

Pawtuckaway to Great Bay Greenway Vision Unfolds Four projects & ~ 2,000 acres to be conserved!

Inspiring! That one word best summarizes how you've responded to our early vision of linking Pawtuckaway State Park to Great Bay through a greenway of protected lands.

We are proud to share with you, that thanks to your support of our organization, we now have *four properties totaling nearly 2,000 acres under agreement for permanent conservation*: the Harvey's Kennard Hill Forest, Limperis Farm, Burley Farm, and Sweetser Farm. These lands in Epping, Nottingham, Newmarket, and Newfields make possible the unfolding vision of a greenway – and maybe one day a series of trails – from Great Bay to Pawtuckaway. Over the next few years, the Land Trust will be working to secure the necessary funding to make this vision possible. But for now, please read further and look inside to see how these special places fit into this vision.



continued on page 4

Harvey's Kennard Hill Forest. PHOTO CREDIT: DUANE HYDE

Merger Complete: Welcome Strafford Rivers Conservancy Members

As this newsletter goes to press, the final paperwork for the merger of the Strafford Rivers Conservancy (SRC) and Southeast Land Trust is being prepared, signed, and recorded. In late November, SRC completed their final project – the Berry Brook Farm in Farmington (see article on page 2). Now this easement, and an additional 70 special places, are part to the portfolio of conserved lands stewarded by the Southeast Land Trust. We want to take this moment to acknowledge and thank SRC outgoing board members Steve Dibble, Nancy Carmer, Alexandra Roberts, and Bruce Kerr for their decades of dedicated service and invaluable contributions to SRC, and their strong support of the merger. Welcome to the members, landowners, and communities of the Strafford Rivers Conservancy! ■



Black Bear Talk with Ben Kilham

Weds., January 21, 2015 - 6:30–8:30 pm - Snow date: Weds., January 28 - 6:30–8:30 pm - Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter, NH
Come learn about this fascinating creature from black bear expert and author, Ben Kilham. Please register by e-mailing register@seltnh.org. *See details on page 8.*

The Heart of the Watershed: Geology and Hydrology of the Howard Swain Memorial Forest

Sat. February 14, 2015 - 9 am–Noon - Snow date: Sat. February 21 - 9 am–Noon - Nottingham Road, Deerfield

Join us for a wintertime meander over ancient granite that will lead us to the edge of the Pawtuckaway Mountain complex at Rocky Ridge. We will discuss the glacial history and the hydrology of the site, including the importance of upland wetlands (controlled in part by beaver) in improving water quality and maintaining water availability in the Lamprey River watershed. If the ice is thick enough, we will venture across Dead Pond to examine weathering and fracturing up close in the impressive boulders on North Mountain.

This free winter hike/snowshoe is led by Wally Bothner (Professor of Geology, Emeritus) and Anne Lightbody (Assistant Professor of Hydrology) from the Department of Earth Sciences at the University of New Hampshire. Please register by e-mailing register@seltnh.org

A Season of Giving!

During this season of giving, the Land Trust is fortunate to be working with so many landowners generously gifting their land or a conservation easement – all to protect for today and tomorrow. **You can help make these gifts possible:** we are still seeking contributions for these special places – so please consider a special end-of-the-year gift for one or all of the pending projects!

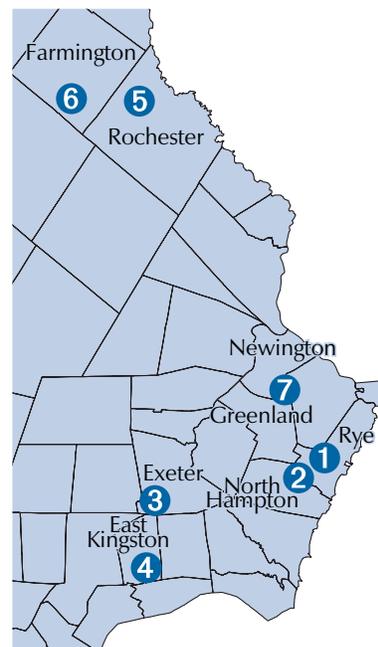
- 1 **Rolf R. Lium**, who in 2012 worked with the Land Trust and Town of Rye to conserve his historic fields on Washington Road, will be protecting an additional nearly 15 acres on the opposite side of the road through a donated easement. These fields and woods are bounded by beautiful stone walls and are representative of the pastoral legacy of New Hampshire.
- 2 Progress continues on the fundraising for the 94-acre **Charles E. Rand Memorial Forest** in Rye and North Hampton, to be gifted to the Land Trust as a fee ownership by Nancy Rand and her daughter-in-law Sandy.

