



THE LEGACY

For all who love the Lakes Region of New Hampshire



LRCT Completes Conservation of Mt. Pleasant Property in Tuftonboro and Wolfeboro

The Lakes Region Conservation Trust is peak bagging again. After a successful fundraising campaign, this spring LRCT purchased a 127-acre parcel on scenic Mt. Pleasant in Tuftonboro and Wolfeboro. This new conservation land joins the parade of mountain tops, forest lands, and waterfront parcels in the Lakes Region that are permanently conserved by LRCT for the benefit of the public.

The Mt. Pleasant property includes a well-trodden trail to a granite outcrop with stunning views of Lake Winnepesaukee, the Belknap and Ossipee Mountains, and other mountains beyond. In addition to its recreational value, this land acquisition permanently protects water quality, habitat for a variety of flora and fauna, and the remnants of an early settler community.

The property, located off North Line Road at the Tuftonboro-Wolfeboro town line, was purchased at a discounted price from the property’s owners. Many donors joined the fundraising campaign to raise \$286,500 needed for purchase and stewardship, significantly aided by a \$75,000 grant from the New Hampshire Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) and a \$25,000 gift from the Land Bank of Wolfeboro-Tuftonboro.

“The Mt. Pleasant project is a wonderful community project,” said Land Bank President Don McBride, “that will protect significant habitat, water quality, and scenic resources and provide great opportunities for recreation for families today and into the future.”

Now that acquisition of the property has been completed, LRCT is busy making plans to improve the trail on Mt. Pleasant that leads to its spectacular view, and we look forward to celebrating this land conservation accomplishment at the property next year after progress is made on the trail improvements. There never seem to be enough trails, and enough views, and LRCT is thrilled to be able to add these to its collection.



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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 160 properties totaling over 28,000 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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Reflections



As we enjoy the summer of 2021 in the Lakes Region, we are hoping that you and your family and your friends are experiencing and appreciating the beauty of our region, the activities of the season, and time together ... in person ... as we are. Here at LRCT, we are in the midst of our most active season and looking forward with optimism and inspiration.

As you will read in this issue of *The Legacy*, already this year we have welcomed new staff members, initiated a new land conservation fund in the town of Sanbornton, and completed land conservation projects in Tuftonboro and Wolfeboro and in Franklin. Work on land conservation projects and opportunities throughout the Lakes Region continues, and now, in mid-summer, our land stewardship activities have moved into high gear. We are also diligently preparing to seek renewal, next year, of LRCT's land trust accreditation, a program designed to ensure that land trusts meet the highest national standards for excellence and conservation permanence. It's hard to believe that nearly five years have passed since LRCT worked through the initial rigorous accreditation review process.

Reflecting on the challenges that all have experienced during the past year and more, we are reminded of and humbled by the incredible support for LRCT provided by people like you. So many of you have let us know how much LRCT's conserved lands mean to you and benefit your families and friends. Many have expressed a renewed appreciation for being outside ... in all seasons! And record numbers of people have visited LRCT's conserved lands—for exercise and fresh air, the sense of peace and renewal provided by nature, and enjoyment of the scenic beauty that the Lakes Region possesses in such abundance.

Your dedication to the Lakes Region and its natural qualities is essential to LRCT's work, and your continuing support represents a lasting investment in this place that we all cherish so much.

Don



LRCT Welcomes Two New Staff Members

During the past several months LRCT is fortunate to have added two terrific new staff members, and we are pleased to introduce them to you:

Welcome Back, Micaelie!



Readers of *The Legacy* may remember meeting Micaelie O'Hare during 2019, when she served as a member of LRCT's AmeriCorps crew, part of the Lakes Region Conservation Corps. Micaelie was an outstanding member of that group, and we are very happy that Micaelie has returned to LRCT in the position of Stewardship Support and Outreach Coordinator. In this capacity she works on mapping and other activities as part of LRCT's land and conservation easement stewardship team, coordinates LRCT volunteers, and plans and coordinates guided hikes and paddles.

