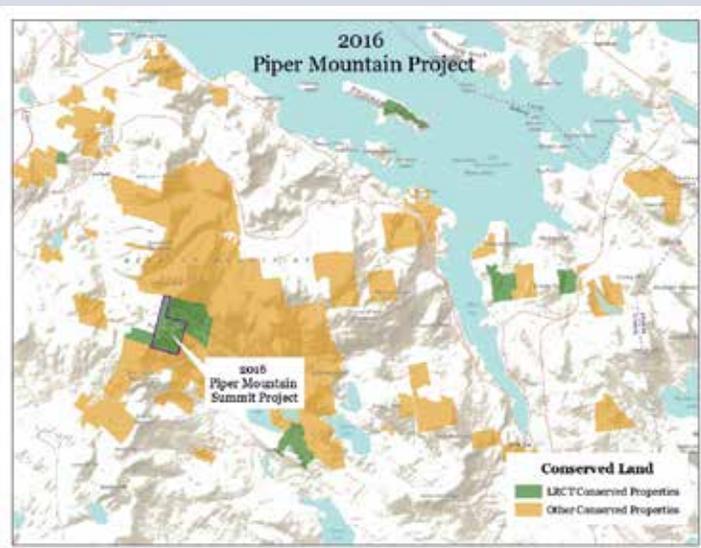
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The Piper Mountain project is the second land conservation effort in recent years where LRCT and the Gilford Conservation Commission have worked together. In 2014, the two organizations conserved the 332-acre Moulton Valley parcel, which abuts the Piper Mountain property.

With the completion of the Piper project, a total of 691 contiguous acres has been conserved through LRCT ownership and conservation easements held by the Town of Gilford, protecting key habitat, incredible hiking trails and destinations, and unspoiled natural habitat in the heart of the Belknap Mountains.



Left to right—Doug Hill, Everett McLaughlin, Don Berry, and Russ Wilder at the Piper celebration



After the snow melted and the leaves emerged, on a beautiful sunny Saturday, LRCT and the Gilford Conservation Commission held a celebration atop Piper Mountain, complete with champagne, ice cream, and Piper Mountain blueberries. This made for a perfect setting to recognize all the hard work that went into making the Piper project a success. One person received special recognition—long-time Gilford Conservation Commission member Everett McLaughlin, who has worked relentlessly for many years to conserve the summit of Piper and who was essential to bringing the transaction together. LRCT President Don Berry presented Everett with a plaque as a group of more than 50 friends and supporters toasted Everett and the project and enjoyed the view across the Belknaps and out to Lake Winnepesaukee. Thanks to the dedication and support of all who helped with the Piper project, this beautiful piece of the Lakes Region has been secured for the benefit and enjoyment of all of us today and generations to come.

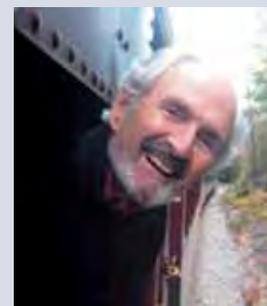
IN MEMORIAM

It is with great sadness and friendship that we mark the passing of two members of the Lakes Region Conservation Trust community. We are very grateful for their hard work and support and for the important contributions they have made to our organization and to our beautiful region.



Dave Roberts played a key role in the protection of lands in the Lakes Region for many years. He was an avid hiker, naturalist, and trail creator and an excellent cartographer. Dave served as LRCT's first Property Adopter for the Castle in the Clouds Conservation Area and created our first map of that property's extensive network of hiking trails. Dave also had a special love for the Belknap Range, and he created a number of trails there as well as detailed trail maps of the Belknaps. Dave was known for his kindness, humility, and hard work. In honor of his commitment to LRCT and his tremendous generosity, LRCT's Dave Roberts Castle in the Clouds Trails Fund was created in 2007 to support the stewardship of the trails at the Castle in the Clouds Conservation Area.