- 3 Honoring her aunt and her deep roots in Exeter, Martha Pennell is donating 13 acres in Exeter as the **Kimball Reserve**. RiverWoods Retirement Community has committed \$13,000 as a challenge match to raise the remaining funds – your gift will be matched!

You can help conserve these Special Places!
Make a secure donation at www.seltnh.org.



- 4 This December **Davis Finch and Jean Topping** are adding 30 acres of land to their existing conservation easement in East Kingston and Kensington. Located off Fish Rd, the property is part of Hog Hill Swamp – the largest wetland system in East Kingston and a tributary to the Powwow River. Davis and Jean are protecting this land for no compensation – a wonderful end of the year gift! In total, 168 acres will have been protected through their generosity and love of the land.
- 5 **The City of Rochester** will be adding 133 acres to a conservation easement previously granted to the Strafford Rivers Conservancy that protected shoreline on both sides of the Cochecho River. This project is expected to be completed in early 2015.
- 6 The Strafford Rivers Conservancy accepted a conservation easement on the 76-acre Berry Brook Farm in Farmington from landowners **Maurice and Gerie Huppe**. The Berry Brook Farm is located within the Blue Hills Conservation Focus Area, a high priority area with thousands of acres of conserved lands in close proximity to the Farm. As part of the merger with SRC, this easement will be transferred to the Southeast Land Trust.
- 7 **The Baird conservation easement** in Newington is now completed, protecting more than 30 acres. Thank you to the Baird family and the Town of Newington for partnering with the Land Trust. ■



**As of December 1, 2014. Check for updates on our progress!*

A Season of Secrets

By Emma Carcagno

Early fall gets all the glory: perfect temperatures; yellow afternoons; red, orange and yellow leaves light the forest ablaze. But, I'd contend that late fall has its own beauty, often overlooked, that heralds an exciting season yet to come. Yes, that's right, I'll admit it: I love winter. And I love this in-between season, easing us (sometimes not-so-gently) into the winter ahead. Late fall is filled with cold, quiet mornings. Muted tones of brown and gold linger on oak trees, flames of bright red winterberry holly fill our wetlands, and red ruby jewels of wild cranberries beckon (if you know where to find them).

I know I haven't convinced you yet of late fall's beauty. You're still mourning summer's end, gone in a blink. You're dreading the cold, snow, ice, and wind yet to come, but hear me out. Late fall and winter reveal so many beautiful gifts to us. Secrets hidden by spring's burst of lush, green vegetation and cacophony of breeding birds; by summer's warm-weather distractions, long days of sunlight, and copious biting insects.

As the last leaves begin to fall, birds' nests once hidden so well are suddenly revealed and beg closer inspection. Is it possible that this nest has been here right next to the trail all summer long without notice? What is that? The hair from a horse's tail? Paper birch bark? Pine needles? And how do birds intricately weave all these materials together into sturdy cups with just their beaks and tiny feet? How many eggs were born from this nest? And what kind of bird built it? An endless list of questions, some easily answered, others leave us pondering.

And just like the tourists, gone for the season, our migratory birds have all moved on to warmer weather and abundant food further south. They've left behind a familiar rag-tag collection of New England's toughest little birds: chickadees, tufted titmouse, northern cardinals, dark-eyed juncos, and woodpeckers to name just a few. These birds go about their business all summer longer, barely noticed amongst the flashy warblers with their bright feathers and loud morning chorus. Now these familiar, friendly characters are seemingly abundant in the absence of the tourist birds. They're here to tough out the winter with the rest of us; true New Englanders.

Soon the snow will fall, blanketing the outside world in a cloak of white revealing even more to us. We'll be able to see and follow the path of the red fox along the field's edge, the bobcat's journey to the beaver dam, the white-tailed deer's favorite spot to bed down beneath the hemlock trees, the meandering path of the ruffed grouse through the aspen trees, and the footprints of other people enjoying the same trails on snowshoes and cross-country skis. We know logically that these wildlife species are there in summer too, but it is so rare to find their sign or see them for ourselves. Winter opens a window into the world of the wildlife around us, hidden in plain sight the rest of the year.