Micaelie grew up in New Jersey and earned her B.S. degree in Environmental Science and Policy, with a minor in Adventure Education, from Plymouth State University (PSU). Micaelie's AmeriCorps work for LRCT included control of invasive plant species, improvement of trails, and engagement of community members through guided hikes and hosting at trailheads on conserved lands. She has also worked as a teaching assistant for a GIS course at PSU and as a seasonal land steward for the Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire.

Welcome, Matt!



Matt Morris has recently joined LRCT as our Conservation Easement Steward. This position is responsible for the stewardship and management of conservation easements held by LRCT, including planning and implementing conservation easement monitoring, training and oversight of volunteers and others engaged in easement monitoring, preparation and maintenance of conservation easement baseline documentation reports and other records, and management of conservation easement issues and relationships with conservation easement landowners.

Matt joins LRCT from the Sudbury Valley Trustees, a land trust covering 36 communities surrounding the Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord Rivers between Boston and Worcester, where he served as Land Stewardship Coordinator. Matt is a New Hampshire native and earned his B.S. degree in Wildlife and Conservation Biology, with a minor in Geospatial Analysis, from the University of New Hampshire. Matt has also worked as a UNH wildlife technician aiding live-trapping, tagging, and releasing of small mammals for scientific research and as a UNH Cooperative Extension intern conducting vegetation surveys in southern New Hampshire forests.

Micaelie and Matt are both tremendous additions to the LRCT staff, and we hope you will have an opportunity to meet them soon.

Accreditation Notice

The land trust accreditation program recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. The Lakes Region Conservation Trust is pleased to announce it is applying for renewal of accreditation. A public comment period is now open.

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, conducts an extensive review of each applicant's policies and programs. LRCT received accreditation from the Commission in August 2017, and we will register for renewal of accreditation later this year. We will then submit our pre-application for accreditation renewal in February 2022 and our final application in May 2022. LRCT has become a stronger organization for having gone through the rigorous accreditation program, and we look forward to the comprehensive review that will take place during the renewal process. The strength provided by the accreditation program helps us to ensure that special places will be protected forever, making the Lakes Region an even greater place for us and future generations.

The Commission invites public input and accepts signed, written comments on pending applications. Comments must relate to how the Lakes Region Conservation Trust complies with national quality standards. These standards address the ethical and technical operation of a land trust. For the full list of standards see <http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/help-and-resources/indicator-practices>.

To learn more about the accreditation program and to submit a comment, visit www.landtrustaccreditation.org, or email your comment to info@landtrustaccreditation.org. Comments may also be faxed or mailed to the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, Attn: Public Comments: (fax) 518-587-3183; (mail) 36 Phila Street, Suite 2, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866.

Comments on the Lakes Region Conservation Trust's application will be most useful by July 1, 2022.

LRCT Completes Mill City Park Conservation Project in Franklin

This spring LRCT completed a conservation easement and management plan to protect 17 acres of land along the Winnepesaukee River in Franklin adjacent to the new Mill City Park. This conservation easement, conveyed to LRCT by the City of Franklin, is an integral part of the Mill City Park project, which combines opportunities for recreation and enjoyment of the City's riverfront. LRCT is proud to be able to play a role in this important downtown project and to work with the City in conserving valuable habitat and open space along the River.

Three rivers run through Franklin; the Pemigewasset and the Winnepesaukee join in the City to form the mighty Merrimack, which then makes its way toward Manchester, Lowell, and Lawrence, legendary mill cities. These three rivers also made Franklin a mill city. There is a stretch where water from Lake Winnepesaukee seems in a particular hurry to get to the ocean, and on this stretch many mills were built over many decades. The last of these mills closed in the 1970s and is now home to a brewery and restaurants and shops, a new future for old mills.



Mill City Park will tap the energy of that rushing water for a whitewater park, for the enjoyment of boaters and spectators, with new whitewater features and viewing areas on the shore. The same rivers that powered the mills will now power a new vision for Franklin, driven by enthusiasm for adventure and recreation.

