

THIS LAND

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM THE SOUTHEAST LAND TRUST OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

150th Property Conserved! Brentwood couple donates conservation easement on 39 acres

Picture a beautiful horse pasture with scattered trees to provide shade on the edge of a beautiful, well-managed forest brimming with large oak and pine that you can explore via a network of woodland trails. That pretty much describes the Goun & Kaufman property in Brentwood, now conserved by a conservation easement, the 150th property conserved by the Southeast Land Trust since its founding in 1980! Roger Goun and Jody Kaufman donated the easement, limiting additional development of 39 acres of their 43 acre property.

“From our perspective, the Southeast Land Trust is lucky to be able to work with people like Roger and Jody who are great stewards of their land and wanted to make sure that future generations will be able to enjoy it,” explains Brian Hart, Executive Director of the Southeast Land Trust, a regional non-profit conservation organization based out of Exeter. “And to top it off, this is our 150th property protected – a milestone in our land conservation efforts.”

In explaining their decision to conserve their land, Jody recently stated that “we felt so lucky to find this parcel of land 15 years ago. We love living here, sharing it with the wildlife and occasional hikers or cross country skiers. We are grateful to be able to keep it open in perpetuity with the help of the land trust and the Town of Brentwood.”

Jody and Roger bought the property in 1997 and immediately began



The recent wet snows beautifully clung to the trees in the glade at the Goun & Kaufman property.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ROGER H. GOUN

continued on page 3

Land Trust Receives Accreditation!

This February the Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire achieved land trust accreditation from the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance.

“Accreditation is national recognition that the work of the Southeast Land Trust meets high ethical and legal standards, assuring our partnering landowners and communities that our commitment to permanence is supported by the quality and depth of our work,” explains Brian Hart, Executive Director. “Through this rigorous process, we’ve become a better and stronger organization and are more prepared than ever for perpetuity.”

The Land Trust is one of only seven land trusts in New Hampshire and 201 in the

continued on page 7





GET Out & About

All field trips are free and open to the public but advanced registration is required. Please contact Karen McCormack at the Southeast Land Trust to register and receive more details: 603.778.6088 or info@seltnh.org.

Woodcock Walk

**Wednesday, March 27 - 6pm -
Location to be determined**

Spring is around the corner! Join Emma Carcagno, Cooperative Extension Wildlife Program Assistant, to observe an early harbinger of spring: the woodcock! On this easy walk, we'll see the different habitats woodcock use and hopefully catch this strange little bird performing its elaborate courtship display. We'll also keep our eyes and ears peeled for other signs of spring.

Wild & Scenic Film Festival

**Friday, April 26 - 7pm -
The Music Hall, Portsmouth**

(see article on back page for more details)
Tickets are \$10.50 adults and \$9 for students, military, and seniors. Available at The Music Hall Box Office or www.themusicHall.org. Lead sponsor ReVision Energy and supporting sponsors Northland Forest Products, Upton & Hatfield, LLP and Veris Wealth Partners.

continued on page 3

LCHIP: It is time to return dedicated funding to its intended use

Land conservation is important to New Hampshire's environment, economy and quality of life. More than a quarter of the economic activity in the state is related to open spaces, from forestry and agriculture to tourism, second homes and outdoor recreation. New Hampshire citizens understand and appreciate how our natural resources provide jobs to many thousands of our citizens and contribute to our quality of life.



The Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) is the State's only significant financial contribution to protecting its natural landscape. Through a competitive application process, LCHIP provides grants to nonprofits like the Southeast Land Trust and to communities to conserve vital lands and historic buildings. The Land Trust and our region has benefitted greatly from the funding provided by LCHIP, supporting the conservation of the Pawtucakway River Reservation, the Batchelder Farm and Amber Acres Farm.

In 2008 the New Hampshire legislature enacted a surcharge on certain real estate documents recorded in county registries of deeds. The express purpose of this surcharge was to provide a continuing source of revenue for

LCHIP, and the legislation only succeeded due to its commitment to conservation and broad public support for this purpose.

However, in 2011 the legislature diverted the bulk of the program's dedicated funding to the state's general fund, effectively reducing to zero all allocations for new LCHIP grants. The surcharge continues to be collected in the name of LCHIP, though grant funds are no longer available.

In fact, when you record a deed at the Registry, they will stamp your document with "LCHIP fee", signifying its payment.