So, while you may still be dreading all the short days and snow shoveling yet to come, I hope you can hold a little excitement for the secrets about to be bestowed on you. Head outside this winter and follow the trail of the fox at the edge of the field. Wander with her through the woods. You'll surely cross the porcupine's path, and learn the fisher's lope. The chickadee will sing you its song and your footprints will lead you back home. ■



Wild Cranberry found at the Mast Road Natural Area in Epping.

PHOTO CREDIT: EMMA CARCAGNO

Trail Network Growing in Tucker-French Forest

During our strategic planning process, we heard you, our members, loud and clear: please expand public access to our lands with maps, trails, and kiosks!

In response, this year the Land Trust is establishing an extensive trails network on the Tucker-French Forest in Kingston and Danville. Work on the trails began in late July led by our Land Manager, Phil Auger with contributions from numerous volunteers, including Walt Roy, Ernie Landry, Tom Chamberlin, and others.

Here are some highlights of the new trail network:

- Nearly 6 miles of interior trails have been improved, of which 2 miles are new.
- All trails will be available for walking, cross-country skiing, snow shoeing and other passive recreational uses.
- More than half of the trail network will be open to snowmobiles, the only motorized vehicles allowed.
- Public access has been improved greatly with upgrades to Tucker Road and additional parking on Route 107 near the Little River bridge.
- Six of eight bridges have been completed including one that makes five turns as it zigs and zags across the Little River.

Stay tuned for a spring grand opening or if you're adventurous, venture out now and explore before we're finished!



Trail work, Summer 2014

Pawtuckaway to Great Bay Greenway Vision Unfolds

1 Harvey's Kennard Hill Forest, 1,115 acres

The Harvey family elders Dan and Louise and their eight adult children have agreed to sell a conservation easement on 1,115 acres of land in the remote northwest corner of Epping and southern Nottingham, the largest single project ever undertaken by the Land Trust. True salt-of-the-earth people, the Harvey family have owned land in Epping for eight generations – since 1755. Their decision to conserve these woods was decades in the making, took lots of family discussions, and finally came together earlier this year. The attributes of this land are too numerous to list in their entirety, but include being located within a 4,757 acre block of unfragmented forest identified as a priority by numerous conservation plans, spectacular beaver influenced ponds supporting multiple rare species, a great blue heron rookery, and migratory birds, and two miles of brooks, and the highest point of land in Epping. Finally, the Harvey's Kennard Hill Forest abuts more than 800 acres conserved by the Land Trust along and near the Pawtuckaway River, building on twelve prior projects! The proposed conservation easement will also ensure that the Harvey Woods will be open for public access and will allow the Land Trust to establish a trail system to support public recreation.

**Breaking News:
LCHIP invests \$400,000 with grant!**

2 Sweetser Farm, 200 acres

In February of this year, David Sweetser visited our office at the suggestion of local realtor Rob Gilman to explore options for his family's 200 acre farm on Ledge Farm Road in Nottingham. We quickly realized its strategic importance, as it abuts the Harvey's Kennard Hill Forest. Working to meet the family's goals and building on the vision of linking Pawtuckaway to Great Bay, the Land Trust has agreed to acquire a conservation easement on the majority of the farm and woodlands. Once conserved, it is the hope of the family and Land Trust that a new family will purchase the protected farm and continues its long agricultural heritage.