And this is where LRCT comes in. As part of the project, the City needed to include a conservation component and needed an experienced partner to help in accomplishing that. The City owns four parcels of undeveloped river-flanked land just upstream from the new park, and it has partnered with LRCT to permanently conserve this land. In addition to being classified by the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department as highest ranked habitat in the state—undisturbed woods, habitat for wildlife—the land offers opportunities for passive recreation, and it will even preserve remnants of two of the mills that are part of Franklin's industrial heritage.

Over the next several years, City staff and volunteers will improve the conserved land by removing debris and invasive species and constructing a recreational trail on the track of an historic road that once served the old mills. As conservation easement holder, LRCT is the long-term steward of the property and has oversight responsibilities and a perpetual duty to monitor the property and ensure that its conservation values are protected.

This innovative project for the City of Franklin is also a first for LRCT—LRCT's first conserved land in Franklin and first as part of a visionary economic development initiative. LRCT looks forward to a fruitful partnership with the City in caring for this important riverfront land.

What's Happening?

We certainly missed guided hikes and paddles on and to LRCT conserved lands in 2020, and we are very grateful to have been able to resume these events this spring and summer.

Already LRCT staff and volunteers have led a bird walk at Knights Pond during the spring migration season, a paddle on Lake Wicwas to explore LRCT's conserved properties there, a paddle to Stonedam Island on Lake Winnepesaukee with ecologist Rick Van de Poll, a geological program and hike at the Castle in the Clouds Conservation Area with Professor Nelson Eby of UMass Lowell and LRCT Board Chair and geologist Russ Wilder, a paddle on Squam Lake to LRCT's conserved properties on Metcalf Point and Jimmy Point, and a paddle on Newfound Lake from the Grey Rocks Conservation Area on which LRCT holds a conservation easement.

LRCT's guided hikes and paddles provide an opportunity to explore, enjoy, and learn from conserved lands and to meet others who share your love for the Lakes Region.

Upcoming events include:

- September 3, Friday** • Red Hill Watson Ledge Hike in Moultonborough
- September 18, Saturday** • Piper Mountain Birding in Gilford
- September 25, Saturday** • Homestead Forest Hike in Ashland

We also expect to schedule additional events to be held later in the fall and winter. For further information or to register for a guided hike or paddle, please visit our website.



LRCT Welcomes Two New Board Members

LRCT is pleased to announce two new members of the Board of Trustees, both with long-standing connections to the Lakes Region and to LRCT's land conservation work. Welcome, Melissa, and welcome back, Judy!



Melissa Countway of Alton joined the LRCT Board of Trustees in July and has been serving on the LRCT Lands Committee since early this year.

Melissa was born in Wolfeboro and grew up in Alton. After graduating from Alton High School, she attended the University of New Hampshire where she studied math and then obtained a Master's in Education. After teaching for five years, Melissa attended law school at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and then returned to New Hampshire and settled in the Lakes Region to raise her family. After working in private practice, Melissa served as the Belknap County Attorney for six years until she was appointed to the New Hampshire Circuit Court in 2017.

Melissa enjoys all lake activities, skiing, and hiking and has fond memories of stuffing envelopes at the kitchen table as a teenager in support of the LRCT's efforts to preserve Knights Pond. She now lives in Alton not very far from this beautiful pond.



Judy Ryerson of Moultonborough re-joined the LRCT Board of Trustees earlier this year and serves on the Development Committee and assists with publicity.

Judy first served on the LRCT Board in the 1990s and early 2000s and was deeply involved then in LRCT's campaign to acquire the Castle in the Clouds property. Her commitment to that property has continued ever since, and she has for the past several years served on the Board of the Castle Preservation Society (CPS). Between stints with LRCT and CPS, Judy served the Town of Moultonborough on the Conservation Commission and the Planning Board. Prior to coming to the Lakes Region in the 1980s, she worked as a writer and producer in the WGBH-TV newsroom.

Judy's interests in journalism and publicity co-exist with her love of nature and getting into it. She loves it when someone says "Take a hike." Judy and her husband Keld Agnar live on Lake Winnepesaukee in Moultonborough and spend winters in St. Petersburg, Florida.