Henry Ide served as an LRCT Trustee from 2007 to 2016 and as a member of the Stewardship Committee. Before bringing his wisdom and legal expertise to his role as Trustee, he served in the Navy, practiced law in Connecticut, and was an avid golfer. For more than five years, Henry served as LRCT's Property Adopter for the Pine Hill Conservation Area in Moultonborough, located close to his home on Wakondah Pond. Henry spent his childhood summers hiking Red Hill and exploring the region and later returned to make his home here looking across the water to Red Hill. Henry was known for his integrity, intellect, and good will. We are grateful for his wise input and advice during his time as Trustee and for his steadfast commitment to the Lakes Region.



REFLECTIONS –

It is understandable that working at LRCT would provide opportunities for wonderful outdoor experiences as we protect some of the most beautiful places in the Lakes Region. What may be less known is the opportunity for important relationships to be formed along the way. I think of this particularly as Peggy Merritt completes her term as Chair of the LRCT Board of Trustees this summer.



Peggy Merritt and Don Berry

Peggy joined the LRCT Lands Committee in 2006, and since then she has participated in almost every LRCT committee and served as Lands Committee Chair and Board Vice Chair and, from 2013 to 2017, as Board Chair. She has worked diligently on behalf of LRCT, contributing wisdom, commitment, and passion for land conservation and for this beautiful Lakes Region. Peggy has led the LRCT Board during a number of important projects and initiatives, including our most recent Strategic Planning process, establishment of the LRCT Advisory Council, and LRCT's preparation and application for Land Trust Accreditation. She has been an indispensable participant in numerous fundraising campaigns and land conservation projects, including the expansion of LRCT's Red Hill River Conservation Area in her hometown of Sandwich. With an eye toward securing LRCT's future successes, Peggy and her husband Ron Lawler have generously established two funds—The Lakes Region Conservation Trust Legacy Fund at the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation and the Sandwich Land Conservation Fund here at LRCT.

In addition to being an energetic and dedicated conservationist whose record of contribution to and leadership of LRCT is extraordinary, Peggy is a good friend with whom it has been a great honor and pleasure to work. We will miss her presence as a Board member greatly, but we look forward to seeing her often as she continues to serve as a Lands Committee member, Conservation Easement Monitor, and, I'm sure, in other capacities. Thank you, Peggy, for all that you have done and continue to do for LRCT and for the Lakes Region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Don'.

Donald S. Berry
President



The Lakes Region Conservation Trust was founded in 1979 to conserve the natural heritage of New Hampshire's Lakes Region. Our conservation and stewardship work preserves community character, conserves critical wildlife habitat and diverse ecosystems, protects natural landmarks and scenic landscapes, and provides outdoor recreation opportunities for people of all ages.

Together with our dedicated community of supporters, we have conserved 145 properties totaling over 25,000 acres. These conserved lands encompass many of the special places that define our unique and spectacular part of New England, affording everyone abundant opportunities to explore and connect with the natural world and establishing a legacy of conservation for future generations.

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Ashley E. Clark, Membership Coordinator (Campton)

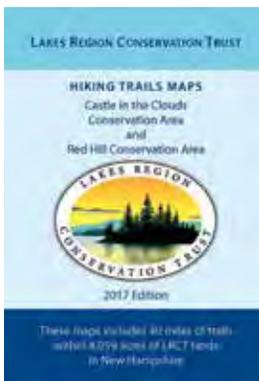
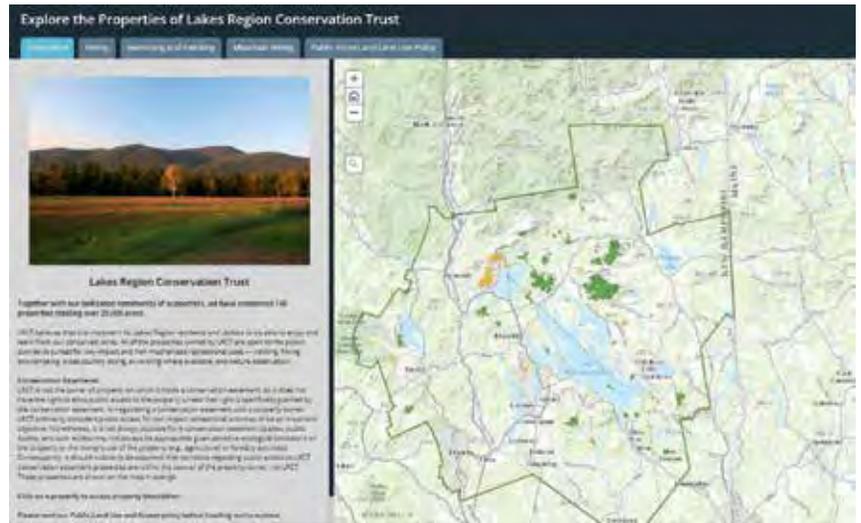
David R. Mallard, Land and Stewardship Director (Sandwich)