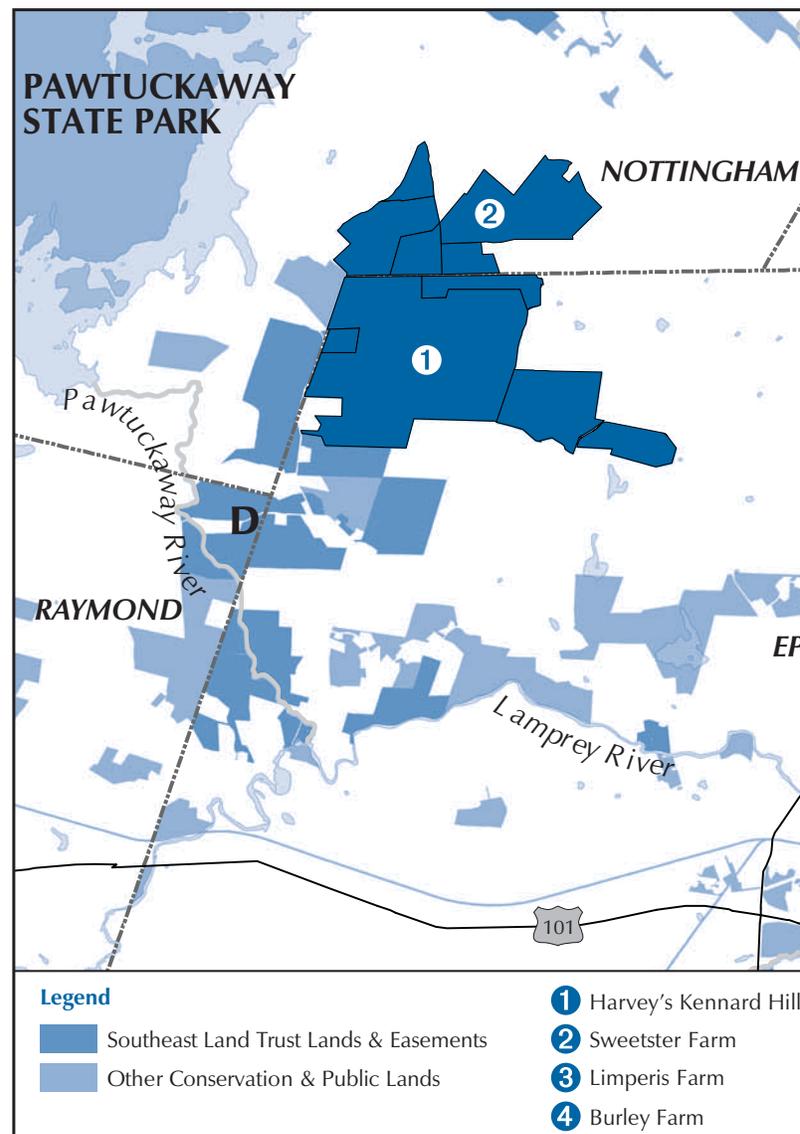
3 Limperis Farm, 263 acres

Beloved by area residents for fresh corn, tomatoes, and veggies, the Limperis Farm is an active farm nestled on the banks of the Lamprey River and Jacobs Wells Road. The Limperis family will retain ownership of 77 acres subject to a conservation easement, allowing them to continue farming. The remaining 186 acres will be acquired by the Land Trust as a new reservation. With more than 1,800 feet of shoreline on both sides of the *Wild and Scenic* Lamprey River, these woods abut the Land Trust's Lamprey River

Wildlife Preserve and will help link the Land Trust's Piscassic Greenway in Newfields all the way to Route 125.



The fields of the Limperis Farm are shown here in this image from a recent LCHIP video. CREDIT: COURTESY OF CLEARLY CREATIVE



Four projects & ~ 2,000 acres to be conserved!