LRCT and Grappone Establish Sanbornton Land Conservation Fund

LRCT and the Grappone Automotive Group of Bow, New Hampshire, have established the Sanbornton Land Conservation Fund to facilitate and support land conservation in Sanbornton. LRCT announced the Fund at a Sanbornton Conservation Commission meeting earlier this year, and Commission Chair Brad Crosby thanked LRCT and Grappone and expressed the Commission's enthusiasm for working with LRCT to identify worthy conservation projects.

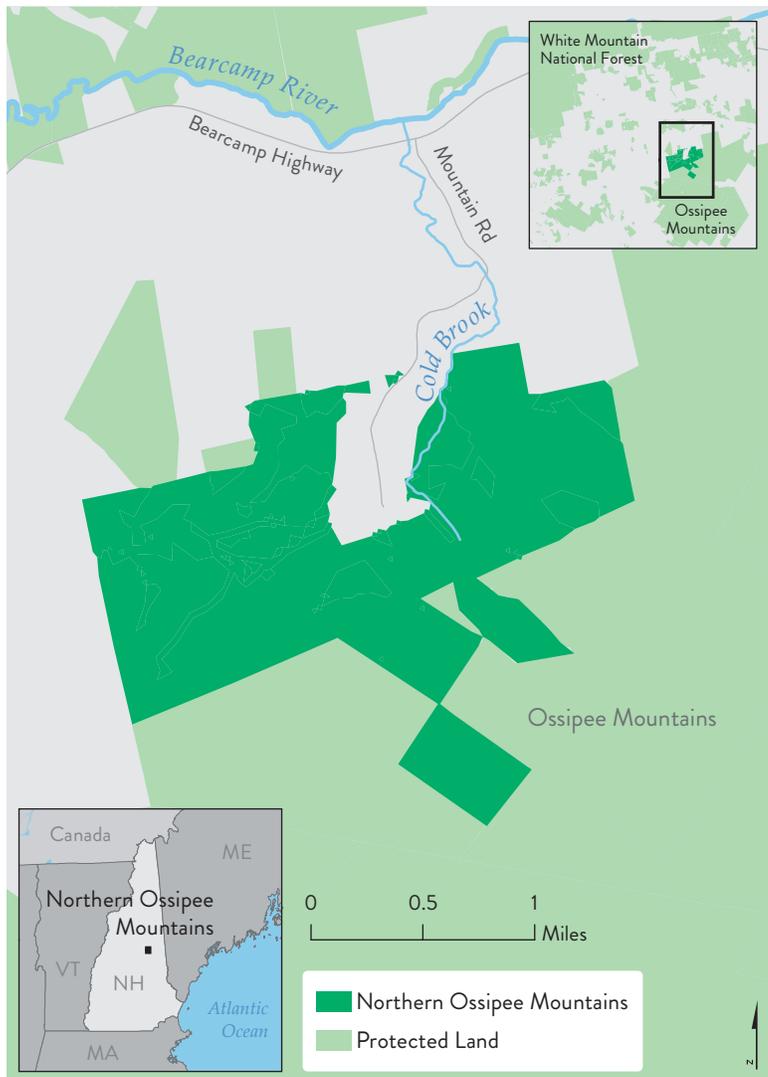
This all began with a run along a country road. Amanda Grappone Osmer, a fourth-generation owner/manager of the Grappone Automotive Group, moved with her family to Sanbornton last year. She knew little about her new town, but she is a runner and decided to run all the roads in town. When she finished, Ms. Osmer knew Sanbornton well and began to look for ways to help the town achieve its master plan vision of retaining Sanbornton's extraordinary values of rural character and heritage and of supporting farming and forestry. Her search led her to LRCT, and LRCT was eager to work with Ms. Osmer and the town to help pursue this vision. The Fund, managed by LRCT, can provide financial support for conservation of land entirely or partly within Sanbornton, undertaken by LRCT or by another land conservation organization. It can be used toward the purchase price or for transaction costs, such as for title searches and legal services, environmental reviews, surveys, and appraisals. The Fund welcomes new contributions, tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Asked if she would be involved personally with the management of the Fund, Ms. Osmer said she didn't expect to be: "I trust the team at LRCT to manage the funds with the same commitment to excellence that they demonstrate in all their work. I'm excited to be working with them." And LRCT is excited to be working with Amanda and with the Town of Sanbornton.

