

Forest Notes

SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF NEW HAMPSHIRE FORESTS

Summer 2006



**ALL HAIL
THE GRAND
MONADNOCK**

Mulligan Forest Bond Sets New Record *LCHIP Funding Also Approved*

This spring voters in Nottingham overwhelmingly approved an \$850,000 town bond to help fund a conservation easement of the 2,036-acre Mulligan Forest property. A second key element of the project fell into place in May when the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program awarded a \$295,000 grant toward the acquisition of the easement on the Mulligan Forest property.

“As New Hampshire continues to grow at record levels, we face many challenges in helping our economy keep pace,” said Tom Burack, Chair of the LCHIP Board of Directors in announcing the latest round of grants. “Projects like these are tools we can and should use to protect and maintain both our economic growth and our quality of life.”

The Nottingham bond was approved by 96 percent of the voters, a new record for a town vote on conservation funding in New Hampshire.

Located in the heart of Nottingham, the Mulligan Forest property is the largest unprotected, privately owned woodland in Rockingham County. Owned by siblings Jim and Rick Fernald and Deb Fernald Stevens, the property includes well-managed working forest, six miles of frontage along the Bean and North Rivers, rich wildlife habitat and five miles of woods roads and trails.

The Town is working with the Forest Society to purchase a conservation easement over the entire property that would permanently protect the land from development, preserve its water resources, and guarantee public pedestrian access. The Forest Society would hold and monitor the easement, ensuring the land’s permanent protection and public access. The Town of Nottingham would also hold a legal interest in the easement.

The Forest Society

and Nottingham’s Conservation Commission worked hard to secure passage of the Nottingham bond. From December 2005 through mid February 2006, Forest Society staff worked with the Nottingham Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator to review the draft conservation easement, agree on an amount for the town’s bond, and to develop warrant language. Forest Society staff also met with the town’s Budget Committee, which voted unanimously to support the bond.

Once the Mulligan Forest bond was on the town warrant, the Forest Society and Nottingham Conservation Commission endeavored to inform town residents about the upcoming vote. The Forest Society held two indoor public information sessions on the project, and two public walks on the Mulligan property. About 140 town residents participated in one or more of these events. The Forest Society also mailed a detailed brochure on the project to every household in Nottingham. On town meeting day, the Forest Society gave a thorough presentation on the project and the proposed bond, and answered questions from the audience. Turnout was unusually heavy, and when the votes were counted 277 yes votes were cast and only twelve no votes.

The Forest Society is deeply grateful to every Nottingham resident who came out and voted for the Mulligan Forest bond. Our heartfelt thanks also go to the Nottingham Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator,

Budget Committee, Conservation Commission, Planning Board and Capital Improvements Program Committee for their unanimous support of the bond. Last but not least, thanks to Jim and Rick Fernald and Deb Stevens for making the Mulligan Forest project possible by agreeing to sell a conservation easement on their land.



PHOTO: G.C. SLUDER

“Our three Forest Society ‘amigos,’—Geoff Jones, Dave Anderson, and Brian Hotz—are extremely knowledgeable trip leaders and entertainers. We always enjoy their guided walks through the forests and fields as well as the interactive group discussions—after every trip we go home with newly acquired natural-history knowledge. As avid hikers from Vermont we especially love the opportunity to visit areas of New Hampshire we’ve never explored. Some field trips can be challenging but are always rewarding, and always a great time.”

— George and Nancy Smith, Hartland, VT



Harvest Your Own Christmas Tree

Nov. 19th - Dec. 24th

Open Daily 9am-5pm except Wednesday which is also the Locals Day, 9am-7pm.

Lodging packages at local establishments are available. Please contact The Rocks for additional information at 603.444.6228 or info@therocks.org.

The Rocks Estate, Bethlehem, NH

Come share the family experience of harvesting your own Christmas tree or choose one of several varieties of fresh-cut trees. Enjoy beautiful views, a horse-drawn wagon ride (weekends only), and a browse through our NH crafts gift shop.

Save the Date!

Creek Farm Reservation Open House with Hiking Tours

Sunday, October 22

Creek Farm, Portsmouth

Tours will begin at 9 a.m., 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and last for two hours.



PHOTO: G.C. SLUDER

CONSERVATION CENTER

Art Exhibits at the Concord Conservation

Exhibits are open for viewing weekdays 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please call (603) 224-9945 before visiting, as the gallery space is used for meetings and other functions. A percentage of sales benefit the conservation work of the Forest Society.

“Just Flowers”

Photographs by Jerry Pollack, Hampton

A photographic exhibit of flowers from household gardens. You have seen these flowers every spring, summer and fall. But have you? Come enjoy them from another point of view, color, light and forms that live about us, seen through a particular eye.