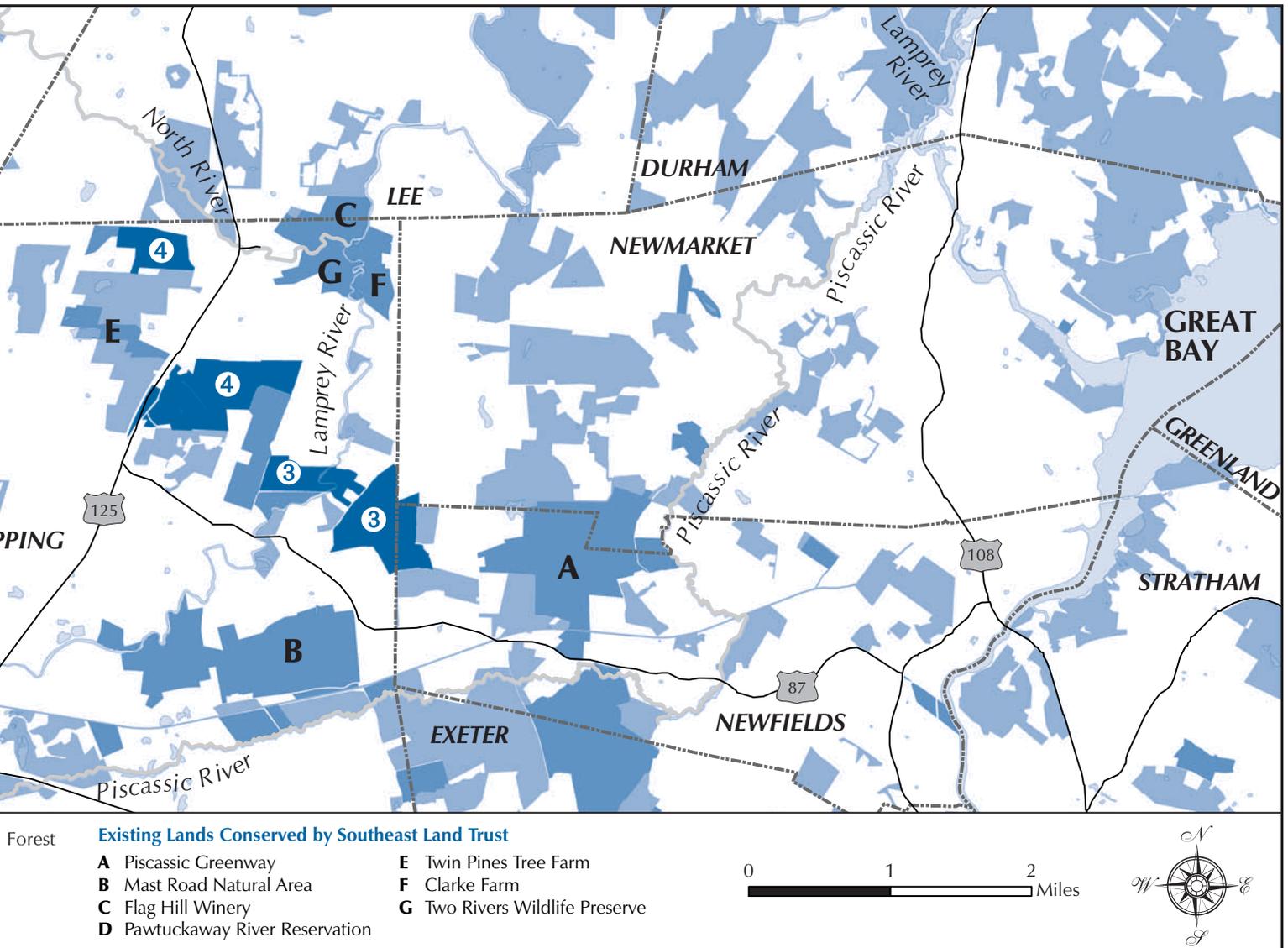
4 Burley Farm, 300 acres

The members of the Burley family, with their deep roots in Epping, take great pride in their long relationship with their lands and the community. In prior years, the family conserved nearly 200 acres adjacent to and near Route 125 in Epping, but still needed to decide how to proceed with the remaining farmland and woodlands.

Two hundred acres of the property lie off of North River Road and include fields that were previously leased to Stout Oak Farm (now located in Brentwood!). Historically, the farm was once an apple orchard, and before that a dairy that sold milk to H.P. Hood, linked by the old B&M Railroad that ran on what is now Route 125. This property includes the circa 1790 John Prescott Chase farmhouse, on the State Register of Historic Places, and to visitors,

appears much as it would have to the original settlers, an agrarian homestead. An additional nearly 100 acres of well managed woodlands lies on Birch Hill Road north of Route 125.

As our discussions with the family evolved, the Land Trust presented our vision for the Pawtuckaway to Great Bay Greenway and the possibility of the Burley Farm being reinvigorated agriculturally, showcasing good land stewardship, supporting a public trail network, and meeting community needs. Inspired by this vision and wanting to see the property again as vibrant as it once was, the family generously agreed to sell the property for less than half its appraised value. The Land Trust is now actively evaluating the property and planning for its future. One thing is for sure – the Burley Farm will be conserved! Stay tuned for more details! ■





Stewarding the Land: A Volunteer Profile

We'd like to express a big THANK YOU to our Volunteer Easement Monitors who graciously gave their time again this year to walk many of the lands on which we hold conservation easements!

- Phil Albright
- Siobhan Basile
- Bill Campbell
- Emma Carcagno
- Shawn Carignan
- Tom Chamberlin
- Ellie Coffin
- Peter Coffin
- Marilyn Del Donno
- Jim Eggers
- Amy Farnham
- Debby Grubbs
- John Haslam
- Leslie Haslam
- Ray Konisky
- Ernie Landry
- Josh Lent
- Jim Lindsey
- Judi Lindsey
- Caren MacAskill
- Spencer Martin
- Frank Northrup
- Preston Samuel
- John Seavey
- Dudley Shepard
- Ann Smith
- Bob Vecchio
- Rebecca Watts

The Southeast Land Trust relies on many volunteers to help with events (such as the Fall Foliage Fundraiser), stuffing envelopes, serving on committees, annual monitoring of our conservation easements and trail building and maintenance on the lands we own. Our volunteers are as diverse as the land we protect, bringing to the Land Trust a multitude of talents, interests and experiences, all of which help us further our work protecting and stewarding land in the region for today and future generations.