LRCT in the Spotlight

The following is an article from *The Resilient Landscapes Initiative (2013-2020)–Protecting the Places That Endure*, a February 2021 publication of the Open Space Institute (OSI). The publication reports on OSI's Resilient Landscapes Initiative, which supported 59 projects that conserved 50,000 acres of land in 11 states across the East, showcasing resilient landscapes from Maine to Tennessee. Among those projects was LRCT's conservation easement project with The Farm Trust, encompassing 1,615 acres of forest and farm land in the northern Ossipees. LRCT is proud to have participated in the Initiative and very grateful for OSI's support.

Spotlight: Northern Ossipee Mountains, NH



The Ossipee Mountains in central New Hampshire, the remains of an ancient volcanic ring, is today a resilient region of scenic mountain summits and slopes, productive farmland, working forests, significant wildlife habitat, and pristine wilderness. This highly resilient and connected region is a major conservation priority for various national and regional land trusts, the State of New Hampshire, and local conservation commissions.

Building on nearly two decades of successful conservation in the Ossipees, the Lakes Region Conservation Trust (LRCT) used a \$200,000 grant from OSI's Resilient Landscape Initiative to purchase a conservation easement on 1,615 acres of land. The parcel has strong resilient attributes and includes 100 acres of old growth forests, vernal pools and habitat for bobcat, moose, fisher, lynx, black bear, marten, ermine, porcupine, and snowshoe hare, and nesting habitat for many forest interior neo-tropical migratory birds.

Of the land under conservation easement, 550 acres are managed as wilderness and 985 acres as working forest. The land is now part of a contiguous conservation preserve of more than 21,000 acres and adds impetus to efforts to connect the Ossipees with the White Mountain National Forest to the north.

The transaction built on an earlier OSI Catalyst grant to LRCT to identify and map climate-resilient lands, including key corridors to support species movement and connections between conserved lands. With OSI's support, the land trust has integrated resilience into its future conservation plan.

The project also highlighted another important role for land conservation in responding to climate change: through the project, LRCT has participated in the nation's first aggregate carbon credit project, enabling LRCT and the conservation easement landowner to work together to secure revenues through carbon offsets generated for the California greenhouse gas reduction program.

"We have made climate a priority for our organization on many levels, so it was gratifying to be able to protect this important tract of resilience land. We are grateful for OSI's support for our planning efforts which helped us to understand climate resilience, and then to help close this important land protection project." — Don Berry, Lakes Region Conservation Trust



Remembering Tom Howe *by Don Berry*

I first met Tom Howe in the late 1980s, while he was serving as Executive Director of LRCT, a position in which he served from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s. In fact, Tom was instrumental in my becoming involved with LRCT.

Among the many notable accomplishments of Tom's leadership of LRCT were the completion of land conservation projects in numerous Lakes Region towns—including land on Winnepesaukee and on Tom's beloved Squam, on Knights, White Oak, Red Hill, and Bearcamp Ponds, and on the Rattlesnakes and Red Hill—as well as work on many other projects around the region. These conserved lands stand as a permanent legacy of Tom's extraordinary contributions to the Lakes Region and all of its human and non-human inhabitants.

More recently, during Tom's time at the Forest Society, I and all of us at LRCT have had the great good fortune to continue to work with him on numerous conservation endeavors, particularly in the Belknap Mountains. We've had the benefit of his wisdom and experience, his generous spirit, and his friendship. And we are tremendously grateful both for his leadership of our organization, and for his remarkable land conservation contributions and accomplishments throughout New Hampshire.

During the months since Tom's passing, many conversations have turned to the thought that it's hard to imagine New Hampshire without Tom Howe. Of course, that is so sadly true. But in an important sense, Tom continues to be with us ... in the precious natural landscapes, from the Seacoast, to the Lakes Region, to the North Country, that his work and his vision have secured for us and for future generations.

All of us at LRCT extend our profound gratitude to Tom's wife Sarah Thorne, their children Phoebe and Peter, and the Howe and Thorne families for sharing Tom with us.





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