



Currents

Newsletter of the Strafford Rivers Conservancy

The Conservancy's mission is accomplished through education, advocacy, and the acquisition of development rights of significant land to ensure that it remains undeveloped forever.

Protecting The Natural Resources, Beauty And Character Of Lands In The Strafford County Area

Founded in 1989

Fall 2007



THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Autumn Greetings, Members and Friends of the Strafford Rivers Conservancy,

As the days are getting shorter in New Hampshire, it seems that the list of the SRC's accomplishments and opportunities is getting longer. Although this greater volume of work can be taxing on the resources of our Board, staff and volunteers, it certainly bodes well for regional land conservation and further strengthens the collaborations that the SRC has established with area conservation commissions, local land trusts and landowners.

Of the easements we completed this year, several are highlighted in this newsletter. To date, during 2007, we have conserved an additional 149 acres. We are delighted to be working more in the northern and western areas of Strafford County. These areas are experiencing significant growth as a result of the increased development pressure pushing up from southern NH. We are appreciative of the local conservation commissions, our partner landowners and our members who are dedicated to preserving the numerous environmentally significant places in this region.

Financial support is such a critical component to our accomplishments. As a non-profit we continue to rely on the generous donations of our members and donors to support our work. Together with your help and contributions, the Strafford Rivers Conservancy can continue to preserve the important open spaces and the quality of life in and around Strafford County for future generations to enjoy. Thank you.

We look forward to seeing you at our annual meeting and dinner celebration of our land protection work on December 12th (see invitation on page 4). Best wishes to you and your families as we near the end of 2007.

Kevin McEneaney, President

Hickory Hill Farm Preserves Rural Character in Dover

On July 17th, 2007, Bill and Nancy Hunt signed a conservation easement with the SRC to preserve an almost 60 acre rural tract of their Hickory Hill Farm on Back Road in Dover, assuring that their land will never be subdivided or developed. Their easement, containing 1/3 woodland and 2/3 open hay fields, protects prime agricultural soils, wetlands and habitat for fox, coyote, deer and Red-tailed hawks.

The Hunt's connection to this land goes back to 1968 when Bill's parents bought the property and raised a small herd of Black Angus cattle. In 1974 Bill and Nancy built their home on the farm and started exploring other uses of the land to augment their careers as teachers. The result of their efforts is a, now familiar to many, one acre pick-your-own strawberries operation which they plan to expand into blueberries. Additionally, since 2001, the Hunts have been building a horse boarding business, Phoenix Stables, which has proven to be not only successful but also a pleasure to neighbors and passersby who enjoy seeing the animals out in the pasture.

While considering an easement for several years, it was the spirit of preservation in the conservation of the Tuttle Farm and strong encouragement and support from the Dover Open Lands Committee

(Continued on page 2)



Bill and Nancy Hunt at their Hickory Hill Farm in Dover.

Teneriffe Mountain Blueberry Farm Hawk Watch and Nature Walk

*Presented by the Strafford Rivers Conservancy and
Moose Mountains Regional Greenways*

On Saturday, September 22, Naturalist Mark Suomala with Steve Panish, owner of this lovely 102 acre property now held in conservation by the SRC, led an enthusiastic group of hikers to the top of Teneriffe to study the diverse flora and fauna, view the blueberry fields and White Mountains and hopefully, sight migrating hawks.

(Continued on page 2)



Lands Committee at Work in the Field By John Wallace

Much of the Lands Committee's efforts over the summer, and now into the fall, have been devoted to the Conservancy's continuous responsibility to the stewardship of all its conservation easements. What do we mean by stewardship?