Exhibit: July 3 through September 28

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Saving Special Places

What could possibly draw 265 New Hampshire folks away from raking their lawns and cleaning up the lawn furniture on the first sunny warm Saturday of the spring? For people who are concerned about how to conserve open space in their communities, the answer to that question was Saving Special Places 2006, the fifth annual New Hampshire land conservation conference held at Kingswood High School in Wolfeboro in April. The conference is organized by the Forest Society's Center for Land Conservation Assistance and the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension, with assistance this year from the state Conservation Land Stewardship Program. This year's conference included more than 30 different workshops on land protection topics ranging from basic conservation tools to communications and outreach, funding, stewardship and land management.

In her opening remarks, Forest Society President/Forester Jane Difley highlighted the gains of the land conservation community since the first Saving Special Places conference in 2002, noting that collectively we have protected 342,000 acres in the last five years. One single project, the Connecticut Lakes headwaters, represents half of that total, but the balance represents work on protection projects large and small by a variety of organizations around the state. In 2000, there were 1.3 million

acres of public and conservation land in the state (including the 788,000 acres of the White Mountain National Forest), or 22.6 percent of New Hampshire's land base. By 2005, that figure had increased to 1.6 million acres, or 28.6 percent, representing a gain of 6 percent in five years.

For the closing plenary session, conservation volunteers from Wakefield presented "PINK: An Environmental Fable", a play by humorist Rebecca Rule that was originally part of their public education and outreach strategy to get town support for three conservation measures on the warrant for town meeting. The original presentation was held four days before town voting, and all three conservation measures passed.

The conference was made possible in part to support from corporate sponsors Dwight Keeler & Co. Real Estate and Ransmeier & Spellman Professional Association. Local hosts, who provided volunteers who helped with the logistics, included Moose Mountain Regional Greenways, Green Mountain Conservation Group and Dan Hole Pond Watershed Trust, with additional help from the NH Association of Conservation Commissions and Forest Society staff and Board members.

Plans for Saving Special Places 2007 are already in progress. Watch the new CLCA website (www.clca.forestsociety.org) for information about date and location, so you can get it on your calendar early.



SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF NEW HAMPSHIRE FORESTS

Forest Society News

Forest Society Branches Out with Tree Mail

The Forest Society launched its first e-newsletter in May as a way to keep members and friends of the Forest Society up to date on current events and happenings. Each month Tree Mail arrives in subscribers' inboxes, offering the latest news, links to stories about the Forest Society in newspapers around the state, updates on our most recent land protection projects, plus up-to-the-minute information on Forest Society field trips and other events and workshops.

Receiving the monthly Tree Mail e-newsletter is free and easy—if you would like to subscribe, simply visit www.forestsociety.org/news/newsletters.asp. Subscribers may opt out and cancel their subscription at anytime by clicking the link at the bottom of each Tree Mail newsletter.

G.C. SLUDER



A Natural Classroom at Creek Farm

Shoals Marine Lab an Ideal Partner

CREEK FARM COTTAGE WITH 1125 FEET OF SHORELINE ON SAGAMORE CREEK, SERVES AS AN IDEAL LOCATION TO CONNECT STUDENTS WITH THE SML LABORATORY ON APPLIEDORE ISLAND. PHOTO: G.C. SLUDER.

It took some time, more than a little perseverance, and help from many hands but in the end the Forest Society found an ideal partner for our 35-acre Creek Farm Reservation in Portsmouth. In May Shoals Marine Lab (SML) formally agreed to lease the buildings on the property, including the picturesque Creek Farm Cottage, to use as a marine biology classroom and living quarters for students, staff and faculty, providing a mainland base for academic programming offered on Appledore Island.

"We have been working diligently with leading citizens in the state to find the ideal partner for the historic building at Creek Farm," said Jane Difley, President/Forester. "We're pleased to say that we've found exactly that in the Shoals Marine Lab. With SML taking on the task of putting the Creek Farm Cottage to good use, we at the Forest Society can now focus our attention on the stewardship of the remaining 30-acres of spectacular coastal woodland for the enjoyment of the people of New Hampshire in general and the citizens of Portsmouth in particular."

Shoals Marine Lab is an undergraduate education and research marine biology program that is administered by the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell University in cooperation with the University of New Hampshire. SML offers courses in

marine science on Appledore Island, one of the Isles of Shoals off the coast of New Hampshire and Maine.

"Creek Farm Cottage, with its frontage on Sagamore Creek, will ultimately be an ideal site for our undergraduate biology and marine science courses in late spring and summer," said Willy Bemis, Director of SML. "The dock connects us by water to our facilities on Appledore."

The lease was signed following extensive negotiations, careful consultation with city officials, and the successful application for required zoning variances. The next step will be for Shoals Marine Lab to begin a fundraising campaign for the renovation of the building.

"We're hopeful that the historic preservation community will step forward and help us raise the funds to renovate," Bemis said. "It's a wonderful place, but there is still much work to be done." Citing Swiss-born naturalist Louis Agassiz, Bemis noted that the Creek Farm location will help achieve SML's goal to "...get a whole new generation of students to study nature, not books."

The Creek Farm property, which includes Goose Island and 1,125 feet of shoreline on Sagamore Creek, was once part of the 18th-century farmstead of New

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