



THE LEGACY

For all who love the Lakes Region of New Hampshire



Land Conservation in 2020

This year’s pandemic has certainly affected the way in which we at LRCT have been working, with innumerable Zoom conferences, new protocols for ensuring the health and safety of staff and volunteers, and the absence of opportunities to see LRCT friends and supporters at our headquarters in Center Harbor. What has not been affected is the ongoing work of exploring and pursuing land conservation opportunities throughout the Lakes Region, and we have three land protection campaigns under way right now.

Thank you to everyone who has already contributed to help us conserve these three special places in the Lakes Region. If you would like to learn more about these projects or to make a contribution, please visit our website at lrct.org.

Mount Pleasant—Peirce-Albee Property, Tuftonboro and Wolfeboro

The 132-acre Peirce-Albee property on Mt. Pleasant in Tuftonboro and Wolfeboro encompasses critical wildlife habitat and travel corridors, part of the watershed of Upper Beech Pond (a drinking water source for the Town of Wolfeboro), and Tuftonboro’s historic Mount Pleasant-Haley-Walker cemetery. The property features a trail to a prominent open ledge, where visitors will be able to enjoy expansive views extending to Lake Winnepesaukee, Red Hill, the Belknap, Sandwich, and Ossipee Mountain Ranges, and points beyond. The project has received enthusiastic support from the Land Bank of Wolfeboro-Tuftonboro and the Tuftonboro and Wolfeboro Conservation Commissions and has already been awarded a generous grant from the NH Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP). We are currently working on raising the remaining \$162,600 needed to purchase the property.

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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 more than 155 properties totaling over 27,500 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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Reflections



"We have never so enjoyed a hiking area as we did your Castle in the Clouds property, and we fell in love with it. The quiet and isolation on the trails even with packed parking lots was a wonder. Thank you for keeping it open" ... "I wonder how often people say THANK YOU! for all the work you do to conserve trails we love and use. ... We have had countless birthdays in the Belknaps, trained and socialized pups, trained ourselves, quieted our minds, renewed our souls. We are so incredibly fortunate to have these trails available for our use." ... "It is times like these that we really come to appreciate what conservation groups, and LRCT in particular, do for us. ... We know that this is where we want to donate to help sustain the work that you do so well."

These are among the very kind words that have been sent to us during the past few months by LRCT friends and supporters.

In this time, we have all felt renewed appreciation for the woods and fields, lakes and ponds, and summits and hillsides that surround us with natural beauty and are so critical to our well-being. These are places for recreation, enjoyment, learning, and inspiration, places where everyone in our communities, as well as visitors from near and far, are all welcome.

As of this writing, we are working, still out of the office for the most part, to steward LRCT's conservation lands and coordinate the activities of dedicated volunteers, plan for activities connecting people with the natural world, manage the season's increased use of conserved properties, and pursue future land conservation opportunities throughout the region.

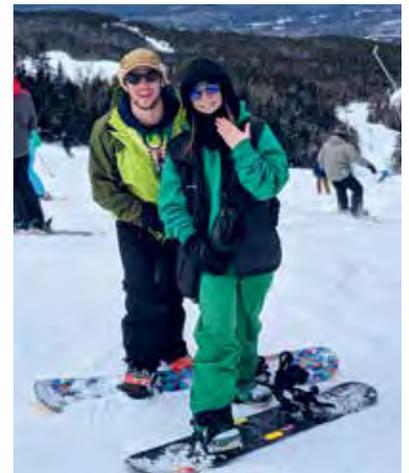
In this time, we have also felt extreme gratitude for your support that enables LRCT to continue on with this good work. As you take a walk, appreciate a view, study plant and animal life, or experience the wildness at LRCT's conserved lands, please take a moment to reflect on your vital role in ensuring that the Lakes Region's extraordinary natural qualities will remain for the well-being of the generations to come.

Don Berry

Congratulations to Ashley and Andrew!

We are pleased to share with you yet another momentous event in the life of one of LRCT's staff members. In February, LRCT's Administrative Coordinator Ashley MacMillan and Andrew Nelson were engaged at Loon Mountain Resort in Lincoln, New Hampshire.

Ashley is from Chester, New Hampshire, and Andrew is from Lakeville, Massachusetts, and they met in 2013 while studying at Plymouth State University in Plymouth, New Hampshire. Ashley joined the LRCT staff in August 2019, and Andrew works as a manager of Zumiez in Tilton, New Hampshire. They live in Plymouth with their Siberian Husky, Eevee, and are welcoming a baby girl this summer!