The term "stewardship" is commonly used to describe monitoring and enforcement obligations of conserved land. Stewardship includes, among other things, the following duties:

- Annual visit to the property to walk the boundaries;
- Update baseline documentation to reflect changes in permissible uses of the property;
- Maintain extensive records on each property documenting monitoring visits and other pertinent information;
- Defend the terms of the conservation easement against violations, in court if necessary

Armed with maps, compasses, and global positioning system (GPS) units, we have been spending many hours out on these properties, updating our files and making sure that the conditions of the easements are being met. Fortunately, in the majority of cases, we do not find any problems or encroachments, which can be caused by the landowner or, more often, by abutters who are unaware of the exact location of the easement boundaries. When there are problems or even when we see the possibility of future problems, we notify the landowner and work with him/her to see that the issue is resolved in a timely manner. *We welcome volunteers to help us!* If you think that you would enjoy walking through some of the region's most stunning natural lands and piecing together the occasional puzzle of finding boundaries, then contact the SRC office. We'll put you on the list of people whom we notify when we are scheduling a monitoring visit. No great skill or knowledge is required, just a willingness and desire to help us to protect, preserve and be good stewards of the land!

We are excited to be working on many new land protection projects. In July 2007, we closed on an easement at the Hunt property, **Hickory Hill Farm**, located on Back Road in Dover. The easement on this pick-your-own strawberries farm forever protects from development extensive hay fields, woods and wetlands that host a wide variety of plants and animals that share the land (see related article).



Kevin McEneaney posting boundary markers on the newly conserved Hickory Hill Farm in Dover.

The Strafford Rivers Conservancy

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We expect to be very busy in the next months. Generally, landowners decide to conserve their land because they love it and want to see it protected for future generations. In 2007, new tax incentives (scheduled to expire in 2008) have made it even more attractive for landowners to voluntarily protect their land with conservation easements. Members and supporters can take pride in knowing that we are currently on track to close on new conservation easements in Barrington, Brookfield, Farmington and Wakefield. We hope to have lots of wonderful stories to share in our next newsletter!

Hickory Hill (Continued from page 1)

that influenced the Hunts to take the serious step to conserve. "We believe that keeping prime agricultural soils and lands in current use as opposed to development is important for the growth of food and fiber now and in the future...after all, they aren't making any more of it!" Bill, now retired from teaching, is looking forward to devoting more time to the farm, focusing on its efficiency and expanding productivity. Funding for the preservation of Hickory Hill Farm was received from the Federal Farm and Ranchland Protection Program and substantial matching funds from the City of Dover.

Teneriffe (Continued from page 1)

Although low cloud cover dampened the chances of sighting hawks, Mark shared his knowledge of their migration and further explained the uniqueness of the mountain habitat and its importance to the regional watershed. In the walk down through the woods, Steve spotted a specimen of the rare Small Whorled Pagonia orchid found in this environment; an enjoyable treat for all to see!





A Conservation Profile of the Town of Barrington, New Hampshire

By John Wallace, Barrington Conservation Commission and SRC Land Agent

Barrington, in western Strafford County, is a diamond-shaped town roughly seven miles on a side. Known for its several large lakes, Barrington is a source of drinking water for several downstream communities including Portsmouth, Dover, Durham and the University of New Hampshire.

The “crown jewel” of conserved land in Barrington is the ca.1400-acre Samuel A. Tamposi Water Supply Reserve (SATWaSR), which harbors the headwaters of the Oyster and Bellamy Rivers; both critically important water supplies for the seacoast. This land, owned by the town and protected by an easement to the Society for the Protection of N.H. Forests (SPNHF), contains a variety of habitats, including many vernal pools and globally rare Atlantic white cedar swamps.

In the late 80’s Barrington was the recipient of grants from the state that went towards the protection of farms and land along the Isinglass River. At present the town holds 19 conservation easements acquired both as donations from generous landowners and as a result of subdivision development.

The SRC has been involved in a couple of these subdivision developments; the result of an innovative “conservation subdivision” ordinance voted into the town zoning and viewed as a good compromise between development and conservation. Under this arrangement, once the natural features of a property most worthy of protection are identified, the developer clusters house lots away from them. Conservation restrictions are then placed on the open space, which must be at least 50% of the property. In the **Forest Ridge** subdivision a spectacular 93 out of a total 118 acres was protected. And recently, a 45 acre easement was acquired abutting the SATaSR.



Protected woods and wetlands in the conserved parcel of the Forest Ridge subdivision development.