As federal and local dollars dwindle, restoring the financial capacity of LCHIP is crucial to stewarding the most important natural resources of the New Hampshire landscape. Governor Hassan has proposed restoring LCHIP's funding in the next budget – so now is the time to urge your state representatives and state senators to restore LCHIP's dedicated funding. You can find your legislators contact information at www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members/wml.aspx.

This article is based on a statement released by the New Hampshire Land Trust Coalition (www.nhltc.com), of which the Southeast Land Trust is a founding member. ■

Good Morning, Vietnam!

A reference to the hilarious 1987 Robin William's' movie is not something you would ever expect in our newsletter, but there is no better way to share the news that our Land Protection Specialist, David Viale, is on a temporary leave in Vietnam. Dave joined his wife in December as she took a short-term overseas work assignment. We wish them both great adventures and can't wait to hear their stories of the culture, food, and wilderness of Vietnam and beyond! ■



Early in the spring, before the over story has leafed out, colorful young skunk cabbage will erupt through the leaf litter. PHOTO BY BRIAN HART

150th Property Conserved!, continued

to plan for managing the property, building a home and creating pasture out of what was then a fully forested tract. Based on the advice of the Rockingham County Forester, they hired a licensed forester to develop a forest stewardship plan while they worked on plans for the house and barn. The careful planning paid off in some creative ways.

One example is their horse pasture. Jody and Roger moved here from a relatively treeless region by comparison to New Hampshire. They love trees but also needed pasture for their horses. Instead of clearing all of the trees for pasture they decided to create a “glade” by spacing out the healthiest oaks and hickories and planting grass. When looking over that beautiful tree-studded pasture, they remind then Rockingham County Forester Phil Auger that he previously told them it wouldn’t work. In fact they have had lots of opportunities to rib Phil about this recently because he is now working for the Southeast Land Trust as a Land Agent and in this new role, managed the conservation easement project on the Goun & Kaufman property. In addition, the owners improved the trails created in the process of logging the land for all sorts of recreational uses including walking, skiing, and of course horseback riding. Later these trails became part of a town wide network of recreation trails in Brentwood that include Ole Gordon Road which is a Class A Trail.

The Goun & Kaufman property includes approximately 17 acres of prime farmland soils under that glade pasture. The forests have been managed well enough to be certified as a Tree Farm. Though relatively small in and of itself, the property is part of a significant unfragmented block of open space that was identified as a Priority Protection Area in the most recent Brentwood Master Plan. Other conserved nearby lands includes the privately owned Chet Ladd Forest (which is protected by a conservation easement held by the Southeast Land Trust) and a parcel owned by the NH Fish and Game Department which was once a pheasant farm and deer research facility.

As with many conservation projects, the Goun & Kaufman easement was a partnership of the landowner, the land trust, and the community. The landowner generously donated the easement and the Town of Brentwood, through its Conservation Commission, provided the necessary funding to cover the project’s associated transaction costs. The Southeast Land Trust holds the easement and is responsible for its long-term monitoring and stewardship, to ensure the Property’s natural resources are conserved in perpetuity. The Town holds an executory interest in the easement, ensuring that the Town can protect its investment should the Southeast Land Trust fail to do its job or cease to exist. ■

March Town Meetings Hopping with Conservation Proposals

This March when voters go to the polls in many Seacoast towns, they will be voting on proposed partnerships with the Southeast Land Trust. **Kensington** and **Hampton Falls** voters will be asked to authorize the conveyance of conservation easements to the Land Trust on town-owned parcels. The easements will permanently protect wetlands and forestland while supporting continued public uses like hiking and sustainable forestry. In **Kingston**, residents will weigh in on a proposal to expend \$424,000 from the Land Acquisition Capital Reserve Fund to acquire 150 acres of forestland and wetlands located near Rockrimmon State Park. These properties are priorities of the Town and Land Trust, and if passed, will be conserved through conservation easements held by the Land Trust, building on our past efforts along the Class A trail Rockrimmon Road. Finally, **North Hampton** will be deciding on the appropriation of \$150,000 to support the purchase of a conservation easement on the historic Governor Dale Farm. ■



GET Out & About

Washington Road Woodlands

Saturday, May 11 ■ 9–11am ■ Rye

It wasn’t all that long ago that Rye was a quiet farming town filled with stone walls that framed the many beautiful small fields. The Southeast Land Trust recently partnered with the Town of Rye to conserve one of the best examples of old Rye. Join us to explore this Washington Road property with the landowner, who has meticulously restored many of the fields and stone walls that frame them and has some created walking trails that lead out to the edge of Berry’s Brook. Join tour leader Phil Auger to look for spring wildflowers and migrating song birds just on their way back from the tropics.