Ragged Island News

As always, there is lots of activity at LRCT's Ragged Island Conservation Area on Lake Winnepesaukee, one of our most popular conserved properties. Here are a few recent highlights:

Island Map and History

With the assistance of LRCT's past AmeriCorps members, who GPS-ed the island's trails, and nearby landowner David Harris, who has an encyclopedic knowledge of the island's history, we have created a new Ragged Island map now posted in the island's main kiosk, near the Lodge. The map depicts the island's features and current buildings, as well as past buildings and some of the stories associated with them. In addition to the new kiosk map, we have also created a Story Map presenting information about the island, which is available on our website. We hope you will have an opportunity to see the new kiosk map or view the Story Map and learn more about this special island.

Another Successful Work Day

Enjoyable and highly productive workdays are a great tradition on Ragged Island under the leadership of long-time LRCT Property Adopters Muriel and Mike Robinette, and the pandemic has not prevented this tradition from continuing. On a sunny Saturday in June, Mike and Muriel organized yet another successful workday at the island. With the help of incredibly dedicated LRCT volunteers and staff members, all exercising appropriate precautions to maintain health and safety, Ragged Island is looking better than ever for the summer of 2020! We extend a huge thank you to the Robinettes and to all of the volunteers and staff members who contributed their talent and time.

New Ragged Island Host

If you are visiting Ragged Island this summer, be sure to say hello to our new Ragged Island host, Allison Cross. Allison is a teacher whose family has long had a cottage on nearby Cow Island and who has served as a Ragged Island Stewardship Volunteer in the past. In light of the suspension of LRCT's AmeriCorps program this summer, we are very fortunate that Allison has been able to join us to assist at Ragged Island.



Dave Mallard Elected to NH Land Trust Coalition Board

We are pleased to announce that LRCT Land and Stewardship Director Dave Mallard has been elected to the Board of Directors of the New Hampshire Land Trust Coalition (NHLTC). NHLTC was formed in 2012 with a mission of advancing land conservation in New Hampshire through professional development, policy advocacy, and education. The Coalition is made up of land trusts and other organizations and individuals engaged in land conservation in the state. NHLTC's goals include promotion of high ethical and professional standards, including the Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices, by providing workshops and a forum for the exchange of ideas and information, strengthening the voice of land trusts in the state legislature and in public agencies on issues of direct interest to land conservation, and supporting education of the public on the values of private land conservation.

Dave serves as a member of the NHLTC's Outreach and Education Committee and joins LRCT President, and NHLTC Treasurer, Don Berry on the Board.
Congratulations to Dave!



**NEW HAMPSHIRE
LAND TRUST COALITION**
Advancing Land Conservation in NH

AmeriCorps Update



One of the activities that we are missing most during this summer of 2020 is working with a dedicated AmeriCorps crew as part of the Lakes Region Conservation Corps (LRCC). Because of interruptions to regular operations and difficulty in securing housing for our 2020 AmeriCorps recruits resulting from this spring's pandemic, we very reluctantly decided to suspend LRCT's participation in the program this year.

We remember with great appreciation the outstanding contributions of our 2019 AmeriCorps members—Nick Langlois, Alyssa Milo, Micaelie O'Hare, and Jordin Whyland. The group served with us from May to October, achieving much during their short time here. They went above and beyond the call of duty in their work to control invasive species, improve trails, and engage community members

through guided hikes and hosting at trailheads on LRCT conserved lands. In particular, the group is responsible for improvements to access, mapping, and signage for LRCT properties throughout the Lakes Region. Among these projects were working with volunteers from Wolfeboro and from Brewster Academy to create a new trail entrance to the Sewall Woods Conservation Area, installing new blazes along the main loop trail at the Knights Pond Conservation Area, mounting new interpretive signs along the Brook Walk at the Castle in the Clouds Conservation Area, and collecting GPS tracks of trails to improve various trail maps and to create a new trail map for the Ragged Island Conservation Area.

We are grateful for the extraordinary service provided by Nick, Alyssa, Micaelie, and Jordin, and we wish them well in their future endeavors. We are also very grateful for the excellent and dedicated leadership provided LRCT's former Special Projects Manager Anne Payeur, who managed LRCT's 2019 AmeriCorps program.

Based out of the Squam Lakes Association, the LRCC program has grown substantially from its initial year, now with eight host sites throughout the region. LRCT is proud to work with our colleagues at the Squam Lakes Association, the Squam Lakes Conservation Society, the Green Mountain Conservation Group, New Hampshire Lakes, the Newfound Lake Region Association, Camp Hale, and the Lake Winnepesaukee Association to bring this vital force to conservation work in the Lakes Region. While we greatly regret not having an AmeriCorps crew at LRCT this summer, we very much look forward to participating in the program again in 2021. Stay tuned for updates and information on recruitment!