The SRC is presently involved in two other projects in Barrington. The first, the **Borodavchuk property**, covers almost 100 acres along Rte 125 and borders the Bellamy River across from SATWaSR. Together with its open fields on one side of the road and Winkley Pond on the other, an oasis of nature will remain along this otherwise rapidly developing corridor. The second, **Richardson Pond**, is visible from Route 9 near Barrington’s Town Hall. The SRC will hold an easement and the town will own this 156 acres, opening up recreational opportunities in fishing, boating and hiking for the community to enjoy. Much of the funding for these projects is coming from Barrington, via the conservation bond that was passed by the voters a few years ago and the town’s conservation fund.

In collaboration with the SRC, Barrington’s Natural Heritage Committee, Conservation Commission, and the Barrington Open Space Coalition will continue to work together to protect and preserve the town’s beauty and natural character. The working motto for these efforts is to get “Ten by Ten”: Protect 10% of the Town’s Area by 2010.

BE A LEGACY LEADER

By creating a lasting gift or making a planned gift, you can help the Conservancy preserve, protect, and enhance the land, water, ecological and recreational resources of Strafford County long after you are gone.

Your tax advisor can inform you of the many special ways you can make a charitable bequest to the Conservancy. Options include gifts of stock bonds, or IRAs or a simple sentence in your will bequeathing a specific dollar amount or percentage of your estate.

It may be as simple as: “I bequeath to the Strafford Rivers Conservancy, Inc., a non-profit organization in Dover, NH, for its general purposes the sum of \$_____” (or “____% of my residuary estate”.)

WAYS THAT YOU CAN HELP

- Join today and become a member of the Strafford Rivers Conservancy
- Encourage friends and neighbors to become members and help support land conservation
- Give a membership as a gift or remembrance
- Donate from your IRA
- Establish a bequest from your will or estate
- Establish a charitable remainder trust
- Donate land or appreciated securities
- Place a donated conservation easement on your property
- Agree to cover transaction costs for a generous landowner or for a significant conservation project
- Volunteer your time

For more information on these opportunities please contact the Conservancy at (603) 516-0772. Thank you!



The Strafford Rivers Conservancy

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Since 1989, protecting the natural resources, beauty and character of lands in the Strafford County area.

Winter Tree and Shrub Identification Workshop

Saturday, December 15, 9:00-11:00 am
(rain date: December 16, 1:00-3:00 pm)



Learn how to identify trees and shrubs in the winter with **Dick Weyrick**, retired professor of forestry at UNH. Participants will visit the **Franklin parcel**; a beautiful 50 acre property along the tidal portion of the Salmon Falls River in **Rollinsford** owned and protected by the SRC. Workshop is free for members and \$5 for non-members.

Map Making Online Workshop

Saturday, January 12, 9:00 am-12:00 pm
(snow date: January 19, 9:30 am-12:30 pm)

Learn how to map natural resources in your community using NH GRANIT's free online Data Mapper with **Nancy Lambert**, a geospatial technologies educator. Make custom maps with topographic data, aerial photos, soils and other features. This workshop will be held at the **McConnell Center, Dover** and is \$20 for members and \$35 for non-members. Limited to 12 participants.

Registration is required for both workshops

For registration and directions please contact the Conservancy at (603) 516-0772 or e-mail info@straffordriversconservancy.org

Please join members, friends, guests and the Board of Directors of the Strafford Rivers Conservancy at their

Annual Meeting and Dinner Celebration

to be held at
The Governor's Inn
78 Wakefield St., Rochester, NH
Wednesday, December 12th, 2007

Social Hour at 6:00 pm ~ Meeting at 6:30 pm followed by a presentation given by Kristin Rines, from NH Fish and Game, about "NH MOOSE!"

Dinner/Dessert/Coffee at 7:30pm ~ Cost is \$35 per person

Any questions, please contact Anna Boudreau at (603) 516-0772 or The Gov's Inn at (603) 332-0107. E-mail to info@straffordriversconservancy.org

----- *Please return registration form by November 23rd* -----

Name (s) _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Amt Enclosed (\$35/person) _____ (checks payable to The Strafford Rivers Conservancy.) Please mail to: **The SRC.PO BOX 623, DOVER, NH 03821-0623** **THANK YOU!**