Erin C. Mastine, Communications and Administrative Coordinator (Gilford)

Lisetta J. Silvestri, Operations Director (Holderness)

INTERACTIVE STORY MAP NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

We are excited to announce the launch of our new interactive online Story Map! Learn about LRCT's properties all in one place. Our Story Map shows how each property is conserved and which properties provide opportunities for hiking, swimming, paddling, and mountain biking. Visit our website, www.lrct.org, to start exploring!



2017 CASTLE IN THE CLOUDS CONSERVATION AREA AND RED HILL CONSERVATION AREA HIKING TRAILS MAPS NOW AVAILABLE

The 2017 edition of the popular waterproof map of the Castle in the Clouds Conservation Area Hiking Trails is now available with the addition of a Red Hill Conservation Area trails map on the back. These two maps show 8,059 acres of LRCT's conserved lands and 40 miles of trails, color-coded to match the trail blazes on these properties. Visit our online store to get yours today.

OAK RIDGE INTERPRETIVE TRAIL MADE NEW AGAIN

The Oak Ridge Interpretive Trail at the Castle in the Clouds Conservation Area, completed in 2009, was made possible through the imagination, talent, and hard work of a dedicated team of volunteers, former LRCT staff member Kristen Clothier, and the generous financial support of the Burnett Trust Fund and members of the H. Weston Burnett family. If you've hiked along the Oak Ridge or Turtleback Mountain Trails, you've probably noticed the signs with an acorn symbol, indicating a place to stop and read from the trail guide.

We have now installed a new set of signs which make it possible to learn about the natural and human history of this environment even if you aren't carrying your trail guide. This relatively easy 1.8 mile hike will take you to a beautiful lookout point and is a perfect activity for families. We are grateful to many volunteers for their contributions to the new sign project, and we especially want to thank LRCT Trustee Cindy Stanton for spearheading the project and former LRCT Trustee and Castle in the Clouds Conservation Area Property Adopter Larry DeGeorge, his wife Gerry DeGeorge, and their friends and fellow volunteers for installing the new signs.



Left to right—Carol Luby, Russell Roland, Dianne Luby, and Larry DeGeorge. (Not pictured Gerry DeGeorge, Tom Beland, and Laurel Luby)

The original illustrated Interpretive Trail Guide offers additional detailed information. If you would like to purchase a trail guide, please visit our online store.

STAY CONNECTED

Would you like stay in touch with LRCT to learn about projects like the ones above and upcoming events such as volunteer workdays, guided excursions, and other programs, and to keep informed of progress on land conservation and stewardship projects? If so, please sign up for LRCT e-blasts on our website and follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

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Acorns at Knights Pond Conservation Area in Alton—Ken MacGray Photo



SUMMER/FALL 2017

Special thanks to...

- Cindy Stanton for her dedication to LRCT stewardship and outreach efforts.
- The Samuel P. Pardoe Foundation for a very generous challenge grant for the Piper Mountain project.
- Our dedicated volunteers who helped with the Piper Mountain project mailing: Moe Criasia, Donna Jurka, Everett McLaughlin, Nanci Mitchell, and Russ Wilder.
- LRCT Treasurer Tom Crane for his vision and leadership on the Lake Wicwas land conservation project.
- Linda Allen and Ken MacGray for providing us with beautiful photos of several of our properties.
- Bill Poulin for helping us with outreach on Ragged Island this summer.
- Larry DeGeorge, Peggy Merritt, Jack Merselis, and Muriel Robinette for their extraordinary service, dedication, and leadership as LRCT Trustees, their generosity and friendship, and their commitment to conservation in New Hampshire's Lakes Region.

CONSERVE

ENJOY

EXPLORE

CONNECT

JOIN

Lake Winnepesaukee—Russ Wilder Photo