

A Season of Growth

As the landscape prepares for warmer weather, I am delighted to share that I have recently joined SELT as the new Easement Stewardship Manager. After spending time in the land conservation grant world, returning to easement stewardship feels like coming home.

My heart and passion truly lie in working directly with the land, the people who care for it, and the deep-rooted stories that shape it. I feel incredibly fortunate to be part of an organization committed to conserving the natural and working lands that define southeastern New Hampshire.

In these first weeks, I have already had the pleasure of meeting dedicated landowners, walking beautiful, conserved properties, and immersing myself in the powerful sense of purpose that infuses SELT's work. To contribute to the ongoing legacy of land conservation and stewardship, and a shared promise of ensuring these special places remain protected with intention and care for generations to come, is an honor I hold dear.

I look forward to connecting with more of you in the months ahead, whether during a monitoring visit, a community event, or simply enjoying the landscapes that make up our beloved region.

We hope you enjoy this issue of SELT Everlasting, and, as always, we appreciate hearing from you on topics and programs that best support you and your stewardship journey.

Best,



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To update your contact information, please visit:
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SELT's Easement Stewardship Team



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Planting Native Species in a Changing Climate

Embracing native plants is the key to thriving, healthy landscapes right in your own backyard.

Over the past few decades, the impacts of climate change have become more visible across New Hampshire's ecosystems.

From more unpredictable weather events to the increase of non-native plants, animals, and diseases that severely alter our landscapes, many of us have been left thinking: how can we confront this unstoppable destiny? Part of the answer happens to exist all around us—native plants.

Planting native species is one of the most effective and sustainable ways to combat climate change, as they are naturally adapted to New Hampshire's soils, climates, and native pests. These plants also sequester carbon, support pollinators and wildlife, reduce erosion, improve soil health, and help manage stormwater.

With our changing climate, selecting the right native species to plant is critical. The USDA's updated 2023 Plant Hardiness Zones show that Southeast New Hampshire now falls within Zones 5b to 6b. This means that it is more important than ever to select native plants that can sustain evolving conditions.

To ensure native species can grow and thrive on your property, it is essential to match the species to the specific conditions available, including sunlight, soil types, and water availability. Thoughtful planning guarantees that native plants are not only beneficial to the local ecosystem but can also survive on your property for a long time with minimal maintenance.

Another equally important matter is sourcing your plants and seeds responsibly. Native plants should be sourced from credible regional suppliers that verify and sell species appropriate to our local landscapes, commonly known as 'ecotypes.'

The goal of reducing the number of non-native plants in our region is a long-term one, but you can contribute to that by aiming for less than 20% of non-native plants on your property.

By taking these critical steps in planting native species on your property, you are creating resilient and authentic landscapes that go beyond gardening to mindful stewardship and restoring the integrity of New Hampshire's environments.



The flowering dogwood is a native New Hampshire species that provides nectar for pollinators in the spring, shelter for birds and insects in the summer, and red berries in autumn that serve as food for wildlife preparing for winter.

Sources: New 2023 USDA Hardiness Zones Explained

Access the USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map at: <https://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/pages/map-downloads>

“Wort” Case Scenario

As an invasive plant, swallowwort, a climbing perennial brought over from Europe as a decorative exotic in the 19th century, brings deeply disruptive and destructive consequences to the environment. They grow easily in the sun or shade and force out native plants in the understory; in fact, their roots produce toxins that actively diminish growth of other plants.

But it gets worse. According to UNH Extension:

If it lacks something to climb upon, the plants will twine upon themselves forming ropes. It is this trait that earns it the nickname “dog-strangling vine.” There is also concern that monarch butterflies will mistake swallowwort for native milkweeds and lay their eggs upon them, only to have their caterpillars starve.

Source: extension.unh.edu/blog/2018/06/invasive-spotlight-swallow-wort

Monarchs are already under pressure from habitat loss, but the tragic mix-up between swallowwort and milkweed can push the species towards even

further decline.

Swallowwort provides intense challenges for control and mitigation due to their resilience. The plants can’t be pulled from the surface as they break with ease, leaving their roots to sprout.



There are no natural predators to consume them, and their seeds spread through the wind. Destroying seed pods before they take flight can reduce the spread, and herbicides have proven effective (visit the Extension page for more details).

Swallowwort serves as a cautionary reminder of how invasive species can disrupt ecosystems, showcasing the important role of native plants in maintaining biodiversity and ecological resilience.

Welcome to the Team

We are pleased to share that two new members have joined our stewardship team! Sarah Scribner, our Stewardship and Conservation Administrative Assistant, brings a wealth of organization and expertise to our work, helping our processes run smoothly behind the scenes.

This season, we are also joined by Epping native Sam Hereford as our new Seasonal Conservation Easement Steward. Sam has hit the ground running and is already out in the field supporting monitoring efforts and learning the ins and outs of easement stewardship.



Sarah Scribner



Sam Hereford

SAVE THE DATE

TRAILFEST

Saturday, October 18, 2025

Burley Farms

247 North River Road, Epping, NH

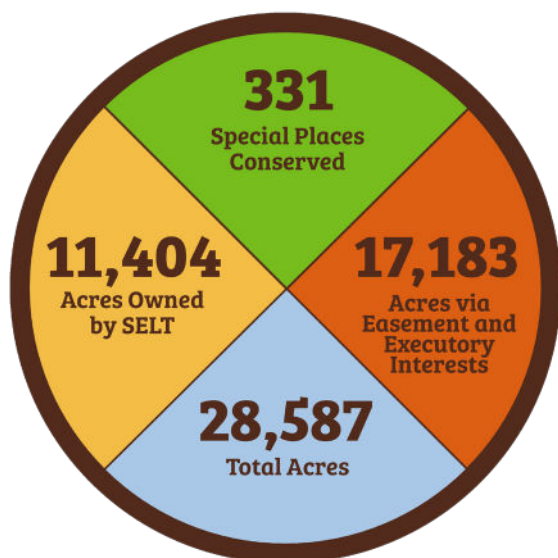




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SELT



As of May 2025

To contact SELT, please call 603-778-6088 or email info@seltnh.org. To update your contact information, please visit www.seltnh.org/landowner-contact or reach out to Nicole DeCarolis at nicole@seltnh.org or 603-658-9480.

SELT Everlasting is published twice a year and is the Easement Stewardship newsletter of SELT. Written and edited by Nicole DeCarolis, Deborah Goard, Dave Johnson, and Lizzy Franceschini.

Thinking of Selling Your Land?

More and more conserved land is selling – meaning there is a whole new generation of landowners who need to understand what a conservation easement is and the associated privileges and responsibilities.

SELT can help make your sale smoother by working with your realtor to properly inform buyers about your conservation easement. Once you've decided to sell and have selected a realtor, please have them call us.

We will provide an electronic packet of information to incorporate in your disclosures and can answer questions from buyers.

Once you've scheduled a closing, please remember to give us the required notification of transfer of title in accordance with the terms of the easement.