Fifth Annual Birding Walk at the Piscassic Greenway

Saturday, May 18 ■ 6–9am ■
Newfields

Rise and shine with avid birdwatcher Patience Chamberlin & past President of NH Audubon’s seacoast chapter, Roger Stephenson, for this introductory birding walk at the Land Trust’s 440-acre Piscassic Greenway. At this time of year, it is a great stopover for migrating birds and recent management activities have created even more potential habitat for interesting birds and other critters.

continued on page 6

Conservation Projects Update

1 Wow! Every day in December brought additional gifts and grants to support our partnership with the Town of Durham to protect the beautiful and productive **Amber Acres Farm**. Amber Acres Farm serves as part of the scenic gateway to **Durham** and **Lee** along Route 155A's agricultural landscape. With two-thirds of the property at work as open fields, the farm is well suited for agriculture and the project's goal is to ensure the land's continued use for local food production as a working farm. In addition, the property has 4,000 feet of shoreline on the Oyster River, a primary drinking water supply for Durham and the University of New Hampshire.

The success of Amber Acres was made possible through a diversity of funding sources and the landowner (who sold the conservation easement for less than its appraised fair market value). The U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provided a leading grant of \$765,000 from the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program. The Town of Durham Conservation Commission provided \$250,000. State funding from the New Hampshire Land and Community Heritage Investment Program and the Conservation License Plate (Moose Plate) were matched

with contributions from more than 75 individuals and foundations. Thank you to all who helped conserve this productive, scenic landscape!

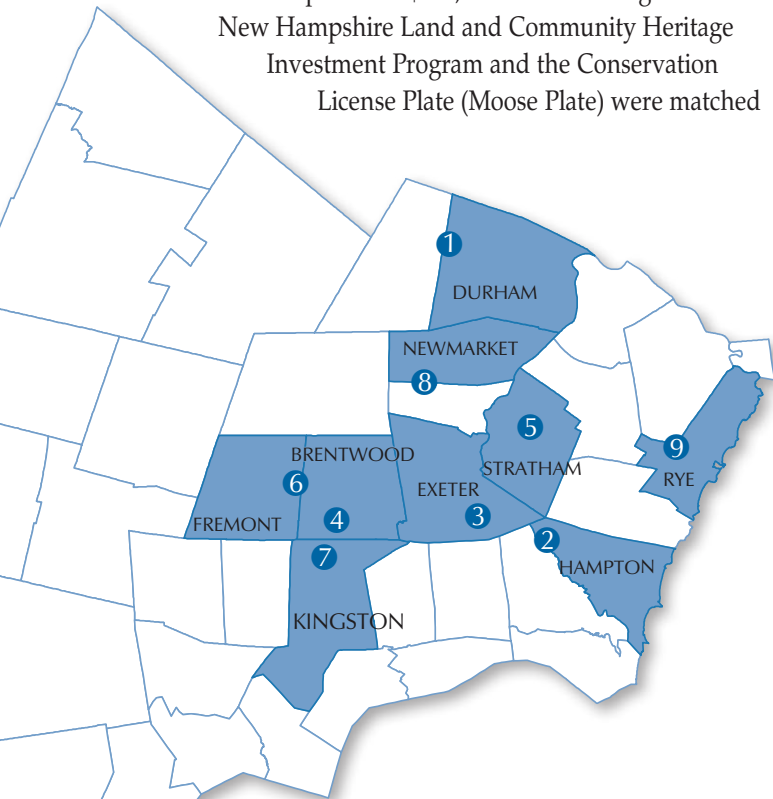
2 The Land Trust completed the third and final easement of the **Batchelder Farm** project, protecting 17 acres of woodlands and wetlands off of Heritage Drive in **Hampton**. The four Batchelder brothers deserve thanks for their amazing patience and commitment to conserving the family's historic 120 acres of fields and woods on Exeter Road.

3 Located at the confluence of the Little River and Exeter River, **Gilman Park** in **Exeter** has been well loved and much used since being gift by Daniel and Minnie Gilman in 1892. The park was gifted to the Town of Exeter in September by the Gilman Park Trustees, subject to a conservation easement also gifted to the Land Trust. The intent of these transfers was to ensure the public's continued use of this park while meeting the intent of the Gilmans' original gift.