- 322 new visitors engaged
- 4 guided hikes led
- 60 miles of trails maintained
- 1 new trailhead created
- 12 properties monitored
- 8.23 acres of invasive species treated



Farewell, and Congratulations, to Anne Payeur

With very mixed feelings, earlier this year we said farewell to LRCT Special Projects Manager Anne Payeur. Anne has taken a new position as Stewardship Manager for the Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust, which is based in New London and serves 14 towns in the Mt. Kearsarge/Ragged/Lake Sunapee region.

Anne joined LRCT in June 2018 and has been a talented and dedicated member of the LRCT staff, and we know she will enjoy great success in her new position. We miss Anne greatly, but we congratulate her on this wonderful career opportunity and congratulate our colleagues at Ausbon Sargent in their good fortune in having Anne join their team.

Robert Frost at Ossipee Mountain Park

One hundred twenty-five years ago, a young and not-yet famous poet Robert Frost spent the summer at Ossipee Mountain Park in Moultonborough, situated on land that is now part of LRCT's Castle and the Clouds Conservation Area. Frost had followed his fiancée, Elinor White, there; she had accompanied her artist sister, who had been invited to paint portraits of the grandchildren of Benjamin F. Shaw, who had established Ossipee Mountain Park during the previous decade. By 1895 Ossipee Mountain Park, with its summer lodging, lake and mountain views, and cascading waterfalls and woodland paths, had become a noted tourist destination.

Frost found a place to live in the run-down house of a local farmer, which he rented for a nominal amount in return for serving as guardian of the owner's hard cider stored in the cellar. The house was uphill from the present-day location of Shannon Pond but then may have seemed isolated deep in the forest. That summer provided Frost with the opportunity to explore the nearby mountains, just the beginning of his long connection with the mountains of New Hampshire. And his experiences and impressions during his summer at Ossipee Mountain Park found their way into two of his later poems.

One dark night Frost became alarmed after being awakened by sharp knocking on the unlocked door of the house in which he was staying; he climbed out an open window and spent the night in the woods, only to discover the next morning a neighbor who had simply wished to spend the night to sober up before going home. Frost later wrote "The Lockless Door," published in his collection *New Hampshire* in 1923, the last stanza of which reads: "So at a knock / I emptied my cage / To hide in the world / And alter with age."



Frost's encounters with his fiancée in the course of traveling on foot to and from Melvin Village and the still uncertain quality of their relationship are reflected in "Meeting and Passing", published in his collection *Mountain Interval* in 1916: "As I went down the hill along the wall / There was a gate I had leaned at for the view / And had just turned from when I first saw you / As you came up the hill. We met. But all / We did that day was mingle great and small / Footprints in summer dust as if we drew / The figure of our being less than two / But more than one as yet...." Frost's biographer Lawrance Thompson wrote in *Robert Frost, The Early Years 1874-1915*, that years later this poem remained important for Frost as a memento of his Ossipee Mountain days.

Leah Hart Hosts "Merrimack: The River at Risk"

We are proud to report that LRCT Conservation Easement Steward serves as the host of a new documentary film "Merrimack: The River at Risk," which premieres this summer on NHPBS and can be viewed on the NHPBS website (nhpbs.org). The film is a collaboration between the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (the Forest Society) and conservation photographer and filmmaker Jerry Monkman.

As many readers know, much of the Lakes Region lies within the Merrimack River watershed. The film explores the rich history of the River and its watershed, the threats against it, and efforts to fight pollutants in it by conserving the lands around it. Forest Society President Jack Savage, who served as producer of the documentary, emphasized the importance and effectiveness of collective efforts to protect the river's water quality through conservation of lands in the river's watershed.

Leah joined the LRCT staff in May 2018, and prior to that served as a conservation easement steward with the Forest Society from 2015 to 2018. Congratulations to Leah on this key role! *Photo by Jerry Monkman.*



Tuftonboro's Great Meadow

The Great Meadow is the largest wetland complex in Tuftonboro, consisting of over 500 acres of open and forested wetlands near the southwestern base of the Ossipee Mountains and encompassing habitat highly ranked under the New Hampshire Wildlife Action Plan. An ecological study of the Great Meadow prepared by Dr. Rick Van de Poll identified 22 different natural communities, some rare in the State, and more than 300 species of plants, 31 species of mammals, 13 species of amphibians and reptiles, 83 species of birds, and 2 species of fish.

