



THIS LAND

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM THE SOUTHEAST LAND TRUST OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Nearly 100 Acres Preserved Along Pawtuckaway River Corridor Competes for National Funding

In late 2008, the Southeast Land Trust purchased two critical riverfront properties on the Pawtuckaway River in what is envisioned as the first phase of the Pawtuckaway River Corridor project. The long-term goal of the corridor is to conserve nearly two miles of shoreline along the river and a block of 400 acres of key wildlife habitat and forestland.

The first property, called the Pawtuckaway River Reservation, was acquired in partnership with the Town of Raymond, Bear-Paw Regional Greenways, and the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department. Members of the Trust played a crucial role in the project's success, donating more than \$200,000 of the necessary funding! Thank you!

"We are thrilled to partner with the Town of Raymond, which will be contributing \$75,000 to support the land's permanent protection," notes Brian Hart, Executive Director of the Southeast Land Trust. To complete the project, the Trust secured a \$40,000 grant from the Landowner Incentive Program and \$3,000 from the Piscataqua Region Estuaries Project.

The Town of Raymond will hold a reverter interest in the property, allowing the Town to take ownership of the land should the Trust cease to exist or not fulfill its responsibilities. Conservation restrictions on the land will be held by Bear-Paw Regional Greenways, who has also identified the area as a top priority in their greenway planning.

With the support of the Lamprey River Advisory Committee (LRAC), the Trust purchased the 34-acre Pernokas tract

in Epping. The parcel is located off of Blake Road at the southern end of the Pawtuckaway River Corridor. The land, once slated for a housing development, includes 2,000 feet of shoreline on the Pawtuckaway River and critical wildlife habitat. It also abuts a conservation easement on 91 acres of forestland. Neighbor Phil Primack donated the easement to the Trust in 1998.

"LRAC should be commended for its willingness to fully fund this purchase on an important tributary to the Lamprey River," explained David Viale. Viale, the Trust's new Land Protection and Stewardship Specialist, works with LRAC to implement their conservation goals for the Lamprey River. "Without LRAC's support, the Trust would not have been able to purchase this keystone parcel."

These two purchases represent the first phase of several to complete the conservation corridor. Last year, in partnership with the NH Fish and Game Department, the Trust submitted the Pawtuckaway River Corridor project to the federal Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) for a grant of \$1.5 million. The project was recognized by CELCP for its ecological

importance, and was ranked 19th out of 45 projects in the country! However, funding in the FY09 budget has yet to be finalized, so the Trust and Department plan to resubmit the application for the FY10 grant round. Stay tuned!

Volunteers are needed to conduct property clean ups in the spring of 2009 – if you are interested in volunteering, please call or e-mail Karen McCormack at 778.6088 or info@seltnh.org. ■



The Pawtuckaway River is one of the cleanest tributaries of the Lamprey River.
PHOTO COURTESY OF PETE INGRAHAM.



GET *Out & About*

Both field trips are free and open to the public. Registration is required – call 603.778.6088 or e-mail kmccormack@seltnh.org. Directions and site details will be provided to registrants.

February Footsteps Saturday, February 28 • 9-11am • Newfields & Exeter

Located at the confluence of the Piscassic River, Fresh Brook and Beech Hill Brook, and nestled amid several hundred acres of unfragmented conserved lands, these 450 acres are owned by NH Fish and Game with a conservation easement held by the Southeast Land Trust. We'll walk or snowshoe to explore its uplands, learning about winter ecology while looking for animal tracks and signs.

Guided by: Frank Mitchell, naturalist and recently-retired UNH Cooperative Extension Land and Water Conservation Specialist.

Great Bog Walkabout Saturday, April 18 • 9am-Noon • Portsmouth

The Southeast Land Trust holds a conservation easement on 193 acres of Portsmouth's 700+ acre Great Bog, one of the largest intact freshwater wetlands in NH. Great Bog contains a variety of habitats including sedge, cattail and reed marshes, wooded red-maple and skunk cabbage swamps, open grassy fields, shrub-invaded fields, and forest. As springtime refreshes this local treasure, we'll explore its uplands and swamp

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Region's Water Quality at Risk

A January symposium hosted by the NH Water Resources Research Center and the Lamprey River Watershed Association highlighted the diminution of the region's water quality and the growing need to tackle these challenges before the damage is too great.

Some key findings include:

- Excessive nitrogen is degrading the water quality of Great Bay; however, only 1/3 of the nitrogen is from point (like pipes) sources, making reductions difficult.
- Floodplains with longer periods of flooding tend to absorb nitrates, reducing surface water pollution, while floodplains that have shorter flooding periods tend to leach nitrates.
- With only a seven degree range between a cold water fishery and a warm water fishery, tributaries play a large role in regulating the temperature of a river, and supporting

habitat for species such as brook trout.

- Salt concentrations in surface and ground water have increased 200-300% since introduction of road salt in the 1950s. Salt levels impact water not only in the winter, but in the summer when flows are at their lowest, thus increasing the concentration of salt.
- A watershed becomes degraded after about 10% of its surface cover becomes impervious. It becomes totally degraded after about 40% impervious cover.