We are grateful to have Amy Farnham as an Easement Stewardship Volunteer. A native of Exeter, Amy enjoyed growing up with lots of open land in the surrounding community. She remembers fewer businesses lining Route 108 in Stratham and when there was no need for a stop sign in downtown Exeter. After 15 years of living and experiencing other locations in the U.S., she came back to Exeter and remembers the shock of seeing how much development had occurred while she was gone. And while she understood the need for some change to keep the towns vibrant she also knew the importance of keeping some land undeveloped for other uses such as farming and outdoor recreation.

So in 2012 when she came across a request for Easement Stewardship Monitors with the Land Trust, she was curious about what exactly it was and, being at a place in her life where she was looking to volunteer, decided to attend the training. Like many volunteers, while Amy wasn't in a position to contribute financially, she says she was certainly "willing and able to walk a property." Amy found the volunteer training to be rewarding as she learned new skills such as navigating land using a survey and compass, a skill she has now taught her own kids. For the past three years, she walks one of our conservation easements annually, checking the boundary and reporting any changes or interesting sights she comes across.

Amy sees an added benefit in her volunteering. She brings her children on these walks, explaining that it is a "great way to involve the kids and to try to instill in them the significance of keeping undeveloped land around". While she realizes they don't yet understand how important open space is, she hopes that their time spent on these conserved lands will help them to one day understand and appreciate them.

Over the last few years Amy has discovered how much land is already conserved in this area and that much of it is available for public use. It is Amy's hope that landowners continue to work with the Land Trust to successfully protect more land for people to enjoy. When asked what she would say to anyone looking to volunteer, she enthusiastically said she would "Highly recommend it!" and that it's a great way to contribute to the Land Trust. She sees it as being "low input, high output and very rewarding." Thank you Amy - and all of our volunteers - for all you do! ■



Amy Farnham, Easement Stewardship Volunteer.

PHOTO CREDIT: DEBORAH GOARD

Fall Foliage Fundraiser Nets \$70,000 for Local Conservation

On October 24th, we celebrated our “Watershed Moment” – our merger with the Strafford Rivers Conservancy – at the annual Fall Foliage Fundraiser in downtown Portsmouth. It was a fun-filled evening that raised over \$70,000 to advance our mission of conserving lands for people and nature *throughout our expanded service area of southeastern New Hampshire!* A huge and heartfelt THANK YOU goes out to our dedicated sponsors, guests and volunteers! ■



More than 200 supporters attended the Fall Fundraiser, including Strafford Rivers Conservancy Board members Sam Reid & Kevin McEneaney, and event volunteer Karen Oliver.

PHOTO CREDIT: SCOTT MARION



Board Members

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Ann Smith Treasurer, Kensington
Sam Reid Secretary, Dover
Don Briselden Exeter
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Emma Carcagno Newmarket
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Questions, Comments, Concerns?

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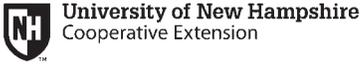
The Social Black Bear: What Bears Have Taught Me About Being Human with Ben Kilham

Black bears, thought to be solitary, have a different type of social behavior that possibly parallels early human behavior. They show evidence of reciprocal altruism, food sharing, and early group formation of unrelated individuals. Bears can live for as many as forty years, which allows them long-term benefits from forming relationships with fellow cooperators. Come learn about this fascinating creature from black bear expert and author, Ben Kilham.

Ben is a wildlife biologist based in Lyme, New Hampshire. His love of and devotion to black bears has enabled him to study their habits and interact with them for more than two decades. He and his wife Debra have accepted orphaned bear cubs into their home and enabled them to successfully return to the wild. Ben has been the focus of several news articles and documentaries, including National Geographic's *A Man Among Bears* and Animal Planet's *Papa Bear*. He is also co-author of the book *Among the Bears: Raising Orphaned Cubs in the Wild*.

This free event will be held at the Forum, which is on the third floor of the Phelps Academy Center on Tan Lane in Exeter. Please register by e-mailing register@seltnh.org.

Sponsored by:



Land Protection

BY THE NUMBERS



As of December 1, 2014

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Merger with Stafford Rivers Conservancy Complete
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