4 Our 150th property was protected in February. Donated by Roger Goun and Jody Kaufman, this easement conserves 39 acres of glades and forestland off of Ole Gordon Road in **Brentwood**. Read more on page 1.

5 In October, we completed our second project of 2012 with the **Town of Stratham**, accepting a conservation easement on



- 1 Amber Acres Farm
- 2 Batchelder Woodlands
- 3 Gilman Park Easement
- 4 Goun & Kaufman Easement
- 5 Jones Easement
- 6 Kelliher Memorial Forest
- 7 Magnusson Addition to Tucker-French Forest
- 8 Tucker Addition to Piscassic Greenway
- 9 Washington Road Easement



The Kelliher Memorial Forest includes a portion of Spruce Swamp, a 700+ acre fen swamp in Fremont and Brentwood. During our May 25 field trip, maybe you will find a piece of the wreckage of the B-52 Stratofortress plane that crashed in 1959. PHOTO BY BRIAN HART

the **Jones Woodlands** on Winnicutt Road. This beautiful, mature forest includes an exemplary example of dry Appalachian oak forest and complements the protection of farmland and forests on the opposite side of the road. This project was one of the last of 13 completed using the 2003 Stratham Open Space bond – protecting 543 acres in the town and leveraging \$2 million in other funds! Congrats to Stratham!

6 In **Fremont** and **Brentwood**, we accepted the generous donation of 129-acres of forestland and critical wetlands adjacent to Spruce Swamp. We now call this the **Kelliher Memorial Forest**, in honor of the family who donated it to us after selling a conservation easement to the Natural Resources Conservation Service. (Take a tour of this land at our May 25 field trip. See page 6 for details.)

7 Of course every year the Land Trust's **Tucker & French Family Forest** grows, like all trees do. But this past year the forest grew in scope to more than 589 acres with the addition of nearly 27 acres donated by Magnusson Farm. The Magnusson Tract is a restored gravel pit that lies across the Little River from the rest of the Tucker-French Family Forest. It serves as critical habitat for nesting turtles and buffers the Little River from development off of Route 107 in **Kingston**. Thank you to Connie Magnusson for this donation!

8 In partnership with the Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership, the Land Trust acquired 59 acres of valuable wetland, stream frontage and wildlife habitat as an addition to the popular **Piscassic Greenway**. The newly acquired Tucker tract, located off Neal Mill Road in **Newmarket**, boasts a large complex of beaver impounded wetlands, and nearly 3,000 feet of frontage along Piscassic Stream. The entire property is designated as "highest ranking habitat in New Hampshire" in the *NH Fish and Game Department's Wildlife Action Plan* and provides high quality, diverse wetland habitat for waterfowl, migratory birds and other local wildlife. The open marshes are ideal for several turtle species of conservation concern, including wood, Blanding's and spotted.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC), on behalf of the Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership, negotiated with the landowner, Donald Tucker, on the sale of the 59 acres and directed the deed at closing to the Land Trust. "This is an important investment for water quality protection, but as important is the quality wildlife habitat found on the property," said Duane Hyde, Director of Conservation Programs with TNC, who holds conservation restrictions on the property ensuring its permanent protection from development.

As the new owners of the Tucker tract, its addition will



With more than two miles of stone walls on just 48 acres, this Washington Road property in Rye is a testament to the commitment of our ancestors to create fields and pastures in our stony soils. PHOTO BY BRIAN HART

strengthen the Land Trust's management opportunities for wildlife and provide for the option to expand our trail network to Neal Mill Road. Attendees of Piscassic Greenway Day on June 8 will enjoy guided tours and learn more about this new addition. (See page 6 for details.)

9 December continued our partnerships with the conservation of 48 acres in **Rye** and **Portsmouth**. Working with the Town of Rye, the Land Trust accepted a conservation easement on these historic fields, forest and wetlands off of Washington Road. Within the priority area of Berry's Brook and adjacent to 120 acres of land conserved by the Town, this property can be visited during a special landowner-led walking tour on May 11. (See page 3 for details.) With nearly two miles of stone walls – well maintained – you will start to understand the challenges that settlers of the 18th and 19th century had in farming our stony soils! Many thanks to the dozens who responded to our request for support and contributed to cover our project and stewardship costs and to the Town of Rye for contributing the purchase price from the Town's open space bond. ■

Do you have the Moose Plate?