Located along the Melvin River which flows to Lake Winnepesaukee, and overlying the largest and most productive stratified drift aquifer in Tuftonboro, the Great Meadow is also of regional significance for its role in protecting surface water and ground water resources.

As described by Dr. Van de Poll in his study, the Great Meadow is “[l]argely formed by the upper Melvin River watershed, [with] several perennial streams that descend from the slopes of the Ossipees into a broad basin filled with cat-tail marshes, wire sedge meadows, scrub-shrub swamps, and forested wetlands. The open marsh system in the center of the wetland complex is exceptional—nearly 200 acres of low vegetation complete with sphagnum fens, stunted spruce and tamaracks, and isolated hummocks of bouldery hemlocks provide stunning vistas. The early settlers in Tuftonboro utilized the swamp for marsh hay, and here and there are open water ditches that belie their former efforts at converting the soggy ground into productive farmland.”

Permanent protection of the Great Meadow has long been a priority for the Town of Tuftonboro and the Tuftonboro Conservation Commission. Earlier this summer, the Lakes Region Conservation Trust received from the Town a conservation easement on 149 acres of land in and around the Great Meadow, to ensure the legal protection of this land in perpetuity. This protected land abuts 227 acres already protected by a conservation easement granted by the Town to LRCT in 2014.



These conservation easements ensure protection of the property's wildlife habitat, surface and ground water resources, opportunities for environmental and nature education and low-impact recreation by the public, and scenic value. As conservation easement holder, LRCT is responsible for monitoring the property regularly to ensure the continuing protection of these conservation values.

LRCT is proud to assist the Town and the Conservation Commission in conserving these important natural resources, and we look forward to our partnership with them in permanently preserving this special place for the benefit of the Town and its residents and visitors.

New LRCT Member Decals for 2020!



If you've recently renewed your support for LRCT, you may have noticed the new design of LRCT's member decals. For some time, LRCT supporters have inquired about an easy way to remember when their annual membership comes up for renewal. Since late last year we have been using a decal with the months of the year printed around the margin. When you make a contribution, you will receive a gift acknowledgement letter along with a decal punched to indicate the month in which your contribution was received. Your LRCT membership will run through the end of that month in the following year.

Land Conservation in 2020 *Continued*

Red Hill River Conservation Area Expansion—Myers Property, Sandwich



The 26-acre Myers family property in Sandwich encompasses over 2,000 feet of frontage along the Red Hill River, which flows to Garland Pond, Lee's Pond, and Lake Winnepesaukee, as well as wetlands and woodlands that have been identified as climate change resilient lands and the site of an 18th and 19th-century brickyard. Conservation of this property will preserve valuable natural habitat and a scenic landscape in the river corridor, provide opportunities for outdoor recreation and renewal, and protect water quality and historic resources. It will expand LRCT's Red Hill River Conservation Area and add to the significant conserved lands along and near the Red Hill River from Red Hill Pond in Sandwich to Lee's Pond in Moultonborough.



Thanks to two generous challenge pledges of \$5,000 each from anonymous donors and a \$45,000 disbursement from the Sandwich Land Conservation

Fund, which was established by long-time Sandwich residents Peggy Merritt and Ron Lawler in 2017, we are nearing the completion of a \$111,000 fundraising campaign to purchase this property. Working closely with the Myers family, this project has been a focus of our spring fundraising efforts and thanks to the generous support from our anonymous donors and members like you, the project will be completed in a matter of weeks. Thank you to all who have supported this campaign!

Weeks Conservation Project, Gilford

The 65-acre John M. and Eileen R. Weeks property is located on the western slope of Gunstock Mountain in Gilford and encompasses highly ranked wildlife habitat, land critical to the protection of a public water supply and the Gunstock River watershed, and a cherished scenic landscape close to Gilford Village. LRCT is working in partnership with the Town of Gilford and the Weeks family to purchase and permanently protect this property, which has long been a conservation priority for the Gilford Conservation Commission and the Belknap Range Conservation Coalition. Conservation of this property will expand the magnificent conserved landscape in the Belknap Mountain Range that encompasses over 9,000 acres of contiguous land, including the abutting Muehlke Family Tree Farm, and will provide recreational, nature observation, and education opportunities for the community. The Town of Gilford will be the owner of the property, and LRCT will hold a conservation easement. LRCT's project fundraising goal is \$145,425 and we hope to finish the project later this summer.





Lakes Region Conservation Trust

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Conservation Excellence



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