For the Southeast Land Trust, the information shared at the symposium reinforced that land protection is the most effective long-term strategy for conserving the water quality of our rivers and estuary. We hope to use these findings to strengthen our land protection work and to engage a broader audience in our mission. For more information on the current research, visit www.wrrc.unh.edu. ■

A Smashing Success! *Fundraiser Exceeds Expectations*

Last November's Fall Foliage Fundraiser at the Seacoast Science Center raised \$32,000 to support the work of the Southeast Land Trust, including \$11,000 for the Pawtuckaway River Reservation land protection project in Raymond and Epping. We wish to thank all of the businesses and members who supported the organization through their generous gifts

of services and items, and thank you to our event co-sponsor, Cambridge Trust Company of New Hampshire, who underwrote the event and provided prime tickets to the Jets-Patriots game at Foxboro.

Plans are underway for 2009 – contact Karen McCormack at 778.6088 if you would like to volunteer your time and talents! ■

Wish List

The Southeast Land Trust is in need of a few specific items to support our outreach programs and storage needs:

- **EZ Pop-UP Tents** will be used at farmer's markets, annual meetings, and other outdoor events.
- **Fireproof file cabinets** are necessary to protect permanent files of the organization from damage and destruction during fire.
- **LCD computer projector** would support outreach and education efforts to communities and landowners regarding the land trust, our goals, and land conservation.

If you are interested in donating any of these items, please contact Karen McCormack at 778.6088 or info@seltnh.org to arrange the donation. *Thank you!* ■

Conserving Land in a Down Economy

By now, economists have realized what many of us knew since the summer of 2008: our economy was in recession and the outlook for future growth was bleak.

Thanks to the continued strong support of our members like you, we ended 2008 in a sound financial position, with a small operating surplus (less than \$500). We continue to carry no debt and have healthy financial reserves for emergency needs. For 2009, the Board of Directors have taken the following steps to limit the impact of a recession on our mission:

- Conservatively budgeting revenue and expenses to reflect the economic slowdown. The Board of Directors adopted a conservative budget that focuses our resources on our core mission: conserving new lands and stewarding the lands under easement or ownership.
- Adopting a scaleable operating budget, whereby certain expenditures will only be made if specific funds are raised. These

include purchases of replacement computers and fire-proof file cabinets, upgrades to our website, and certain land management activities.

- Delaying the hiring of new staff until the economy rebounds. Although our 2007-2010 Strategic Plan identified land protection staff as a high priority in 2009 and we continue to have the need for more resources, we will not be hiring additional staff in 2009.

For conservationists, there is a silver lining in a shrinking economy. Land values have dropped by at least 10-15% from just last summer, and many developers and home builders are willing to sell critical parcels at comparatively low costs. But with these opportunities comes the challenge of raising funds from limited public and private dollars. Should the recession deepen further and require the Board of Directors to take more significant steps, we will keep you informed. ■



Get Out & About, continued

edges. In addition to the awakening plant life, we expect to find amphibian eggs and other pond life, early migrant birds, and notable residents such as wood ducks and beaver. If our timing is right, Portsmouth's only actively-nesting ospreys will have returned!

Guided by: Davis Finch, naturalist and founder/trip leader for WINGS worldwide birding tours; Denny Abbott, accomplished birder with multi-year service on committee charged with evaluating proposed bird records; Don Green, whose interests in various aspects of biology led him into the Great Bog some ten years ago and who has never quite left it.

A New Face Saving Places

2008 saw many changes in the staff of the Southeast Land Trust. Conservation Projects Manager Kristen Grubbs took a great opportunity to work for the Town of Ipswich, MA on land conservation, offering her a much shorter commute and more time with her young children. Community Land Protection Specialist Ellen Snyder returned to freelance consulting, and continues to work on specific projects with the Trust, including management plans and easements. We wish both Kristen and Ellen the best, and look forward to working with them again!

This August David Viale joined the Trust as our new Land Protection & Stewardship Specialist. Originally from upstate New York, David completed his Masters Degree in Natural Resources Management & Administration at Antioch New England University in Keene, and brings a variety of experience to the organization. David will be working with the Lamprey River Advisory Committee to permanently protect land along the wild and scenic portions of the Lamprey River. He will also be working with the Town of Brentwood to increase land protection within the Exeter River watershed and to assist with their easement monitoring. When not at work, David can be found playing his mandolin and guitar and exploring our region's natural areas. ■



David Viale, new Land Protection & Stewardship Specialist. PHOTO BY BRIAN HART.

Board Members

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Clearance Sale – 2009 *Special Places* Calendar now 50% off!

Here's your last chance to purchase the 2009 *Special Places* wall calendar at a special discount of just \$6.00 each – 50% off! Use this special discounted price to introduce friends and family to the Southeast Land Trust or as belated gifts! The full color calendar showcases beautiful lands conserved by the Southeast Land Trust and its community partners and landowners.

To order your calendar, please send \$6.00 per calendar to: Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire, PO Box 675, Exeter, NH 03833. You are welcome to use the enclosed remittance envelope – simply note that you would like a calendar. ■



2009 *Special Places* Calendar



Questions, Comments, Concerns?

To contact the Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire, please call 603.778.6088 or e-mail info@seltnh.org.

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Website: www.seltnh.org

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See page 1 for details.

100 Acres Preserved Along Pawtuckaway River!

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