The conservation of both Amber Acres Farm and the Batchelder Farm was supported by funds from the sale of the Conservation License Plate (Moose Plate) through the NH State Conservation Committee grant program. Get your plate today and help projects like these!





GET Out & About

Spruce Swamp and the B-52 Flying Fortress

Saturday, May 25 • 9am–12 noon
• Brentwood/Fremont

Thanks to the generosity of the heirs of Joseph and Mary Kelliher, the Land Trust recently was given one of its most interesting and unique properties. The 129-acre Kelliher Memorial Forest is interesting ecologically speaking because it contains a variety of wildlife habitat features including portions of Spruce Swamp, the largest wetland complex in southeastern New Hampshire. The property is also quite unique because it was the site of a B-52 Flying Fortress crash! Phil Auger and Fremont historian Matthew Thomas (invited) will bring us into some of the hidden places on this property to look for breeding waterfowl and traces of the fallen aircraft.

Piscassic Greenway Day Saturday, June 8 • Various events from 8am–3pm • Newfields

Join us for our first Piscassic Greenway Day, a community celebration of the permanent conservation of these now 440-acres of land in the heart of Newfields and Newmarket! It has been eight (!) years since these lands were proposed for 102 unit housing development and the community responded by voting to acquire and conserve these lands. Details are still being finalized, but will include family-friendly workshops, hikes, the grand opening of the Tucker Tract, and our annual Conservation Celebration & Cookout (see next page for details or visit www.seltnh.org).

Perpetuity in Focus: Land Trust Establishes Conservation Easement Stewardship Fund

For each conservation easement accepted by the Southeast Land Trust, the organization takes on a significant responsibility – the monitoring, stewardship, and enforcement of the easement, in perpetuity.

That’s a huge commitment that requires planning, foresight, and money. So for each easement, the Land Trust seeks to set aside at least \$5,000 for this purpose. But holding, managing, and investing these funds to meet this commitment proved a challenge for the Land Trust’s volunteer board and staff.

And while the Land Trust’s approach of investing in balanced mutual funds with low cost investment firms had proved successful, “we recognized that as our investment grew, so did the risk of loss and opportunity for returns,” explains Brian Hart, Executive Director. That’s why the Land Trust initiated discussions with the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation (NHCF) about establishing an agency fund to provide annual support to the Land Trust for its easement stewardship program.

These discussions culminated in the establishment of the Conservation Easement Stewardship Fund with NHCF. As an agency fund, it is solely designated to support the monitoring, stewardship, and enforcement of any conservation easement held by the

Southeast Land Trust. To fund it, the Land Trust contributed an initial \$276,000, representing gifts received for past completed projects. Additional contributions will be made on a quarterly basis, based on the new conservation easements completed that quarter.

Now, NHCF’s professional investment team is responsible for managing these funds, with the goal of providing an inflation-adjusted stream of income to the Land Trust to support our costs of easement stewardship. Each February, NHCF distributes a portion (currently set at 4.03%) of the fund to the Land Trust. The 2013 distribution was approximately \$10,000.

“This partnership with the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, one of the country’s leading community foundations, should assure our landowners, communities, and donors that their gifts to support the long-term stewardship and enforcement of conservation easements will be honored and use for their intended purpose,” explains Tom Chamberlin, President of the Board. This assurance, and knowing that the funds could be managed more robustly than by the organization itself, is what motivated the Board, by unanimous vote, to establish this fund.

Separately, the Board also decided to retain \$150,000 for the legal defense of our conservation easements. These legal defense funds are held by the Land Trust and are immediately available to the organization, if necessary, to cover unanticipated legal costs and associated fees with enforcing our portfolio of conservation easements.

The Land Trust Alliance recommends that based on the number of easements held by our organization, we should have a minimum of \$565,000 in available funds for easement stewardship and defense. At this time, the land trust has a total of \$426,000 committed, leaving a shortfall of \$139,000. As part of our accreditation process, the Board of Directors adopted a multi-year plan to eliminate the shortfall and ensure we have sufficient funds for future monitoring and enforcement.

Gifts to the Conservation Easement Stewardship Fund are welcome. Please send your gift using the enclosed envelope and write “Conservation Easement Stewardship Fund” in the memo field. Thank you! ■



NEW HAMPSHIRE
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

Conservation Celebration & Cookout

As part of the Piscassic Greenway Day, the Land Trust will host its annual Conservation Celebration & Cookout in Newfields! Join the Board, staff, and volunteers as we celebrate the conservation of fifteen additional properties totaling more than 650 acres of critical habitat, prime farmland, shoreline on our river and forests. The Conservation Celebration is our chance to share all the great work enabled by you, our members, and to recognize and thank the land-owners and communities with whom we have partnered.

After sharing a delicious locally-inspired cookout, attendees can choose an easy hike of the recently expanded Piscassic Greenway and its trail system or other nearby properties. Members and non-members are welcome, so feel free to bring a friend or neighbor who might want to learn more about the Land Trust.

The cost to attend the Annual Cookout is \$15 per adult, \$5 per child seven and over (6 and under are free). Pre-registration is required. Please reserve your spot by May 31st by contacting Karen McCormack at 603.778.6088 or info@seltnh.org. Please specify if you intend to join us for the field trip and whether you require a vegetarian meal. ■

Conservation Celebration & Cookout
Saturday, June 8 ■ 10:30am–1pm
Cole Farm, Newfields

E-News and Facebook Waiting for You

You may have noticed a long-period of time between issues of *This Land*. Can't wait for the next issue to know what is happening or to attend a field trip? Please sign up for E-News, our monthly electronic newsletter or like us on Facebook. These social media tools are simple, cost-effective ways for us to communicate to you, and for you to share with your friends and neighbors about our great work. To sign up for E-news, visit our website and enter your name and email address in the form fields on the left side. ■

Land Trust Receives Accreditation!, continued

country that has been awarded accreditation since the fall of 2008. Accredited land trusts are authorized to display a seal indicating to the public that they meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent.

"This round of accreditation decisions represents another significant milestone for the accreditation program; the 201 accredited land trusts account for half of the 20,645,165 acres currently owned in fee or protected by a conservation easement held by a land trust," said Commission Executive Director Tammara Van Ryn. "Accreditation provides the public with an assurance that, at the time of accreditation, land trusts meet high standards for quality and that the results of their conservation work are permanent."

The Land Trust began preparing for accreditation in 2009 through a self-assessment of its compliance with the Land Trust Alliance's Standards and Practices. After completing the assessment, the staff and board reviewed every conservation transaction completed, drafted and adopted new policies on various issues, completed more than 50 reports on the property condition of older conservation easements, and streamlined a variety of processes within the organization. Then, in early 2012, the formal accreditation application was submitted to the Land Trust Accreditation Commission.

"We are proud to display the accreditation seal and will strive to continue to meet the quality and excellence that is represents," notes Hart. "Our members and supporters should view this symbol as our commitment to perpetuity and our conservation goals." ■



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David Viale Land Protection & Stewardship Specialist

Questions, Comments, Concerns?

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Wild & Scenic Film Festival returns with theme "A Climate of Change"

This year brings the third annual Wild & Scenic Film Festival, an evening of entertaining, educational, and inspiring films which speak to the environmental concerns and celebrations of our planet. Films featured at Wild & Scenic give people a sense of place. In our busy lives, it's easy to get disconnected from our role in the global ecosystem. When we realize that the change we need in this world begins with us we can start making a difference. If you have not attended before, the evening consists of about two hours of short films with a brief intermission and raffle of donated items.

This is a fundraiser and friend-raiser for your local land trust, so grab a friend or invite a colleague! Get your tickets (\$10.50 regular or \$9 for seniors/military/students) in person at The Music Hall's box office or online at www.themusichall.org (service charges apply to online purchases). See more about the Wild & Scenic Film Festival at www.seltnh.org, including previews of select films. Thanks to our generous lead sponsor ReVision Energy and our supporting sponsors Northland Forest Products, Upton & Hatfield, LLP and Veris Wealth Partners for underwriting the evening! ■



Wild & Scenic Film Festival
Friday, April 26, 2013 ■ 7pm
The Music Hall, Portsmouth



Land Protection BY THE NUMBERS

As of March 1, 2013, the Southeast Land Trust has conserved 151 special places totaling 8,846 acres:

- 6,242 acres via conservation easements and executory interests
- 2,604 acres owned by the Land Trust



Accredited: Land Trust Recognized Nationally!

See details on page 1

150th Property Conserved!

See details on page 1

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